

The REPORTER

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75¢

State to drop masking in schools on March 14th

Area schools are following guidance

BY ANGELO LYNN

RUTLAND COUNTY— Last week, Vermont Gov. Phil Scott announced that the state would no longer recommend that students wear masks in schools after March 14, a change in masking guidelines that included all public indoor spaces.

At a press conference March 3, state officials recommended that masks be made optional everywhere indoors — including schools — by March 14.

Area schools are among those that are adopting the optional masking protocols.

“We have had a masking mandate in place,” said RNESU Superintendent (See *School masking*, Page 3)

Karpak named Rowland Scholar

BRANDON — Devon Karpak, Otter Valley Union High School’s Tech Ed instructor, was recently selected by the Rowland Foundation as a 2022 Rowland Fellow.

Karpak’s proposal that focuses on building the OV tech program and creating an exemplar curriculum (See *Devon Karpak*, Page 16)



Div. IV state champions!

THE WESTSIDER’S GOLDEN Horde girls won the Div. 1V state championship game against rival Proctor this past Saturday in a thrilling back-in-forth contest at the Aud in Barre that ended, 57-56, with several missed opportunities in the final minute of play. See the story on Page 9

Photo submitted

Brandon folk artist follows life passion

BY ELSIE LYNN PARINI

BRANDON — Crossing from her home, through the breezeway and into her barn-studio, Robin Kent doesn’t even need to put on boots for her daily commute. Shoes, however, are recommended. Kent’s Brandon studio is where she has crafted her folk art for the past 25 years, and the history shows.

“I have a huge mountain of shards of pieces I don’t use,” she said in an interview a few weeks ago. “There are hammers, screws, nails and remnants of cut outs

from the band saw all around the studio.”

Kent remembered one year she participated in Open Studio Weekend. “My studio was a mess,” she said happily. “I wanted people to see this as a space where someone had just stopped working to answer the door. It really is a workshop.”

Yes, it’s her workshop. The place that she’s been creating art since she moved to Brandon a quarter century ago.

“Coming to Brandon was my change of life,” she explained. “I



ROBIN KENT

was 47 years old when I landed in Brandon. Everything I held dear changed.”

Kent was coming from a life working for a textbook publisher in Massachusetts. Before that, she had earned her college degree in art education and tried teaching — but that didn’t work out. Then she helped low-income people on Cape Cod sell their art at local galleries. And then she tried her hand at commercial art, advertising and magazine production.

Though her career path was varied, her passion for art was clear.

And just as this New Jersey native knew she wasn’t an urban person from the start, she also always knew she wanted to be an artist.

“I’ve never had the angst of ‘what am I gonna do when I grow up,’” Kent said, remembering the giant piece of slate in her childhood kitchen where she would draw. “I always knew what my

(See *Robin Kent*, Page 7)



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Key senators accept Scott's demand on firearm background check bill

BY ETHAN WEINSTEIN

MONTPELIER — Key members of the Vermont Senate say they're willing to accept a compromise offered by Gov. Phil Scott on a gun-control bill he vetoed last month. The new plan would scale back S.30, which would have closed the Charleston Loophole by strengthening firearm background check rules.

Federal law allows gun sales to proceed if a background check takes longer than three days. As it passed the Legislature, S.30 would have required most purchasers to actually pass a background check before receiving their gun.

Scott vetoed the bill, telling lawmakers he'd sign a version of it that lengthened the waiting time from three to seven business days. He said a 30-day or longer waiting period was not acceptable.

"I believe going from three to effectively 30 days is excessive and unreasonable for law-abiding citizens who wish to purchase a firearm for their own personal safety or for other lawful and constitutionally protected purposes," Scott said in his letter to the Legislature.

In a Tuesday meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee, lawmakers aired their feelings about the de-

mise of S.30 and its potential path forward.

"After thinking it over and talking it over with the chair, it seemed like it was best to accept the hand that had been offered," said Sen. Phil Baruth, D/P-Chittenden, an outspoken supporter of new gun laws and the original sponsor of S.30. "That's what this draft attempts to do."

Erik FitzPatrick, a lawyer for the Legislature, explained that the change to seven business days is the only difference between S.30 as vetoed and the compromise.

Jaye Johnson, Scott's legal counsel, offered her stamp of approval on behalf of her boss.

"Thank you all for this draft, which accepts the governor's path forward for this compromise," she said.

Last month, the Legislature approved S.30 after a back-and-forth between the Senate and House that led to significant changes to the bill. What initially had been introduced as a bill to ban guns in hospitals and other public places morphed into legislation amending the background check system.

To expedite the rewrite process, legislators on Tuesday voted to accept a strike-all amendment to another bill, S.4, which had originally

proposed creating a two-day waiting period for firearms purchases. The Senate Judiciary Committee decided to replace the text of S.4 with the amended text of S.30 in order to more quickly move the bill out of panel.

The committee approved the amended gun legislation, 4-1, with Sen. Joe Benning, R-Caledonia, casting the only dissenting vote.

He highlighted his distaste for a provision of the bill intended to be a compromise — allowing out-of-staters to bring high-capacity magazines into Vermont for shooting competitions.

"I remain somewhat perplexed and uncomfortable with a provision that would allow another out-of-state resident to bring a high-capacity magazine into the state," he said. "We deny our own citizens the ability to possess the same."

Benning's biggest problem with the bill, he said, was a section that allows judges to temporarily seize firearms from alleged domestic abusers.

"I think it's a precedent that we're establishing that I fear for the future may be a stepping stone for other cases," he said.

The new bill, S.4, is now expected to move to the Senate floor.

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Fish & Wildlife seizes firearms, drugs

ATHENS, VT. — On March 3, Vermont State Game Wardens and collaborating agencies seized seven firearms and approximately 3,000 rounds of ammunition alleged to have been illegally possessed, as well as approximately 880 bags of suspected heroin and fentanyl and a large amount of U.S. currency.

The seizures took place during execution of a search warrant for

evidence of deer taken illegally and for the illegal possession of firearms in Athens, Vermont.

Along with Vermont State Game Wardens, collaborating law enforcement included Special Agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations, and the Vermont State Police.

"This case is a great example of the cooperation between the Vermont Warden Service and its state and federal partners in law enforcement," said Game Warden Colonel Jason Batchelder. "This is an ongoing investigation and further information will be forthcoming at an appropriate time."

On covering the pandemic Mandavilli to deliver annual Middlebury lecture

MIDDLEBURY — On Monday, March 14, at 7 p.m., Apoorva Mandavilli of the New York Times will deliver the 2022 Robert W. van de Velde, Jr. '75 Memorial lecture "Reporting on an Unprecedented Pandemic" at Middlebury College. The link to join this webinar can be found on the Middlebury Events Calendar.

Robert van de Velde Jr. attended Middlebury College where he majored in Sociology and was an active member of the staff of WRMC-FM, the college radio station. Not long after his graduation, he died suddenly. Shortly after his death, family members and friends established the Rob-

ert W. van de Velde, Jr. '75 Memorial Lecture. This lecture provides an annual opportunity for a searching examination of the confluence of public affairs and journalism.

Since the early days of 2020, when the world slowly woke to the coronavirus pandemic, reporting on the virus has been relentless, fast-paced, and immeasurably complicated. It has also been exhilarating. This presentation will offer a glimpse into the experience of a journalist who has written almost exclusively only about the pandemic for nearly two years.

Ms. Mandavilli joined the staff

of The New York Times in 2019. Previously, she was the founding editor-in-chief of Spectrum, an award-winning news site on autism science that grew an audience of millions. She led the team there for 13 years. She also co-founded Culture Dish, an organization dedicated to enhancing diversity in science journalism, and was the founding chair of the Diversity Committee for the National Association of Science Writers.

She is the 2019 winner of the Victor Cohn Prize for Excellence in Medical Science Reporting.

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School masking

(Continued from Page 1)

dent Jeanné Collins, adding that she confirmed last Friday “that we would move to mask optional as of March 14. We have 97% of adults (staff) vaccinated, and 55-60% of eligible students vaccinated.”

Collins said that even though there was a large surge in COVID cases since the December break over the holidays, “we feel we are ready to step into this move.”

She said the school district would differ from the state on some testing options. “One thing we wish to continue is the availability of antigen tests for staff and students to address lingering anxieties for the rest of the school year,” she said. “The state is talking about phasing this out, but we are advocating to finish the year” by making the antigen tests readily available.

Superintendent Chris Sell of the Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union said they too would follow the state guidelines. “The GRCSU will be following the

recommendation of the Agency of Education and going mask-optional on March 14,” Sell said, adding that they would continue to provide take-home antigen testing as per state guidelines. The GRCSU includes the schools in Rutland, Proctor, West Rutland, Poultney, Middletown Springs and Wells.

Sell had sent a memo out to staff, parents and guardians last week that spelled out the policy change in more detail, including the following:

- Beginning March 14th, masks will be optional in all GRCSU schools and on school transportation (buses, vans, etc.).
- If a student or staff member would like a KN95 mask to wear while at school or on school transportation, please reach out to your child’s school office for more information and availability.
- We will continue to provide take-home antigen testing kits to all staff, students, and families as needed at this time.
- There will be an update to the isolation and quarantine guidance. We will share this updated information from the Vermont Department of Health when we receive it.
- Please note that March 11th is the last school day that all individuals are required to wear masks while in school buildings. “Mask optional” does not begin until March 14th. Any individual who refuses to wear a mask between now and March

14th will be sent home for the day.

Sell added that the school district was “aware that this shift in the AOE’s COVID recommendations and guidance may be received differently by each of our community members. As a result, if you have any questions or are in need of any support please reach out to your child’s administrator and/or school nurse.”

STATEWIDE RESPONSE

Schools in other parts of the state were following suit.

“I feel good about (March) 14th,” said David Young, superintendent of the South Burlington School District, which plans to lift its mandate by that date. “I think the important piece here is, it’s mask-optional, right? We aren’t telling people they can’t wear a mask.”

Many schools have already lifted mandates.

“It has been almost exactly two years since the pandemic turned our world upside down, but I am confident that we are truly turning the corner toward normalcy,” Barre Superintendent Chris Hennessey

wrote in a letter to parents last week, announcing that masks would be optional as of Monday, March 7.

In a letter to families last week, St. Johnsbury Superintendent Brian Ricca also announced plans to make masks optional by March 7.

“No one should ask anyone else about their mask-wearing choices,” Ricca told parents in a letter last week. “This is a personal decision, a family decision, and we will be respectful of the options that others make.”

It was not immediately clear if any school districts had opted not to follow the governor’s guidance, though one superintendent — Brigid Nease, of the Harwood Union school district — said that school officials were monitoring Covid-19 cases and had not yet decided whether to follow the recommendations.

Brian Hill, interim superintendent of the Mill River Union school district, expressed some reservations about the new guidance.

“We need (to) take steps to move from pandemic to endemic, and the numbers suggest that the timing for one of those steps is near — but it is hard to not be conflicted about that timing and if it is the right step when experts are conflicted,” Hill wrote in an email. “We’re trying to take it all in stride and help all of our folks feel valued, no matter which side of the masking debate they lean

toward.”

The state’s new guidance comes two weeks after the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention loosened its recommendations for masking indoors. The federal agency recommends that masks be worn indoors in counties with high levels of Covid-19 transmission, but still advocates for universal masking in schools, according to its website.

Vermont, however, is recommending that masks be made optional statewide — including all counties and schools.

That marks a change from the state’s previous recommendations, in which mask-wearing was pegged to a school’s vaccination rate.

“We’re going to look at this historically — the entire state of Vermont, instead of by county, because we’re so intertwined with everyone else,” Scott said last week.

The state is following a nationwide trend of lifting mask mandates in schools — a process that has drawn criticism from some public health experts, who see the trend as politically motivated and unscientific.

“Data, not dates or politics, should guide Vermont’s school COVID-19 policy choices,” Anne Sosin, a policy fellow of health equity at Dartmouth College, wrote on Twitter last week.

But the governor’s announcement last week appears to signal a larger shift in the state’s approach to Covid-19 safety guidelines in schools.

In a memo released last week, the state Agency of Education said that it would no longer issue Covid-19 recommendations for schools and previewed upcoming changes in school testing procedures.

By March 14, “there will be no school-specific Covid-19 prevention and mitigation recommendations issued by the State of Vermont,” the memo reads. “School Covid-19 testing programs (response testing and staff assurance testing) will be phased out at some point in favor of students and staff accessing the same testing programs provided to all Vermonters.”

Agency of Education spokesperson Ted Fisher said in an email that details were not immediately available about “when, and how, school testing will transition to a broader statewide approach, but those conversations are ongoing.”

“Conditions have reached the point where special protections in schools are no longer needed, and there is a lot of interest in ending mandates on things like masking, which have posed challenges for some students during the pandemic,” Fisher said.

Editor’s Note: Peter D’Auria of ViDigger contributed to this report.

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BRANDON REPORTER

Guest Editorial

Despite our nation's polarization, we should all agree on transparency

BY JUSTIN SILVERMAN

We live in contentious times. According to a 2020 study by the National Bureau of Economic Research, political polarization among Americans has grown rapidly during the last 40 years.

"There's evidence that within the U.S., the two major political parties have become more homogeneous in certain ways, including ideologically and socially," said Jesse Shapiro, a co-author of the study and a professor of political economy at Brown University. "So when you identify with a certain party and you're looking across the aisle, the people you're looking at are more different from you than they were a few decades ago."

Given the degradation of political discourse in our country and the growing list of hot-button issues pitting us against friends and neighbors, it's easy to see the divide. But as Sunshine Week begins this year, let's remember that no matter where we stand on a particular topic, we all need accurate information to shape our opinions and best advocate for ourselves.

The mission of Sunshine Week — March 13-19 this year with related events occurring throughout the month — is to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. The sunshine reference is attributed to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis who famously wrote that "sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants." In other words, an informed citizenry is the best check against government corruption.

This is the idea behind state public record and open meeting laws, as well as our federal Freedom of Information Act. Government transparency is a non-partisan principle that transcends who's in office or which political party is in control. Freedom of information or "sunshine" laws open up government and empower people through information.

The University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism published a report last fall analyzing the polarization in our country. The report identified the most contentious issues which

included gun legislation, policing, and vaccines. As Americans, we may have starkly different opinions about these issues. But consider the common ground we can find when looking at them relative to government transparency.

To have an informed debate about gun legislation, for example, it may be helpful to know basic data points like how many firearms are being manufactured in the country or the number of gun-related deaths each year. We may need to determine where it's most difficult to obtain a firearms license or to read emails among government officials looking to curtail Second Amendment rights.

Before we discuss whether a police department should be defunded, we should first determine how much funding that agency receives. How is money spent within local, state, and county law enforcement agencies? For us to have a conversation about police officers using force against citizens, we need to know the policies within each department and under what circumstances lethal or non-lethal force can be used.

More than two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, debate still rages about vaccine efficacy and government mandates. Fueling that debate is a steady flow of misinformation that can be counteracted by federal data on vaccine trials, statistics on state resident vaccinations, local school district vaccine requirements for teachers and students, and other vaccine-related records.

While sunshine laws vary from state to state, all this information should be available to us through public record statutes and federal FOIA. Wherever we ultimately land on the issues, these laws exist to provide us a way to learn about government and better support our positions.

But despite the mandated sunshine, shadows persist. Public record request deadlines are often ignored. Inadequate staffing and request backlogs result in delays. Documents are excessively redacted. Citizens are shut out of public meetings. The flow of information can be slowed to a glacial pace.

(See *Sunshine week*, Page 16)



The river runs through it

THE OTTER CREEK'S Sutherland Falls in Proctor was raging this past Sunday as temperatures reached the low 60s and melting snow and ice packed Vermont's rivers and streams.

Reporter photo/Dale Christie



Legislative Report

BY STEPHANIE JEROME

Legislative Wrap-up, half way point

We are already halfway through the 2022 legislative session. We started on January 4, with legislators working remotely to protect public health as the Omicron surge peaked. On January 18, we returned safely to the statehouse to work in a hybrid mode. We passed some significant legislation in these first two months. Meanwhile, work on our key priorities continues across the House in collaboration with the Senate, as we debate bills and consider investments prior to our May adjournment.

2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The legislature is tackling a wide range of issues in 2022. While none of these challenges can be solved in a single session, our priorities include:

Investing Vermont's stimulus funds to boost recovery and set the stage for a strong future

Tackling the challenges of housing, workforce development and childcare

Enacting strategies to combat climate change and transition to a sustainable way of life

Addressing our pension liability in a way that's fair to teachers, state employees and taxpayers

Mental health and substance use disorders

Access to affordable healthcare

Building out rural broadband and expanding cell service to under-served rural areas

BUILDING A BALANCED BUDGET FOR FY23

The House is working on the FY 2023 budget, which covers state government and its community partner organizations from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. The committee is on target to present its proposed budget to the full House in mid-March. As is our Vermont tradition, it will be a balanced budget. In 2021, Vermont was allocated \$1.049 billion through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Of that amount, more than \$600 million was allocated for FY 2022 investments, leaving more than \$400 million available. These funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026. In developing the FY23 budget, our

challenge is to make strategic use of one-time money to address extraordinary ongoing needs.

HEALTH INSURANCE SAVINGS

Vermonters have an opportunity to see significant savings on health insurance because of extended subsidies under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Those directly enrolled in the individual market can roll over to Vermont Health Connect with no change in benefits and gain the advantage of federal subsidies. Between \$58-\$76 million is available to Vermonters for plan year 2023.

PUBLIC PENSION SYSTEM

In the past year, the legislature has focused on putting Vermont's public pension system on a path towards long-term sustainability, so that teachers, troopers, and state employees can rely on a well-funded, solvent system when they retire. A group of legislators, government officials and union representatives worked together to address the issue. They reached compromises that balance

(See *Legislative Wrap*, Page 6)



‘Meaning of Life’

BY VICTOR NUOVO
Middlebury College professor emeritus of philosophy

Good and Evil

It is impossible to reach an understanding of the meaning of life without a knowledge of good and evil, for lacking it, we would not be able to decide how to act, what goals to pursue, how to direct the course of our lives. But now comes the question: What does it mean to know good and evil? The question led me to the Bible, in particular, to Genesis, chapters 2 and 3.

Before reading further in this essay, I recommend reading the biblical text. There are several things in it to be noted.

First, that the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Genesis give a second account of the original creation. The first account (in the 1st chapter of Genesis) tells how “God” (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. The second tells a different story. It begins by remarking that “the Lord God” (Yahweh Elohim) created the earth and the heavens in a single day. On the same day, he created Adam, the first man, from “the dust of the ground” (which is what the name “Adam”

means); it tells how the Lord God fashioned a human figure out of dust and “breathed into its nostrils the breath of life”. The Lord God’s reason for creating Adam was that there might be someone to cultivate the soil of the newly created earth: a creature made of dust or earth to cultivate dust or earth. And to this end, he fashioned a garden at a place that was well watered and pleasant—which is what its name “Eden” means.

The Lord God observed that Adam was alone, and needed a companion, a partner, to assist him in cultivating the garden. He caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep (i.e., anaesthetized him) and removed one of his ribs, from which he created a second human being, whom Adam would name “woman”. She would become the “mother of all the living”.

It should be noted that this account of the creation of mankind differs significantly from the account given in the first chapter of Genesis. There it is said that God created man “in his image”, “male

and female he created them”, suggesting that the image of God is bisexual (note that “Elohim” is a plural noun). It is a more noble portrayal of mankind.

But to return to the story: we learn that among the trees that the Lord God planted in the garden was a tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam is told that he may eat freely of the fruit from all of the trees in the garden except this one, and he is warned that if he should violate this prohibition, on that very day he would die, that is, become mortal.

What followed is well known. Eve is tempted by a snake, a clever animal; the fruit looks tasty, and besides, it will make one wise, just like God; she tastes the fruit and induces Adam to taste it also; their minds are opened (“enlightened”?) by this forbidden knowledge, the knowledge of good and evil.

What did they learn from this knowledge? They became aware of their nakedness, aware also that they had done something wrong. And this knowledge caused them to feel ashamed. Hearing the Lord God walking in the garden, they hide. But the Lord God finds them, questions them, condemns them, (See *Meaning of Life*, Page 13)

And there is humor and irony: playing on a human fear of snakes and reptiles; making a mockery of it

Letter to the Editor

Brandon’s FOTH needs sponsors

For the upcoming year, over 25 events have been scheduled at the Brandon Town Hall. All but 10 of these events, set for April 30 to Dec. 7, 2022, have been sponsored through the generosity and support of the Brandon community. The Friends of the Brandon Town Hall (FOTH) is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) organization. We depend on our sponsorship program to continue to bring quality, affordable entertainment to Brandon and the surrounding communities.

All money collected through ticket and concession sales goes toward the restoration and renovation of the Town Hall. This year’s projects include the installation of a dropped ceiling with a new fire suppression system, and LED lighting to the down-

stairs meeting room. FOTH will also be adding brighter lighting upstairs in the main hall by replacing 48 LED bulbs in the chandeliers.

Sponsors help pay for these renovations and improvements. If you would like more information about how to participate in our sponsorship program, please contact me, Dennis Marden, at denniswarden@gmail.com or calling me at 802-247-5420. If you would like to sponsor any part of the remaining programs, you can send your tax free donation to: FOTH, PO Box 181, Brandon, Vt., 05733. Donations in any amount are welcomed and appreciated. Thanks in advance.

Dennis W. Marden,
FOTH president

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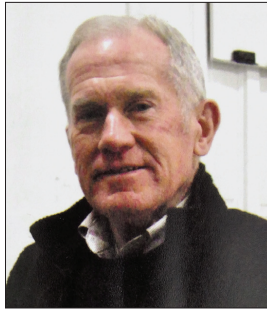
Obituaries

Rev. Dr. Donald G. Lewis Jr., 79, Addison

ADDISON — The Reverend Dr. Donald G. Lewis Jr., beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend, died unexpectedly on Feb. 21, 2022, at UVM Medical Center with his family at his side.

Donald was born on May 10, 1943, to Amelia V. Beal and Donald G. Lewis Sr. in Bethlehem, Pa. He attended schools in Montgomery County, Pa., graduating from Upper Moreland High School. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Millersville State University in 1965 with honors in Philosophy. He pursued further studies at Franklin and Marshall College and became a graduate assistant in Philosophy at Bucknell University.

In 1972 Donald Lewis graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary with the degree Master of Divinity. He completed his doctoral work at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was Director of Annual Giving at Princeton Theological Seminary and served congregations as pastor in Shrewsbury, Toms River, Chatham and Fanwood, N.J., as well



DONALD G. LEWIS JR.

as Richardson, Texas. He further served as an Army Reserve Chaplain, retiring in 2003 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Donald Lewis married Judith Ann Slater in 1969, with whom he had three children: Kathryn Elizabeth, Donald Gordon and Matthew James.

Donald retired from active ministry and moved to Addison, Vt., in 2010. Together, Don and Judy opened a small inn, where they welcomed many people into their home, many of whom have re-

mained dear friends.

Donald found his way to Northlands Job Corp in 2012, where he enjoyed working with youth as a counselor for nearly 10 years. He enjoyed reading, sailing on Lake Champlain, gardening and tending to his roses, blueberries and small orchard. He loved his German Shepherds. His favorite day of the year was Christmas.

Don was blessed with seven grandchildren who loved coming to spend time with him, picking flowers, sailing and riding in his blue MG.

He is survived by his wife, Judy Lewis, of Addison, Vt.; children, Kathryn E. Lewis (Jason) of Pt. Reyes, Calif., D.G. III (Leah) of Mill Valley, Calif., and Matthew James (Carrie) of Brandon, Vt.; his seven grandchildren; his sister Marilyn Smith (Winton) of Memphis, Tenn.; and his brother Robert Lewis (Jill) of Cincinnati, Ohio.

A private family service took place on Feb. 27. Interment will take place at a later date at the Vermont National Cemetery. Memorial gifts may be sent to Princeton Theological Seminary.

Legislative wrap

(Continued from Page 4)

our commitments to both state employees and teachers with the interests of Vermont taxpayers. The Senate is taking the first pass at turning those compromises into legislation.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Vermont's 17 regional career and Technical Education (CTE) centers provide critical pathways to improve career readiness for students and adult learners. Stakeholders in the business, nonprofit, education and government sectors have committed to a goal: by 2025, 70 percent of Vermonters possess a postsecondary degree or credential of value, such as an apprenticeship, certificate or license. Currently, only 51% of Vermonters possess these degrees or credentials. Our CTE centers play a significant role in helping to meet this goal. We've been working to resolve concerns relating to the way we fund our CTE centers, for example, is widely seen as a barrier to enrollment. The legislature is considering proposals to support CTE and postsecondary attainment;

HOUSING SHORTAGE

We are facing a statewide housing crisis. Part of the problem lies in the amount of housing built over the past four decades. In 1980, housing stock grew at an annual rate of 1.8%. By 2019, the rate at which we were producing housing had dropped by 87%, to 0.2% per year. There has been a reduction in housing units from 3,200 to about 400 per year. The pandemic exacerbated the shortage. With federal relief funding, the General Assembly has responded with initiatives to address the needs of homeless Vermonters, renters, landlords, and to speed the production of new or rehabbed housing.

This year in its annual budget adjustment, the House included \$50 million to support more mixed-income units, multi-family rentals and to increase shelter capacity. Between now and the end of the session, we expect to allocate up to \$25 million to rehabilitate 400 existing units that are offline because of code violations, plus a pilot for middle-income buyers.

DEVELOPING A VIBRANT WORKFORCE

Workforce development is one of our legislative priorities this year. With 25,000 job openings in Vermont and an unemployment rate of just 2.5 percent, we're trying to identify and remove the barriers that are preventing people from working or returning to work. We're listening to education and training providers to see if we can provide better opportunities for Vermonters to gain postsecondary skills, credentials and degrees of

value. The legislature continues to support scholarships and grants that make these opportunities affordable for all Vermonters. We're also working with employers and business associations to identify their long-term workforce needs.

BUILDING A BETTER NURSING PIPELINE

Even before the pandemic, Vermont had a shortage of nurses and an aging population in need of more healthcare services. Our nursing shortage became critical following the "Great Resignation" and the unique pressures put on the healthcare system by COVID-19. To meet this need, Vermont must find ways for more students to gain access to nursing education and careers. The legislature is looking for ways to support Vermont's colleges in expanding their nursing programs. Scholarships and grants, some of which the legislature created in 2021, will continue to make a college program in nursing affordable to Vermonters. By investing in nurse education, Vermont can build a better pipeline for the workforce needed now and in the future.

CREATING A VERMONT CHILD TAX CREDIT

The federal child tax credit puts money directly into the wallets and checkbooks of families with children. H.510, which passed the House in February, would create a Vermont version of the child tax credit. This payment — \$100 a month for every child age six and under — will lift families with young children out of poverty. It will also encourage young families to stay in Vermont and thrive. Our focus on young families addresses two important goals: reducing poverty for young children and meeting our demographic challenges. H.510 also included an increase in the Social Security tax exemption to improve on changes we enacted three years ago.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Voters will have the opportunity to vote on two proposed amendments to the Vermont Constitution in November. Proposal 2 would amend our Constitution to provide that "slavery and indentured servitude in any form are prohibited." Proposal 5 would enshrine reproductive autonomy and liberty into our state's constitution, ensuring that this right is preserved for future generations.

It has been an honor to serve as your state representative - please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Rep. Stephanie Jerome
(Brandon, Plattsford, Sudbury)
sjerome@leg.state.vt.us
www.stephaniejeromevt.com

In fond memory

Wayne Kingsley, a long-time resident of Forest Dale where he had a vegetable farm and much beloved farm stand, died this past Friday after being sidelined with cancer since this past autumn. An obituary was not available by press time, but The Reporter will publish a fuller account of his life in next week's issue and on our website, www.brandonreporter.com, as soon as it's available.



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WE NEED YOU

Robin Kent

(Continued from Page 1)
calling was.”

Her family had vacationed at Lake Hortonia in the summers and so when the time came for Kent to make the move, she knew where she wanted to go.

“I always liked Brandon,” she said. “I just knew Brandon was where I wanted to be.”

When Kent arrived, she connected with Warren Kimble and “got his two cents” about how to be a folk artist living in Vermont.

The two ended up collaborating and founded the Brandon Artists Guild. Kent went on to establish her own rhythm and style and has carved her own niche in the Vermont folk art scene. She currently has work displayed at BAG and the Vermont Folk Art Gallery in Brandon, Frog Hollow in Burlington, Remarkable Things at Stowe Craft, and Shelburne Museum. The American Folk Art Museum in New York City even commissioned Kent’s work for their shop.

“Folk art is a nice umbrella,” she explained. “It’s the kind of thing where you really don’t have to subscribe to something to be considered successful or not by other standards; it’s a practice that will take you where you want to go.”

For Kent that has meant a continual course to loosen and soften.

“When I was a kid I needed glasses,” she remembered. “When I got them, I remember seeing every single blade of grass, and it hurt my eyes. Ever since, I’ve always been one to soften things.”

Kent uses bristle brushes and blends her colors with a soft blur on canvas or plywood.

“I got into painting wood, because my former partner used to do furniture repair,” Kent explained. “I used to be a plywood snob; I liked using nice wood. But then I found you can’t cut against the grain of the fancy wood and plywood allows you to do anything.”

You guessed it, Kent’s no longer a plywood snob.

And there’s nothing less than fancy about her plywood either. The pieced-together wooden shapes are as dynamic in their depth as they are in personality.

“I can personify anything,” Kent said smiling. “When I grew up there was this tulip tree outside my bedroom window... The leaves would shake and I would see nodding heads, applauding me... I tend to do pieces with two eyes looking at you. I like to have a connection — alive or not — something I can talk to or relate to.”

When she needs inspiration, Kent digs in the piles of wooden

cut outs around her studio.

“It feels like I’m a 5 year old again,” she said. “If I see a leg, arm or something, then I’ll go find other things to make a complete piece. Those are the ones that are much looser.”

Kent will work on her cuts, assembly and painting, then put her work aside and come back to it a few days later to “fix it” until the piece says “I’m done.”

“I’m in my studio with the shards of wood and the house paint that I use,” Kent said. And her cat, don’t forget Callie. “Sometimes my cat gets jealous; she’s my shadow.”

Kent said she works in waves, taking time off to refuel herself and then working nonstop.

Sometimes, the 72-year-old has trouble with her shoulder from all the hammering and nailing, so she takes a break and switches over to painting on canvas, which is gen-



ROBIN KENT IS the artist behind three signs you may remember on the streets in Brandon: New Moon, Café Provence and Taco and Bean. She also designed the BAG logo.

Artwork photos courtesy of Robin Kent Portraits: Reporter photo / Steve James



ter on her body. Kent also uses her recovery time to read about the lives of other artists.

“It’s very interesting,” she said. “It gives me good perspective on how artists have lived... and how so many of them loosen up and become more expansive; it’s a validation of what I’ve come to on my own.”

To see more work by Robin Kent visit one of the local galleries or email her directly at Artisans2@comcast.net.



Sports

STATE CHAMPIONS!

West Rutland battles Proctor down to the wire, 57-56

BY GENE DELORENZO

BARRE — The West Rutland Golden Horde girl's basketball team won the school's second state championship in Division IV girls basketball in the past four years by defeating rival Proctor, 57-56, at the Barre Auditorium this past Saturday. The Phantoms had defeated the Westsiders twice during the regular season — the only losses for the West Rutland team.

Saturday's game had more twists and turns than a drive to Lake Horton. Each team showed great versatility and offensive balance in attempting to subdue their familiar foe. In the end, it all came down to senior West Rutland Anna Cyr picking up a loose ball on the right wing with 54 seconds to go, taking two bounces to her left with her right hand, and draining a 20-foot three-point shot to give West Rutland a 57-56 lead.

West Rutland would go on to miss the front end of three consecutive free throw attempts, but Proctor returned the favor with a turnover, a missed layup and a long desperation shot before the game was history. West Rutland — champions again! But just barely.

Proctor had battled back in the fourth period hitting five three-point shots (on seven attempts) to overcome an eight-point deficit that had reached 38-30 midway through the third quarter. And West Rutland, after an early deficit of their own (Proctor jumped out to a 7-2 lead), had dictated much of the early game by combining a rebounding advantage at both ends of the court along with a flat 3-2 zone that appeared to be designed to limit the penetration of Proctor's senior guard Maggie McKearin.

Although McKearin would go on to score 24 points, West Rutland's trapping zone forced many turnovers and limited the Proctor offense in the half court for much of the game. For one of the few times all year, Proctor committed more turnovers than their opponent. Proctor would have 19 turnovers and West Rutland 16.

During the middle portion of the game, when Proctor was trailing 36-23, the Phantoms turned it over 12 times in 42 possessions while making only one three-point shot. The team regrouped, however, and in the final 24 possessions, they committed just four turnovers and



WEST RUTLAND GIRLS pose directly after their Saturday afternoon victory at the Aud.

Reporter photo/Gene Delorenzo

made six three-pointers.

Instead of relying on McKearin's drives into the middle of West Rutland's condensed trapping zone, the Phantoms made the appropriate adjustment and began reversing the ball after the initial double-team and found available shooters. Laci French and Meghan Cole have been cool-as-cucumbers all year and Saturday was no different. They buried shot after shot and soon Proctor was back in the lead at 56-54 with a minute to go. They had even forced WRHS into fouling to get the ball back.

Proctor, however, proved to be more efficient from three-point land (8 of 14 for the game) than from the foul line (just 8 of 17).

Remarkably, but for one three-point shot with 6:30 remaining in the third quarter, Peyton Guay, West Rutland's leading scorer, would not score in the second half. With Anna Cyr and Kenna Wright-Chapman the primary handlers out front, Guay was negated on the wing and did little to affect the eventual outcome.

Big treys by Wright-Chapman and Cyr, along with hoops by Arianna Coombs, Cyr, and Mallory Hogan put the Golden Horde ahead, 54-53, with just under three minutes to play.

Proctor's French would then hit her third three of the quarter with 1:56 to play to retake the lead at 56-54. Then, after a WRHS miss and resultant foul, Proctor would have a chance to build the lead even further.

But a subsequent miss at the line would set up Cyr for her game-changing heroics, hitting the three

and taking the 57-56 lead.

But the game was far from over with just under a minute to play.

Proctor had three more tries with the ball after West Rutland misfired on three consecutive front ends of foul line attempts, but could not score.

McKearin got the ball and drove to the basket with a nifty Euro-step move, but the ball hit the rim and bounced out as West Rutland rebounded, missed on a foul shot and a last-second desperation shot from Proctor from 70 feet was right on target but fell short.

McKearin led all scorers with 24. French added 12, Jenna Davine 8, Isabel Grebs 6 and Meghan Cole also had 6 on her two three-pointers.

For West Rutland, Cyr had 17, Guay 15, Arianna Coombs and Isabel Lanfear, 8 each, Mallory Hogan 4 and Isabella Coombs had 2.

West Rutland finished the season at 22-2, while Proctor ended with an 18-2 record.

Proctor boys defeat Twinfield in playdown opener, lose to Rivendell

PROCTOR — The Proctor boys opened their playoff schedule on Wednesday, March 2, against the Twinfield Trojans and put on one of their performances of the season, rolling to a 57-36 win.

Usually, a No. 8 vs. No. 9 matchup is a tightly contested affair. That would not be the case in this ballgame. All credit goes to the Phantom defensive intensity. From the first possession, the Phantoms lived up to their name. The guys were jumping, leaping, diving, and doing all it took to win the game.

The Trojans missed their first four shots and could manage only 3 for 13 (23 percent) in the first quarter. Throw in five turnovers and you have a team that is going to struggle. For Proctor, it was an impressive defensive performance throughout the game.

Offensively, Proctor got five points in the first quarter from Carter Crossmon, including a big three-pointer giving them an 8-5 lead with 2:23 left. Proctor would not trail the rest of the game. The defensive onslaught

continued in quarter two. Twinfield would shoot 2 for 10 with six more turnovers. Meanwhile, Proctor rolled to a 22-13 lead at halftime. Star scorer Bryson Bourn had a quiet seven points to lead the Phantoms in the first half.

He would come alive in the third quarter, however. A subtle shift in alignment had him move into the middle of the paint at the top of the key. Following a three-pointer by first-year Kerrick Medose of Twinfield, cutting the lead to 26-16, Bourn flashed down the lane, caught the ball, and in Michael Jordan fashion changed hands in mid-air and laid in a left-handed layup. Spectacular!

The play took the wind out of the Trojans. They would score only one basket the rest of the third period. The numbers were strikingly familiar — 2 for 15 from the floor, 7 turnovers.

The start of the fourth period was Twinfield's best performance as they hit four straight shots, cutting the lead to 40-31. But Bourn immediately hit three

in a row and any comeback thoughts Twinfield had disappeared.

Proctor's lead jumped to 17 at 51-34 and a parade of free-throw shooters closed out the game. Bourn with 24 points and Levi Petit with 16 led the way for the Phantoms. Contributions also came from Crossmon with 8, Joel Denton (4), Jacob Patch (3) and Ian French (2).

For Twinfield, Kerrick Medose, with 11, was the only double-figure scorer for the Trojans.

The Phantoms would move to 12-9 on the season. Twinfield finished their season at 9-12.

The limelight for the Proctor boys, however, wasn't to last. On Friday night, March 4, Proctor took on the #1 seed Rivendell Academy. While complete information was not available at press time, Rivendell prevailed 62-38.

Rivendell will next play against Blue Mountain in a state semi-final on Monday night March 7. Rivendell moved to 19-0 on the season. Proctor finished a successful season at 12-10.

Calendar of events

March

10:

Danú Celebrates Traditional Irish Music
Danú will perform live at the Mahaney Arts Center's Olin C. Robison Concert Hall on Thursday, March 10 at 7:30 PM ET. Tickets are \$25 for the general public, \$20 for Middlebury faculty/staff and alumni, \$10 for youth, and \$5 for Middlebury College students. Vaccinations and boosters (or valid medical or religious exemptions) and masks are required.

17:

Brandon Inn throws first-year anniversary party on St. Patty's Day
For all those Irish-loving folk out there, the Brandon Inn is hosting a one-year anniversary party to coincide with St. Patty's Day from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Titled "Let the Shenanigans Begin," owner Joel MacLaren and his team are celebrating their first year in business by bringing in Vermont's premier Irish Band Extra Stout to enliven the festivities with Irish music from 6:30-8:30 p.m. It's a cash bar, and admission includes a delicious dinner of corned beef and cabbage, and much more. Tickets for the celebration are \$22 in advance and \$25 per person at the door, they can be purchased between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the Inn's café, or email: events@BrandonInn.com.

26 27

Maple Open House Weekend at Baird Farm!
Come celebrate the Vermont Tradition of Maple Sugaring from 10:00 am-4:00 pm. Tours throughout the day of our sugarhouse, Boiling demo in the main building (weather permitting), Free Rosemary Waffles and Coffee, Outer Limits Brewing serving maple themed beer, Come Alive Outside (Sat and Sunday) Fun outdoor maple themed activities, Tabling and Grass-fed Beef Raffle by our collaborating farm partner Jamie Hamilton of Hamilton Cattle Company, Maple Themed Giveaway, Maple Syrup tastings as well as sampling of value added maple products (including maple ketchup and maple hot sauces), Availability to purchase any of our maple products, Baird Farm merch, and other items in our farmstore.

Goings on around town



RONALD COLMAN AND Constance Talmadge star in the silent comedy 'Her Sister From Paris'



BUSTER KEATON STARS in two comedies, 'Sherlock Jr.,' and 'Battling Butler'



SILENT FILM ACCOMPANIST Jeff Rapsis will return to Brandon Town Hall to create live music for this year's silent film series

FOTH resumes silent film series with live music in 2022

BRANDON, Vt.—Classics from the silent film era return to the big screen this May at the Brandon Town Hall and Community Center, which will host another season of vintage cinema with live music.

This year's offerings in the historic facility include classic comedy from Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton as well as a 100th anniversary screening of the pioneer horror film 'Nosferatu' for Halloween.

It's the 11th year of the popular silent film series, which gives residents and visitors a chance to see great movies from the pioneering days of cinema as they were meant to be shown—on the big screen, with an audience, and accompanied by live music.

Screenings are held once a month on Saturday nights starting in May and running through November. Admission is free; donations are encouraged, with proceeds to benefit the Town Hall's ongoing restoration.

Over the years, silent film donations have helped support projects including handicapped access to the 19th century building; renovating the bathrooms; and restoring the structure's original slate roof.

Live music for each silent film program will be provided by Jeff Rapsis, a New Hampshire-based performer and composer who specializes in scoring and presenting

silent films.

In accompanying films live, Rapsis uses a digital synthesizer to recreate the texture of the full orchestra. He improvises the music in real time, as the movie is shown.

"It's a real treat to return to Brandon for another season of great silent film," Rapsis said. "If you've never seen one of these movies in a theater, check it out. These films were the pop culture of their day, and retain their ability to hold an audience and deliver a great time at the movies."

First up is Harold Lloyd in 'For Heaven's Sake' (1926), an uproarious romantic comedy which screens on Saturday, May 14 at 7 p.m.

In 'For Heaven's Sake,' Lloyd plays a wealthy young man smitten with the daughter of an impoverished clergyman who ministers to the urban poor.

On the day Lloyd and the girl plan to marry, Lloyd's wealthy country club friends kidnap him to prevent what they see as an embarrassing mistake.

Can the urban mission's petty criminals and chronic alcoholics rescue Harold and get him to the church on time?

'For Heaven's Sake,' promoted with the tagline 'A Man With a Mansion, A Miss with a Mission,' became the year's 4th-highest grossing film, earning \$2.6 million. Critic Leonard Maltin described 'For

Heaven's Sake' as "...a screamingly funny silent comedy."

The screening of 'For Heaven's Sake' is sponsored by Judith Reilly Gallery, Gary and Nancy Meffe, and Pam and Steve Douglass.

Other films in this year's Brandon Town Hall silent film series include:

Saturday, June 11, 7 p.m.: 'The Adventures of Robin Hood' (1924) starring Douglas Fairbanks Sr. 100th anniversary of blockbuster adaptation of the tales of Robin Hood. The top grossing film of 1922! Sponsored by Bruce Ness and Nancy Spalding-Ness.

Saturday, July 23, 7 p.m.: 'Sherlock Jr.' (1924) and 'Battling Butler' (1926). A Buster Keaton double feature showing the stone-faced comedian at the peak of his physical comedy powers. Sponsored by Kathy and Bill Mathis in memory of Maxine Thurston.

Saturday, Aug. 13, 7 p.m.: 'Blood and Sand' (1922) starring Rudolph Valentino in his first starring role, as a sexy bullfighter in this romantic thriller. Celebrating its 100th anniversary! Sponsored by Edward Loedding and Dorothy Leysath, the Hanson Family in memory of Pat Hanson, and Sally Wood.

Saturday, Sept. 10, 7 p.m.: 'The Flying Ace' (1926), rare example of movies pro-

duced for black-only theaters in segregated parts of the nation; added to the National Film Registry in 2021. Sponsored by Nancy and Gary Meffe.

Saturday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m.: 'Nosferatu' (1922) Just in time for Halloween! Celebrate the 100th anniversary of F.W. Murnau's original adaptation of Bram Stoker's 'Dracula' story. Sponsored by Bar Harbor Bank and Trust.

Saturday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m.: 'Her Sister from Paris' (1925) starring Constance Talmadge, Ronald Colman. The scene: Europe. The cast: Rich people. Effervescent battle-of-the-sexes comedy. Sponsored by Harold & Jean Somerset.

See Harold Lloyd in the uproarious rom-com 'For Heaven's Sake' (1926) on Saturday, May 14 at 7 p.m. at the Brandon Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7, in Brandon, Vt. All are welcome to this family-friendly event. Admission is free, with free will donations accepted in support of ongoing Town Hall renovations.

For more information and the latest updates on Covid-19 safety protocols at the Town Hall, visit www.brandontownhall.com. For more about the music, visit www.jef-rapsis.com.



Mim's Photos

Can you identify any of the people in these vintage photos from Mim Welton's Dateline Brandon newspaper archives? Let us know!



E-mail ads@brandonreporter.com
if you can identify someone in these photos.
Or call us at 247-8080



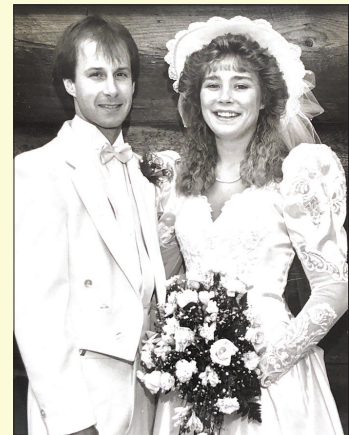
Sanford Rouse of Brandon called to recognize one of the men in the upper right photo of 3 men printed in the Feb 23 edition of the paper. Sanford said the man on the right is Mike Blanchard of Pittsford and used to work for Bill Ryan Auto Sales; then later ran Blanchard Auto Sales in Pittsford.

Terry Ferson of Brandon also called to identify the 3 men as (left to right) Mike Blanchard, Dave Larock, Bob Ryan. Given the conflicting ID, we asked Terry if he was pretty certain about this order and he admitted that he was not 100% certain, but believes he is correct.

Recognized



Terry Ferson also identified Lynn Hallett of Forest Dale in one of the photos printed in the 3/3 edition. Her parents are Bernie and Mary Hallett of Forest Dale. She is married to Reg Ryan and they now live in Proctor. Terry believes the photo was taken at a baby shower.



Terry Ferson was the first to recognize the wedding couple on the right as Greg and Sheila Gearwar of Brandon. Sheila owns Brandon House of Pizza.

Robert Gearwar Sr. also called to identify Greg and Sheila (Brown) Gearwar of Brandon. Greg is a contractor and Sheila is the owner of the popular Brandon House of Pizza.

Kurt Kimball from Brandon was our third caller to identify Sheila and Greg. Thanks Kurt!

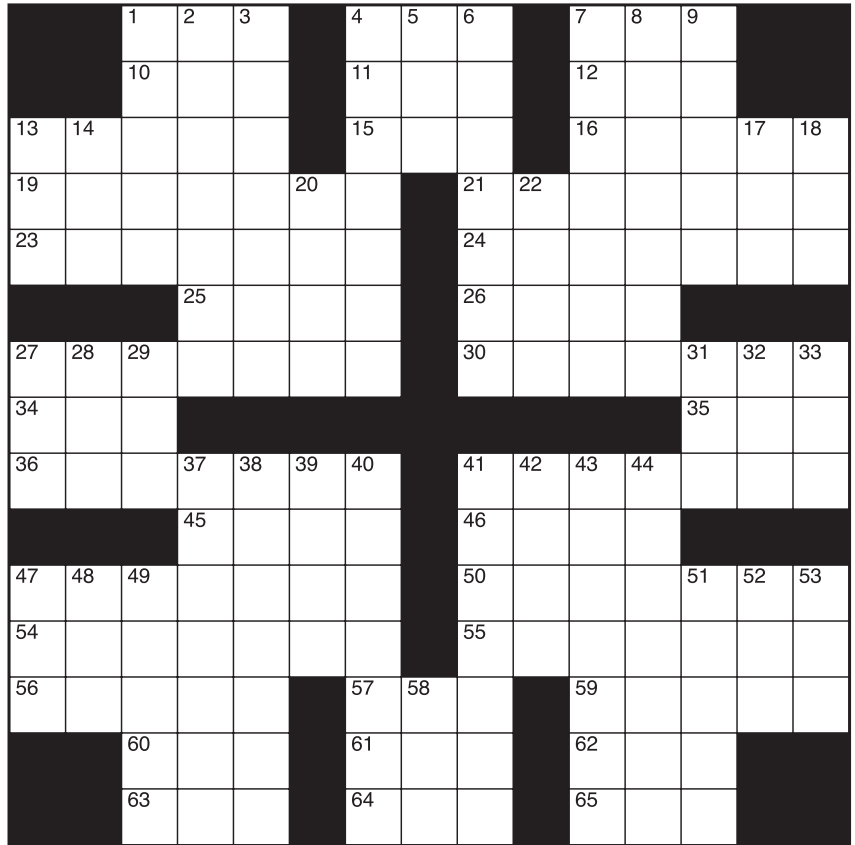
Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Central mail bureau
4. Member of the family
7. Partner to flow
10. ___ Angeles
11. Military mailbox
12. Patriotic women
13. Shallow lake
15. Tear apart
16. Middle Easterner
19. Eat to excess
21. Stained
23. Certain peoples of equatorial Africa
24. 1st day of month
25. Skin disease
26. Skating figure
27. Annelids
30. Gracefully slender
34. Kids need it
35. Swiss river
36. Indents
41. A sheer fabric of silk or nylon
45. Belgian River
46. ___ Spumante (Italian wine)
47. Originate from
50. Rugged mountain ranges
54. Made less clean
55. Professions
56. 3s
57. Scarf
59. Yellow light
60. Bird noise
61. Opposite of start
62. Bar bill
63. Northeastern Mass. cape
64. American rocker Snider
65. Midway between northeast and east

CLUES DOWN

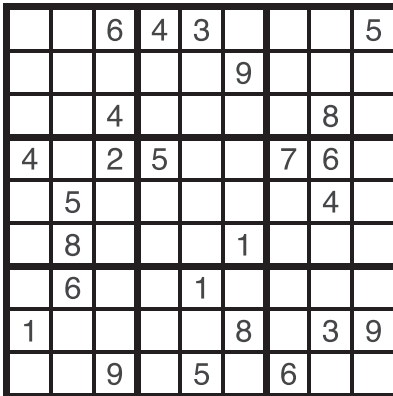
1. Scandinavian drink
2. Washington river
3. Fast-running flightless bird
4. Nerve conditions
5. Indicates near
6. Immediate relevance
7. Things you can eat
8. Receptacles
9. Retired Brewers great
13. Month
14. Happy New Year!
17. Exclamation to convey truth
18. Passports and licenses are two
20. Ebert's partner Siskel
22. Long skirt
27. Part of company name
28. Drugmaker ___ Lilly
29. Electronic countermeasures
31. Klutz
32. Chinese statesman
33. Stir with emotion
37. Flat-bottomed boat
38. Go-between
39. This (Spanish)
40. A plot of ground where seedlings are grown before transplanting
41. Small waterfall
42. Modern tech necessity (abbr.)
43. Utter repeatedly
44. One of the bravest
47. Sun up in New York
48. Space station
49. Chilean seaport
51. Hasidic spiritual leader
52. They ___
53. Soviet Socialist Republic
58. Single unit



Sudoku

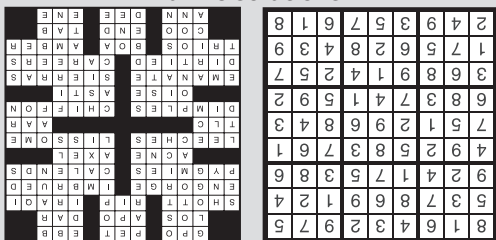
Here's how a sudoku puzzle works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku every row, every column and every box must contain the numbers 1 through 9. Each number must appear only once in each row, column and box. Figure out where to fill in the missing numbers by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers that are filled in, the easier it gets to solve.



Level: Intermediate

Puzzle solutions



Don't forget to license your dog!

It's that time of year again! The Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS) would like to remind you to license your dog(s) by April 1st. Did you know that Vermont state law requires all dogs 6 months and older to be registered with the town clerk in which a Vermont resident resides, and must be renewed every year? In order to get them registered with your town, you will need to have them up-to-date on their rabies shot. It is also state law that all cats are required to have their rabies shots as well. Please check with your veterinarian to make sure your dog and cat are up to date on their shots and make an appointment, if necessary. If you have any questions on how to go about registering your dog, please reach out to your town clerk!

I COULD BE THE NEW FRIEND YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

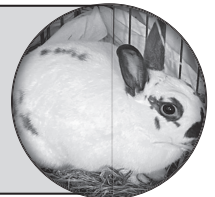


DIESEL - 8-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE. HOUND MIX. BROWN.

My name is Diesel, and I was brought to the shelter in August because my owner could no longer care for me. I am a very sweet boy, and really love people. I walk nicely on the leash and love to run around outside. I can't go home with cats, unfortunately, as I really don't get along with them. I would do best with older kids and have done well with other dogs.

FREDDIE - ADULT. NEUTERED MALE. AMERICAN. BROWN AND WHITE

I am inquisitive and like to investigate any new toys, especially cardboard boxes and tubes, and I love running up tubes and jumping off boxes. I also like to snuffle around and explore any new spaces thoroughly and mid-morning is my favorite time to be most active. If you are looking for two bunnies my best friend Cookie would love to go home with me. I like to see my human friends and come over for a pat when I see anyone pass by. I am not litter boxed trained but maybe with some help I could be.



RUTLAND COUNTY

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**ADOPTION CENTER OPEN
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.**

Off the Shelf

New books at the Brandon Free Public Library

Young Adult Fiction

I Must Betray You by Ruta Sepetys

Seventeen-year-old Cristian Florescu dreams of becoming a writer, but Romanians aren't free to dream. Amidst the tyrannical dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu, Cristian is blackmailed by the secret police to become an informer. He's left with only two choices: betray everyone and everything he loves—or use his position to creatively undermine the most notoriously evil dictator in Eastern Europe.

Adult Fiction

The Paris Apartment by Lucy Foley

Jess needs a fresh start. She's broke and alone, and has just left her job under less-than-ideal circumstances. Seeking respite, she shows up at her half-brother's apartment, but he's not there. The longer Ben stays missing, the more questions she has. Ben's neighbors are an eclectic bunch . . . and everyone knows something they're not telling.

Adult Non-Fiction

Scoundrel: How a Convicted Murderer Persuaded the Women Who Loved Him, the Conservative Establishment, and the Courts to Set Him Free by Sarah Weinman

In the 1960s, Edgar Smith

Did you know?

Part I: We have scenic Vermont paintings by Allen Fitzpatrick on display this month! Allen has graciously donated a painting that you can bid on at the library in a mini silent auction, with proceeds from the sale benefiting the library. Stop in to take a look!

Part II: We're looking for new volunteers! Come chat with us during a free brunch on Saturday March 12 from 10-12 at the Brandon Inn. Contact us for more information or to let us know you're coming! Phone: 247-8230, text: 247-1053, or email: info@brandonpubliclibrary.org.

is in prison and sentenced to death for the murder of teenager Victoria Zielinski. Weinman explores the astonishing story of a murderer who conned the people around him into helping set him free and ponders who is accorded innocence, and how the public becomes complicit in the stories we tell one another.

Biographies

Tony Hillerman: A Life by

James McGrath Morris

The author of eighteen spell-binding detective novels set on the Navajo Nation, Tony Hillerman simultaneously transformed a traditional genre and unlocked the mysteries of the Navajo culture to an audience of millions. Morris offers a balanced portrait of Hillerman's personal and professional life and provides a timely appreciation of his work.

The following large print books were donated by Brenda Whittaker:

"One Step too Far" by Lisa Gardner in memory of Marion C. Sawyer

"City of the Dead" by Jonathan Kellerman in memory of John Trimmer

"Abandoned in Death" by J.D. Robb in memory of Hilda Crosby

"Robert B. Parker's Bye Bye Baby" by Ace Atkins in memory of Arthur E. Sawyer

"Beach Wedding" by Michael Ledwidge in memory of Tom P. Whittaker

"Criminal Mischief" by Stuart Woods in memory of Charles H. Whittaker

"Caramel Pecan Roll Murder" by Joanne Fluke in memory of Matilda E. Whittaker

"Nothing to Lose" by J.A. Jance in memory of "Tish" Holmes Washburn Morris

Brandon Police Report

BRANDON — Along with routine property watches, traffic stops and fingerprinting, Brandon Police responded to several domestic disturbances this week. They received a call from a residence of Forest Dale Road on March 6, then responded to possible sighting of the suspect later in the day. The report was a false sighting.

In other activity police:

On Feb. 28

- Conducted routine business property watches on Furnace Road and Union Street.

- Made two traffic stops for speeding on Grove Street.

- Conducted community policing on Franklin St during an OVUHS during sporting event.

- Assisted Rutland City Police Department in attempting to locate a suspect and vehicle that were involved in a domestic assault in Rutland City. The vehicle was not located.

On March 1

- Removed a mortally wounded deer from the roadside on Grove Street.

- Made a traffic stop on Grove for no registration

- Conducted directed speed enforcement on Center Street

- Conducted traffic control on Franklin Street for OVUHS buses.

On March 2

- Took two sets of fingerprints, one for employment and one for a Mentor Connection volunteer.

- Conducted traffic control on Franklin Street for buses leaving OVUHS.

- Conducted a property watch on a Richmond Road residence.

On March 3

- Conducted four routine property watches on Park Street, Franklin Street and Grove Street, on of which was insecure,

- Conducted a property watch at a residential property of Basin Road.

- Found an open loading dock at a routine business property check in Alta Woods. Nothing was found to be out of order and officers secured the door.

- Assisted a motorist with a disabled vehicle on U.S. Route 7.

- Took fingerprints for a volunteer.

- Conducted traffic control on Franklin Street for OVUHS buses.

On March 4

- Conducted routine business property watches on Conant Square and Watch Hollow Road.

- Made two traffic stops, one on Grove Street for an equipment violation and the other on Champlain Street for a speed limit violation. Both operator were issued tickets.

- Responded to a motor vehicle complaint on Grove Street/Conant Square. Dispatch advised Brandon Officers to be on the lookout for a silver pickup truck traveling south on Grove Street. After searching the area the vehicle was unable to be located.

- Conducted a foot patrol on Center Street.

- Took fingerprints for relicensure.

- Made traffic stops on Franklin Street and Grove street for speeding violations, one of which was a silver Prius clocked at 64 mph in a 50 mph zone.

- Conducted directed patrol, (See Police report 13)

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

LEO July 23-Aug. 23

Leo, the small steps you are taking lately will eventually cover much distance, so keep up the progress. Some things take time and right now it's a lesson to learn.

VIRGO Aug. 24-Sept. 22

Virgo, even if things seem like they are a bit out of control, find ways to put yourself in a good place Slow down and stay grounded as much as you can.

LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23

Libra, only a few months into the new year you may be having trouble staying motivated with your resolutions. A partner or cheering squad can keep you going.

SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22

Physical affection is a great way to showcase your love right now, Scorpio. Take advantage of all the hugs, kisses and subtle touches you can muster in the days to come.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21

Sagittarius, space out your tasks so the week doesn't seem like it is rushed early on. Don't put too much pressure on yourself to get everything done immediately.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20

Look for ways to delve into the arts this week, Capricorn. Explore unique hobbies or visit a museum with a new exhibit. Work with your hands as much as you can.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18

Aquarius, invest in your home space with some upgrades that will add warmth and a feeling of coziness. Creature comforts can have a profound impact on your mood.

PISCES Feb. 19-March 20

This week you will need to assert yourself at work, Pisces; otherwise, others may overlook your contributions. Get what you deserve.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

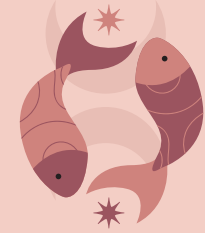
FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

March 10 Pam Oliver, sportscaster (60)
March 11 Colson Whitehead, novelist (52)

March 12 Edward Albee, playwright (d)
March 13 Mikaela Shiffrin, alpine skier (26)

March 14 Diane Arbus, photographer (d)
March 15 Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Supreme Court Justice (d)

March 16 Jorge Ramos, journalist (63)



ARIES March 21-April 20
Aries, the universe is subtly trying to tell you to slow down a bit. Don't ignore those nagging feelings that you should take breaks whenever you can manage them.

TAURUS April 21-May 21
Prioritize your goals and put yourself first for the time being, Taurus. All eyes will be on you and you want to be sure that you are presenting the best version of yourself this week.

GEMINI May 22-June 21
Gemini, take every opportunity to foster growth in your professional ambitions. Network as much as you can and explore continuing learning offerings through your job.

CANCER June 22-July 22
Something surprising may help you feel more connected to the universe around you, Cancer. Sensory overload can be enhanced by spoiling yourself with something special.

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Brandon police

(Continued from Page 12)

monitoring traffic with LIDAR device.

- Conducted community policing on Neshobe Circle at Neshobe Elementary School.

On March 5

Conducted routine business property watches on Forest Dale Road, Grove Street and Rossiter Road.

- Responded to a report of a female that stole a can of beer at Jiffy Mart on Grove Street and then fled the scene in a newer model, black SUV with no license plates on it. Unable to locate the suspect/vehicle.

- Made a traffic stop on McConnell Road. The vehicle oper-

ator was ticketed for 21 MPH over posted speed limit.

- Returned a lost ATM card returned to owner.

- Conducted a welfare check in Conant Square for a possible overdose. Male refused further medical treatment.

- Reported a death to next of kin in Brandon.

On March 6

- Responded to suspicious activity in the area of Owls Way.

- Responded to a domestic assault on Union St. The investigation is ongoing and a be on the lookout was issued for the defendant.

- Responded to an anonymous caller reporting a juvenile driving

a vehicle. The juvenile in question was gone on arrival.

- Received notice of a gun being shot on Furnace Road.

- Responded to two accounts of suspicious vehicles. One vehicle was left behind Hanford Supermarket. Police spoke to the owner and all was OK. The other vehicle was reported on Lake Dunmore Road. The vehicle was involved in DUI and was waiting to be towed.

- Responded to two 911 hangups, one on Carver Street, where resident was OK, and one on Grove Street, where both buildings were secure. Responded to 911 hang up on Carver St; spoke to resident and all OK

- 911 Hangup Grove St Responded to 911 call on Grove St; both buildings secure

Meaning of Life

(Continued from Page 5)

pain; life becomes burdensome to them; it is no longer pleasant; paradise is lost.

We learn from the narrative that there was another reason why the Lord God expelled Adam and Eve from the garden: anxiety. There is another tree, the tree of life, whose fruit presumably makes anyone who eats of it immortal, and the Lord God is anxious that having the knowledge of Good and Evil, the man and woman might eat also of another tree in the garden, the tree of life, and already knowing good and evil, they would “become like one of us”, that is, like God. Is this meant ironically? Why should a God be anxious? Why should a creature cause its creator to become anxious?

So, what is the knowledge of good and evil, and why does possessing it make one like God? Biblical scholars advise that we should not treat this narrative as a philosophical discourse, but as a work of folklore, which probably originated in the oral tradition of some ancient Hebrew tribal community. This does not mean that it does not convey a sophisticated wisdom; it does indeed, but of a sort that cannot easily or routinely be reduced to rational concepts. It’s meaning must be intuited by the imagination also. It is, after all, a story. This does not diminish its profundity; rather, it deepens it.

And there is humor and irony: playing on a human fear of snakes and reptiles; making a mockery of it. And the two trees: if the Lord God created the garden, why did he put them there? And the discovery by Adam and Eve of their sexuality, and their feeling of shame in their nakedness. All of these themes might be better explained by a psychoanalyst than a philosopher, or by

a philosopher who takes seriously the insights of psychology and psychoanalysis. In any case, the story should not be trivialized, or dogmatized, but by reflecting on it, plumbing its depths, which run deep.

I have not finished with this ancient story. Instead, I will conclude this essay with a question. When Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord God’s prohibition of the forbidden fruit, was their action evil, or was it merely wrong? A prohibition, in this instance a divine prohibition, is a rule, and to disobey a rule is, in general, wrong. But “Right and Wrong”, “Good and Evil” don’t mean the same thing. What’s the difference?

Postscript 1: The name Yahweh Elohim requires an explanation. Elohim, as already noted, is a plural noun, it means not God but Gods. Yahweh, is a curious noun, derived from the verb to be; so one may translate it “He who is of the Gods”, or “one of the Gods”, or a prominent member of a divine council that created all things. The use of Elohim as a name for God in the first creation story given in Genesis, and in the same story, the account of

the creation of man in God’s image: “male and female he created them” implies that Elohim is not so much bisexual, but dual: male and female. The opening chapters of Genesis are not, strictly speaking, monotheistic.

Postscript 2: The second chapter of Genesis is noteworthy in another respect: Verse 24 treats the institution of marriage: “Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves unto his wife, and they become one flesh”, that is, they become one life, even one person. Cleaving together refers to the sexual act, which suggests that, at least according to the Biblical text, premarital sex is a contradiction in terms, for the very act constitutes marriage.

Postscript 3: There is still another respect that gives significance to the second chapter of Genesis. The author of the narrative was doubtless gynophobic, blaming original sin on “the woman”, and making this a reason to decree that women be subservient to men, which is sufficient reason to conclude that he—for it was doubtless a man—was not divinely inspired. Nevertheless, it is great poetry.



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See page 11

Classifieds

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED: - Looking for an experienced support staff for a lady in the Pittsford area. This community support position is 15 hours/week. Also looking for a respite person(s) with varied hours. If interested contact Lori 802-779-5999

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR BRANDON DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD (DRB)

On Wednesday, March 23, 2022 at 7:00 PM, via In-Person at Town Hall (1 Conant Square), and via Zoom remote conferencing, the Brandon DRB will conduct a Public Hearing to review Application #6170 from the Town of Brandon (Owner) and its Applicant, Aldrich & Elliott P.C. This application requests conditional use permit for renovations and upgrades, as well as small additions, to the existing municipal Waste-Water Treatment facility at 500 Union Street (Tax Parcel# 24-50-38) This Public Service Use is located in a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area (a Conditional Use), to install new structures in this location require DRB review.

A copy of the application is posted in Town Office, 49 Center St. & www.TownofBrandon.com This Meeting & Hearing may also be attended remotely by Zoom audio & visual programs; and access instructions are posted on Town website, Post Offices, and at Town Office.

Interested Parties are to be registered and present testimony, or have submitted written testimony to the Town, by 7:10 pm of the Hearing date or they may forfeit their right to appeal any decision of the DRB to VT Superior Court (Environmental Division).

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West Rutland's Arianna Alexander on honor list

BANGOR, ME — West Rutland resident Arianna M. Alexander has been named to Husson University's Honors List for the Fall 2021 semester. During the fall semester, Alexander was enrolled in Husson's Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences program.

Students who make the Honors List must be enrolled as an undergraduate student, carry a full-time load of 12 credit hours, complete all attempted courses in the time allotted for the semester, and achieve a 3.40 to 3.59 semester grade-point average.

Like all things vintage?
Mimi's Photos are on page 10!

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 The Town of Fair Haven, VT is seeking qualified applicants for the position of town accountant. This is a full-time exempt position with benefits.

This is an exempt position that oversees the maintenance of comprehensive accounting records for the town. This position is responsible for developing and managing financial management systems and practices for all departments, assuring orderly flow of receipts and expenditure monitoring including cash flow, processing payroll and account payables.

The position is the primary financial advisor to the Town Manager, and is the liaison with the Town Treasurer. An associate's degree in accounting plus two years' experience in municipal government is preferred.

Salary ranges from \$30,000 - \$52,000.
 Salary based on experience.

A complete job description is available at the Fair Haven Town Office.

Send a cover letter and resume by March 31, 2022 to:
 Town Manager, 5 North Park Place,
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Sunshine week

(Continued from Page 4)

This is a reality that should concern us all. Every American should be waving the banner for government transparency. The consequences of secrecy affect not just our ability to have good-faith debates about the issues that matter most, but they also limit our ability to oversee government and the work it does on our behalf. When it comes to transparency, we're all stakeholders.

So, here are a few things we can do to honor Sunshine Week:

- Contact your state representative to discuss strengthening your respective public records and open meeting laws. For example, many states are now considering changes to allow remote participation during government meetings. Be a part of the effort to make access to government easier and more equitable for all Americans.

- Support your local newsroom. Journalists are often the most frequent filers of public records requests. They are typically at the frontlines of obtaining government information despite newsroom budget cuts and inadequate resources. Subscribe to your news source of choice

and be kind to those seeking out information on your behalf.

- Make a public records request. Not sure how? Visit nefac.org/foiguide for video tutorials. Take advantage of your right to know by requesting information about issues that mean the most to you. Then take that information and engage in fact-based conversations with those in your community.

"Thoughtful debate about serious issues is central to our democracy," wrote the authors of the Annenberg study. "But solving real problems is impossible when every issue is viewed through a distorted lens that is often informed by sources who create their own facts to further their own power."

Sunshine laws are integral to thoughtful debate. They can provide us the knowledge needed to form opinions about what's best for this country and how well our government is leading the way. But those laws need to be protected and strengthened. That's something we can all agree on.

Justin Silverman is executive director of the New England First Amendment Coalition. Learn more about the coalition's work at nefac.org.

Devon Karpak

(Continued from Page 1)

riculum and program for a CTE connected pathway for grades 7 through 12, was chosen for this honor and will be supported by the Rowland Foundation both financially and with professional development.

All too often there is a barrier of time to bring ideas to fruition. The Rowland Fellowship allows for schools to create time by awarding each of the fellows up to \$100,000, which can be used to hire additional personnel, meet the needs of implementation of programs for students, as well as travel and time to reflect for the Rowland Fellow instructor.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity and a transformative experience for students, schools and educators alike, said RNE-SU Supt. Jeanne Collins.

Karpak's proposal to build out the school's tech program was chosen for its unique nature. Schools like OV do not currently have opportunities for students in 7th through 10th grade for students to explore careers and take Pre-Tech courses. Otter Valley has been



DEVON KARPAK

lucky enough to have kept their woodshop program active when many other schools are cutting similar programs. In fact, over the past three years Karpak, OVUHS Principal James Avery, with the support of Collins and the OVUU school board have worked to expand the program from primarily wood working to new offerings in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM), and heavy equipment operation (in partnership with Markowski Excavating).

Planned programs to imple-

ment next year and in the near future include building trades with small engines (grant funded from through FFA) and welding in the very near future (spurred on by a grant from the American Welding Society).

Karpak's vision is for the tech-ed program to empower students to create and connect in ways that will enable them to see a direct path to their futures and bring additional meaning and relevance to their high school careers. Additionally, he hopes to build further community partnerships that will help students see that Vermont is a great place to grow up and build a life.

Karpak plans to partner with local manufacturers and employers to assist in fully realizing this community-built program.

Finally, Karpak looks forward to not only continuing to build the program during school hours but to also open up the shop to the community. "This is an amazing opportunity for OV," said Collins, adding that Karpak is ready to work to get students further engaged.

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