



By Paul Holmes

AROO! THE BEAST CALLS TO SPARTANS

The Killington mountains will welcome about 7,000 Spartans racers and their supporters this weekend to the annual obstacle course race.

Page 14



FRIDAY IS THE 13TH

Friday the 13th is considered an unlucky day in Western superstition. Friday the 13th occurs if and only if the month begins on a Sunday. The occurrence happens at least once every year and up to three times a year.



TUNBRIDGE FAIR OPENS THURSDAY

The Tunbridge World's Fair is Sept. 12-15. This fair has been popular since 1867!

Page 17



Courtesy Megan Wagner

Last year, Dream Maker Bakers created a 770 pound whoopie pie (above). This Saturday, the Killington bakery hopes to set a world record with a 1,100-pound creation. It will debut at 4:15 p.m.

Killington bakery attempts world record whoopie pie

By Adam Davis

Dream Maker Bakers in Killington is looking to set a new world record with the largest whoopie pie ever produced at the annual Whoopie Pie Festival in downtown Rutland on Saturday, Sept. 14. The 1,100-pound concoction will require almost 300 pounds of powdered sugar, as well as 150 pounds of marshmallow fluff, butter, and shortening to make the filling. They will add 75 pounds to each cake layer this year to build upon their 770 pound whoopie pie they created for last year's festival.

The current world record for the largest whoopie pie ever made belongs to Wicked Whoopies in Freeport, Maine, at an impressive 1,062 pounds. When recently asked by NBC News in Maine what they thought about

Dream Maker Bakers seeking to break their record, they seemed open to the challenge.

"They said 'I hope that they break it, and they add enough on to make it harder for anybody else to break it, but we're going to come back for it,'" according to challenger Dream Maker Bakers owner Megan Wagner.

In addition to the potential record-breaking dessert, Dream Maker will also have traditional whoopie pies available at their stand, as well as samples of the world's biggest whoopie for the crowd. After the festival, the remainder of the pie will be donated to various food banks throughout the state.

"My team splits into two as soon as it's done being weighed, and half of the team

Whoopie pie → 4

Five startups selected for Rutland's first-ever venture-backed accelerator

Five companies have been selected to participate in a national startup accelerator program including three Vermont-based startups and two from out-of-state, according to a news release Sept. 10. Tacitly, Aprexis Health, Brightwater Tools, SkinGenius and Cathoven will participate in the gBETA Rutland program through national venture capital firm gener8tor.

"StartUp Rutland alongside CEDRR is honored to bring this program to Vermont to support homegrown innovation and attract and retain talent," said Lyle Jepson.

network of mentors, customers, corporate partners and investors.

gener8tor received more than 50 applications nationally and internationally for the Rutland program. The five selected companies were chosen based on their growth potential and investor readiness. See below for more details on each company.

gBETA Rutland is a free 7-week accelerator program designed to set a path for startups to pursue investment opportunities. Startup founders receive intensive concierge coaching and access to gener8tor's national

Accelerators → 2

More students are choosing VTSU, enrollment is up at start of second year

Vermont State University (VTSU) begins its second year by welcoming more than 1,700 new degree-seeking students in the Class of 2028 to its campuses this fall and reports a strong retention of returning students as well, meeting expectations

Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) and 56% are first-generation college students.

VTSU leadership is optimistic about the future and will continue building on the successes of this year in the future. "The Class of 2028

The Class of 2028

represents 35 states and 11 countries... 70% of the Class of 2028 hails from Vermont.

students stronger than the inaugural class in Fall 2023, or 14% year-over-year.

Since its unification in 2023, VTSU has worked to realign programs, learning options and course offerings to meet student interest and state economic and workforce needs.

The Class of 2028 represents 35 states and 11 countries, with students hailing from as far away as Florida to California and Italy to Japan. In fact, out-of-state student enrollment is up 13% across all VTSU campuses, enriching the student population and diversity of the campuses. 19% of the new class identify as

is remarkable and it's an honor to welcome them to Vermont State University for what is sure to be an exciting and very productive year," shared Dave Bergh, VTSU president in a news release Sept. 5. "Their curiosity and engagement on issues that are important to them and their diversity of experience and interests have stood out to me as I've had the opportunity to meet them over the last week."

The Vermont State Colleges System has long been the affordable and accessible higher and continuing education system of Vermonters, educating and providing

VTSU → 4



Courtesy VTSU

Woodruff Hall welcomes students to the Castleton's campus.

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← **Accelerators:**
from page 1

"I'm thrilled to get to work with these five incredible companies on their growth," said Mose Cassaro, gBETA Rutland program partner and manager/director of StartUp Rutland. "This program not only supports these five companies, but brings opportunity and economic development throughout Vermont, attracting national and international attention."

The program is made possible by a partnership with StartUp Rutland, an initiative launched by The Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region (CEDRR).

"StartUp Rutland alongside CEDRR is honored to bring this program to Vermont to support homegrown innovation and attract and retain talent on a national scale to help bolster a thriving economic ecosystem in Rutland," said Lyle Jepson, executive director at CEDRR.

At the end of the program, the startups will showcase their companies in front of investors, community members, and the public at a pitch event on Oct. 23 at The Paramount Theater in downtown Rutland. The event will run from 5-7 p.m. and is open to the public.

The Fall 2024 cohort
Tacitly Inc.

Tacitly Inc. is a venture-backed post-revenue technology startup that stands at the innovative crossroads of technology and healthcare, nestled within the Green Mountains of Rutland, Vermont. Specializing in Extended Reality (XR) training solutions, Tacitly pioneers in developing immersive educational experiences for the healthcare sector. Tacitly has established a partnership with the prestigious Dartmouth Health currently utilizing their offerings to train medical professionals.

Founder and CEO: Jeffrey DeJarnette, tacitly.com.

Aprexis Health

Aprexis Health provides innovative medication management solutions tailored for

health plans, state Medicaid programs, regional pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), and self-insured employers. With a focus on improving clinical outcomes and reducing both medication and medical costs, Aprexis has successfully facilitated over 20,000 clinical interventions. Having gained substantial traction in 2024, the company projects revenues exceeding \$250,000 by year-end, with over \$1.25 million already secured for 2025.

Co-founder: Robert Squire, aprexis.com.

Brightwater Tools

Brightwater Tools is a venture-backed, woman-led, Vermont-based start-up supported by the U.S. National Science Foundation. Their onsite, scalable, and automated wastewater treatment process transforms human waste into fertilizer, creating circular nutrient and water economies for a resilient future.

CEO: Kimmerly Nace, brightwatertools.com.

Cathoven AI

Cathoven AI is a San Francisco-based, venture-backed startup offering a smart assistant for language teachers. It is being used in 50+ top universities like Columbia, Berkeley, and Cambridge. Cathoven enables language teachers to turn any engaging content — videos, news, stories, podcasts — into lessons adapted to their students' language level. Cathoven was selected as the second-best AI in Education project by QS in 2023, right after Duolingo.

Co-founder/CEO: Erdi Tac, cathoven.com.

Skingenius

Skingenius is a Massachusetts-based skincare recommendation platform that uses advanced ingredient research and analysis to provide tailored product recommendations based on your skin type, allergies, and current routine. By thoroughly evaluating product ingredients for safety and effectiveness, Skingenius helps you avoid negative skin reactions and waste. Think, an esthetician in your pocket, guiding you to the best skin care choices.

CEO: Yuliya Pokhylyko, skingenius.io.

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After 20 years Saradarian, director of Rutland County Humane Society, resigns

Beth Saradarian, executive director of the Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS), has submitted her resignation to the board of directors. Saradarian stated she made the difficult decision to resign to pursue new opportunities after 20 years and much consideration.

She joined the organization in 2004 and has been executive director since 2019. Prior to joining RCHS Saradarian spent 19 years with Dun and Bradstreet.

During her tenure at RCHS, Saradarian has implemented programs to save more animals and better serve the community. She has overseen remediation of hoarding situations and insured care to animals who have been abandoned, abused or neglected. She has also steered the agency through the difficulties of the covid pandemic, staffing shortages and funding challenges. While she was executive director, the length of stay for animals dropped from 35.1 days in 2019 to 31.3 days in 2023.

The Board of Directors regretfully accepted her resignation and send out a news release Sept. 4. Board president Mei Mei Brown stated, "I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Beth in her role of executive director. Beth's dedication to the homeless animals and the staff who care for them is beyond compare, which shows in her willingness to assist RCHS's next director settle into their role. Both the staff and board will miss her guiding hand that has led our organization for the last five years."

The board will begin the search for a new executive



Courtesy Mt Times archives

Beth Saradarian has been the executive director of RCHS for 20. The board announced her resignation Sept. 4.

director in the near future. Saradarian has agreed to stay on to assist with the transition.

RCHS is currently located at 765 Stevens Road in Pittsford, but is seeking a new home.

For more information, visit: rchsvt.org.



Courtesy Paul Hatin, Mendon Fish & Game Club

Over 50 attended annual Mendon Fish & Game Club 3-D bow shoot

On Aug. 24-25 over 50 bow shooters came out for Mendon Fish & Game Club's annual 3-D bow shoot at the clubhouse. "It was the biggest turnout we have had in quite a while," said Rick Putnam, bow shoot committee chair.

WRJ VA Healthcare System earns double 5-star quality rating

Only facility in Vt or NH to earn the top rating

The White River Junction Veterans Affairs Healthcare System (WRJ VAHCS) announced Sept. 5 that it received a 5-star Overall Hospital Quality Star Rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). WRJ VA was the only facility in Vermont and New Hampshire to earn the top rating.

The measures used to calculate overall CMS Star Ratings are mortality, safety of care, readmission, patient experience, and timely and effective care. The more stars (out of 5), the better a hospital performed on the available quality measures.

Across both VA and non-VA hospitals nationwide, just over 8% of facilities rated received a 5-star rating in the 2024 data. These findings are the latest in a series of recent evaluations showing the effectiveness of VA health care compared to non-VA health care, revealing that VA health

care is consistently as good as — or better than — non-VA health care.

"This is an outstanding achievement. My sincere gratitude goes out to our amazing staff. They are true professionals who care deeply for veterans, consistently going the extra mile to provide excellent care and maintain a healing environment for our patients," said WRJ VAHCS Executive Director Brett Rusch, MD. "These five stars affirm our commitment to excellence and dedication to our veterans."

The U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs healthcare system in WRJ is a fully accredited acute medical and surgical care facility offering primary and subspecialty outpatient care, including rehabilitation and mental health services. The WRJ VA Healthcare system serves veterans in Vermont and the four contiguous counties of New Hampshire.

Are You Running for Office?

★★★

Rutland County residents as well as Vermont residents running for state and/or federal positions who would like an unfiltered platform to announce and articulate their position can do so through PEGTV's candidate profiles.

Candidate profiles offer candidates the opportunity to speak briefly about their platforms in a modern television studio setting with a professional production crew.

If you would like to schedule studio time to record a profile, send in your own recorded profile, or get more information, please contact Rich Elnicki at (802) 747-0151 or relnicki@pegtv.com

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Table of contents	
Local news	2
State news	8
Opinion	10
Puzzles	9
Calendar.....	10
Arts, Dining, Entertainment.....	14
Pets	22
Horoscopes.....	23
Columns.....	24
Service directory.....	26
Real estate	28
Classifieds	31

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Courtesy Megan Wagner
Hundreds of pounds of ingredients will be combined to bake the world's largest whoopie pie this Saturday.

← **Whoopie pie:**
from page 1

works on making donation boxes — Food shelves can still sign up to receive some, and we've had requests from all over Vermont," Wagner said. "The other half of my team will cut up and serve it to the crowd."

"We are looking forward to welcoming a huge crowd to Downtown Rutland to enjoy a day packed with fun and family-friendly activities!" said Chrispin White, CEDRR's member services and events manager.

Last year's festival drew an estimated 5,000 people and this year's is expected to potentially draw even more.

"It's an extremely fun event that has grown tremendously in size from year to year. Last year, they were predicting 3,000 people and 5,000 showed up. So, they're expecting 8,000 this year, and maybe more since we've announced that we're trying to break the record," Wagner said. "Our employees have friends and family from all over the country that are coming in to see it, and everyone we've talked to is really excited."

Dream Maker Bakers will unveil its record-breaking whoopie pie at 4:15 p.m.

Dream Maker Bakers were first introduced to the idea of making a massive whoopie pie when the Rutland Chamber of Commerce approached them with the proposal prior to the festival's inaugural year in 2022.

"They came to me three years ago; they were trying to find a bakery that could make them a big whoopie pie, but we weren't sure how big," Wagner said. "My head baker and I said, 'We could do that.' I had a pan built as big as it could possibly be for the biggest oven that I could find and that's where we started. Our first was 550 pounds."

In addition to whoopie pies from 20 area bakers, the third annual Whoopie Pie Festival will feature live music, performances, various activities, and food trucks. Both Center Street and Merchants Row will be shut down to traffic from 12-5 p.m. for the festivities.

For more information, visit rutlandwhoopiepiefest.com.

Welch discusses affordable housing at Habitat for Humanity in Rutland

On Sept. 6 U.S. Senator Peter Welch (D-Vt.) visited Habitat for Humanity of Rutland County and toured an active construction site for new affordable housing. Senator Welch also stopped by the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, which sells new and gently-used clothes and home goods. Proceeds from the ReStore are used to build Habitat for Humanity homes.

"Home ownership is a challenge in rural communities across the country, and in Vermont the affordable housing shortage is especially brutal. Habitat for Humanity is working to make housing more affordable in Rutland and across Vermont," said Senator Welch. "I'll keep fighting in Washington to bring resources back to Vermont so we can build more housing and help make home-ownership a reality in rural America."



Submitted
Senator Welch was joined by Habitat for Humanity board members President Eric Solsaa, Megan LaChance and Kyle Kershner; Habitat Executive Director Rebekah M. Stephens; and ReStore Staff/Volunteers Christine Chesnutis and Steve Ball.

← **VTSU:**
from page 1

opportunities to more Vermonters than all other institutions in the state combined. At VTSU this fall, over 70% of the Class of 2028 hails from Vermont, there are 100 more Vermont students in the Class of 2028 than there were in the Fall 2023 class, and all 14 counties are represented in the student body.

Over 7,000 students will make their way through a credit-bearing Vermont State University class or program at some point in the year. Another few thousand will take a continuing education class or other non-credit offering in the apprenticeship programs, in skilled workforce training, or via a one-day course. In any given semester, about 5,000 learners will be engaged in the University's offerings. The University expects to report total fall enrollment after the half-semester courses start in October.

Alexandria Schermerhorn is a 2024 VTSU Castleton graduate and was Senior Class President, she is currently the Graduate Assistant for Student Activities on the VTSU Williston Campus. "I was unsure of how student life would be impacted by unification, but I found that transformation provided students with many more academic opportunities with a wide range of career-focused courses available virtually

across the campuses, many extracurriculars, and in particular, expanded access to both campus-based and university-wide student government structures. I am excited to see the VTSU Williston campus continue to grow and improve support for students in their academic, social, and leadership endeavors. Even in the short weeks since the semester began, I can see new energy and enthusiasm among students, especially related to our new student government structure and constitution. It's really exciting."

That excitement carries across VTSU's campuses. New student enrollment numbers are as important as the retention of existing students. "We're seeing indications that our retention is trending above historical rates," noted Kelley Beckwith, vice president of student success. "There is a positive response to our new program array and advising model, both of which put students and their needs at the center of our work. Our online new student enrollment is up 25%, mainly driven by a handful of programs like Early Childhood Education, the bachelor's degree RN-BSN nursing bridge program, and psychology. All are primarily enroll-

ing Vermonters and have strong pathways internally and through Community College of Vermont (CCV), and all fill critical workforce demands across Vermont. While we still have some time before these numbers are finalized, these numbers represent solid progress. As always, we're taking a look at what we're doing right and where we can continue to improve."

Vermont State Colleges system Chancellor Beth Mauch is focused on affordability and accessibility for students across the system as the Vermont State Colleges System looks to grow at both CCV and VTSU to better serve Vermonters of all ages seeking to upskill or earn a degree.

"Streamlining the ability to transfer within the Vermont State Colleges system, from CCV to VTSU, is incredibly important as we work to meet our students where they are and support their efforts to achieve an education that is affordable and accessible," stated Mauch. "It's a strategic priority of the system's and I am incredibly pleased to see that internal transfers from CCV to VTSU are up 33% over last fall in this new class. That's key as students bridge from CCV to a VTSU bachelor's degree program

or to the nursing program, or as they seek to transfer their early college credits."

"We were laser-focused on stability and enrollment this year and these numbers are a testament to that work," added President Bergh. "We'll continue this essential work in partnership with the state and with our communities to carry this year's success through the recruitment and ultimately the retention of our future classes. We are here for the benefit of Vermont and you see that reflected across our student body, with over 70% of our students coming from in-state and many of our out-of-state students choosing to stay in Vermont after graduation to make their life here and contribute to our economic vitality."

He further stated, "I'm incredibly pleased with all our partners – faculty, staff, students, our communities, and our alumni – who worked together to share VTSU's story and its unique offerings and helped us grow this year's entering class to where it is today. Four years ago, the legislature and Governor decided the Vermont State Colleges were an essential investment. We would not be here today without their support and trust. We are seeing the fruits of that work in our institutions today."

Unsustainable property tax bills: How did we get here? What's being done?

Most towns in Windsor County have received their education and municipal property tax bills by now. Many, not all, towns have big tax increases. Woodstock has yet to



By Sen. Alison Clarkson

receive their bills but we can expect a 30% increase. These are increases none of us have budgeted for, and one that will be a challenge for many. So, I feel I need to address it head on. In this piece, I'd like to try to answer three questions:

- 1. Why has education costs increased this year?
- 2. Why are some towns increases particularly steep?
- 3. What is the Legislature is doing about it?

This year's education tax bill, and the tax increases it contains, is unsustainable. We are all frustrated by the confluence of education finance challenges, which have resulted in such big increases in both spending and taxes this year. The question is: how to ameliorate it.

I think it's important to map out how we got to this point. First: How the costs get set. Local education districts prepare school budgets, which local voters vote on at Town Meeting. These budgets are developed and approved locally. The total of these budgets sets the education bill which comes to the Legislature to be funded.

Second: Why the bill/costs have increased so much this year. Costs have been increasing for some time, but over the past three years, the federal pandemic funding (ESSER funds) has helped us cover the increasing costs of education, thereby masking the impact of inflation on taxpayers. This year some key cost drivers have challenged our schools as they created their budgets: a 16.4% increase in teacher's health care, the end of one-time federal Covid/ESSER funds, overall inflation, mental health and social service needs, PCB clean up, and the debt service on new capital projects or renovations. Without the federal funding we are seeing the cumulative impact of cost increases in education. All these factors resulted in a big bill this year.

In addition, the new weighting formula, Act 127, which went into effect this year gives more per pupil support to school districts with children living in poverty, learning English as a second language and living rurally. While Act 127 was well intentioned, it has resulted in unintended financial consequences which need to be fixed.

This increased bill is what the Legislature was sent and had to figure out how to pay.

Third, how the bill gets paid. Funding the education bill has traditionally been paid through property taxes. Because education costs have increased, the state has had to devote additional revenues to cover the bill (sales tax, the Lottery) and to buffer the pressure on property taxes. Unfortunately, other property related costs, like Current Use and TIFs (tax increment finance) continue to be included in the education fund even though they are unrelated to education.

In December the tax department predicted that taxes would have to increase 20% to cover education costs. As a result, school boards went back to work trimming budgets and the Legislature worked hard to lower the tax impact. Not great, but with adding revenue of the 3% increase on short term rentals and the cloud tax the state-wide increase was reduced to 13.8%. Again, not great for any of us but better than where we started.

Fourth, additional things which impact local residential taxpayers are local school spending choices and increases in house values. Woodstock area towns have experienced the impacts of Covid, climate refugees and seasonal sales on real estate prices — and, as a result, we have seen a rapid escalation of our house values. This is having a big impact

on our taxes. If you are selling a home this has been a great benefit — but the increased valuation has had a terrible impact on our property taxes. Towns which have reappraised are seeing this big increase in values. In Woodstock it is particularly painful as our property values have risen so high, so fast and our CLA (Common Level of Appraisal) has fallen to 63% of fair market value. The CLA is the balancing lens which ensures all towns properties are valued at the state-wide market rate. However, now market value includes seasonal home sales which are having a profound effect on our house values and on our property taxes as a result.

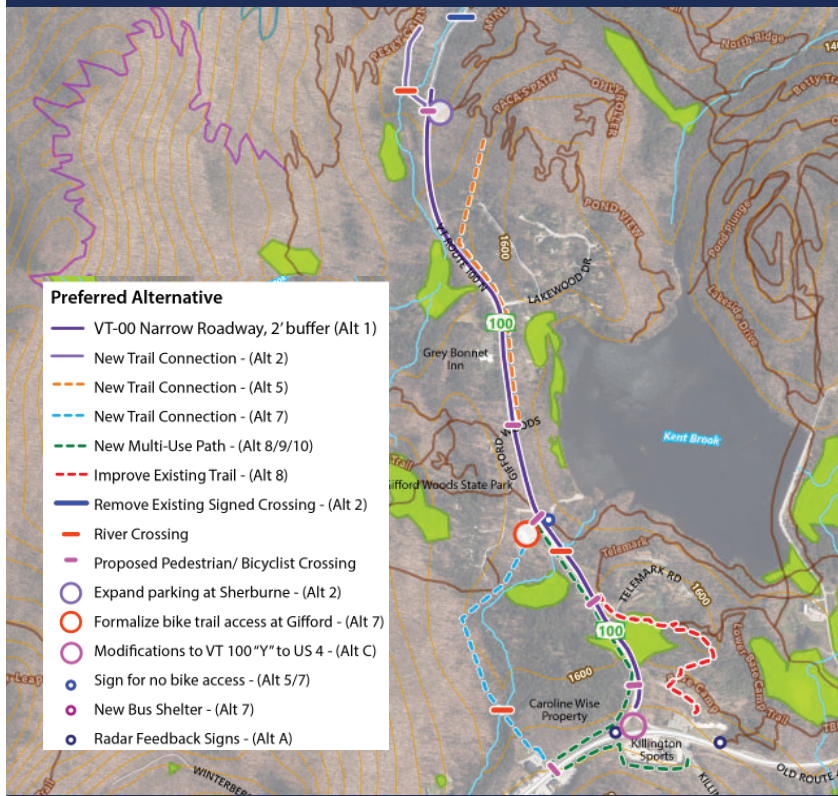
Fifth, the governor's proposal to artificially reduce the tax level seemed attractive — but it would have resulted in 30% higher taxes on our businesses and much bigger increases next year. He proposed using up all our reserves and borrowing to pay this year's education bill — basically putting it on the credit card. The Legislature felt this was not

responsible and would have caused more pain next year. We hope that in facing the challenge now, we will find solutions sooner rather than later.

So, we need to attack all the education funding factors — cost and revenue — this coming year. No Vermonter can afford further tax increases like this. The Legislature created the Commission on the Future of Vermont Education System to work this summer and fall reviewing all these issues and will make recommendations to the Legislature this January. We need to proceed with smart solutions — not just go at everything with a meat cleaver — tempting as that might be. The commission is already at work reviewing all the challenges our education system is grappling with and hopefully proposing thoughtful solutions to them. Getting this fixed will be a top priority in the next Legislative session.

Sen. Alison Clarkson can be reached by email: aclarkson@leg.state.vt.us.

KILLINGTON CONNECTING TRAILS SCOPING STUDY



MEETING DETAILS

DATE: Wednesday, September 11th, 2024
TIME: 7:00 PM

IN-PERSON LOCATION:
Killington Public Safety Building
800 Killington Road,
Killington, VT 05751

VIRTUAL OPTION:
Join Zoom Meeting
Meeting ID: 861 9104 2719
Passcode: 261897
By Phone: +1 929 205 6099
By Link: <https://tinyurl.com/4txe4473>

PUBLIC MEETING

Please join us for the Final Public Meeting of the Killington Connecting Trails Scoping Study. The Town of Killington worked with VHB to develop improvements to bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety in the area around several multi-use, off-road trail networks: Gifford Woods trails, Sherburne trails, and trails around Kent Pond.

VHB has prepared a DRAFT Scoping Report and will present their findings and the recommended trail connections along and across US Route 4 and VT Route 100 in Killington.



GUEST EDITORIAL

What's next for Vt's education system?

By Ann Manwaring
Editor's note: Ann Manwaring of Wilmington, a former Democratic state representative who served from 2007-2017.

For six of the 10 years I was in the Legislature, representing the towns of Wilmington, Whitingham and Halifax, I was on the Appropriations Committee. We spent a good deal of our time in that committee listening to state agency administrators present their financial needs for the ensuing fiscal year, beginning the next July 1. By the end of the budget process, when the governor finally signed the “big bill” as it is affectionately known, every state agency knew how much money it had to do its work for the following year.

Schools in Vermont have no such assurance, as the money each school receives for the work it is expected to do travels with students. Schools don't know until school starts in the fall, two months after their fiscal year begins, what their student population will be, and thus what their revenues will be.

This is a tough way to run any organization, whether it is for-profit, non-profit or public entity — especially one that is so essential to the wellbeing of all of us. Larger districts fare better than smaller ones, but all of necessity have had to adopt strategies to cope, some of which might have the unintended consequence of putting upward pressure on their budgets, and thus the property tax. This is a direct result of the shift from local financing of education to the Act 60/68 financing framework.

Education in Vermont is a statewide system tied together by its financing structure. Please do not think that because I am from one of the fabled “gold towns” that I am trying to upend Act 60. I am not! But I do hope that the powers at the state level will recognize that for any system to be effective for those who benefit from its work and for those who pay to support the work, financing, effective organizational structure and transparent accountability are all needed.

As the Legislature struggles with this year's notable increases in property tax rates, I'd like to suggest some “what-ifs.”

What if instead of distributing funds from the state education fund in one bucket which includes all costs based on the equalized pupil count for each school, as is now the case, the Legislature were to create two buckets?

One bucket would continue to travel with the student and include all those costs directly associated with student outcomes, such as teacher salaries, curriculum development, classroom supports, food service, libraries, sports and others.

The second bucket would include facilities costs such as building and grounds maintenance, utilities, heat, staff caring for infrastructure, bond payments, etc. This bucket would be given to schools at the beginning of the fiscal year, thus granting to schools for the first time since Act 60 assurance of at least a portion of their financing needs for the school year. Both buckets would be derived from the locally enacted budgets, as is now the case.

One benefit would be to diminish uncertainty of how to operate a school, inherent in the present system. Other possible
What if → 12

Financing, effective
organizational structure
and transparent
accountability are
all needed.



Debate 2024 last word by Dave Granlund, PoliticalCartoons

LETTERS

Moats misses a generation: Gen Jones

Dear Editor,
In David Moats' opinion piece “True generational change in view” published in the Sept. 4-10 edition, he completely misses an important part of the equation: Generation Jones (born 1954-1965, between Boom

No, Obama isn't part of Gen X; he's part of Gen Jones, a term he has specifically used to describe himself.

& X). Gen Jones has become a widely-embraced concept/term as this, among many websites, clearly show: GenJones.net.

There have been articles about Gen Jones in USA Today, Newsweek and The New York Times just in recent weeks, in addition to
Gen Jones → 7

September is animal pain awareness month

Dear Editor,
Animals suffer from pain, just like people do, and it can come in many forms: surgical pain, arthritis, cancer, and dental pain are just a few. Acute pain is obvious — for instance your dog got hit by a car or your horse has a bruised foot and is limping — and it is distressing for all. Chronic pain can be more subtle and mistaken for “getting old” or “slowing down.” Old age is not a disease, but pain certainly is, and recognizing the signs knowing some of the treatment options can help animal owners and their animals.

In small animals, it is important to recognize the subtle signs of pain, because animals cannot speak to us and rarely cry out in pain. Decreased activity, not going up or down stairs, reluctance to jump up onto surfaces (this especially applies to cats), and difficulty standing after lying down can all be signs of arthritis
Animal pain → 7

VCV endorses Pieciak for treasurer

Dear Editor,
Vermont Conservation Voters (VCV) announced its endorsement of Mike Pieciak for state treasurer of Vermont, Sept. 5. During his tenure as state treasurer, Pieciak has been an effective leader on issues aligned with Vermont Conservation Voters' mission, championing policies that safeguard our environment and support our communities.

Through its endorsements, VCV aims to educate voters across the state on candidates whose values and actions align with their vision for Vermont to advance and defend policies that protect the environment and promote health, while advancing social, racial, and economic justice, and strengthening our democracy.

In his first term, Treasurer Pieciak helped deliver on historic climate action. Pieciak secured \$15 million in relief to rebuild communities impacted by the July 2023 flooding events.
Pieciak → 7

Please reach out to John Rodgers

Dear Editor,
While living in Wolcott, I had the pleasure of having John Rodgers, who is now running for lieutenant governor, serve as my state senator. During this time, I corresponded with him on numerous occasions regarding legislation. Although we may not have always seen eye-to-eye on every issue, John Rodgers always made the time, even if it meant a phone call, to listen to my concerns.

Rodgers is a true leader who I believe Vermont needs. On Day One, he will roll up his sleeves and listen to all Vermonters as individuals, not just members of a political party. Rodgers has a long history of advocating for the “Vermont View” — I feel that's an approach focused on bettering the state for the sake of ALL VERMONTERS, rather than serving special interests, lobbyists, or any one political party.

Key areas Rodgers can lead important discussions
Rodgers → 7

CAPITOL QUOTES

A presidential debate was held Tuesday night, Sept. 10 from 9-10:30 p.m. It was hosted by ABC News at Philadelphia's National Constitution Center. With no other debates scheduled between Ms. Harris and Mr. Trump, the face-off may have been one of the highest-stakes 90 minutes in American politics in generations. More than 50 million Americans watched the June debate between President Biden and Mr. Trump live, and projections for Tuesday's bout were 10s of millions more — including news coverage to social media clips after the fact. While the Mountain Times went to press prior to the debate itself, the campaigns had been setting the stage...

“Well, Donald, I do hope you’ll reconsider to meet me on the debate stage. Because as the saying goes, ‘If you’ve got something to say, say it to my face.’”

said Vice President **Kamala Harris** challenged former President Donald J. Trump to commit to a presidential debate during a raucous rally in Atlanta, July 30.

“I will end Kamala Harris’s anti-energy crusade and implement a policy of energy abundance, energy independence, and even energy dominance... my plan will terminate the Green New Deal, I will end the electric vehicle mandate,”

said **Donald Trump** in his own ad posted on Truth Social over the weekend.

“A loaf of bread costs 50% more today, ground beef is up almost 50%,”

said **Kamala Harris** in footage used in an ad released by Trump over the weekend.

“For 54 years, they were trying to get *Roe v. Wade* terminated and I did it, and I’m proud to have done it.”

said **Donald Trump** in footage used in an ad released by Harris over the weekend.

Animal pain: from page 6

and joint pain. Overgrooming or licking a particular area can also be a sign of pain as can avoiding contact or hiding. Decreased appetite can signal mouth pain. If you have ever had a toothache, you can relate. In fact, pain from dental disease is one of the most common unrecognized sources of pain in our pets. The decreased appetite may be subtle, or your pet may avoid chewing its food, drop it, or chew only on one side.

Large animals and other small animals may be reluctant to eat (indicating mouth pain), isolate themselves from their pasture mates, seem “down,” or stiff

and slow.

The good news is your animals do not have to suffer needlessly. There are many options available to help treat pain, including pain medications, joint supplements, laser therapy, acupuncture, physical therapy, and even therapeutic massage. A comprehensive dental evaluation by your veterinarian can identify dental disease and help you treat it.

At home, you can do many things to help your old pets. Steps or ramps (or even rearranged furniture) can help them to get to their favorite spots, heated beds, raised food and water

dishes, regular brushing and trimming nails, low openings to litter boxes, and carpet runners for traction can all help.

Talk to your veterinarian if you think your pet may be in pain. There are many options to help your animals and they need not suffer. For more information on pain in pets, including a checklist to help determine if your animal is in pain, go to caregivers section on the website of the International Veterinary Association for Pain Management, ivapm.org.

M. Kathleen Shaw DVM, Vermont Veterinary Medical Association

Rodgers: from page 6

and drive positive change include cleaning our waterways, rethinking fiscal responsibilities, spurring responsible housing developments that don’t continue polluting our waterways, and advancing environmental conservation.

I encourage you to reach out to John Rodgers directly with any questions you may have. He will be sure to respond.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Ayotte, Fletcher

Gen Jones: from page 6

hundreds of earlier articles in prominent media across the globe.

No, Obama isn’t part of Gen X; he’s part of Gen Jones, a term he has specifically used to describe himself. Harris and Walz are part of Gen Jones as well. To write a piece like this in 2024 and not even mention Gen Jones suggests that either no research was done, or research was done but the writer chose to pretend to his readers that there are only two generational options for Harris/Walz, when there are obviously three (Boom/Jones/X). Either way, it doesn’t exactly shout competent or credible journalism or writing.

Best,
Robert Williams Jr., Bridgewater

Pieciak: from page 6

He supported the passage of Vermont’s first-in-the-nation Climate Superfund so that Big Oil pays for the damages its products have caused our communities, and is taking a leading role in its implementation.

Pieciak also co-launched the bipartisan Climate Resilience Implementation Strategy to better prepare Vermont communities for a changing climate.

“We need leaders with a strong vision for Vermont and the ability to deliver meaningful change. Mike Pieciak is that

leader,” said Justin Marsh, political director, Vermont Conservation Voters. “He has consistently worked to find new ways to protect our communities, our environment, and to address the climate crisis.”

“I’m honored to receive the endorsement of Vermont Conservation Voters. Vermonters know that the climate crisis is real, and it’s hurting them,” Mike Pieciak added. “Too many of our neighbors have lost their homes, their businesses, or their livelihoods to flooding and other climate disasters. My mission is to rebuild the middle class in Vermont, and that means protecting Vermonters and their communities from the

climate crisis.”

Marsh added, “Thanks to Treasurer Pieciak’s Climate Credit Finance Facility, Vermont intends to invest up to \$30 million in green energy production, weatherization, electrification, and climate resiliency, further cementing his commitment to solutions that better prepare Vermont for a changing climate.”

For its endorsement process, VCV invites all

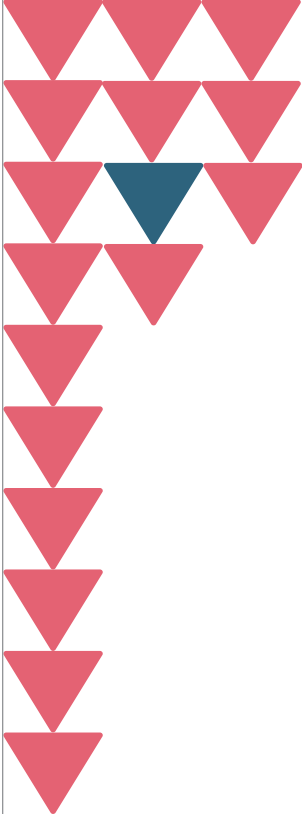
“My mission is to rebuild the middle class in Vermont,” said Pieciak.

statewide candidates to participate in an interview process.

In addition to holding interviews, VCV staff gathers information about each interested candidate’s environmental voting record and demonstrated leadership if they previously served in office, as well as examples from their career and work they’ve done in their communities that align with our mission. The VCV board of directors votes on all endorsements.

For our current list of endorsements, visit: vermont-conservationvoters.com/endorsements.

Justin Marsh on behalf of Vermont Conservation Voters



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B	I	I	O	E	O	H	M	D	N	G	E	C	E	R	Y	A	B	G	T
K	D	P	E	M	M	R	N	G	N	K	N	B	D	D	M	G	M	Y	H
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- ASANA

BANDHA

BODY

BREATH

CENTER

CHAKRA
- CHATURANGA

CORE

ENERGY

FUNDAMENTALS

HATHA

MANTRA
- MIND

MUDRA

NAMASTE

POSE

POSTURE

PRANA
- SACRUM

STRENGTH

STRETCH

STYLE

UJJAYI

YOGA

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions →22

CLUES ACROSS

1. Engine additive

4. A type of test

8. Curtain

10. Irish surname

11. The opposite of good

12. Got rid of

13. Central parts of a church building

15. Stylistically

16. Intestinal

17. Negative potential outcomes

18. Lived up to a standard

21. Snag

22. Time units (abbr.)

23. Ad ____

24. "Partridge" actress Susan

25. For each

26. ____ Paulo, city

27. League titles

34. More intensely black

35. Slang for lovely

36. Petrarch is known for them

37. Old Eurasian wheat

38. Body part

39. Swedish rock group

40. They're worth avoiding

41. Rising and falling of the voice

42. Wings

43. Enzyme import for respiration

CLUES DOWN

1. Idyllic

2. South Pacific island nations

3. Shrub of the olive family

4. Boundaries

5. Encircle

6. Weights

7. Samberg is one

9. Sheep sound

10. European country

12. Respected group of people

14. Trigraph

15. Prosecutors

17. Assign a nickname

19. Huge size

20. Partner to cheese

23. Fastballs

24. Principle underlying the universe

25. Distinct units of sound

26. Title of respect

27. Against

28. Foot (Latin)

29. One point east of due south

30. Concerning the blood

31. Type of pentameter

32. North American peoples

33. Layers of rock

34. Georges ____, French philosopher

36. Lengthy tale

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GUESS WHO?

I am a talk show host born in New York on September 19, 1974. I studied Communications at the The College of Saint Rose in Albany. I am known for my impressions, and I became a household name when I joined the cast of "Saturday Night Live." I started hostina late niaht TV in 2009.

Answer: Jimmy Fallon

SUDOKU

Solutions →22

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Level: Intermediate

WEDNESDAY 9/11

S.E.A.T. Exercises

9-10 a.m. *(Wednesdays)* Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. \$6 per individual class or \$5 per class when paying for the whole month upfront. A brand-new, chair-based full body workout led by Melissa Cox. rutlandrec.com/godnick or 802-773-1853

Killington Active Seniors Lunch

11:30 a.m. *(Wednesdays)* The Lookout Tavern, 2910 Killington Road, Killington. \$5 donation towards the meal, tip is covered by local donors. 908-783-1050

Wednesday Farmers' Market (Rutland)

1-5 p.m. *(Wednesdays)* Depot Park, downtown Rutland. One of the largest farmers' markets in the state and the first to operate year-round. vtfarmersmarket.org

Diabetes Support Group

1-2 p.m. RRM Diabetes & Endocrinology Center, 160 Allen St., Rutland. Free. For patients managing diabetes, offering a space to discuss challenges, ask questions, and provide support. Hosted by Community Health and Rutland Regional Medical Center's Diabetes & Endocrinology Center. Contact Michele Redmond at 802-277-5327. chcrr.org/diabetes-support-group

Market on the Green

3-6 p.m. *(Wednesdays)* The Green, Woodstock. Produce, crafts, live music, and more. woodstockvt.com or 802-457-3555

Bone Builders at the Chaffee

3:30-4:30 p.m. *(Wednesdays)* Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. Heather Wilson leads a bone-building class focused on weight training and balance exercises to increase strength, balance, and bone density. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Cribbage for Adults

3-5 p.m. *(Wednesdays)* Hartland Public Library, 135 Route 5, Hartland. Free. hartlandlibraryvt.org/calendar or 802-436-2473

'Link by Link: A Vermont Woman's Bold Acts for Peace and Civil Rights

4-5 p.m. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Hybrid. Free. UVM Professor Pamela Nicole Walker discusses Virginia Naeve's efforts for peace and civil rights, including her collaboration with Coretta Scott King on "The Box Project." This hybrid event requires registration at vermonthumanities.org.

Group Art Share and Critique

4:30-6 p.m. The MINT Downtown, 72 Merchants Row, Rutland. Free with MINT membership. \$5 suggested donation for non-members. Open to MINT members and the broader community. Bring one original piece of in-process or completed artwork for discussion. Handouts available for ideas on introducing and discussing art pieces.

Diabetes Support Group

5-6 p.m. Community Health Castleton, 261 Route 30, Castleton. Free. For patients managing diabetes, offering a space to discuss challenges, ask questions, and provide support. Hosted by Community Health and Rutland Regional Medical Center's Diabetes & Endocrinology Center. Contact Michele Redmond at 802-277-5327. chcrr.org/diabetes-support-group

Artistree Music on the Hill

6:30-8 p.m. *(Last concert)* Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, So. Pomfret. Free. Pack a picnic, bring a blanket, enjoy live music & scenic views from the hillside at Artistree. All dates are weather dependent. No pets allowed. Service dogs welcome. Reservations are not required. info@artistreevt.org

Killington Connecting Trails Scoping Study Public Meeting

7-9 p.m. Killington Town Hall, 271 West Mountain Rd, Killington. Free. Final public meeting of the Killington Connecting Trails Scoping Study. The town of Killington worked with VHB to develop improvements to bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety in the area around several multi-use, off-road trail networks: Gifford Woods trails, Sherburne trails, and trails around Kent Pond. VHB has prepared a scoping report draft and will present their findings and the recommended trail connections along and across US Route 4 and VT Route 100 in Killington. killingtontown.com

THURSDAY 9/12

Digital Marketing Seminar

9-11 a.m. HUB Coworks, 67 Merchants Row, Suite 201, Rutland. Free. Learn about digital marketing strategies and techniques in this informative seminar. rutlandvermont.com

West Rutland Marsh Monitoring Walk

8-10 a.m. West Rutland Marsh, Marble St., West Rutland. Free. Join us for the monthly monitoring of West Rutland Marsh. Walk the full 4-mile route or half. rutlandcountyaudubon.org/events

Tunbridge World's Fair

Tunbridge Fairgrounds, 407 Fairground St., Tunbridge. \$15, seniors \$10. Senior Citizen Day. This timehonored Vermont event began in 1867. Day 2, livestock shows, pony pulling, music, midway & much more. tunbridgeworldsfair.com

Essentrics Stretch and Strengthen

9-10 a.m. *(Thursdays)* Stone Valley Arts, 145 E. Main St., Poultney. \$10. No-weights, low impact workout combines principles from ballet, tai chi, and physiotherapy to restore flexibility and balance. Bring a mat and water. stonevalleyarts.org

Advanced Line Dance

9:30-10:30 a.m. *(Thursdays)* Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. rutlandrec.com/godnick or 802-773-1853

Senior Bone Builders

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

Survivors Support Group

10 a.m.-noon. *(Thursdays)* Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. Free. Fliers available at the Godnick Center or call 802-775-3232. rutlandrec.com/godnick or 802-775-1853

Rutland Fall Job Fest

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Depot Park, 49 Evelyn St., Rutland. Free. Meet employers actively hiring and explore career opportunities. This outdoor event is sponsored by the Vermont Department of Labor, HireAbility, and Catamount Radio. For questions, call the Vermont Dept. of Labor Rutland office at 802-786-5837. vermont.gov/event/rutland-fall-job-fest-2024

Artery

Noon. *(Thursdays)* Adults. Connect and create with others. \$10-\$20. Painting in all mediums welcome. No set topic or instructor, attendees will work on their individual artwork. MUST PRE-REGISTER. chaffeeartcenter.square.site/ or call 802-775-0356

Ukelele Group

Noon-1 p.m. *(Thursdays)* Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. Attendees will play a collection of sheet music. All levels welcome, ages 12+. Must pre-register by Wednesday at noon. chaffeeartcenter.square.site/ or call 802-775-0356

Play Bridge!

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

Thursday Farmers' Market (Fair Haven)

3-6 p.m. *(Thursdays)* Village Green, Fair Haven. vtfarmersmarket.org

Feast and Field Music Series

5:30-9 p.m. *(Thursdays through 9/26)* Fable Farm, 1525 Royalton Turnpike, Barnard. \$5-\$25. Point Noire Cajun Band Tickets: feastandfield.com/tickets

Trivia - Library After Hours

7-9 p.m., Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Teams of up to 6 play a fun trivia event moderated by popular Vermont-based Pub Geeks. Questions will cover pop culture, sports, history, and books. The winning team earns bragging rights and a spot on the digital display board. This BYOB event includes snacks provided by the library. The game starts at 7:30 p.m. normanwilliams.org

'Act 39'

7 p.m., Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green, Woodstock. \$5-\$36. A performance by the Highland Center for the Arts of "Act 39," a true story written by Rob Mermin about Vermont's medical aid in dying law, told through the lens of friendship and mortality. pentanglearts.org

The Struggle Is Real Comedy Tour: 'Bored Teachers'

7:30 – 9:30 p.m. The Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$35, \$45, \$55 + tax/fees. Teacher-comedians from Bored Teachers take the stage for a night of comedy. paramountvt.org

FRIDAY 9/13

Vermont Coverts Woodland Management Weekend

Sept. 13-15. Green Mountain Conservation Camp, Castleton. A weekend retreat focused on woodland and wildlife management, featuring presentations on habitat improvement, forest health, and conservation. For pricing and scheduling details and to apply, visit vtcoverts.org or contact Lisa Sausville at info@vtcoverts.org or (802) 877-2777

20th Annual Community Center Golf Outing

Lake St. Catherine Country Club, 427 Lake St., Poultney. Enjoy a scramble style 18-hole golf tournament to support the Community Center Elderly and Disabled Transportation Program. Features a \$10,000 hole-in-one contest, prizes for various categories, and a friendly environment. For scheduling, tee times and pricing, call: 802-468-3093 or visit castletoncsi.org

Tunbridge Vermont World's Fair

9 a.m. Tunbridge Fairgrounds, 407 Fairground St., Tunbridge. \$15, seniors \$10. Senior Citizen Day. This timehonored Vermont event began in 1867. Day 2, livestock shows, pony pulling, music, midway & much more.

Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sale

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Gently used books, CDs, DVDs, and puzzles available for purchase by donation to support library programs. rutlandfree.org

Pet Adoption Event

10 a.m.-2 p.m. The Ice House, Jackson Gore Base Area, Okemo Mountain Resort, 66 Jackson Gore Road, Ludlow. Find your perfect match at the Springfield Humane Society's pet adoption event. spfldhumane.org

Vermont Cheese Week: Grafton Village Cheese Company

10 a.m.-6 p.m. Grafton Village Cheese Company, 2568 Route 103, Proctorsville. Free. Open house cheese extravaganza with cheese-themed activities, photo booth, and carving demonstrations. vtcheese.com/cheeseweek.

Vermont Cheese Week: Plymouth Cheese Shop

11 a.m.-6 p.m. Plymouth Cheese Shop, 102 Mill Road, Bridgewater. Free. Celebrate the grand opening of the new cheese shop with samples, live music, and meet the owners at the Historic Bridgewater Mill. vtcheese.com/cheeseweek.

Bone Builders at the Chaffee

11 a.m.-noon. *(Fridays)* Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. Heather Wilson leads a bone-building class that focuses on weight training and balance exercises to improve strength, balance, and bone density. chaffeeartcenter.org

Connections & Interconnections of Life Weekly Group

Noon-1 p.m. *(Fridays)* Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St, Rutland. Free. A place to share thoughts, philosophies, spirituality, cultures, and more in a respectful way. All are welcome. Must RSVP: chaffeeartcenter.square.site

Pet Adoption-Event

Friday at 10 AM



Calendar: Email events@mountaintimes.info from page 10

Castleton Community Center 20th Annual Golf Outing

1-5 p.m. Lake St. Catherine Country Club, 3 Country Club Road, Castleton. \$110 per person. Enjoy a scramble style 18 holes of golf with prizes and a \$10,000 hole-in-one contest. Entry fee supports the Community Center Elderly and Disabled Transportation Program. More details at castletonccsi.org

Hartland Farmers Market

4-6:30 p.m. (Fridays) Hartland Public Library Fields, 153 US Route 5, Hartland. Free. The Hartland Farmers Market offers a variety of local produce and goods. Contact Market Manager Trisha Wass at hartlandfarmersmarket@gmail.com or 1-360-223-0438 for more information.

Friday Night Live: Foreigners Journey

5-10 p.m., Downtown Rutland, Center St. & Merchants Row, Rutland. Free. Live music from Foreigners Journey, featuring "American Idol" finalist Rudy Cardenas and other veteran musicians. Outdoor dining, food trucks, bouncy houses, activity stations, and more. Musical performances start at 8 p.m. In case of rain, the show moves to the Paramount Theatre. For more details, visit downtownrutland.com/fridaynightliv.

Fall Food & Art Friday at The Sable Project

5:30 - 8 p.m. at The Sable Project, 588 N Taggart Hill Road., Stockbridge. Free admission. Enjoy presentations from Sable's fall resident artists, live music, works-in-progress, and wood-fired pizza from Fat Dragon Farm. BYOB. thesableproject.org

Sarah Stewart Taylor: 'Agony Hill'

6-7:30 p.m. Hartland Public Library, 16 Library St., Hartland. Hartland author Sarah Stewart Taylor presents her new mystery novel, "Agony Hill," set in a fictional Upper Valley town in the 1960s. Taylor will discuss her research, writing process, and Vermont history. SarahStewartTaylor.com. Visit: hartlandlibraryvt.org/calendar for further details.

'Act 39'

7 p.m., Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green, Woodstock. \$5-\$36. A performance by the Highland Center for the Arts of "Act 39," a true story written by Rob Mermin about Vermont's medical-aid-in-dying-law, told through the lens of friendship and mortality. Pentanglearts.org.

SATURDAY 9/14

Spartan Race

All day. Killington Resort, 4763 Killington Road, Killington. Cost varies by registration level. Experience a challenging course with steep slopes and massive climbs in the Green Mountains. Finishers receive a t-shirt, medal, and professional photos. spartanrace.com.

Rutland Whoopie Pie Festival

Saturday, Noon- 5 PM



Vermont Coverts Woodland Management Weekend

Sept. 13-15. Green Mountain Conservation Camp, Castleton. A weekend retreat focused on woodland and wildlife management, featuring presentations on habitat improvement, forest health, and conservation. For pricing and scheduling details and to apply, visit vtcoverts.org or contact Lisa Sausville at info@vtcoverts.org or (802) 877-2777

Run with a Ranger

8 a.m. (Saturdays) Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, 54 Elm St. (Route 12) Woodstock. Free. Join a Park Ranger for a 4.5-mile trail run with a 600' elevation gain through historic carriage roads and trails. This intermediate+ run includes insights into the history of the Mt. Tom Forest. Water and restrooms available at the Forest Center. Bring sneakers, a water bottle, bug spray and sun protection. Meet at the Forest Center; parking is at Billings Farm & Museum. Registration required. nps.gov/mabi/planyourvisit/index.htm

Tunbridge Vermont World's Fair

8:30 a.m. Tunbridge Fairgrounds, 407 Fairground St., Tunbridge. \$20 admission. Games, live animals, music. tunbridgeworldsfair.com.

Bake Sale, Craft Sale, and Yard Sale

9 a.m.-4 p.m., Bridgewater Grange #284, 129 Rte 100A, Bridgewater Corners. \$10 to secure a spot. The event features a bake sale, craft sale, and yard sale. Rain or shine. Call Tina at 802-672-5700 for more information.

Online Diabetes Prevention Program

9-10 a.m. (Saturdays through Aug. 2, 2025) Online. Rutland Regional Medical Center will host a year-long diabetes prevention program focusing on healthy eating, physical activity, stress management, and personalized action plans to reduce diabetes risk. The program includes 16 weekly sessions and monthly maintenance sessions. MyHealthyVT.org.

TEDxHartlandHill Conference 2024

9 a.m.-5 p.m., Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. Ticket info: Pentanglearts.org. The 2024 TEDxHartlandHill Conference, themed "AWE," will feature inspiring talks from a diverse range of speakers. Includes a special performance by Tuck & Patti and a speaker dinner at The Jackson House. Info: Pentanglearts.org. Reserve tix at tedxhartlandhill.square.site/

September Celebration 2024

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Upper Valley Aquatic Center, 100 Arboretum Lane, White River Junction. Free. A day of fun with a car show, food trucks, music, face painting, free classes, touch-a-truck, and free cake. Activities for all ages. uvacswim.org

Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sale

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Gently used books, CDs, DVDs, and puzzles available for purchase by donation to support library programs. rutlandfree.org

Rutland Garden Club National Garden Club Small Standard Flower Show, FloralOpoly

10 a.m.-5 p.m. Castleton University Bank Gallery, 104 Merchants Row, Rutland. Free. The show features competitions in design, horticulture, education, and botanical arts, with classes themed around Monopoly. People's choice voting for the photography exhibit is available. Contact Heather Masterton at mastertonh18@gmail.com

Mt. Tom Farmers' Market

10 a.m.-1 p.m. (Saturdays through 10/16) Saskadena Six parking lot, 247 Stage Road, South Pomfret. Free. Local produce, goods, fresh vegetables, fruits, homemade items, and more.

Vermont Golden Honey Festival

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Golden Stage Inn, 399 Depot St., Proctorsville. A mix of farmers' market, crafts, and activities. Vendors will feature honey-infused products like honey apple pizza, beeswax balms, and mead. The event is rain or shine. goldenstageinn.com

Rutland Railway Museum & Model Club

11 a.m.-3 p.m. (Saturdays) 79 Depot Lane, Center Rutland. Free. Maintained by the Rutland Railway Assoc. Inc. See an operating HO scale model railroad set up and displays hundreds of rare or antique model trains, photographs, signs, and memorabilia saved from an earlier time, including the former Rutland Railroad Caboose #45. rutlandrailway.org

The Third Annual Rutland Whoopie Pie Festival

Noon-5 p.m. Center St., Rutland. Free. The festival features whoopie pie vendor samples, caricature artists, face painting, and live entertainment including The Panhandlers steel band, square dancing with Cast Off 8's, and the MINT's Soap Box Derby, 1-5 p.m. Food trucks, a Ga Ga Pit, and various activities like hula hooping and a zoo-themed dance workshop/workshop, the "green street challenge" on Merchants Row, meet "Star Wars" characters and Ghostbusters, and witness the unveiling of the largest whoopie pie in the world. The festival concludes with whoopie pie awards at 4 p.m. rutlandwhoopiepiefest.com

Hawkwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

Sunday at 9 AM



Art at the Chaffee: Drop N' Paint

Noon-2 p.m. (Saturdays) Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$25 per person, instructor help optional with a fee. All ages. Supplies and images to paint are provided. Must pre register by Friday noon at chaffeeartcenter.org or 802-775-0356

Vermont Prohibition Lecture by Adam Krakowski

1 p.m. Poultney Public Library, 205 Main St., Poultney author Adam Krakowski presents a lecture on Vermont's history with prohibition, covering crime, corruption, and rum-running during the temperance movement. poultneypubliclibrary.com

Woodstock History Center's Old-Time Fair

Noon-3 p.m. Woodstock History Center, 26 Elm St., Woodstock. Admission, food, and games are 25 cents each. Enjoy games, balloon animals, face painting, crafts, and more. Activities are geared toward preschool and elementary-age children. woodstockhistorycenter.org

2024 Chamber Music Concert Series

2 p.m., North Chapel, 7 Church St., Woodstock. Free. Donations welcome. Violinist Liana Branscome and pianist Victor Rosenbaum will perform sonatas for violin and piano by Mozart, Brahms, and Beethoven. orthchapelvt.org/

'Act 39'

2 p.m., Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green, Woodstock. \$5-\$36. A performance by the Highland Center for the Arts of "Act 39," a true story written by Rob Mermin about Vermont's medical-aid-in-dying-law, told through the lens of friendship and mortality. Pentanglearts.org.

"Quartet for the End of Time" Performance

4 p.m. Grace Congregational UCC, 8 Court St., Rutland. Ensemble Chamarré performs Olivier Messiaen's "Quartet for the End of Time," an 80-year-old masterpiece inspired by Messiaen's time as a French POW. gracechurchvt.org.

SculptFest24 at the Carving Studio & Sculpture Center: Opening Reception

5 p.m., (Runs through Oct. 20) Carving Studio and Sculpture Center, 636 Marble St., West Rutland. Free. SculptFest24 features site-specific sculptural installations from artists including Dari Blythe, Haley Kean, Michelle Leftheris, Whitney Ramage, Joe Schine, Ilya Sobol, and Josh Urso, selected by guest curator Colin C Boyd. The opening reception includes light refreshments and live music by The Plumb Bobs. Pricing and info: carvingstudio.org

A.J. 'Croce: Croce' Plays Croce 50th Anniversary

7-10 p.m. The Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$49.5-\$75. A.J. Croce celebrates his father's 50th anniversary with a tribute performance. paramountvt.org

Musical Performance Featuring Harry Manx

7 p.m. United Church of Bethel, 108 Church St., Bethel. \$25-\$30. This performance is a benefit for WFVR-LP Royalton Community Radio. wfv.org.

← **Calendar:** Email events@mountaintimes info.....
from page 11

'Act 39'
7 p.m., Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green, Woodstock. \$5-\$36. A performance by the Highland Center for the Arts of "Act 39," a true story written by Rob Mermin about Vermont's medical-aid-in-dying-law, told through the lens of friendship and mortality. Pentanglearts.org.

SUNDAY 9/15

Spartan Race
All day. Killington Resort, 4763 Killington Road, Killington. Cost varies by registration level. Experience a challenging course with steep slopes and massive climbs in the Green Mountains. Finishers receive a t-shirt, medal, and professional photos. spartanrace.com.

Vermont Coverts Woodland Management Weekend
Sept. 13-15. Green Mountain Conservation Camp, Castleton. A weekend retreat focused on woodland and wildlife management, featuring presentations on habitat improvement, forest health, and conservation. For pricing and scheduling details and to apply, visit vtcoverts.org or contact Lisa Sausville at info@vtcoverts.org or (802) 877-2777

Tunbridge Vermont World's Fair
9 a.m. Tunbridge Fairgrounds, 407 Fairground St., Tunbridge. \$15 admission. Tractor pull, swine agility, awards, livestock costumes, music and much more. tunbridgeworldsfair.com.

Ludlow Farmers' Market
9 a.m.-1 p.m. (Sundays through 10/13) So. Depot St., Ludlow. S. Depot Street in Ludlow. Find a variety of loca produce, fresh baked goods, handmade crafts, cold beverages, live music and more. Join us for fresh food, community, and fun. Info: ludlowmarket.org

'Hawkwarts' School of Witchcraft and Wizardry
11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. VINS, 149 Nature's Way, Quechee. \$20. Enjoy a magical day with activities including raptor encounters, magical creature care, crafting, potion-making, and more. vinsweb.org

55th Annual Meeting of the Middletown Springs Historical Society
2 p.m. Historical Society building, 10 Park Ave., Middletown Springs. Free. The meeting will feature a slide lecture by Jon Mathewson, curator of the Dorset Historical Society, on paleontologist Walter Granger. The lecture will cover Granger's early life, career at the American Museum of Natural History, and significant fossil discoveries. Refreshments will be served, and the event is handicapped accessible. For more information, call David Wright at (802) 235-2376.

Annual Phineas Gage Walk and Talk
2-4 p.m. Cavendish Historical Society Museum, Route 131, Cavendish. Free. This year's Walk & Talk covers the location of the accident, Dr. Harlow's home/surgery, and the boarding house where Gage was taken after his injury 3/4 mile from the museum, and participants will walk close to 2 miles. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended. Rain or shine. cavendishhistoricalsocietynews.blogspot.com

David Feurzeig Piano Performance
2 p.m. at President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site, Route 100A, Plymouth Notch. Free. UVM Professor David Feurzeig will present a solo piano recital featuring a diverse range of musical styles, from ancient and classical to jazz and avant-garde. This performance is part of his "Play Every Town" tour, promoting climate-conscious travel and local engagement. A light reception will follow. historicites.vermont.gov

TAKE
A
DRINK
LOCAL

Yoga in the Canopy
4-5:15 p.m., VINS Nature Center, 149 Natures Way, Quechee. \$26 general public; \$22 VINS members. Experience a slow-flow yoga class amid the treetops on the Forest Canopy Walk. All levels are welcome. Dress in layers and bring a yoga mat. In case of rain, the class will move to a covered outdoor area. Registration required. vinsweb.org

Pie in the Face for Chase
1-6 p.m. The Summit Lodge, 123 Summit St, Killington. \$10. An afternoon of fun with a silent auction, teacup raffle, and pie throwing. Entry includes a chance to win door prizes. Proceeds to support research on Phelan-McDermid Syndrome. Follow on Facebook and Instagram for updates and volunteer opportunities. pieinthefaceforchase.com

Dumbfun & Unity Comedy Presents: Liz Glaser
6-8 p.m. Brix Bistro, 118 Merchant's Row, Rutland. data not provided. Enjoy a chef-designed dinner and live standup comedy featuring Liz Glaser, a top comedian with accolades from the Boston Comedy Festival and HBO Women in Comedy Festival. Reservations recommended: (802) 776-4175. wevurski.com

MONDAY 9/16

Community Lunch
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Mondays) Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. Over 60, \$3.50. Under 60, \$6. Donations welcome. In partnership with the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging and Meals on Wheels, the Godnick Center hosts congregate meals. Make new friends, connect with pals. 802-773-1853

Monday Movie
1 p.m. (Mondays) Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Contact the library for the title. sherburnelibrary.org/movie-monday or 802-422-9765

Community Music Jam
4-6 p.m., Stone Valley Arts Center, 145 E. Main St., Poultney. Free. An informal jam circle for musicians of all skill levels. Participants take turns choosing songs, with all genres welcome. Bring your instruments and join in the musical fun. Email Lobo at lobo@em-w.com. stonevalleyarts.org

Farm & Forest Yoga Flow
5:15-6:30 p.m. Billings Farm Visitor Center, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. Free. Led by National Park ranger and yoga instructor Jen. Check in by 5:25 p.m.; class starts at 5:30 p.m. FarmForestFlowYoga

TUESDAY 9/17

Bird Walk
7:30 - 9:30 a.m. Fairgrounds East, 131 Town Farm Road, Poultney. Free. Meet at the Fairgrounds Trail parking area for a 3.5-mile hike on easy to moderate terrain. rutlandcountyaudubon.org/events

Handcraft Gathering
2-4 p.m. (Every 3rd Tuesday) Abbott Memorial Library, South Pomfret. Bring your knitting, crocheting, embroidery, or mending projects. abbottememoriallibrary.org

Alzheimer's Support Group
4-5 p.m., Community Health, 71 Allen St., Suite 403, Rutland. Free. A monthly meeting for Alzheimer's caregivers and family members to share experiences and support one another. The group is run by participants with hands-on experience in caregiving. chcr.org/

Tuesday Night Twilight League
5 p.m. (Tuesdays through 9/24) Green Mountain National Golf Course, 476 Barrows Towne Road, Killington. Non-pass holders \$40, pass holders \$22; includes 9 holes with cart. Shotgun start at 5 p.m. 4 person scramble. Teams welcome or individuals/pairs will be linked into groups of 4 and play the front 9. Results in Gracie's Clubhouse Grill after play. Must sign-up before Tuesday at noon. gmngc.com or 802-422-4653

RUTLAND AREA TOASTMASTERS
6-7:30 p.m. (First and Third Tuesdays) Courcelle Bldg, 16 N. St. Ext., Rutland. Develop public speaking, listening and leadership skills. Guests welcome. 802-775-6929. toastmasters.org



← **What If:**.....
from page 6

outcomes of a two-bucket strategy might be 1) better accountability for a significant portion of school spending as facilities management is more straightforward, 2) possible additional shared services might be recognized, and 3) opportunities to manage school capital financing differently might arise.

What if property tax increases caused by legislative actions were managed differently?

I was part of a small legislative working group whose task was to identify all the legislative actions that caused increased costs to schools. We identified 130 pieces of legislation enacted in the previous five years. The cost impact of some was small, such as the requirement for using healthy cleaning products, and some were significant such as pre-K.

All were worthy of consideration. But legislators were asked to evaluate only the value of the proposal, not how to raise the revenues to pay for it. As a result, legislators are given a free pass to celebrate improved services without the burden of voting to raise taxes to pay for the action.

This is fundamentally different than program or policy changes that are part of the state's income-tax-supported General Fund obligations. Vermont has created a system to assure that new policy or program initiatives to be operated by state government are paid for within existing revenues. It works!

Vermont is able to live within its budget based on expected revenues, even though we, unlike most states, have no constitutional requirement for a balanced budget. It works also, in part, because legislators are loath to vote to increase taxes or fees, regardless of the value of the proposal.

And finally, **what if** the state took significantly more responsibility for the portion of the education fund that comes from property taxes (over \$1.4 billion projected for FY2025), with the same understanding and commitment now afforded General Fund revenues and spending? **What if** the state took as its mission to complete the changeover inherent in Act 60 by embracing not just financing, but also effective operations and transparent accountability? All three are necessary for a well-functioning system.

[MUSIC Scene]

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

WED
9/11

LUDLOW

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

POULTNEY

7 p.m. Poultney Pub - Open Mic with Danny Lang

QUECHEE

6 p.m. Public House Pub – Chris Pallutto

RUTLAND

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

SOUTH POMFRET

6:30 p.m. Artistree – Music on the Hill Summer Concert Series with The Sidewinders

WOODSTOCK

3 p.m. Town Green – Farmers Market with Sammy B

THURS
9/12

BARNARD

5:30 p.m. Fable Farm – Feast & Field with Pluto Rising

BRANDON

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

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

5 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Jacob Green

KILLINGTON

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

6 p.m. Rivershed – Chris Pallutto

6 p.m. The Foundry – Liz Reedy

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

7 p.m. Off the Rails – Sammy B

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Vinyl Night with Ken

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 Krishna Guthrie

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

SOUTH POMFRET

7 p.m. Artistree – Open Mic Night

WOODSTOCK

6:30 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Mountain Dog

FRI
9/13

BOMOSEEN

6 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge and Taproom – Aaron Audet

6 p.m. Lakehouse Pub & Grille – Ryan Fuller

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

6:30 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Trivia

CASTLETON

6 p.m. Blue Cat Bistro – Rebecca Padula

KILLINGTON

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Zach Yak

6 p.m. The Foundry – Scott Forrest

7:30 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Chris Pallutto

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Donal O'Shaughnessy

LONDONDERRY

6 p.m. New American Grill – George Nostrand

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Liz Reedy

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Krishna Guthrie & Bow Thayer

RANDOLPH

7:30 p.m. Underground Listening Room - Almost Machines w/ Technical Difficulties

RUTLAND

6:30 p.m. Stonehedge Indoor Golf – Duane Carleton

STOCKBRIDGE

5:30 p.m. Fat Dragon Farm – The Sable Poject's Fall Artists in Residence

SAT
9/14

BRIDGEWATER

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Comedy Night with Liz Glazer

CASTLETON

6 p.m. Third Place Pizza – Ryan Fuller

KILLINGTON

2:30 p.m. The Umbrella Bar at Snowshed – Duane Carleton

6 p.m. Rivershed – Jacob Green

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. The Foundry – George Nostrand

7:30 p.m. Jax Food and Games – Chris Pallutto

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Donal O'Shaughnessy

PROCTORSVILLE

10 a.m. Golden Stage Inn – Honeyfest with Sammy B

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Em & Nat

STOCKBRIDGE

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

WOODSTOCK

6:30 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Radio Bear

SUN
9/15

BOMOSEEN

6 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge and Taproom – James Joel

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

3 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Nick Bredice

KILLINGTON

12 p.m. Rivershed – Brunch with Scott Forrest

1 p.m. Summit Lodge - 11th Annual Pie in the Face for Chase Charity Event

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tboneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

6 p.m. The Foundry – Jazz Night with the Summit Pond Quartet
7:30 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Nick Bredice

STOCKBRIDGE

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

MON
9/16

BOMOSEEN

6 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge and Taproom – Ryan Fuller

KILLINGTON

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 King Arthur Junior

WOODSTOCK

6:30 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Richard Enderlin

TUES
9/17

KILLINGTON

7:30 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Taco Tuesday with Rick Webb

LONDONDERRY

6:30 p.m. New American Grill – Trivia hosted by Zach Yakaitis

LUDLOW

6 p.m. The Killarney – Trivia with Rick Davis

PITTSFIELD

7 p.m. Town Hall – Acoustic Jam

POULTNEY

7 p.m. Poultney Pub – Bluegrass Jam

QUECHEE

5 p.m. The Public House – Jim Yeager

RUTLAND

6:30 p.m. Vermont Tap House – Trivia Night

Garden Club hosts flower show, FloralOpoly

Saturday, Sept. 14 — RUTLAND — The Rutland Garden Club will present a National Garden Club Small Standard Flower Show at the Castleton University Bank Gallery, 104 Merchants Row in downtown Rutland.

Judging will be conducted on Friday, Sept. 13, and the show will be open to the public on Saturday, Sept. 14, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The show is free to attend.

Each National Garden Club show presents a number of areas of competition based on a theme. This show is called “FloralOpoly,” a play on the name of the board game Monopoly.

The show will contain entries from club members in four formal flower show divisions: Design, horticulture, education and botanical arts.

Within each division are the named classes. Each of the classes is named whimsically based on the game Monopoly, to reflect a guiding theme for that class. For example, within the design division, there will be a petite design class, “A Walk Through Marvin Gardens.”

Attendees will be invited to vote for their favorite in the People’s Choice contest for the photography exhibit.

For more information visit: Rutlandgardenclub.org.

Annual Phineas Gage walk and talk held, Sept. 15

Sunday, Sept. 15 — CAVENDISH — again the Cavenish Historical Society (CHS) will hold its annual the annual Phineas Gage Walk and Talk on the Sunday closest to the date of the accident. Gage, a railroad foreman, on Sept. 13, 1848, had a tamping rod pass through his head as a result of a blasting accident, and lived for 12 more years.

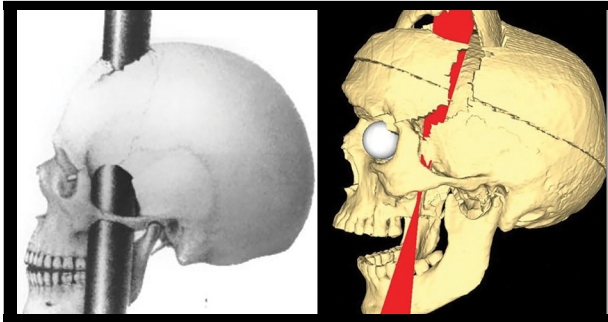
His accident made medical history, thanks to the dedication of Dr. John Harlow, the Cavendish physician who documented his injury and course of recovery. Harlow was able to secure Gage’s skull and tamping rod, which now reside at the Warren Anatomical Museum at Harvard. Thanks to Cavendish Labs, CHS has a 3-D exact replica of Gage’s skull.

This year’s Walk and Talk starts at the CHS Museum, Route 131 in Cavendish at 2 p.m. The walk includes the location of the accident, Dr. Harlow’s home/surgery, and the boarding house where Gage was taken after his injury. Note this event takes place rain or shine.

The site of the accident is approximately three quarters of a mile from the Museum and by the time other sites of interest are visited and we return to the museum, you will have walked close to 2 miles. Participants can stop at any time. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended

This program is free and open to the public. Donations welcomed.

For more information, please call 802-226-7807 or email margocaulfield@icloud.com.



Courtesy

The skull of Phineas Gage with drawing showing the tamping rod that pierced his brain.

Spartan Race returns to The Beast

About 7,000 expected to attend

Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 14-15—KILLINGTON— If you think you’re among the baddest of the East, come play in what is known as “Joe’s backyard” after founder Joe DeSena. This is where Spartan Race was born; and that means anything goes. Expect steep slopes, off-trail descents and massive climbs at this legendary venue.

Pre-registration is required to participate, as spots in each heat are limited.

Spartan Race headquarters will be at the Killington Bear Mountain lodge on Bear Mountain Road (off East Mountain Road near the Skyship Gondola on Route 4) once again this year. Organizers expect about 7,000 attendees throughout the weekend.

Saturday start times:

- Ultra: 6-7 a.m.
- Beast: 7a.m.-1 p.m.
- Kids: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Sunday start times:

- Sprint: 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Kids: 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

All finishers receive a t-shirt, medal, and professional photos, and every registration comes with access to the Spartan account to track race results, photos, teams, and challenges.

Spectating

Spectating zones include the lodge at Bear Mountain and the area around the top of the K-1 Gondola. Parking is available at Bear lot, Bear Mtn. Road (one side), Skyship lots, Upper Snowshed lots, Killington Road, and K-1 Bays. No parking will be available at Ramshead

and Lower Snowshed (saved for moutnain biking and Adventure Center guests). Parking at Bear Mountain will fill up quickly on both Saturday and Sunday, but shuttle service will be available between base areas and parking lots.

Parking is free, but spectators will need to purchase a Festival Pass (\$20 online in advance or \$25 on-site). Spectator passes will gain you round-trip access to the K-1 Gondola for the day; please note that the gondola requires a Spartan wristband. Conversely, those who purchase a Scenic Gondola lift ticket on the Killington website will be able to enter the Spartan festival area if they present their valid lift ticket at the entrance.

The Peak Lodge at the top of the K-1 Gondola will be open to the public all weekend from 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Gondola rides are free for Spartan athletes and anyone with a Spartan spectator pass. The K-1 Gondola will operate from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sunday. Last ride up is 30 minutes prior to closing at 4:30 p.m.

For more information, visit: spartanrace.com.

Other resort activities

Hiking (on trails A, C, E, F, and J) and mountain biking on trails accessible via the K-1 Gondola will not be permitted during Spartan weekend.

The Snowshed Adventure Center and Bike Park will be open Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mountain biking will remain open on Snowshed and Ramshead Express Quads only. All mountain biking trails accessed from the K-1 Gondola will be closed for Spartan Race.

The event will have live music on Saturday and Sunday from 2-5 p.m. at the Snowshed Umbrella Bar.



By Thomas Bartlett



By Robin Alberti



By Paul Holmes



By Paul Holmes

Spartan Race returns to Killington this weekend with 7,000 attendees, steep slopes, off-trail descents, massive climbs, and live music. Festival village is located at Killington Bear Mountain Lodge.

New York students ready for Sweethearts & Heroes first Youth Leadership Summit in Killington

Wednesday-Friday, Sept. 11-13—KILLINGTON—Nearly 140 students from upstate New York will kick off the 2024-2025 school year by becoming real-life superheroes during a three-day — and phone-free — Youth Leadership Summit in Killington.

Seven schools have registered for the first-of-its-kind summit at Killington Resort from Wednesday, Sept. 11 to Friday, Sept. 13. Sweethearts & Heroes will hold this inaugural event — intended to spark a nationwide initiative — in conjunction with Spartan Race.

Sweethearts & Heroes aims to prevent hopelessness, bullying and suicide by providing dynamic, inspiring content that centers on the human interaction skills necessary for schools and other organizations to change all aspects of their culture — skills such as empathy, compassion and teamwork.

Sweethearts & Heroes designed the upcoming summit, which is also during National Suicide Prevention Month, to unite a select group of youth influencers who represent diverse peer groups from a conglomeration of schools and districts. These influencers will participate in various leadership seminars centered around empathy activation and student empowerment, taking them on a ceremonial initiation into the world of Sweethearts & Heroes, which wants to spread its message across the U.S. by holding similar summits with Spartan.

These summits will be scheduled in conjunction with locally held and nationally attended Spartan races, such as the one from Sept. 14-15 in Killington — the “backyard” of Spartan Founder and CEO Joe De Sena, who established Spartan in Vermont. Sweethearts & Heroes will utilize Spartan’s obstacle course to close out The summit on Sept. 13 with a fun-filled, play-centered, team-building “race” —

but that’s just the beginning.

The real work starts when these new youth leaders, who bonded during the conference through various challenges and overcame adversity together during the “race,” then return to their respective schools to spread messages from The Summit throughout the rest of their district — a message of H.O.P.E. (Hold On, Possibilities Exist) for students, by students.

The seven New York school teams lined up for the first summit in Killington are from: the Ticonderoga Central School District, the Crown Point Central School District, AuSable Valley High School, the Peru Central School District, the Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville Central School District, Chazy Central Rural School, and the Middleburgh Central School District.

“Our K-12 school is in a significant transition; transitions can be hard,” said Kathryn Brown, an English teacher at Chazy Central Rural School. Fourteen Chazy students quickly signed on to the Killington Summit after watching a 3-minute promo video and attending a 15-minute meeting. “When a grant opportunity presented itself (to attend the summit), it was the universe giving a few of us the gentle nudge to take action. We want to create and maintain a culture of empathy, listening, and hope, with the help of Sweethearts and Heroes,” Brown said.

The summits will also be phone-free environments. Tom Murphy, Sweethearts & Heroes director/founder, said, “Young people have gotten away from the important, healthy, interpersonal communication they need on a daily basis, and by keeping our summits phone-free, we’re helping them return. By the end of these three days, they’ll see that they can work together, without their phones or so-

Sweethearts & Heroes → 19



By Robin Alpert

The Spartan Kids Race challenges the youngsters

The Spartan Kids Race, featuring 1-3 km courses with obstacles, will take place on Sept. 14-15. Participants can choose from various race lengths, including 3 km competitive and open categories, as well as 1.5 km and 1 km open races. Prices start at \$25.99, with limited tickets available for each category. The event begins at 9 a.m.

For more information, visit: spartan.com.

Calling All Skellies!

Drum Journeys of Earth will be holding an invitation for **NEW** members to join the Skellies on **Saturday, Sept. 21, at 10am.** Become a part of the Skellies as a dancer, puppeteer, musician & more.

Classes held at Building #5, Howe Center, Rutland
Contact Gary @ 802-282-2581

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Tunbridge World's Fair is Sept. 12-15

Thursday-Sunday, Sept. 12-15 — TUNBRIDGE — The 2024 Tunbridge World's Fair kicks off Thursday and runs through Sunday in Tunbridge on Route 110. It has run continuously since 1867 except in 1918, due to the great flu epidemic, during World War II 1942-44 and in 2020 due to Covid.

The annual fair features demonstrations of farming and agricultural traditions and culture, working antique displays, horse and ox pulling, horse racing, cattle and horse shows, junior exhibits, floral and 4-H exhibits, contra dancing, gymkhana, many free shows and rides.

Tickets:

Children under 12 free every day. Admission includes free entertainment, livestock shows and Antique Hill. The World's Fair keeps admission prices as low as possible to be inclusive but also to keep the fair running.

Open times:

- Thursday (Agricultural Education Day and Veteran Appreciation Day): 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Cost: \$15 for persons 12 and older. Veterans are free with ID.
- Friday (Senior Citizen Day) 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Costs: \$15 for persons 12 and older. \$10 for seniors 65+
- Saturday 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Cost: \$20
- Sunday 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Cost: \$15
- Season ticket: \$50.

Rides:

Unlimited rides bracelets for \$30 or \$25 w/cash on Thursday and Friday. These bracelets are in addition to gate admission. Tickets are \$1 each or 22 tickets@\$20 and 55 tickets@\$50 w/cash. All rides are 3 or more tickets.

Ride Hours:

- Thursday: 1:30-8 p.m.
- Friday: 12-9 p.m.
- Saturday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
- Sunday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

For more information and a full schedule, visit: TunbridgeWorldsFair.com.



6th Annual Vermont Fairy Tale Festival

Saturday, September 21
10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sherburne Library, 2998 River Road, Killington, VT

Costumed Characters
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Fairy Tales





Admission is free with the donation of a non-perishable item for either the food bank or the humane society.



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Friday September 20



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Rutland | September 16

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Front Porch Forum is Vermont Public's lead outreach partner for the Citizens Agenda project.



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RESTAURANT WEEK BEGINS APRIL 24!

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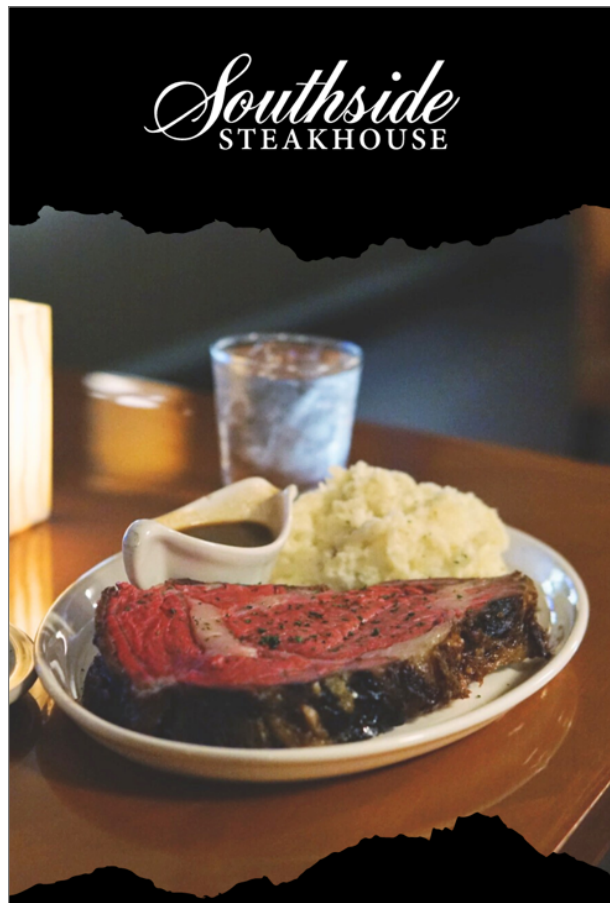
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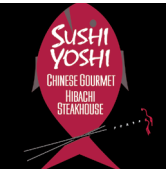
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killington market

Killington Market
Take breakfast, lunch or dinner on the go at Killington Market, Killington's on-mountain grocery store for the last 30 years. Choose from breakfast sandwiches, hand carved dinners, pizza, daily fresh hot panini, roast chicken, salad and specialty sandwiches. Vermont products, maple syrup, fresh meat and produce along with wine and beer are also for sale. killingtonmarket.com 802-422-7736 or 802-422-7594.



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GOT NEWS?
We want to know! Email us!
editor@mountaintimes.info

Locals raise money with pie in the face

Sunday, Sept. 15 at 1 p.m.—KILLINGTON—It's time again to pie local celebrities and raise money for Chase William Kuehl and the Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation (PMSF). Kuehl is one of only 2,500 children worldwide diagnosed with this disease. The prevalence of those with Phelan-McDermid Syndrome is estimated to be between 1 in 25,000 babies born. There is no cure, but it is PMSF's goal to find effective therapies to help those with PMS, and, eventually, a cure.

Due to the recent sale of Moguls Sports Pub, the 11th annual International Pie in the Face for Chase charity benefit, for the first time ever, will be held at the Summit Lodge in Killington from 1-6 p.m. The organization is thrilled to have a new home since The Summit and owner Emmett O'Dwyer have been long-time supporters of Chase.

Last year, \$33,000 was raised, and organizers hope to keep growing that number. Like the past ten years, 100% of the proceeds go to Chase and PMSF, with an equal 50/50 split.

Admission of \$10 to get in, which includes a door prize raffle ticket, and there's many prizes to be won by many, local businesses. Kids are free. Besides the pie-throwing and the door prizes, there will be a silent auction and a teacup raffle. All forms of payment are accepted: Cash, Check, or Credit Card.

For \$22 (the disease is a deletion of chromosome 22), participants get to pie one person in the face with a whipped cream pie. For \$50, you can pie someone with a green pudding pie. Green is the color of the charity, and pudding is one of Chase's favorite snacks, plus it's a lot smellier. For only \$100, mere pennies a day, the PMSF Chaser is the best option available. It's a pumpkin pie topped with pudding and whipped cream. It's the messiest pie to date and the most fun way you can donate, but any donation is a great thing that will help many children and their families. Pie as many people as you want. The Summit supplies all the ingredi-

ents and there will be 22 local celebrities to choose from.

The "celebrity" pie classes this year are:
Freshman: Alex Kuehl (Chase's Cousin), Emma Jean and Lucas Magoon
Sophomores: Captain Jack Wallace and Leo Pond

Junior: Jen Wheatley
Seniors: Andrew Schain and Brian Hughes
Post Grads: Bill Conn and Matt Kopicki
Masters: Annie Johnson Kuehl (Chase's mom and Co-founder), Dave Parnell, Don Sady, Jared Hall, Karena Kuehl (Chase's sister) and Kyler Kuehl (Chase's brother)

O.P's (Original Pie-ees): DJ Dave Hoffenberg (Co-founder), Kelly Spear, Rick Kuehl (Chase's dad and Co-founder), Sal Salmeri, and Team Canada's Peter Whittier

Referee: Jason Evans (Master Class). He will be taking pies as well. Don't get a red card, or you might be taking one too.

The O.P.s have been in the event from the beginning. Due to Covid, the event was not held in 2020 but DJ Dave and Peter Whittier took pies on their own, so they are the only two people who have been in it every year for the past 10 years. DJ Dave took pies in the Moguls parking lot and Whittier took pies from his backyard in Canada.

Chase Kuehl was diagnosed with this disease in January 2012 when he was a little over a year old. His mother, Annie Kuehl, said, "We were floored when it happened, but this is our journey now." Since the disease is so rare, Rick Kuehl said, "This is not the lottery we wanted to win."

They have their struggles, but they have an amazing loving child in Chase Kuehl. Annie said, "Chase's life and world are affected by Phelan McDermid Syndrome in so many different ways and there are days that I can't understand why he has to be one of the 2,500 in the world. But Chase is still Chase ... he knows love and gives and receives it freely. He amazes me daily and reminds what life is truly about."

Pie → 20

← Sweethearts & Heros: from page 15

cial media, to accomplish their goals through teamwork, listening and much, much more. We're going to blow their minds in Killington. We can't wait."

The Summit marks a massive shift in focus for Sweethearts & Heroes, which has brought the messages of H.O.P.E., Action, Empathy, and what they call "the 'stop, drop and roll' of bullying" directly to the schools of nearly 2 million students, from New England to Hawaii, and from Canada to California, for 16 years.

The Summit turns things around, bringing students to Sweethearts & Heroes. "We'll train these young leaders to bring our 'Stop, Drop, and Roll' of bullying back to their local schools and to deliver our messages of H.O.P.E., Action, and Empathy to their local communities," Murphy said. "Our young people are on the frontlines in this war against hopelessness, and we must shepherd and empower them to be the change we need."

The programs and initiatives brought back to schools include Sweethearts & Heroes' signature Circle book, built on the ancient ritual of sharing, listening and creating a community of belonging. Schools will also access Sweethearts & Heroes' new online learning platform, The H.O.P.E. Classroom, and the crown jewel of their curriculum: the B.R.A.V.E. Youth Leadership Program.

In addition to Murphy, Sweethearts & Heroes' central team of traveling presenters includes Ret. U.S. Army Sgt. Rick Yarosh, a HOPE expert, Purple Heart recipient and motivational speaker from New York who was burned severely while serving in Iraq; and Pat Fish, B.R.A.V.E. Program Director & Circle Specialist, also of New York.

For more information, visit Sweethearts & Heroes on social media.



TEDxHartlandHill returns to Billings Farm, Saturday

Saturday, Sept. 14 at 9 a.m.—WOOD-STOCK—This year's TEDxHartlandHill conference theme is "Awe." Get ready to be amazed, inspired, and awestruck by the lineup of speakers and performers. Join in person at the Billings Farm & Museum for a day filled with mind-blowing talks, interactive sessions, and unforgettable moments.

In 2024, TEDxHartlandHill will provide a moment of respite — a moment of awe. Even in the midst of difficult times, there is so much wonder in our world—so much for which to stand in awe. This fall, join us and appreciate our world and all its magnificent mysteries.

The event will be held on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

The event features a special TEDx performance by **Tuck & Patti** kicking off their week-long residency in Woodstock. For over 45 years, this unique, genre-crossing vocal/guitar duo has cast its passionate musical spell worldwide, capturing the hearts of lovers, the respect of jazz buffs and the jaw-dropping awe of guitarists and singers. Featured 2024 speakers include:

Nori Pepe: Former circus performer, aerial photographer, U.S. Freestyle Ski Team

Passionate and adventurous, Nori Pepe has held intriguing roles such as circus performer, aerial photographer, U.S. Freestyle Ski Team member, and artist. For the past seven years, she has lived in Woodstock and worked as PR and marketing manager at Billings Farm & Museum. Her travels and adventurous spirit deeply influence her art.

Dr. James Mcleary: Elder, board member, Inside Circle

James Mcleary is an expert group facilitator and program creator serving on the Elder Council of Inside Circle, an organization leading groundbreaking men's circles comprised of both heads of industry and incarcerated violent offenders, taking place in both Folsom State Prison and San Quentin State Prison. The program provides opportunities for men to heal and serve both themselves and others, reducing recidivism and all forms of violence in our prisons and communities.

Michelle Hogle Acciavatti, M.Sci.: founder, Head Cemeterian, Vermont Forest Cemetery

Michelle Acciavatti, a licensed funeral director and death doula, specializes in helping people come into relationship with their mortality, natural death care and natural burial wishes. She helped legalize natural burial in Vermont and helped found Spirit Sanctuary in New York before opening Vermont Forest Cemetery, the first natural burial ground in Vermont in 2023. With extensive training and

experience, she co-founded The Collective for Radical Death Studies and works with diverse populations in various settings.

Schedule:

8:30-9 a.m. Coffee Clutch/check-in
Welcome by Jennifer Flaster from Billings Farm & Museum and Deborah Greene from TEDxHartlandHill.

9-11 a.m. /Session 1: Art
"Your Brain on Awe: Neuroscience and the transformative power." Speakers include: Melodie Winawer, associate professor of neurology at Columbia University; Ada Mohood, Woodstock Union High School senior/aspiring journalist; and Nori Pepe.

"The Awe in All." Speaker is: James Mcleary, forensic psychologist, executive producer.

Session 1 will end with a portion of time to meet and mingle with speakers and participants in the barn.

11 a.m.–12:15 p.m. / Session 2: Co-existence
"Rewriting the Narrative: Cognitive Breakthroughs in Down Syndrome." Speaker is: Jessica Ong, researcher at Stanford Heller Lab.

"The Art of Disappearing." Speaker is: Trina Merry/Animal Dance Performers, NYC body painter.

"The Legacy of Life." Speaker is: Michelle Hogle Acciavatti, natural death doula, founder of Vermont Forest Cemetery.

12:15-1:30 p.m. lunch
Interactive exhibits and tastings.
1:30-2:30 p.m. / speaker's Q&A (lunch-and-learn) in the barn.

2:30-4 p.m. Session 3: Inspiration
"The Power of Hands." Speaker is: Story Smith, physical therapist educator.
"The Spaces In Between." Speaker is: Kim Nolan, Buddhist chaplain.

"All out awe." With Tuck & Patti, award-winning genre-crossing duo.

4 p.m. Conference concludes
6-9 p.m. Enjoy dinner with speakers at the Jackson House (additional tickets required).



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Tuck & Patti

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Killington hosts final meeting on connecting trails, Route 100 to Route 4

Wednesday, Sept. 11 at 7 p.m. — KILLINGTON — The town of Killington will host its final public meeting on the Killington Connecting Trails Scoping Study. The town worked with VHB engineers to develop improvements to bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety in the area around several multi-use, off-road trail networks: Gifford Woods trails, Sherburne trails, and trails around Kent Pond. VHB will present their findings and the recommended trail connections along and across Route 4 and Route 100 in Killington. The meeting will be held at the Killington Public Safety Building, located at 800 Killington Road and via Zoom: [Tinyurl.com/4txe4473](https://tinyurl.com/4txe4473).

PIE: from page 19

Co-founder DJ Dave said, "Charity is near and dear to me, and I'm honored that so many people volunteer to get pied over and over and help us raise much needed money. I feel blessed to be a part of such a wonderful community. I love Chase dearly and will go out of my way to raise money for him, and to help the other children affected by it. This is a horrible disease with sadly no cure but your donation will help improve these children's lives. Last year, I campaigned dressed as a Merman, and took about 125 pies to my face. This year, I'm campaigning dressed as a Pink Flamingo. Thanks to everyone who supports me, and the cause. I can't wait for this year's event. I want more pies!"

"We can't say enough about the people that support Chase and the foundation through this fun filled event. We are so blessed to have so many wonderful people who want to help us provide the best for our little angel. The money raised will go to support the foundation's efforts to improve the lives of children with PMS around the world as well as The Chase William Kuehl Trust, which will help provide services and support for Chase as he grows," Rick Kuehl added.

DJ Dave added, "Not only do many of my friends volun-

teer year in and year out to be pied, but so many businesses in Killington, Bridgewater, Ludlow, Quechee, Rutland and the surrounding towns donate to the silent auction and raffles. We have Golden sponsors that give generously to the event like Killington Resort, Farrell Distributing, Fiddlehead Brewing, Von Trapp Brewing, Vermont Roofing Company and Blue Ridge Real Estate. It amazes me, because nobody tells me 'No.' Some reach out to me beforehand to make sure they're a part of it. We especially want to thank these businesses who contribute the main 'Ingredients' to the event: Website: JEG Designs; event space: Summit Lodge; T-Shirts: Initial Ideas; Posters: Boss Office Works; pumpkin pies: Mendon Mountain Orchards; pudding: Public House Pub; and Whipped Cream: Stewarts Shops."

If you want to help out at the event and/or donate to the raffles, email pieinthefaceforchase@gmail.com.

Can't make the event? Visit pieinthefaceforchase.com where you can buy pies to pie people from afar, then watch it live on Facebook from the page of the same name. If you want to get a taste of the action without being pied, sit in the splash zone — just come prepared!

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Act 39 (the play) faces mortality head-on

Thursday-Saturday, Sept. 12-14 — WOODSTOCK — Pentangle Arts is proud to host the Highland Center for the Arts as they present the play: Act 39.

What do you do when your best friend, dying of cancer, asks you to help end his life? Act 39, written by Rob Mermin, is the true story of what happened when his friend decided to use Vermont's medical aid in dying law, known as Act 39. It is a soulful, humor-filled story of friendship, and exposes the vulnerability of the human spirit when facing mortality head-on.

Showtimes:

Thursday-Saturday, Sept. 12-14 at 7 p.m. with an additional matinee show at 2 p.m. Saturday.

The show is at the Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green in Woodstock.

For more information, visit: pentanglearts.org.



Submitted

"Act 39" explores the use of Vermont's medical aid in dying law, known as Act 39.

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Grace Church to host the Ensemble Chamarré, Sunday

Sunday, Sept. 15 at 4 p.m. — RUTLAND — On Sunday Grace Congregational UCC of Rutland will be host to the Ensemble Chamarré. Formed in the early days of the pandemic, Ensemble Chamarré is a quartet comprised of Catherine Hudgins (clarinet), Katie Wolfe (violin), William Rounds (cello), and Vytas J. Baksys (piano). These four joined forces, with the goal of bringing new life to a piece called, "*Quatuor pour la fin du temps*." The piece, translated as, "*Quartet for the End of Time*," was composed in 1940 by Olivier Messiaen, during his time as a French soldier POW in Silesia, Germany.

"*Quartet for the End of Time*" contains eight movements, which Messiaen described as being intended to take the listener on a journey from "The harmonious silence of Heaven" through the chaos and tribulations of the end times, and ultimately bearing witness to "The being made divine towards Paradise." Overall, it is a reflection of the man's determination to survive, to triumph over despair.

Inspiration for this piece revolved around his own horrific experiences while held captive, along with what gave him solace and hope. His Christian faith, especially "The Book of Revelations," became instrumental in keeping Messiaen afloat, and enforcing his aspirations towards gaining "freedom." Birdsongs, angels, rainbows, the *aurora borealis*, and his own hallucinations (brought on by starvation and the extreme cold) were all muses involved in his creation of this piece.

"*Quartet for the End of Time*" has been described as, "One of the unquestionable masterpieces of the 20th century," and each worldwide performance that Ensemble Chamarré has presented has been met with great enthusiasm. Their melodic prowess has been touted as "musical wizardry." Their immersive approach to the piece is unique and includes descriptive narratives of the dismal scenes surrounding Messiaen in the camp. Hearing it played, with such reverence more than 80 years later is "mesmeric... brilliant... and a transforming experience."

"*Quartet for the End of Time*" will be performed at Grace Church (8 Court St. in Rutland) on Sunday, Sept. 15 at 4 p.m.

For more information, visit: GraceChurchVt.org.

Vermont Golden Honey Festival held Saturday

Saturday, Sept. 14 at 10 a.m. — PROCTORSVILLE —

Repeatedly voted one of the "Top 10 Fall Events" by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont Golden Honey Festival is part farmers' market with local produce and hot food, and part craft fair with artists and crafters selling their unique items for you and for gifts.

Every vendor is encouraged to have products with some connection to bees ... honey apple pizza, honeybee print fabrics, honey gin, beeswax balms and soaps, kombucha and mead, caramel sauce, and so much more. Goodman's

American Pie of Ludlow Vermont offers up its Honey Apple wood-fired pizza from its 1940s-tow-truck-converted-into-a-mobile-wood-fired-beehive-pizza-oven! (The honey used on its pizza is from Jess Goodman's own hives in Proctorsville.)

Honey-related food and drinks (including honey gin for the adults), crafts, books and kids' activities are just a few things highlights of this one-day rain-or-shine event that has certainly become a regional favorite.

The event will take place from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Golden Stage Inn, 399 Depot St. in Proctorsville.

For more information, visit: goldenstageinn.com/vermont-honey-festival.



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Cosmic Catalogue



Aries March 21 - April 20

It's time to get back to what you started in terms of your day-to-day routines. You've had your fun and distractions but now it's time to get back to business. When it comes to your domestic life, you have a lot to organize and get ahead on. This could be family schedules and general logistics. If you feel as though there is a sense of the pressure is back on, then you'd be right! Focus not only on what's important but also necessary.

Leo July 21 - August 20

There are some scenarios when it's worthwhile and in fact, necessary, to act instinctively or without thinking too much. However, if you want to avoid landing yourself in hot water, you may need to curb your enthusiasm. This week, if there was any advice to offer it would be to practice the pause. Breathe. Think. Feel. Then ask yourself if you really want to do whatever it is you originally thought in the moment.

Sagittarius November 21 - December 20

Jupiter is still weaving some magic in your Relationship Zone. This week, a link from the Sun may help you land the right role or promotion professionally. If you don't work, you may be inspired by your next life direction steps. Whatever it is that happens, don't get too bogged down in the details. Sometimes, your best bet is to just go for it and figure things out later. Opportunities need to be seized not considered.

Taurus April 21 - May 20

Things may have been a little shaky last week, but now you can get on with things. You've cleared your schedule, sorted your priorities and now you can enjoy yourself a bit. If you've made a promise to yourself to get back to some healthy habits and routines, then do commit to that. The work you do now will pay off, so don't give up. Your health and well-being are as important as anything else you're responsible for.

Virgo August 21 - September 20

As your guiding planet, Mercury, arrives back in your sign you can expect that life in general will feel on the up! With this extra energy, why not arrange to meet up with friends or a group you're involved with? If there is a particular community you've been thinking about connecting with, it's an ideal time to show up with confidence. Any miscommunications recently also have the chance to be ironed out, too.

Capricorn December 21 - January 20

All the relationships in your life, personal and professional, are going to be a sore spot for a while. While this sounds less than ideal, a sore spot is just a symptom of something that requires fixing or healing. This approach towards any issues that crop up is more likely to solve an underlying issue than just going in for another battle over power or control. Try and think about problems by how you can grow and learn from them.

Gemini May 21 - June 20

You've just entered a long moon cycle thanks to Mars' arrival in your Cash Zone for an extended period. This week, it may be worth your while to write a list of goals, dreams and desires – as well as a general to do list too! Reason being, this will help keep you on track when the mood you're in when you say you're going to do this or that dissipates, you've got something to keep you focused.

Libra September 21 - October 20

Now that Venus, who is in your sign has passed the South Node, you can start to begin to enjoy a return to energy. This little boost won't fix everything, but you'll likely feel better than you have in some time. This is a good thing because when it comes to your career and life direction goals, you've got your work cut out for you. Make some choices this week and go all in on whatever it is you choose.

Aquarius January 21 - February 20

Whatever you've been going through lately, you can now enjoy a break from it. That said, it's just a break rather than it being all over. So, until the pressure is back on, you can start to figure out solutions. Some of these solutions will involve taking tangible actions on fixable problems. While others, those problems lurk in the recesses of your mind and require your attention. Don't ignore it. What you face now will be tomorrow's blessing.

Cancer June 21 - July 20

It really is time for you to take charge of your life in every way imaginable. This may seem like quite an overwhelming task, but how do you eat an elephant? Just one bite at a time. You don't have to do everything this week because you've got quite a while to sort yourself out. However, you do want to start getting yourself motivated to drastically change your outlook on life and on love.

Scorpio October 21 - November 20

There's a lot going on for you at the moment. That said, your main focus is on where you want to go, what you want to learn and discover. Mars, your patron planet is now in your Adventure and Discovery Zone and it's going to spend quite some time there. This week, do give some thought as to what you can achieve travel, study or spirituality wise over the next several months.

Pisces February 21 - March 20

All of those little things you like to do for fun and enjoyment are now back on the table. In fact, you'll get to enjoy these things for longer than usual. During this process, you may discover that some of what you once enjoyed, you know longer do. Focus on joy, pleasure and passion and live life to the fullest. It might cost you a bit of cash, but hey, you've earned it!

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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.

Lean into facts

Late July seems like a long time ago now and in some ways it is. Much has changed on many fronts collectively, personally and of course, astrologically.

One cycle has come back to remind us of something we may have got lost in for a while — facts! Remember those? Those things that are all around us, yet seem so strangely rare. Those things that sometimes do hurt, but more often than not we are better for knowing.

Then there are also logistics, general communication and the ideas that you may have had that somehow got waylaid. These very things may be



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

back on the table this week and if they are, you have cosmic permission to go all in on them.

In a world full of misconception, illusions, half truths and downright lies, do your best to lean into facts even if they don't feel so great at first. With clear facts and straight talk you know where you stand and can make better choices.

If you value X, Y or Z, then let your behavior reflect that. This is what principles and ethics look like. Talk is not enough and there's a lot of talking going on now. Don't allow yourself to be hoodwinked.

Close friends

With busy lives and breathtaking scenery in the mountain community, it can be hard sometimes to embrace deep companionship and friendship. Casual connections come easily, but don't offer the same benefits that are received through a close connection, through a network of genuine support. As we grow older and more involved in personal responsibility, I want to share a personal reflection regarding my idea of close/true friendship.

I feel that a truly close friend is invited to be a relevant part of your life. To be contacted and included, but also to be invited for 1-on-1 time together, in an effort to show them the value they hold to you. Simply letting someone know where you will be with your gaggle of comrades, and never taking things to a personal level, excluding individual time together, does not signify someone's worth to you.

A close friendship is a give and take. To match the energy that they put in to being a part of your life. To offer the same support that they've shown for you, such as during a loss, a medical event, an accident, or a scary time, like a missing pet. To support their endeavors, such as their career, their art, their hobbies and their interests, as they do for you.

Being treated as a close friend means embracing someone's uniqueness. Appreciation of their core values. It relies heavily on accepting their thoughts, feelings and opinions, even if they vary greatly from your own. The effort to accept and appreciate a perspective beyond your own is being a friend to someone. Holding the same feelings and beliefs as someone is not a requirement



Dream in Color
By Will O'Donnell

for genuine empathy. Only showing support and acceptance of matching ideas, feelings and opinions is indicative of a closed mind and makes genuine connection very challenging for both parties, regardless of other effort put in.

The effort required to invite someone to an individual time with you; while showing support for their ideas, feelings and opinions; while celebrating their differences, uniqueness and idiosyncrasies; while being grateful for the opportunity for a truly personal interaction, is a significant part of genuine intimacy and close friendship.

When you are in the same space together, consider this: Is there even a thought of leaving them behind or not bringing them along to experience the forthcoming joy of your day, regardless of a potential personal sacrifice? Is there a sense that because you cannot see their perspective then it must not be valid? Is there a feeling of inadequacy after putting in bare minimum effort? If they express a hardship, confusion or pain from an interaction with you, are you finding yourself making excuses, rationalizing, and becoming defensive? Do you find it difficult to include them in your life because it requires focused effort on someone beyond yourself? If they've reached out to talk or spend time, have you been receptive or have you viewed it as a hassle and an inconvenience? This is not close friendship nor is it a valued, genuine connection.

To be a close friend, to me, means to value, cherish, and love me. Not romantic love, certainly, but the kind of loving others that is the basis for all religions and for all mindful-

Dream in Color → 28

Black willow provides many ecological benefits

I often spot black willow trees as I'm kayaking along a riverbank or lakeshore. While perhaps less picturesque than its (non-native) cousin the weeping willow, black willow is native to the Northeast and provides a host of ecological benefits.

Willow trees are in the *Salix* genus, along with pussy willow and more than 20 other species of woody plants native to our region. Black willow (*Salix nigra*) grows throughout the eastern U.S., as far north as New Brunswick in Canada and as far south as Florida and Texas.



The Outside Story
By Laurie D. Morrissey

By habitat and appearance, black willow is not hard to identify. The species generally grows in wet areas, including along rivers and in floodplains. Its dark gray bark, which gives the tree its name, is rough with deep fissures, and on older trunks can become shaggy. Many black willow trees have multiple stems growing from a single trunk. The lance-shaped leaves grow up to 6 inches long, with finely serrated margins.

"Black willows are short-lived and fast-growing, most often found along river and stream banks where light is more favorable," said New Hampshire State Botanist William Nichols. In areas that feature ideal growing conditions, such as in the Mississippi River Valley, specimens often grow over 100 feet tall. In New England, black willow is one of the common species in floodplain forests such as those near Lake Champlain and grows up to 60 feet tall.

All willows have high wildlife value, and black willow is no exception. Its flowers provide one of the earliest spring sources of nectar and pollen for insects, including honey bees. Birds eat the catkins and buds, and the leaves are a larval host for hundreds of butterfly and moth species, including tiger swallowtail, mourning cloak, and viceroy butterflies. Deer, muskrats,

beavers, rabbits, and other animals eat the twigs. Some species of ducks and woodpeckers nest in the trees' soft trunks.

Renowned New Hampshire naturalist David Carroll has a special love for these trees. His book "Trout Reflections" includes a drawing of several black willow trunks that form a dam, providing cover for turtles, brook trout and other aquatic species.

"Quite massive sections go down along the banks of streams and other waterways and are particularly beneficial for wood turtles, which spend most of their active season terrestrially," Carroll said.

"The trunk and branch sections often retain a connection with the roots, and the fallen logs sprout linear 'forests' that rise from the prone blowdowns. Fallen trunks can generate sprouts for years. Wood turtles eat willow leaves, and I wouldn't be surprised if painted turtles and snapping turtles did the same, since both eat a lot of plant material."

For humans, one of the black willow's most attractive features is its yellow-gold

Fallen trunks can generate sprouts for years.

fall foliage. But people have recognized the tree's more practical value for generations. The bark contains salicylic acid, which is now produced synthetically to make aspirin. Historically, the wood was used to make artificial limbs, and it is still used to make baskets, furniture, and cabinets, among other items. While weak in a structural sense, the wood is light, sturdy, shock-resistant, and not prone to cracking.

The black willow's greatest value to Outside Story → 26



Field of Dreams

My son was barely 10 years old when we moved into our most recent home. On the day we arrived, I told him to get on his bike and ride around the neighborhood to look for kids to play with. Without concern or care, he promptly did just that.

I knew when he didn't come right back that he must have discovered something or someone to keep him occupied. Being a concerned parent and new to the environment, I decided to venture out to see where he was. Within minutes, I found him with three other boys playing in a nearby front yard.

They seemed to be having fun so I simply smiled and waved. However, the owner of the home saw me and came out. We exchanged niceties with her promising to have my wife and me over for drinks one night as a welcoming gesture.

Ten years later and we're still friends with that couple. And her three boys and my son became fast friends as well, spending countless hours playing together over the last decade.

One of the brothers was involved with Little League baseball, which prompted me to sign my son up for the same league. The fields they played on were at a nearby school, easily accessible on a bike through the back of our neighborhood. For the next several years, my son played and I coached in that league.

The facilities at this park were fantastic, with three separate fields covering every level of play, complete with batting cages, dugouts, and a concession stand.

I have countless memories of my boy and me riding our bikes up to that field for the innumerable practices and weeknight games both in the spring and fall sessions. In fact, he loved it so much that during the off-season we'd also stop by to practice fielding or hit balls in the cage.

I also saw other dads bring their sons and daughters up to practice when the seasons were not in session. Some were serious and became acquaintances, others were one-offs just trying to get their kid interested. But the best scenario of all was to show up and have the entire park empty. That's when my son and I created some fantastic memories.

I give my kid credit. He was always up for a trip to the baseball diamond. He was a naturally excitable child so any opportunity to let off steam was pleasing for him. And from my end, it was pure joy to watch him

fall in love with a beautiful game.

I learned a few things going up to that field night after night. For one thing, you can't force your kid into loving something, especially sports. In fact, when you see they have an interest, it's best not to overwhelm them with it. Let them set the pace with you providing the needed encouragement.

The other thing I learned is that your kid feeds off your excitement. As a longtime sports coach, I've witnessed every parental reaction, from overbearing screaming to complete uninterest. But the parents who cheer excitedly and are always offering words of encouragement are the ones that have the most mature and positive athletes (I had the added dynamic of being father and coach so I had to tread the line of disciplinarian and dad carefully).

I also learned that getting involved in your kids' activities not only makes it fun for them but also invests you more fully in the experience. I loved playing baseball as a youngster and continued with that love as an adult with men's softball.

It was therefore a natural progression for me to start coaching on a youth level. And honestly, I don't know who enjoyed it more.

Sadly, my son eventually aged out of the youth leagues. He chose not to play in high school because of his dedication to basketball. I didn't like the decision, but I respected it.

Last weekend, I ventured back up to that park. There were a couple games going on so I made my way into the bleachers and sat and watched for a half hour. A lot of nostalgia rushed through my brain in that time. I miss those moments with my kid but reminded myself that there will be other moments to cherish in the future.

Nostalgia was forefront in this week's feature, "Facing Nolan," a deep and insightful documentary about one of the greatest pitchers in the history of the major leagues. Nolan Ryan could be as dominant as any pitcher during his 28-year career, but with all the success and adulation, he still had to battle the critics daily.

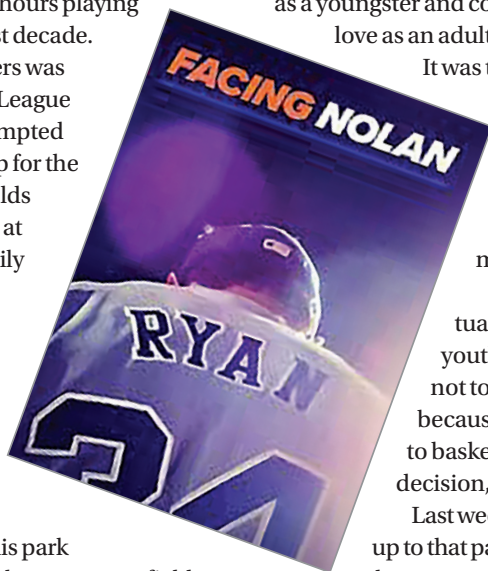
Check this one out if you love baseball. Sure, it's got some great sports highlights, but beyond that, it highlights an immensely interesting man who wanted nothing more than to win at the game he loved.

A heroic "B+" for Facing Nolan," now available to stream on Netflix.

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



The Movie Diary
By Dom Cioffi



Non-venomous Vermont

The first day, I chose to take the east side route. It was a plan I had never been before in a state that I had not visited in over 20 years and certainly not one that I knew anything about. The easterly route up the horseshoe ridge seemed to have the most people and while that is not usually the way I choose a path, it would be the right choice in this case...

For me, it was like being in the midst of an adventure race, but without the camaraderie. There were so many people all moving in the same direction up a mountain at the same time. People trying to maneuver up the dusty path at their own pace, bumping into the slower folks on the steeper sections as they try to pass. No one



Living the Dream
By Merisa Sherman

talking or even acknowledging each other, everyone just in their own individual worlds — A city walk just transported onto a ridgeline. But at least I was out of the city proper and could feel dirt under my feet. Well, at least until the paved descent.

The next day, I once again walked the few blocks to the park. But this time I chose the westerly route and actually turned back. For a moment. After making the 180 turn onto the trailhead, I stopped in my tracks. Literally. The welcoming

sign for the trail was anything but. Here, in this overpopulated public park was a simple sign reading: "DANGER RATTLESNAKES." I stood there for a second and looked around. My eyes followed the sight of the trail and I could see almost a hundred people calmly hiking this route. Can we also talk about how weird it was that the complete lack of trees enabled the ability to even see all the

people? So freakin' weird, hiking without trees.

But all these people seemed completely oblivious to the trail sign announcing the rattlesnakes. No one was wearing boots or even high tops.

Maybe it's just a sign meant to scare tourists or something?

Dogs were running about off lead, scampering through the bushes and sticking their noses everywhere. There were obviously no porcupines in the area, but wouldn't a rattlesnake bite to the schnoz be even more dangerous??

Living the Dream → 28



By Merisa Sherman
A sign for rattlers on the West Ridge Trail in Runyon Canyon State Park, Hollywood, LA, California. We're not in Vermont anymore!

Insights and Inspirations

Editor's note: Bruce Bouchard is former executive director of The Paramount Theatre. John Turchiano, his friend for 52 years, was formerly the editor of Hotel Voice, a weekly newspaper on the New York Hotel Trades Council. They are co-authoring this column to tell short stories on a wide range of topics.

Charley has been gone for three months, and we are settling into acceptance. The pain has diminished some, but the deal I would make to have him back in my arms and looking into those glorious eyes, or licking my face during the morning sit would rise to a number that I would be paying down for years.

The memories continue: the chin on bed patiently waiting for one eye to open, "Get up - I gotta go," or curled up at my feet at the theatre as I stand at the back rail watching The World Cup or The Super Bowl; Good old Charley gladly taking a ton of affection from the audience members.

On the last day of his life, a miracle occurred — a robin began building a nest on the column next to our front door. We could see the activity from a small table on our 25-foot long front porch, or from our big dining room window just 8 feet on an upward angle from the chair to the nest. We watched and we watched.

The robins of the Northeast are known as Newfoundland robins, one of the "early birds" who appear sooner in the spring than other families. They are known for their warm rust orange breasts (males wear warmer orange than females who have browner feathers). We learned that only 40% of nests successfully house babies.

Insights → 30



By Bruce Bouchard and John Turchiano

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← **TOS:**.....
from page 24

modern humans, however, is perhaps as bioengineering tool. Its spreading, fibrous roots soak up water like big sponges, making it a great choice for stabilizing stream-banks and restoring riparian forest buffer zones. It even improves the soil for other plants by sucking up pollutants such as lead, cadmium, and copper, a process called phytoremediation.

Autumn beauty, wood duck apartment, pollinator buffet, and erosion control powerhouse: that's a lot for one tree to lay claim to, but black willow does it all.

Laurie D. Morrissey is a writer who lives in Hopkinton, New Hampshire. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.

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TOWN OF KILLINGTON VERMONT

Final Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a Wetland: Town of Killington, Vermont

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) is considering whether to fund the following Proposed Action under the Catalyst Program. NBRC has prepared an 8-Step Decision-Making Process review in compliance with Executive Order (EO) 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), which established a more protective standard in order to avoid to the extent possible the long and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands, as well as to avoid direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands where there is a practicable alternative.

The purpose of the Proposed Action involves the reconstruction of road infrastructure and the development of additional water system infrastructure located in the Town of Killington, Vermont. Specifically, it includes the reconstruction and partial realignment of portions of Killington Road, East Mountain Road, and Old Mill Road, along with new road construction (Road H) north of the current intersection of East Mountain Road and Killington Road.

Additionally, the Proposed Action includes the installation of the first segment of the Killington South Distribution Water Main along East Mountain Road from the Valley Wells Transmission Main to Killington Road and north along Killington Road to Ravine Road. These two locations represent the southernmost and northernmost limits of the Proposed Action, respectively (approximate coordinates: 43°37'34.7" N, 72°46'11.4" W and 43°38'15.7" N, 72°47'14.7" W). In conjunction with the proposed roadway and water infrastructure improvements, a paved multi-use path will be installed along the west side of Killington Road, a proposed stormwater treatment practice (gravel wetland) will treat stormwater runoff from a portion of Killington Road, and the West Branch Roaring Brook and Roaring Brook culverts under Killington Road will be replaced. NBRC has determined that the Proposed Action's footprint exists within NWI wetlands and accordingly warrants an analysis under the 8-Step Decision-Making Process.

The applicant considered the following alternatives in selecting the proposed action:

No Action Alternative: The No Action Alternative would result in no federal funds being allocated to support the reconstruction of Killington Road and the construction of the Killington South Distribution Water Main. The No Action Alternative would not impact wetlands but would not fulfill the purpose of the Proposed Action. This alternative would perpetuate the unsatisfactory conditions where pedestrians and cyclists use the same roadway as vehicular traffic.

Alternative Site: No practicable alternative sites to the Proposed Action were identified to satisfy the purpose and need. The Proposed Action is located on the existing alignment of Killington Road to the greatest extent feasible and does not propose an increase in roadway capacity, thereby minimizing environmental effects. Alternative alignments would incur higher costs in planning, design development, property acquisition, and construction and would be unlikely to secure the necessary environmental permits based on more substantial natural resource impacts.

Through the 8-Step Decision-Making Process, NBRC identified potential impacts from the Proposed Action and developed the following mitigation measures:

Mitigation Measures for Natural Impacts (Wetlands and Water Resources):

- **Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control (EPSC):** The project will implement EPSC measures in line with Individual Construction Stormwater Permits 9602-INDC.1 and 5898-INDC.4. These include silt fences and other sediment barriers to prevent erosion and reduce sedimentation in nearby wetlands during construction.
- **Minimized Wetland Encroachment:** The project design minimizes encroachment on wetlands by utilizing the existing road alignment and reducing the construction footprint (e.g., steepening side slopes) where wetlands are present.
- **Wetland Mitigation Credits:** The Town of Killington is required to purchase wetland mitigation credits through the Vermont in-lieu fee program to compensate for the loss of wetland area.
- **Stormwater Treatment System:** A gravel wetland stormwater treatment system will be installed to capture and treat runoff from impervious surfaces. This will improve water quality by preventing untreated stormwater from entering nearby wetlands and waterways.
- **Stream Flow and Dewatering Plan:** The contractor will submit a stream flow control and/or dewatering plan, which must be reviewed and approved by the River Management Engineer (RME) prior to construction.
- **USACE GP 18 Conditions:** The project will comply with USACE General Permit 18 conditions, which include minimizing impacts to Waters of the U.S., stabilizing disturbed wetland areas with native plant species, and preventing the introduction or spread of invasive species.
- **Tree Removal:** Trees will be cut at or above ground level, rather than uprooted, to prevent disruption to wetland soil structure and encourage natural regrowth through stump sprouting.
- **Revegetation and Restoration:** Temporarily disturbed wetlands will be

restored to their pre-construction condition and elevation, stabilized using native plant species, and invasive species control measures will be implemented to prevent habitat degradation.

Mitigation Measures for Impacts on Human Lives (Water Supply):

- **Water Supply Monitoring:** Vermont state regulations require monitoring of public and private water wells to ensure that new water sources do not interfere with existing supplies. This will include continuous monitoring during the development of the municipal water system.
- **Water Capacity Assurance:** The Valley Wells have been evaluated and confirmed to exceed the projected water demand of the new municipal water system. This ensures no interference with existing water supplies, safeguarding residents' access to water.

It is NBRC's determination that due to 1) the identification of sufficient mitigation, 2) the lack of practicable alternatives, and 3) the importance of the Proposed Action to address the needs of the Killington community, the importance of the Proposed Action in the wetlands outweighs the requirements of EO 11990 to avoid direct or indirect support of wetland development.

Files that document compliance with Steps 1 through 6 of EO 11990 are available for public inspection upon request. Please send an email request to nepa@nbrc.gov. The 8-Step Decision-Making Process materials will be provided in electronic format unless a hard copy is specifically requested.

This notice provides people who may be affected by activities in the wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment with an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information. NBRC is accepting comments on this notice for seven (7) days from September 12, 2024, through the end of the day of September 19, 2024.

Date of Publication: September 11, 2024

← **Living the Dream:**
from page 25

If all these people weren't afraid of the rattlesnakes, then I shouldn't be either, right? Maybe it's just a sign meant to scare tourists or something? So I waited until someone came and then walked about 50 feet behind them, thinking that they could take the bite and I would be the 911 caller instead of the victim. There were not as many people as the trail yesterday, but there was more than I would find on a busy uphill Saturday on Ramshead.

I was starting to feel a bit more comfortable as I followed the guy. Who was I kidding? The concierge had said to stay away from the bushes, as that's where the snakes hang out but the trail was literally right through the bushes. Are these Californians simply crazy? My heart was beating rapidly, not for the exertion but from the anxiety as my eyes were constantly searching out snakes and my ears were stretching for the rattles. It was the most stressful hike I've ever done in my life and no one else seemed phased at all.

We ducked around a half knocked over chain link fence with a sign from the city saying that the bridge precariously hanging off the side of the mountain was off limits. But everybody just walked over it like they didn't have a care in the

world. Anyway... as we got to the top, there was a part where you could choose the path or continue on a dirt road. Me being me, I chose the path that continued through the bushes. There was no warning sign, so I figured I was good.

Nope. Nope. Nope.

As I turned the corner about 200 feet in, I quickly froze. Immovable. Trying not to be noticed for the few moments in time as the western diamondback rattlesnake with four tiers on its rattle calmly made its way across the path.

Nope. Nope. Nope. I quickly turned around and made my way back through the bushes and onto the big wide open trail with thousands of other people. Back along the dirt road, just underneath the bushy path I saw a sign up on the trail "CAUTION: RATTLESNAKE BREEDING GROUND." What in the actual?? Who in their right mind would build an urban hiking trail around a rattlesnake breeding ground???

As I descended on the wide, paved fire road, I repeatedly

gave thanks under my breathe for the beautiful state we live in. Where I can walk for hundreds of miles without the fear of rattlesnakes randomly crossing my path. Where I am surrounded by trees and not people. Where I now celebrate the variety of non-venomous life nestled under the thick canopy.

I have never loved Vermont more than in that moment.

Merisa Sherman is a long time Killington resident, elected town lister and member of the

I waited until someone came and then walked about 50 feet behind them, thinking that they could take the bite and I would be the 911 caller instead of the victim.

Development Review Board. She is a global real estate advisor and Coach PomPom. Reach out to her at Merisa.Sherman@SotehbysRealty.com



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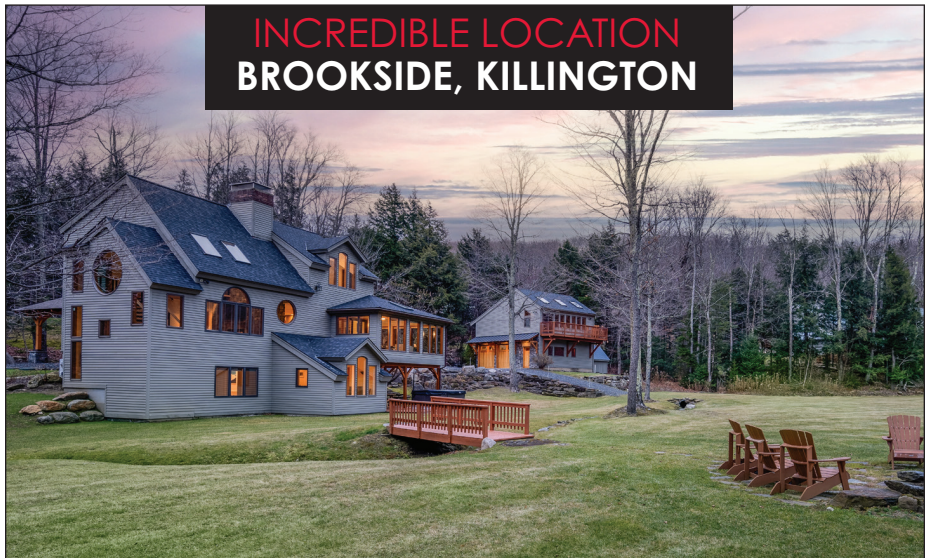
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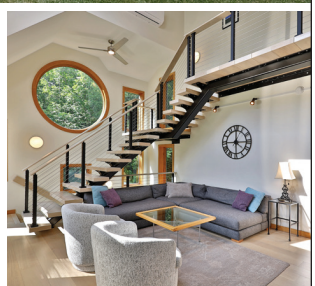
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← **Dream in Color:**
from page 24

ness practices. Not valuing and cherishing them above yourself, but as an equal. To understand their individual hardships and situations and to embrace them with compassion.

To be treated as an equal is an important part of close friendship. As an equal, no differences matter, only love and commonality. As an equal, no struggle a friend is experiencing is an insurmountable issue that you can't


contribute positivity and light to. As an equal, you use your own stability and awareness to embrace a new opportunity to show love. As an equal, you are a relevant part of someone's mind, heart, present, and future. As an equal, mutual respect comes naturally.

Being a close friend means to love. To show love. To welcome and encourage love. To be love.

This is a close friendship to me.

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Insights: from page 25

Our robin was huge, approximately 14 inches from the tip of her beak to the end of her tail, and a big belly filled with new eggs. She swooped in and swooped out, over and over, architect and clerk of the works of her new home; the in-process birthing center, made of twigs, grass, straw and mud. The perfectly made vessel, barely larger than the size of a baseball, was completed in a matter of days.

During this time, she began to take us in. She would stop, mid-construction, snap her head to the side and down to look directly at us, and then continue her task. We had to remain very still — any movement or sound from us would cause her to depart and wait on a utility line across the street from our house. Upon her return she would give us a commanding look.

“OK. It’s fine that you might watch my work, but I ask of you stillness and respect. Any sudden moves or loud noises will make me cross with you. Oh, and don’t even think of climbing up here to have a look. That will put me in a foul mood and might possibly cause me to abandon the new home... oh, and I have a message for you: Your Charley is fine, he is happy and he does NOT want you to be sad.”

That was the exact message I was feeling from this very pregnant robin.

In the world of mysticism, or “the other side,” or the stew of many Wiccans, there are those that believe both cardinals and robins know when a home has lost a loved one. These birds gravitate to that energy and are called to create new life. An antidote to pain and sorrow, or merely a fine place, with nice energy in which to make a family?

In another few days, she began to sit at length, for long stretches, beak straight forward and full body covering the nest, warming and bringing the eggs to fruition.

Before we knew it, on one early morning, there they were, multiple little translucent babies, the color of caramel, quivering and stretching their open beaks, as Mom delivers the goods — worms, bugs and berries. But how many were there? It is three, might it be four?! In and out and back around again; the circular activity over and over. If we sat for two hours there might be 20-plus feedings, and one day we could see clearly that there were four little baby robins, living in that crowded apartment, stretching and stretching for the next bits of breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

On one occasion with Mom away foraging, I slipped a two-step ladder 20 feet across from the nest. My vision was partially obscured by a porch beam, but I stood on a direct line from the nest — a distant but distinct perspective on this ritual of nature. For days I had been very careful to enter my perch when she was away and depart my spot on one of her flights for more food. But one day she caught me, looked up and drilled me with her eyes, and then — like the shot of a bullet she was at me — boom, a snap of wind, she flew just past my ear. I could feel her as she blasted her warning. “Don’t get cute! I didn’t say you could be there!”

I respected that warning by not climbing my ladder again, content to take direction and watch from one of the porch chairs or the inside the big window.

The next phase was watching the offspring, quickly transforming into adolescents, boisterous to roam, now covered with feathers and each with a shockingly large set of wings. They would stand, stretch those wings and, shortly thereafter, begin to practice beating them, rehearsing for the thrilling first sensations of flight.

But how could four young birds possibly exist in that space? Perhaps the close quarters were designed as such to help motivate their leap into the wild. Standing on the edge of the nest like a kid attempting a first dive from the 3-meter platform, wings beating furiously and then wuuuusch, gone in a flash. Up, up into the sky and off to a wide open new life, like a teenager driving away to college in the family Subaru.

We were only lucky enough to see two of the young birds actually take flight. The second was the runt of the litter, the last to go. He tried and tried, whapping those wings and bending his little legs, dozens of times, perhaps frightened by the big hard world just out in front. “I think I can, I think I can.” And then, he took the plunge — and a plunge it was, an odd-ball first venture — a few feet, hover, a few feet more and hover again, and then a sputtering flutter right on down to the front porch below. He found his legs, strutting here and peeking there, trying to make sense of his new world. He came to rest in front of our screen door; we were looking at him and he was looking at us.

“Hey, I know I am supposed to fly, but I can’t, and I’m scared, can you help me?”

We hadn’t realized that Mom was right near by watching the whole episode from the ground below the porch. She chirped a command, he turned around, shook his feathers and hopped off the porch. Mother and child disappeared into the cover of our large patch of sedum, safe from prey, until, with Mom’s urging, he would, shoulder to shoulder with her, disappear into the sky.

We were blessed by this glorious episode — from death to the miracle of new life; exhilarating, humbling, and inspiring.

A perfect sauce in the kitchen of life.



By Bruce Bouchard

The robins came bringing signs of new life.

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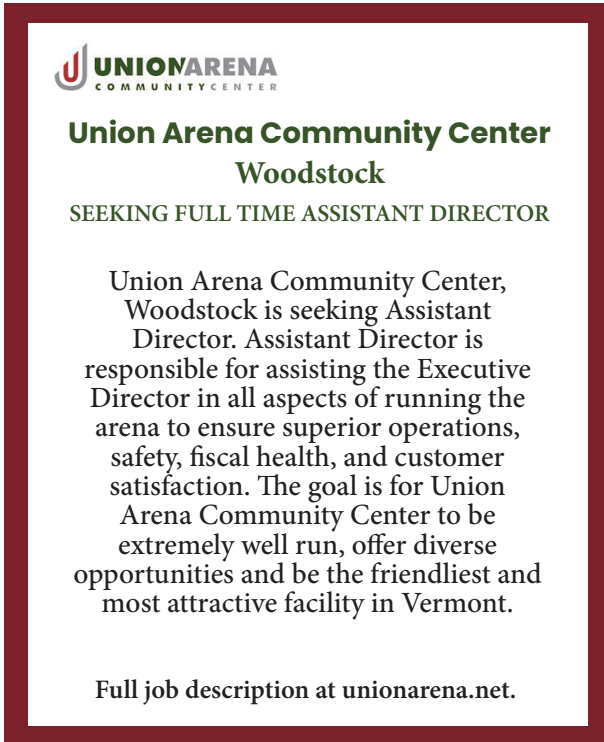
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