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A community supported newspaper

Vol. 29, No. 13

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

\$1

OVUU SB grapples with budget redo, real estate

Re-vote date set for April 30

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The Otter Valley Unified Union (OVUU) School Board met on Tuesday the 19th to reorganize and discuss next steps after its proposed budget failed at the ballot on March 5.

Laurie Bertrand was re-elected Chair, with Natalie Steen as Vice-Chair, and Barbara Ebling as Clerk. Brett Mullins was appointed Representative to the Negotiating Committee. Ms. Bertrand, Ms. Ebling, and Paul Lathrop were appointed OVUU's reps to the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Board. Kevin Thornton was appointed OVUU's rep to the Stafford Technical Center in Rutland.

The majority of the meeting was spent discussing how to proceed in light of the rejection of the proposed school budget of \$27,247,823, which failed on a vote of 891 yes to 1,325 no, approximately 40% to 60%, a "hefty margin," as RNESU Superintendent Kristin Hubert put it.

In an email to The Reporter on the morning after the vote, Ms. Hubert expressed concern that "reductions [in the budget] are likely to impact people and/or programs," given that the Board had not "padded or inflated" the budget. And that sentiment remained on the 19th. The Board now finds itself having to satisfy potentially competing desires for affordability and educational quality.

The Board had found itself already paring down its budget in the wake of Act 127, a recently passed law that capped a district's property-tax increases at 5% if the district kept its budget increase under 10%. OVUU had
(See OVUU, Page 11)



Better late than never

A FIERCE MARCH blizzard dumped more than a foot of snow in the Brandon-Pittsford area this past weekend, with totals exceeding two feet in some parts of the state. After a relatively snowless winter, Mother Nature unleashed everything she'd kept bottled up. And in Vermont, you can't confidently say winter is over until May...

Photo by Steven Jupiter

Brandon SB faces scrutiny over failed budget

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The Brandon Selectboard convened on Monday evening for its first regular meeting after the Budget Committee—which is composed of the Selectboard and six non-voting citizen advisors—revised the proposed town budget on March 18. The proposed budget had failed at the polls on March 5 in a roughly 45% yes/55% no vote.

The March 18 revision stripped approximately \$240K from the failed \$3,796,180 budget—or approximately 6.3%—largely by reducing the \$300K that had been budgeted for paving in FY2025. The reduction in paving was achieved by removing a \$115K paving project (High Pond Road) from

the coming year's calendar and by earmarking \$100K of 1% Local Option Tax (LOT) funds toward the remaining paving projects. These changes reduced the amount of tax revenue needed for paving in FY2025 from \$300K to \$85K.

Regardless, the Selectboard faced strong pushback on Monday from attendees and even from one of their own—Brian Coolidge—for not cutting enough from the budget and for engaging in methods that Mr. Coolidge called "deceiving" and some attendees called "smoke & mirrors."

The thrust of the criticisms was that even with the changes to the proposed budget, the amount to be raised by taxes will still increase by over 10%.

In FY2024 (current year), the amount to be raised by taxes was \$2,737,260. In the revised FY2025 proposed budget, the amount to be raised by taxes will be \$3,032,510, which represents an increase of \$295,250 (or 10.8%). This is even after proposed FY2025 spending was reduced from \$450,030 to \$211,030.

In a year when school taxes are projected to increase by double digits as well, residents are concerned about their continued ability to maintain their homes and provide for their families. Attendees at Monday's meeting insisted that the Selectboard to do more to ease the tax burden on Brandonites.

Board member Tim Guiles pushed back against some of

the criticisms, calling the revised proposal "responsible" and "balanced." Mr. Guiles stated that the Board had an obligation to all of the residents of Brandon, not just to those in attendance. He also cautioned attendees that the budget may ultimately never be as low as some may want.

Attendee Bill Claessens made several specific recommendations that would result in a further reduction of \$49K:

- Taking an additional \$35K for paving from the LOT fund, thus reducing to \$50K the
(See Brandon budget, Page 8)



GARDENING CORNER



March gardens...plan before you plant is best!

BY LYN DESMARAIS

This January, with nearly 200 others, I decided to enroll in UVM's 16-week "master gardener" course. The course is great, I'm learning a ton. I'll share bits, but it's no substitute for the course.

First of all, it's humbling. Let's start with plants themselves. They make their own food. We have to kill something in order to eat, they don't. They can clone themselves! Impressive. They also have sexual reproduction for genetic

evolution. Amazing! And look at how they grow, they actually produce their own limbs, leaves, flowers and seeds! We mammals get bigger, but we don't grow arms, legs, a trunk etc. Fantastic.

In our course, we delve into what makes a plant a plant, soil health, propagation, bug basics, and safely controlling pests. So much of gardening is helped by planning.

"As long as crops have been grown, plant diseases have caused famines, death, and suffering, and were feared as much as war and human disease," said Dr. Ann Hazelrigg at the beginning of the course. Although it's not something we think about much, more than a third of all crops world-wide are destroyed each year.

With climate change, Vermont can expect warming temperatures and more and irregular moisture. New pests, diseases, and fungi that exist further south are headed north.

What can the home gardener do?

There's a disease triangle. Three things must be present at the same time: a susceptible host plant, the right environment, and the pest/disease/fungi. We can do some things—change the host and modify the environment—to make it less "pest-friendly."

How?

We can maintain healthy soil, rotate crops, buy resistant varieties of plants, plant areas for beneficial insects in our gardens, weed, weed, weed! Did



I say weed? Water correctly, mulch carefully, and take advantage of the site's location. Whew! This requires planning before planting, and extra work, but it'll be worth it.

Did you have problems last growing season? Do you know what caused them? Let's start with healthy soil. Do you take a soil test every 3 years? Most soils have everything plants need to thrive. But plants need to be able to use the nutrients in the soil. A soil test will tell you

if your pH (acidity) is letting your plants access nutrients and micronutrients. A soil test will also tell you what, if anything, you need to add to your soil and the amounts. There's no need to guess. It's not true that "if some is good, more is better." It's not a good idea to buy or apply any soil additives until you're told you need them. Healthy plants in healthy soils have a better chance of warding off diseases.

(See Gardening corner, Page 19)



Blooming Bungalow blossoms on Center Street

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The storefront had been inactive for a while. Right next to what is now The River Pub & Grill on Center Street, it had been at various

referring to Blue Moon, which had clothing and accessories on the first floor and gifts on the second. “We were getting so busy and needed more room. I kept looking over at this place and saw it was

a floral-themed mural on the side of building that faces Green Park. More than that, she’s also planning to turn the basement level, which opens out onto the park, into an art studio where folks can

lie said. “This will be a fun way to spend an afternoon or evening.” Allie plans to offer single-session workshops where people with no experience can come in, learn the basics, and leave with a finished project.

“I thought it was so cool that Brandon is called ‘the art and soul of Vermont,’” said Allie. But even with the prominence of the Brandon Artists Guild and the Vermont Folk Art Gallery, “there was nowhere for people to take art classes.”

The studio space is still in progress. Allie hopes to have it open for classes by late spring or early summer.

A tour of the first-floor boutique reveals a lot of the same sort

of charming, eclectic inventory that made Blue Moon a favorite with locals and tourists alike.

“When we had gifts upstairs at Blue Moon, people sometimes didn’t even realize we carried them,” said Allie.

Blue Moon closed for a brief spell last summer, when Allie left to work at a nonprofit and Ellen sampled retirement. But retail is in their blood and they both found themselves hankering to get back into the store. So, Ellen re-opened Blue Moon and soon after floated the idea of a new store to Allie, who wasted no time signing on.

Mother and daughter have the kind of rapport that comes not only from spending a lot of time (See *Blooming Bungalow*, Page 7)



MOTHER-DAUGHTER DUO ALLIE (l) and Ellen (r) Walter stand in their new venture: Blooming Bungalow boutique on Center Street in downtown Brandon. As a companion to their Blue Moon clothing boutique across the street, Blooming Bungalow will focus on gifts, housewares, and plants. Allie also plans to offer art classes on the lower level.
Photos by Steven Jupiter

times Liza Myers’s art gallery, the Vermont Sandwich Shop, and the Pale Horse tattoo and piercing parlor. And now it’s the Blooming Bungalow, a new gift-and-housewares offering from Ellen and Allie Walter, the mother-and-daughter duo who have run Blue Moon Boutique right across the street for years.

“We were getting really crowded over there,” said Ellen last Friday, the new boutique’s first official day of business. She was

available.” Ellen will continue to run Blue Moon as a clothing and accessories boutique while Allie manages the new venture.

What had been a dark storefront is now bright and airy, filled with charming gifts, housewares, and plants. In fact, the name—Blooming Bungalow—refers to Allie’s own living spaces, which have always been bursting with botanicals. An artist herself—some of her pottery is for sale in the boutique—Allie plans to paint

come learn pottery, stained glass, and more.

“Young people are always looking for something to do in Brandon besides going out to eat,” Al-



THE STORE WILL soon have its name in big letters on the front façade and a floral mural, painted by Allie Walter, on the side of the building facing the adjacent park.

Spotlight On Business VERMONT PROTECTIVE COATINGS



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Althea Lamb



BRANDON REPORTER

Guest Editorial

It's time to be thoughtful and truthful, period.

BY LISA PELUSO

The editorial published here last week, "It's Time to Get Real..." is a fearmongering narrative, laden with misinformation and exaggerations. It attempts to paint a bleak picture of Vermont's future under Democratic leadership while promoting an agenda based on flawed reasoning and skewed statistics. Additionally, while it says, "By Terry Burke" in The Reporter, the exact same piece showed up in other publications under different "author" names, which makes it clear that it is not an individual's thoughtful editorial, but an intentional smear campaign. I hope that we are all wise enough to see it for what it is. Consider a more balanced perspective:

Tax Burden: While taxes are an essential aspect of funding public services, the portrayal of Democrats as solely responsible for an unbearable tax burden is misleading. Tax policies are complex and influenced by various factors beyond party lines. Moreover, the proposed taxes are framed in the worst possible light, without acknowledging potential benefits or alternatives. Specifically, the Clean Heat Carbon Tax will NOT "add 70 cents to every gallon of fuel"—this is a fake number, made up, that has been repeated so often people are now starting to believe it. Like other Big Lies, just because it is in the paper doesn't make it true.

Spending and Effectiveness: Claiming that state spending is "out of control" ignores the necessity of investing in programs that support Vermonters,

especially the neediest of our neighbors. It's crucial to evaluate the effectiveness of spending rather than simply decry its magnitude. Additionally, labeling all spending as ineffective is an oversimplification that ignores the positive impact of many state initiatives.

Environmental Policies: The assertion that environmental measures are solely responsible for economic burdens is false. Ignoring the long-term benefits of sustainability efforts and the dangerous costs of inaction does a disservice to Vermont's future generations. Furthermore, characterizing climate action as an attempt to "change the weather" is a gross misrepresentation of the goals of environmental policy, not to mention short-sighted and shockingly ignorant. It's 2024 and whether we choose to believe it or not, climate change is real and we need to be strategic and serious about preventative action.

Crime and Policing: Blaming Democrats for crime issues oversimplifies complex societal factors that contribute to criminal activity. While policing strategies are up for debate, attributing rising crime rates and drug use solely to Democratic policies ignores broader societal trends.

Housing Affordability: Regulations play a role in housing affordability, but blaming regulations alone overlooks the broader economic forces at play. A comprehensive approach to addressing housing affordability should consider factors such as income inequality. (See *Be truthful*, Page 11)



Nature's 'Magic Eye'

A TRIP TO the Island Pond area and Moose Bog in particular is where you, with luck, will find a Spruce grouse.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

Community Forums

Vermont sets national precedent with unanimous House passage of comprehensive data privacy legislation

Montpelier, VT—The Vermont House of Representatives achieved a historic milestone by unanimously passing H.121, an act relating to enhancing consumer privacy, with a resounding vote of 139 - 0.

In a time where our every move, word, and heartbeat are incessantly documented by a myriad of devices, the urgency for comprehensive consumer data privacy laws has never been more critical. Vermont

has a long history of prioritizing consumer privacy protections, and in the absence of federal legislation, we have a duty to protect our own.

Under the leadership of Chair Rep. Michael Marcotte, the Vermont House Committee on Commerce & Economic Development has heard from a diverse range of perspectives from across stakeholder groups and sectors in order

to draft a protective, but largely technology and industry-neutral proposal. He shares, "Consumer protection is of the utmost importance in the State of Vermont. The House Commerce and Economic Development Committee continues its tradition of being a leader in consumer protection and safeguarding data privacy with H.121. We are certain that our colleagues (See *Privacy legislation*, Page 9)

Rutland County Humane Society is in search of land for a new shelter

Our current building's systems are failing, we're out of room and our ability to provide the animals with a healthy environment where they can thrive is diminished. We owe it to the animals, and our community, to ensure they have an improved temporary home until they meet their forever families. Our agency opened its current shelter on

Stevens Road in Pittsford in 1967 and it has served us well over the years but it's time to look to the future.

For the past year and a half, our Board of Directors and RCHS leadership has been hard at work in the planning phase to build a new shelter and home for RCHS. We had a purchase and sale agreement in place for

property in Rutland Town which didn't come to fruition. We are again looking for property in Rutland County for a new home for the animals. We are looking for a piece of land of approximately 5-10 acres centrally located in the county so we can better serve our community. Access to a major road is preferred. (See *RCHS search*, Page 7)

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The Reporter is a nonprofit, community-supported newspaper managed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Current board members are Steven Jupiter, president; Dr. George Fjeld, treasurer; Barbara Ebling, secretary.
Graphic design by Sepi Alavi

Periodicals Postage Paid at Brandon, Vt. 05733

Postmaster, send address change to The Reporter,
58 Maple St., Middlebury, VT 05753 • Phone: 802-388-4944
Email: news@brandonreporter.com, ads@brandonreporter.com

Published every Wednesday in Rutland County by Reporter News Media Corp., Brandon VT.
Member Vermont Press Association; New England Press Association; National Newspapers Association.
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$50.00, SENIORS \$45 • OUT OF STATE SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$60.00, SENIORS \$55
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Letter to the Editor

National political tone is unfortunately seeping into our local discourse

I am responding to the “Guest Editorial” printed in The Reporter (March 20, 2024) by Terry Burke (Rutland County Republican Committee Chair). In case you haven’t noticed, this is part of a larger conservative campaign to oust our lo-

cal representatives who are not Republicans. Flyers are being handed out locally and letters and editorials written with negative, exaggerated platitudes and no policy solutions. Just look at the words and terms they use to describe Democrats

(“multiple crises,” “activists,” “doomed,” “out of control,” “schemes,” “classrooms as indoctrination camps,” “future is..at stake,” etc, etc). Be cognizant of the misinformation and exaggerated claims by these communications and

continue to vote for those who want to have Vermont's future be viable instead of voting for a non-policy driven, backward-looking local Republican party, or what is left of it. The Vermont Republican party is mimicking the National party in

most every way and you can clearly see where that is going. This is the sad fact.

Jay Merluzzi
Brandon

Community Forums Continued

Vermont’s Trout Season set to open on Saturday, April 13th despite snow

Despite lingering snow cover in some areas of the state, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department says anglers can still have fun and be successful early in the season if they keep a few strategies in mind.

“Just like any other time of year, anglers fishing early in the spring should adjust their tactics based on conditions,” said State Fisheries Biologist Shawn Good. “Trout will become more active with warmer water temperatures. If you can find a good location and present your bait or lure without spooking the trout, you’ll have a good chance of catching a few fish, and enjoy a nice day outside.”

Good adds that finding a small to medium low-elevation river or stream that is not too murky from spring runoff can be key. Trout are coldblooded and may be slow to bite especially with low water temperatures, so it is important that they can also see your bait, lure or fly.

Larger baits can often be more effective for enticing early-season trout into biting. Spin-anglers should try night-crawlers, egg imitations, or bright colored spoons and spinners. Fly anglers may find success in the early season by drifting large, more visible flies such as wooly buggers, streamers, or San Juan worms along the bottom in slower pools and runs.

Trout will often hold close to the bottom in the deeper areas of streams during high flow conditions to conserve energy. Choose locations and tactics that allow you to fish using a slow retrieval right along the bottom. Focus on deep holes behind current breaks created by big boulders, downed trees or logjams where trout may be resting. If possible, approach the hole from downstream as trout will often orient themselves facing the current.

While Vermont offers excellent and diverse fishing opportunities for wild trout, stocking also occurs in many lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers where wild trout populations are low or absent. This generally happens each year once the ice has melted and following spring runoff.

“Early in the season, like on opening weekend, you’ll probably have more success if you focus on waters known to hold wild trout,” said Good. “Despite unpredictable weather during early spring, each year anglers report catching impressive trout during opening weekend.”

Good also reminds anglers to check the department’s website frequently as updates are made to the Trout Stocking page. “This is a great tool for anglers to see what nearby waters have been stocked, as the page gets updated several times per week,” said Good. Visit this link <https://anrweb.vt.gov/FWD/FW/FishStockingSchedule.aspx> and click the “See What’s Been Stocked” button to stay informed as the spring progresses.

Anglers who like to fish and release their catch don’t need to wait for opening day. Nearly all waterbodies are now open year-round to catch-and-release fishing for trout in Vermont. Check the 2024 Vermont Fishing Guide and Regulations which is available free from license agents, and it is on Vermont Fish and Wildlife’s website at this link: <https://www.eregulations.com/vermont/fishing/>

A helpful overview of the fishing regulations can be found at: Updated Fishing Regulations Overview | Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department (vtfishandwildlife.com)

The department reminds anglers that in almost all cases regulations have been simplified. For any river, stream, lake,

or pond not listed in the Index of Rivers and Streams or Index of Lakes and Ponds go to General Fishing Regulations on page 52.

I'm pleased with the change in the weekly police reports

I read the police report in your paper weekly, and I am happy that names are no longer published. Let’s not hang our neighbors out for public viewing/shaming. I do not think any

names should be made public without due process and conviction in court of law.

Jessica Doos
Brandon

Leicester News

Dog registration deadline and town bingo fun coming soon



Town Clerk Julie Delphia reminds dog owners of the need to register dogs before April 1.

Cost information available on the town website or by calling office at 247-5961. To avoid possible penalties and fees, get this done before the dog census is completed.

Leicester Historical Society is once again sponsoring Prize Bingo at the Senior Center at the Four Corners on Sat., Apr 13, at 1:00 p.m. All are welcome and refreshments served.



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The Boeing 787 Dreamliner, maintenance, and a little about criminals!

BY CONNIE M. NITE

Hello everyone! How are you this week, my fantastic readers? Are you getting out and about now that we're at the tail end of winter? I'm itching to get into my garden and start the weed pulling process from last year's bounty!

Anyhow, let's get to some more interesting tips and tricks to air travel! This is week five, and for those of you who've been reading every week, it's great to have you back! For our first timers, welcome! This "senior mama" of a quarter of a century of flying around and working for a major airline has some interesting tips and tricks to share in the hopes of having your travel experience be a tad cheaper and a tad more enjoyable! This week we're diving into maintenance, paint jobs, and criminals in shackles. So,

let's get this article started!

Wow! Have you seen the news lately, some of these airlines are having a bad month and thank goodness no ones been hurt! United Airlines seems to be in the news the most lately with its hydraulic leaks, landing-gear collapse, and engine explosion. Oh! Let's not forget the tire falling off and landing on an employee's parked car in the employee parking lot! I can't imagine finishing my four-day trip, excited to head home, going to get my car to find it smashed by a tire! Can you imagine the call you'd have to make to your insurance company! "Yes, that's correct, a tire from an airplane did fall from the sky and land on my car. Yes, my car is no longer drivable, of course I'll hold." I can already see a new insurance-company commercial in the

works!

United Airlines isn't the only airline with maintenance issues lately. Every airline has issues with airplanes at least once a day! Delta has over 4,000 flights a day, Southwest has 3,000, American has 6,700, and United has over 5,000 flights daily! That's a lot of flights and you're bound to have at least a few airplanes experience issues. I'm sure other airlines have had their fair share of issues too, except the media isn't watching them so closely right now. All I can say is, thank goodness no one was hurt, and that's the most important thing!

Let's talk about maintenance! All airlines have a maintenance department and all of them are good! These mechanics do a fantastic job keeping up on the airplane issues, quickly correct-

ing the problems, and getting us underway safely! I will say, once again, the airlines are all about saving money and sometimes they do cut corners by using a term called "deferring" for mechanical issues.

A "deferral" means the airplane is able to fly safely from a non-maintenance base to a base where they can fix it without having to outsource the maintenance, hence costing more money. Now, these "deferral" options are not for major issues; these are for smaller issues like a broken bathroom, or a small dent in the body of the airplane.

I will say, if maintenance is slacking, which I've never known them to do, then perhaps it's their airline's management placing stress on the mechanics to keep operations at full function. It's always about the bottom line, and money is always the bottom line.

On the flip side, though, mechanics aren't afraid to stand their ground. They will say "no" to signing off on a mechanical issue if they're not satisfied it's safe. It's their name on the line if something happens. Also, many of them have families flying on these airplanes and they just overall want to make sure everyone is safe. So, don't let a bad run of mechanical issues scare you from flying or put fear in your heart about traveling. Airplanes are still the safest way to travel!

Ok, let's talk about the Boeing 787 Dreamliner Airplane for a minute and I'll tell you some of its cool features. Boeing really did pretty good in designing the 787 airplane. The seats are still small; however, the bathrooms are bigger, you can control the light coming into your window by pushing the "tint button," and you have your own on-demand television system with a USB charging port right in front of you, and you have Bluetooth pairing earbud access! The air quality is better because of its filtration system, and lastly, it's just a great airplane! Most of the time you'll see a 787 on those long overseas flights. Rarely will you see them domestically. However, never say never! Right now, my airline is flying them coast to coast until we can resume flying to locations in the Middle East. Nothing like having a missile trying to shoot your airplane out of the sky when you're trying to land or take off. Yes, it has happened! I hope you all get a chance to fly on the 787 Dreamliner but don't expect to see them out of the Burlington or Albany airports!

One thing I don't like about the 787 is the composite material the airplane is made of and how the paint peels, leaving the structure of the airplane's composition material open to ultraviolet radiation exposure. No, thank you! So, if you're ever (See Let's Fly, Page 9)

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Legislative Report

BY STEPHANIE JEROME

Midway point of 2024 session

We are at the intense midway point in the House of Representatives - this is the time of year called “cross-over.” All policy bills needed to be voted out of their respective committees by March 15th and all money bills needed to pass out by March 22nd. Next week will be devoted to more policy bills on housing, judiciary, health care, and income and spending bills. Here are some of the major bills that have passed since my Town Meeting Report.

H.121: Data Privacy

Vermont is paving the way for our data privacy! I am so proud that the Vermont House unanimously passed the comprehensive Data Privacy Act (H.121) under the leadership of Chair Rep. Michael Marcotte, myself, and Rep. Monique Priestly. This groundbreaking legislation ensures your right to access, delete, and correct your information, plus opt-out of data sales and targeted ads. Vermont is set to become the 15th state to champion consumer data privacy, aiming to be a national model! This is a strong consumer protection bill that safeguards Vermonters and Vermont businesses. I have been working on this bill since last summer, and proud to see it be voted out of the House and on to the Senate.

H.706: Pesticide Controls

This bill would restrict the use of neonicotinoid pesticides while protecting farmers from undue harm. Neonicotinoids come in the form of treated corn and soybean seeds which are highly toxic to bees and other pollinators, posing a threat to our food system. H.706 takes a targeted approach that reins in

the use of the pesticides known to be wreaking havoc on pollinator populations and ecosystem health. The bill provides significant provisions for a just transition for farmers and lines up with a similar bill passed in New York.

H.289: Energy Policy

This bill modernizes our existing renewable energy standard and is an essential piece of our climate policy. It moves Vermont to 100% renewable energy faster, and it aligns with the ongoing shift to electrify our heat and transportation sectors. H.289 is carefully structured to work for large and small utilities across Vermont. It builds in flexibility in meeting our renewable energy goals and has robust stakeholder support. The shift to renewable energy reduces Vermont's carbon pollution and promotes energy security and price stability.

H.686: Infrastructure

Vermont's transportation system is crucial to every resident and business. It serves as the backbone of the economy and is a critical component of Vermont's economic competitiveness. This is a step towards a 21st-century transportation system that is clean, accessible, and affordable. H.686 will invest nearly \$880 million to maintain critical roads and bridges and build infrastructure that supports more walking, biking, and public transit in communities, while also making important progress towards our goals to reduce carbon emissions and build resiliency in our transportation infrastructure.

H.766: Healthcare

"Our healthcare providers

have told us for years that burdensome paperwork takes time away from caring for patients and continues to cause extreme burnout," said Rep. Lori Houghton, Chair of the House Health Care Committee. H.766 ensures health care decisions are made between a patient and their provider, not an insurance company. The bill aligns prior authorization requirements across multiple payers and creates guardrails around the timeframes for payers to respond to prior authorization requests. This bill is a significant step forward in reducing provider burden and improving Vermonters' access to medical care.

Thank you to the 25+ folks that came out on Sunday for the Brandon Dems Social at Red Clover. It was a great opportunity to speak about issues that are of concern to us. Special thanks to Representatives Will Notte and Peter Conlon, who spoke about public safety and education, and to Red Clover Ale for allowing us to host our event at their space.

As always, feel free to reach out to me with issues that are of concern to you. I truly appreciate all the emails that I receive in support of or against bills that are being considered by the House. I can be reached at 802-6838209 or sjerome@leg.state.vt.us.

*Take care,
Rep. Stephanie Zak Jerome
(Brandon)*

*VT House of Representatives
www.stephaniejeromevt.com
<https://legislature.vermont.gov>*

RCHS search

(Continued from Page 4)

able and property with electricity and access to public water and sewer is ideal, although not a requirement. Please reach out to Beth Saradarian, Executive Director at shelterbeth@rchsvt.org or 802.483.6700 ext. 211 with any ideas or suggestions. Together we can find the perfect spot for our animals and our community.

Founded in 1959, for over

65 years the Rutland County Humane Society has been dedicated to advocating for and working toward a responsible and humane community. RCHS provides shelter and adoption opportunities for pets who are homeless and promotes animal welfare through community programs that benefit both animals and people. RCHS is a private, non-profit organization serving the 28 communities of

Rutland County, VT. RCHS receives no financial support from any national or local humane organization. Programs are supported solely by donations, memberships and fund-raising events.

For more information about RCHS and/or available land, please contact Beth Saradarian, Executive Director, at 483.6700 ext. 211 or e-mail shelterbeth@rchsvt.org.

Correction

In the March 13 issue of The Reporter, we misspelled Calvin Merritte Griffin's name under the photograph in his obituary. We apologize to Mr. Griffin's family and to our readers for the error.

Blooming Bungalow

(Continued from Page 3)

together but from truly understanding what makes each other tick.

"We play off each other well," said Ellen.

"It feels full circle," said Allie. "Crafts are more my passion than clothing, so this feels natural. And I really missed being part of the community. I was feeling really removed."

Ellen smiles and adds, "There's so much community here. Brandon really has it going on now."

The addition of Blooming Bungalow to the Center Street retail lineup—Blue Moon, Carr's Gifts, the Artists Guild, and Across the Street Antiques—will reinforce Brandon's growing reputation as a day-trip destination for those looking to shop and dine.

Though the store is open for business already, a "grand opening" event will be held the weekend of April 12 - 14. In the meantime, come check out the carefully selected goods and welcome Allie back to Center Street.

You are invited to our

EASTER BRUNCH

With Easter just around the corner, we at Neshobe Golf Club are delighted to extend an invitation for you and your loved ones to join us for a sumptuous

Easter Brunch

on Sunday, March 31st, from 10 am to 3 pm.

Indulge in a delightful culinary experience amidst the serene ambiance of our club. From traditional Easter favorites to delectable seasonal delights, our menu promises a feast for the senses. You can preview our Easter Brunch Menu here.

To ensure we can accommodate you comfortably, reservations are required.

Please RSVP by calling (802) 247-3611 at your earliest convenience.

Make this Easter memorable by treating yourself and your family to a delightful brunch at Neshobe Golf Club.

Let's Keep in Touch!
Don't miss a beat! Stay up to date by following us on Facebook. If you love our course, make sure you like our page!

Brandon budget

(Continued from Page 1)

amount to be raised by taxes over for paving

- Cutting \$2,500 from equipment expenses
- Cutting \$5,000 from guard-rail maintenance
- Cutting \$5,000 from road salt expenses
- Cutting \$1,500 from tree maintenance
- Tapping into the town's General Fund, which currently has over \$700K

Town Manager Seth Hopkins defended the original line items and warned against further depleting the LOT fund to lower taxes, since the town relies on those monies to match grants. And in response to attendees' request to hold another Budget Committee workshop for further revisions, Mr. Hopkins cautioned that much of the increase in requested tax revenue in FY 2025 was due to the use of General Fund and LOT monies in FY2024 to lower the amount needed to be raised by taxes. Without those injections of cash, the difference in needed tax revenues between FY2024 and FY2025 would not be so pronounced, suggesting that the appearance of excess costs in the proposed FY2025 budget was misleading.

Despite the calls for another workshop from attendees, some of whom were on

the budget advisory panel, the Board did not vote to schedule another budget workshop. And the motion to accept the March 18 revision did not pass on a 2-2 vote, with Mr. Guiles and Heather Nelson voting to accept it and Mr. Coolidge and Ralph Ethier voting nay (Board Chair Doug Bailey was absent from the meeting because of an injury.)

The Board will now have to vote again on Monday, April 8 to adopt the revised budget in anticipation of the townwide re-vote on April 30, which the Board set on Monday evening to coincide with Otter Valley's budget re-vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

In preparation for the influx of visitors for the eclipse on Monday, April 8, the Board voted to set the traffic lights in downtown Brandon to caution (allowing a freer flow of traffic on Route 7 through town); to station police officers to supervise traffic in downtown; to prohibit use of the stretch of Carver Street from the bridge to the Pittsford line; to prohibit use of Long Swamp Road from the intersection of Short Swamp Road to Burr Pond Road; and to possibly close Stone Mill Dam Road. These precautions will be taken to minimize traffic and the possibility of visitors becoming mired in muddy

roads because of their GPS.

The Board voted to allow the Gran Fondo bicycle race on June 29 to use roads in Forest Dale, specifically Route 73 and North Street. The roads will remain open for regular traffic during the event.

The Board voted to appoint Dan Snow and the Brandon Representative to the Rutland Regional Transportation Commission, with Jeremy Disorda as alternate. Mr. Disorda is the Foreman of Brandon's Highway Department, which also employs Mr. Snow.

The Board voted to waive the town policy that prohibits Selectboard members from serving on other town committees so that Mr. Ethier could continue to serve as an alternate on the Development Review Board. Mr. Ethier abstained from the vote.

The Board voted to accept the proposed winter operations policy. The full text of the policy can be found in the Selectboard packet for 3/25/24 on the town's website.

The Board voted to approve a warrant in the amount of \$99,091 to satisfy the town's expenses and obligations. The Board also approved a transfer of \$99,000 from one bank to another as part of the town's management of funds.

Brandon Town Manager's report

FOR THE AWARENESS OF THE TOWNSPEOPLE

The school district has set its budget re-vote for Tuesday 30 April. For that reason, I recommend the selectboard considering scheduling the Town budget re-vote for Tuesday 30 April rather than our previously proposed date which was two weeks earlier. The special Town Meeting would customarily be the evening before the vote.

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

I am providing the selectboard a recommendation for a diversity of viewpoints that would be helpful to have represented on the downtown parking challenges working group.

FOCUS AREAS DURING REPORTING PERIOD

The monthly progress meeting with the engineers and contractors on the Wastewater facility upgrade was productive; current projections remain that the project will be completed in May with follow-up financial work ongoing through the summer.

Likewise, Watershed Consultants facilitated a meeting with the Town (me and Bill), State, and New England Woodcraft to advance the stormwater management project there. The Town is the grant applicant, and this will assist Woodcraft in meeting their 3-acre stormwater requirements. The Town had previously agreed to maintain the system after its installation. As a result of our conversation with the principals of Woodcraft this week, some revision to exact location of the new management system is now under consideration based on dynamics of the way the site is used. The budget line for "Contractors" in the Highway budget was exceeded in FY23 due to conducting our State-required annual maintenance and inspection on the downtown stormwater vault sand filters that were installed as part of Segment Six. The "Vactor" truck that does this work is costly. This truck plus the engineer's certification is why the FY25 budget for this line has been increased. While the stormwater management project at Woodcraft is a different layout than downtown, the Vactor truck and engineer's certification will still be necessary for this new site.

Tim Guiles and I remotely attended the penultimate eclipse preparedness training offered by Vermont Emergency Management. We will be offering a short series of preparedness bulletins for Brandon residents to ensure their resilience during the projected influx of perhaps 150,000 visitors into Vermont over the April 4 - 7 weekend and a predicted mass exodus of the same amount of folks but almost all at the same time on Monday evening April 8th.

Jeremy Disorda, Bill Moore, and I conducted interviews with two applicants for the public works position (interdepartmental highway and buildings and grounds) and extended an offer of employment to Brandon resident Winston Forbes, which was accepted. We welcome Winston to the Town Crew and look forward to how he will apply his knowledge and skills as a member of this dedicated team.

A major area of work this period was the revision of the budget proposal by organizing discussions with staff and preparing information for the successful March 18th workshop with the public and the budget advisory committee. Thank you to the selectboard for their leadership of that meeting and for creating solutions which are responsive to concerns expressed at and since the Town Meeting by both community members in general and by the budget advisory committee. The school has advised that their budget revote date is Tuesday 30 April. Accordingly, the aspirational schedule (preference) I had announced at the March 18th workshop will not be feasible for the sake of efficiency of staffing our election.

Collaborative work with FEMA is ongoing to refund the Town for its response to the July 2023 floods; continued

(See TM report, Page 9)

DON'T BE STUMPED

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST IS UNDER THREAT

Act now to stop the destructive 12,000 acre Telephone Gap logging project

Act Today to Protect Vermont's Public Forests

Scan to Sign Petition

SPREAD THE WORD!

Have an event to add to our calendar?

EMAIL US AT NEWS@BRANDONREPORTER.COM

Let's Fly

(Continued from Page 6)
 delayed because of a “paint job,” it means you really need paint or speed tape applied to keep the breakdown from spreading within the airplane. Why use this material instead of the old-style metal framing? Yup, you guessed it because it’s lighter, uses less fuel, and costs less money to fly!
 Lastly, for this week, let’s talk about those criminals flying around on all airline carriers! I once had to move an entire row with a mom and her two kiddos. The mom yelled at me, tried to argue, and just didn’t understand why she had to pack up and move to a different row. I totally understood where she was coming from. However, I couldn’t really tell her, “Yes, I understand, but there is a convicted murderer sitting directly behind your 3-year-old daughter, and because the law enforcement officers need to be humane and unlock his shackles for him to drink water, well it’s just a chance we don’t want to take. Given he’s on death row he might grab your baby and try to hurt them to gain

leverage. So, I’m so sorry the gate agent screwed up, but I really need to move you and the kiddos.” Could you imagine the look on her face? To this day she probably thinks I was the meanest flight attendant ever, and little does she know I was only trying to keep her and her kiddos safe. That’s ok, what she doesn’t know won’t hurt her! So, if you’re ever asked to move with kids, just remember there is often times more going on than meets the eye!
 I’ve run out of time this week to talk about those criminals and their shackles. So, come join me next week where I’ll continue talking about some more interesting tips and tricks to airline travel! Adding to the criminal chat, I’ll talk about passengers who die on our airplanes, where we put their bodies, and why. Signing off from this “senior mama” wishing you all sunny Spring gardening days ahead! Take care and fly safe! Oh, and don’t forget to bring your crews chocolates... we love chocolates! Fly on!

Privacy legislation

(Continued from Page 4)
 in the Senate will continue to follow the tradition of strong consumer protection leadership and will continue to work in partnership with other states in order to maintain a protective legislative force in the era of big data.”
 Consumer data privacy bills are incredibly complex and interconnected - definitions, consumer rights, business obligations, and exceptions exist in a delicate balance and even seemingly small changes in language can have cascading effects. House Commerce and Economic Development Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Stephanie Zak Jerome adds, “Data privacy is a vitally important topic and rightfully should be a federal law. In the absence of federal legislation, 14 states have passed data privacy legislation to protect consumers - Vermont is poised to be the 15th and a national model.”
 The Vermont Data Privacy

Act champions crucial consumer rights. It gives people the ability for individuals to access, delete, and correct the information that businesses have about them as well as to opt out of the use of personal data for targeted advertising, data sales, and significant automated profiling decisions. It adds affirmative opt-in consent requirements around the collection and processing of sensitive personal data - including information about health status, demographics, and precise geolocation.
 As the uses of big data and advanced analytics expand, where Vermonters’ personal information is commodified without explicit consent, it is increasingly crucial that we establish a set of rules that balance the needs of business operation with consumer protection. Reporter of the bill, Rep. Monique Priestley stated, “By embracing legislation that consumer privacy advocates EPIC & VPIRG are

touting as one of the strongest in the United States, we have the opportunity to safeguard our personal freedoms, ensure equitable treatment in the digital landscape, and reclaim control over our digital footprints. It is crucial that we protect Vermonters in the face of unchecked technological expansion and to secure a future where data privacy is not just a privilege, but a fundamental right.”
 “I am immensely proud of our commitment to protecting the privacy rights of Vermonters,” said Speaker of the Vermont House, Rep. Jill Krowinski. “The passing of this landmark data privacy bill signifies a monumental step towards ensuring the security and dignity of every Vermonter in the digital age. Our collective efforts have brought forth legislation that not only reflects our values but also sets a standard for the nation. I commend all those who have contributed to this vital initiative.”

TM report

(Continued from Page 8)

positive FEMA progress reports for all four projects are in-hand.

Collective bargaining with NEPBA (police union) awaits the union’s response to the selectboard’s communication of 11 March.

I had many meetings with town officers, staff, and townspeople and responded to many requests for information from various parties.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT	
Operating Expenses	78% thru funds / 75% thru year
Unrestricted / Unassigned Fund Balance	\$718,865
1% (Local Option) Tax Fund Available / Undesignated	\$247,778
Known Grant Matches Not Yet Designated	UNION STREET
Delinquent property taxes (prior years)	\$334,403 (was \$341,988)
Delinquent wastewater (prior years [over 120 days])	\$188,866 (was \$191,571)
Number of <u>payment</u> plans for delinquent accounts	23 <u>active</u> ; 3 await taxpayer signature

FOR AWARENESS OF THE SELECTBOARD

Chief Kachajian has recently completed a weeklong training curriculum as part of the FBI Command College.

Chief Kachajian has complete the steps required to close out the federal technology grant for the proposed electric police motorcycle that the selectboard declined; these funds have been returned to the US Department of Justice for reallocation to another agency.

TOWN MANAGER’S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA:

I recommend approval / adoption of all warned items presented tonight.

*Respectfully submitted,
 Seth Hopkins
 Town Manager*

SOLAR ECLIPSE WEEKEND

APRIL 5-8, 2024
 BRANDON, VT

Join us for this small-town experience of a big time event!

YOU WON'T REGRET IT!



SOLAR ECLIPSE ON 4/8

PLUS MUSIC, ARTS, HISTORY & ENTERTAINMENT, GREAT FOOD, CRAFT BEER, LOCAL WINERIES, MOONSHINE DISTILLERY - SELECTION TO QUENCH EVERYONE'S THIRST!

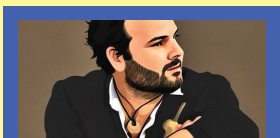
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LEARN MORE: brandon.org



"PATH OF SHADE" ARTIST GUILD SHOW
 RECEPTION 4/5/24



JOSHUA COLLIER "MOONLIGHT IN VERMONT"
 4/6/24



Among the Stars CABARET
 4/6/24



ZOMBIE WALK
 4/7/24



MAIDEN VERMONT CONCERT
 4/7/24

STUDENT: Asta Gamba

GRADE: 8

SCHOOL: Otter Valley
Middle School

TITLE: Value Painting

MEDIUM: Tempera

TEACHER: Dasha Kalisz

OUR CREATIVE KIDS



Statement from Ms. Kalisz:
Students were working with value scale by taking a hue (color) and mixing it with white to create a tint or black to create a shade.

OVUU

(Continued from Page 1)
already slashed \$500K from its earliest draft proposals in order to meet that criterion. It now finds itself needing to find even deeper cuts to satisfy voters.

And the Vermont Legislature came to believe that Act 127 had actually encouraged some districts to pad their budgets, since they could go up to 10% while keeping tax increases below 5%. In response, the Legislature passed H.850, which repealed the 5% cap, opening up the OVUU district to potentially greater tax increases despite all the cuts.

To compound frustrations, the Board has scheduled the re-vote on the budget for April 30 but must notify teachers of any Reduction in Force (RIF) by April 15. An RIF is a notification by the district that a teacher will not be renewed for the coming school year. So, the Board will not be able to make additional cuts to teaching staff if the budget fails on the 30th because the deadline for RIFs will have already passed. The Board would then have to make cuts in other areas, such as athletics, clubs, afterschool activities, facilities, etc.

Brenda Fleming, RNESU's Director of Business & Finance, led the Board through several scenarios, outlining the dollar values of the reductions needed to reduce school taxes by certain amounts.

To realize an average yearly savings of \$13.60 per \$100K of assessed property value across the district, the budget would need to be cut by \$207,535, which represents a reduction of 1¢ on the tax rate. By extension, to realize an average yearly savings of \$136 per \$100K of assessed property value across the district, the budget would need to be cut by \$2,075,350, which represents a reduction of 10¢ on the tax rate.

This means, for example, that a taxpayer whose home is assessed at \$300K would save \$40.80 per year if \$207K were cut from the budget. If roughly \$1,000,000 were cut from the budget, that same taxpayer would save approximately \$204 per year.

"Cutting \$1,000,000 is cutting a lot of people," said Ms. Bertrand.

Board member Kevin Thornton noted that morale among the teaching staff would suffer greatly if cuts to personnel were limited to the schools and not

also made among administrators at the district's Central Office, to "spread the pain." Ms. Hubert assured the Board that all options are being considered.

Ultimately, however, the Board must contend with forces beyond its control: real-estate values. According to Ms. Fleming, much of the anticipated tax increases this year are the result of increased property values across the district. Since Grand List values often lag behind fair-market values, the state has devised a measure called the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) to bring the two values more in line.

The state looks at the property sales in a town over the previous three years and compares the sales prices to the assessed values of those properties. Over the past three years, driven in large part by COVID refugees from urban areas, sales prices across Vermont have risen sharply, creating a large gap between sales prices and Grand List values. For example, Brandon currently has a CLA of 74.69%, which means that a home that sold for \$100,000 would likely have a Grand List value of only \$74,690.

The state views this gap as inequitable, since education tax rates are set by property values. Communities whose real estate is worth significantly more than the real estate's assessed value are seen as underpaying on the value of their homes. Because the state cannot adjust the fair-market value of real estate, it adjusts the assessed value for tax purposes, in order to ensure that homeowners are paying taxes on what their properties are currently worth. The lower a town's CLA, the more the state will adjust the town's tax rate upwards to compensate for the difference.

The increase in property values across OVUU's constituent communities has all but guaranteed a significant increase in education tax this year regardless of cuts to the budget.

"Draconian reductions will not bring us to 0% increase in tax," said Ms. Fleming.

But the Board is still expected

Ultimately, however, the Board must contend with forces beyond its control: real-estate values.

the MAPLE COW™ by Matt Aucoin



to present a new, reduced budget to the voters. At its meeting on March 20, the RNESU Board cut \$164,000 from its budget. OVUU's portion of that cut will go towards the first \$207K in cuts in OVUU's own budget (RNESU covers both Otter Valley and Barstow in Chittenden.)

"It would be a slap in the face if we offered the same budget," said Brett Mullins.

The district has chosen Tuesday, April 30 for the re-vote, which will coincide with

the re-vote on the failed Brandon town budget. The Board will meet again on Tuesday, April 2 to review the scenarios prepared by Ms. Fleming. It will meet again on April 9, which is the latest date by which the Board can adopt a new proposal and still hold a vote on the 30th. If a new proposal is adopted by the 9th, the Board will then hold a public meeting to discuss the new budget on Tuesday, April 23 in anticipation of the re-vote on the 30th.

Be truthful

(Continued from Page 4)
ity, market speculation, and access to affordable financing. In fact, our state reps are working hard to foster solutions and spur housing creation in areas that already have robust infrastructure. Just ask them!

Education: Education reform should prioritize evidence-based strategies rather than political ideology. While focusing on core subjects is important, labeling educational approaches as indoctrination is divisive and disregards the diverse needs of students. It's another example of repeating the scariest of phrases from a partisan media source to instill fear in constituents.

The editorial from last week also promoted an acronym (catchy and vague) program

outlining certain policy proposals.... But its effectiveness and feasibility warrant careful scrutiny. Blanket endorsements without thorough evaluation can lead to unintended consequences and exacerbate existing issues in our state. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Vermont's challenges require thoughtful, evidence-based solutions rather than partisan rhetoric and fearmongering. By engaging in constructive dialogue and prioritizing the well-being of all Vermonters, we can navigate the complexities facing our state and build a brighter future together—one that benefits all Vermonters, not just a select group.

Lisa Peluso is a resident of Brandon.

Mim's Photos
Like all things vintage?
are on page 16!

Calendar of events

March

Mondays

Brandon Rec offers Aikido classes

Come to Brandon Town Hall for Youth classes at 5 p.m., and adult classes at 6 p.m. Beginners and spectators welcome. Visit www.aikidovermont.org for more information, including fees.

Tuesdays

Maclure Library Story Time Playgroup

Looking for a fun, educational playgroup for your 2-5 year old? Look no further! From 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. join Miss Allie, a certified teacher, for a weekly FREE literacy-based playgroup. Light snacks will be provided, along with stories, crafts, songs, games, and more. To register, please email allie.griffiths@rcpcc.org with your child's name, age, and contact information for your family.

Friends Zone

The Friends Zone will be initially open 3 hours per week at the Brandon United Methodist Church on Tuesdays from 12-3 p.m. at 1 Franklin Street, Brandon. Socialize with old friends, make new ones. Sip some soup while you sip a drink. Be puzzled for a bit, sorting out a puzzle, or hold an Ace in the hole until the right moment to play it. If so inclined, you can bring to the table a struggle of your own to work on or your thoughts on developing the Friends Zone or improving our lives.

The door is open. Our minds are open. Our hearts are open. All are welcome in.

MACLURE LIBRARY PITTSFORD VILLAGE FARM LOTHROP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PITTSFORD REC DEPARTMENT OTTER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

PITTSFORD ECLIPSE PARTY

JOIN US ON **MONDAY, APRIL 8TH** AT THE **PITTSFORD VILLAGE FARM** FROM 2-4PM TO VIEW THE ECLIPSE AND LEARN ABOUT THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME SOLAR EVENT!

FREE ECLIPSE GLASSES, ACTIVITIES & MORE PROVIDED BY ECHO & STAR NET

CONTACT@MACLURELIBRARY.ORG 802.483.2972

For more information contact pastors Reverend John Hardman-Zimmerman (hzfm@hotmail.com or (802) 282-7532) or Vicki Disorda (vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com or (802) 345-4125).

Pins & Needles Craft Club at the Brandon Free Public Library

Drop in from 5:30-7:00 p.m., and bring your projects to work on.



Wednesdays

Ping Pong

The Green Mountain Table Tennis Club would like to announce the beginning of its new season!

The club has begun playing on Wednesday evenings starting at 7 p.m. It will meet nearly every Wednesday year-round in the gym at the Rutland Area Christian School in Rutland, located at the corner of Melrose Ave. and Lincoln Ave. in Rutland, a block from the intersection of Route 7

Brandon Congregational Church Easter services

March 28th- Maundy Thursday service at 7:00 pm in Fellowship Hall- This will be a Last Supper format around a large table in Fellowship Hall

March 31st- Sunrise service 6:00 am at the Stewarts House on 1329 Arnold District Rd.

March 31st- Easter Service at 10:00 am in the sanctuary

All are welcome! Email questions to brandoncongregationalchurch@gmail.com

and Melrose Ave. (110 Lincoln Ave., Rutland, VT 05701).

Being a part of this unique and exciting club offers a variety of activities, including regular practice, a challenge board, clinics for beginner and advanced play, singles and doubles, inter-club events with other table tennis clubs, and even tournaments.

If you are interested in table tennis as a recreational or athletic activity, we're interested in you! There is a modest membership fee of only \$30, although you can come twice free as our guest. Bring your sneakers and paddle (or use ours) and have some fun playing a great game of "Pong!" For further information about the Green Mountain Table Tennis Club, visit our club's website at www.gmttc.com.

Yoga Prana Shakti Zoom & Studio Chair Yoga, Gentle, Wednesdays

From 10:30-11:30 a.m. at 155 Woodstock Avenue in Rutland, Lina Cloffe Hanson (Parvati) offers an Earth Conscious, Spiritual, Gentle Physical Yoga Practice. We meet on Mondays via zoom. Contact for Zoom link. (There is also a Monday Zoom only class)

Not everyone can get up and down off of the floor easily, making traditional yoga classes difficult. If you have physical limitation or a health issue this might be the ideal class for you. With the help of a chair most people can practice yoga and reap the benefits of increased circulation, balance, flexibility, mobility, strength and more.

We spend a fair amount of the time exercising in a seated position in the chairs but if possible, we also do exercises standing, using the chairs for support. The exercises can be adjusted for individual needs and we move at a comfortable pace. I think you will soon notice a difference once you start. Looking forward to seeing you in class!

Lina (Parvati) has 20 plus years of experience teaching and a

lifelong personal practice.

To stay tuned if there are any cancellations, follow on Facebook and get on our email list. \$15/class

Thursdays

Ukulele Group

Free at the Chaffee Art Center from 12-1 p.m., for adults & 12+. This is not a class but a group enjoying playing the ukulele together. Must pre-register. There are a limited amount of in-house instruments to reserve.

Attendees will be led through specific sheet music by musician Steven Wilson. All levels are welcome.

Open Mic at Red Clover in Brandon

Join us starting at 6 p.m. for a rousing good time!

Fridays

Chaffee Art Center All About the Arts Free Class for kids 3-5

From 11am-Noon...FREE! Students will have fun creating and doing activities with art, music, literature, and more!

One free book per student will be given weekly (while supplies last) thanks to our partners at Rutland Free Library. Adult must accompany children under age 4. Must pre-register by Wednesday each week.

Instructor: Lori Sullivan; Minimum 3.

Maclure Library Knitting Circle

Come join us weekly to share projects from noon – 2:00 p.m.

Corn Hole at the Godnick Adult Center

By request, we will have drop-in cornhole in the Rec Hall on Fridays from 2-4 p.m.

Play with whomever shows up each time or just practice your cornhole skills!



Saturdays

Bingo at the Brandon Senior Center

First Saturday of each month from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Bring



lunch, and the Center will provide beverages, desserts, and a good time. A great way to pass a Saturday afternoon. Please direct any questions to Kathy Mathis at 247-3121.

Storytime at the Brandon Free Public Library

Join us every Saturday at 10:30 a.m. for picture book storytime. All ages welcome.

Sundays

Brandon Town Hall Painting with Crystal
Crystal Ketcham leads an all ages painting event!

Yes, you CAN paint! More info, contact Crystal at ceastman88@gmail.com

“The study of art is the most important study a garden designer can pursue.”

Friday 29th

Josh Blue at The Paramount Theatre
JOSH BLUE is bringing THE FREAK ACCIDENT TOUR to Rutland, VT on Friday, March 29 for one show! Tickets are \$35 and are on sale now! Tickets can be bought at <https://www.paramountvt.org>

After his groundbreaking win on Last Comic Standing in 2006, Josh Blue has risen through the

his As NOT Seen on TV Tour. Josh does over 200 shows a year, continuing to spread laughter and break down stereotypes of people with disabilities. His stand-up routine is in a constant state of evolution and his off-the-cuff improvisational skills guarantee that no two shows are alike.

Josh represented the United States in 8 countries as a member of the US Paralympic Soccer Team. Josh and his team were thoroughly disgraced in the 2004 Paralympic Games in Athens, Greece by not scoring a single goal. He is a single father living in Denver, CO with his son and daughter.

Espirales Project— Next Stage Arts Project

Newly emerging on the Cuban music scene in 2023, the Espirales Project brings together five top graduates of Cuba’s Instituto Superior de Arte performing across several genres.

Newly emerging on the Cuban music scene in 2023, the Espirales Project brings together five top graduates of Cuba’s Instituto Superior de Arte performing across several genres—Cuban, jazz, world, and chamber music. Tania Haase, Olivia Rodríguez, Alejandro Aguiar, Jesús Estrada and Rodrigo García have led or contributed nationally and internationally to projects across all these styles, performing at Cuba’s International Jazz Plaza Festival and the Habana Clásica concert music festival. They are also teachers who have designed a development program on Cuban music and culture.

The group is led by pianist Rodrigo Garcia Ameneiro. Although his career is still in its early stages, his achievements include the award for best composition at the Stanford Jazz Workshop 2016; first place in the international Vivo competition (2018) at Carnegie Hall in New York; and special prize in the international Grand Prize Virtuoso Amsterdam (2019), together with his wife and Espirales violinist Tania Haase; and the Grand Prize at the Rocky Mountain Music Competition (2021).

From 7:30–9:30 p.m., \$10.00 - \$25.00. Co-presented with Vermont Jazz Center

Chodus / Phrogs w/ Wicked Louder and Time Life Magazines—The Underground - Listening Room

Advance: \$14 (+fees) // Day of show: \$17 (+fees)
Doors: 7:00 // Show: 7:30 • All Ages • BYOB

Chodus/Phrogs: The melodic guitar jangles of Chodus. The dreamy crooning of Phrogs. Claremont, NH has long been known for its fine musical offerings, but these are truly some of the very best. And Danimals Yogurt is the perfect accompaniment to these two musical delights. Join us for a resplendent evening of song and nutritional yogurt smoothies. Danimals knows great music.

Wicked Louder: Thetford Vermont’s own Wicked Louder is the one man creation of Derek P. Lorrigan. As the progenitor of Solid Mass music Wicked Louder is laying the foundation for a style that is impregnable. Thoughtful listening reveals songs about situations. Life and death situations, the complexities of situations involving drugs, situations of power and control, and situations of solitude. Wicked Louder believes in the importance of understanding what has come before and pays homage to the tropes of 80’s college rock and 90’s alternative music while simultaneously composing something unique and modern. Solid Mass music is visionary in its scope. Quality

songwriting fueled by the drain upon human emotion is the promise of the future for this singularly unique band that is Wicked Louder.

Time Life Magazines: Out of all the bands whose members routinely appeared on the website lookatthisfuckinghipster.com during the late 2000s, Real Life Time Machines were widely considered amongst the most promising. Today, some folks say this New England dance-punk outfit – known for bright, efficient songcraft contrasted by belliger-

Brandon eclipse event schedule for Friday, April 5th

6:00 am–7:00 pm | Morningside Bakery 11 Center Street

“Eclipse Cookies”, “Lunar Pie” wood fired pizza” - Start your morning with a cup of coffee and a fresh baked pastry, or pop in a sandwich or for wine, local craft beers and provisions. Eclipse cookies to celebrate the event all weekend long!

10:00 am–5:00 pm | Brandon Artist Guild 7 Center Street

“In the Path of Shade” - a celestial celebration that captures the awe-inspiring essence of a solar eclipse. The show runs from March 1st through April 28th.

11:30 am–8:00 pm | Long Iron Restaurant 224 Town Farm Road

“Luner Lunch, Dark Sky Dinner” - Stop into the Long Iron Restaurant for delicious Solar Specials. The Long Iron also offers a full bar and a great selection of beer and wine. Guests can enjoy a cold beer or sip on a special Eclipse Cocktail while taking in the views.

5:00–7:00 pm | Brandon Artist Guild 7 Center Street

Solar Eclipse Celebration Reception - Join us for the opening reception of our member show “In the Path of Shade”.

4:00–9:00 pm | Red Clover Ale Company 43 Center Street

“Bloodroot Gap” , “Shady J BBQ” Come on in and listen to the ever-popular Bloodroot Gap band and savor some Shady J BBQ while you try our “Eclipse Beer” brewed specially for this once in a lifetime event using a hops variety named Eclipse. And if you’re in town on Thursday night, join us for “Moon shadow open mic” !

7:00–9:00 pm | Brandon Town Hall 1 Conant Square

“Night of the Living Dead”- zombies rise from the grave in this 1968 horror film classic. Was this due to an eclipse? Come find out.

ently impractical stage performances – never got as big as they should have ... but we all know better, don’t we? Let’s face it: Nobody who makes decisions in the serious music industry ever would’ve had the imagination or the patience to know what to do with RLTM’s. And lucky you; this means that, today, a modified incarnation of that band is not too expensive to come play in your club/basement/VFW Hall/backyard/living room/whatever place. We say “modified incarnation” because members of RLTM’s are performing under the designation Time Life Magazines. “What’s the difference between Real Life Time Machines and Time Life Magazines?” you ask? Well, the classic-era RLTM’s lineup consists of Ben the keyboardist, Chico the drummer/singer,

Matt and guitar player/singer and Eli also the singer. According to Internet research, Eli may or may not still reside in the U.S., so if we had to guess, we’d say Eli’s probably not there and that’s the difference. During

their imperial phase, RLTM’s shared the stage with totally famous acts including Screaming Females and the guy who later repackaged himself as Twin Shadow, plus they almost did a show with Kimya Dawson one time. Dawson had to leave the show early because the audience refused to stop doing drugs in front of her baby, but that’s the rock ‘n’ roll (no problem) lifestyle for you, amirite? Moral of the story: If you see a baby, put your drugs away and save them for later. So that’s just some background on Time Life Magazines: a band that definitely does not understand what SEO stands for or how it works.

Goings on around town

Pittsford Historical Society meeting happening on Sunday, April 7th

The Pittsford Historical Society will hold its Spring meeting and program at the Pittsford Congregational Church Fellowship Hall.

Potluck dinner will be enjoyed at 5:30 and a short business meeting will follow at 6:30, followed by a presentation by Phil Mandolare on his recent Revolutionary Era archaeological findings at two Pittsford home sites.

A variety of artifacts will be shown, including a Revolutionary-era hand grenade, coins, buttons, cuff links, household items, and 3 pieces of jewelry.

Phil, an experienced local metal detectorist, will demonstrate how he approaches a potential historical site and how he finds objects. He will share the thorough research needed to verify items.

Everyone is welcome to join this exciting opportunity to learn about Pittsford’s early history.

ranks to become a well-established headliner at venues throughout the world. In 2018, Josh crushed his set on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon. In the same year, he was honored with a performance at the William H. Macy Gala at the prestigious Just for Laughs Comedy Festival in Montreal, Canada. He wrapped up 2018 by recording his fifth hour special, Broccoli, at his home club, Comedy Works in Denver, CO. In 2021, following his 3rd place finish on NBC’s America’s Got Talent, Josh Blue hit the road with

BRANDON IDOL HITS HARD ON ROCK N' ROLL NIGHT

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Americans have invented a lot of amazing things but perhaps none as viscerally enjoyable as rock n' roll. It gets the blood pumping unlike any other genre, its driving rhythms providing an outlet for raw emotion. And last Friday, the Brandon Idol singers gave the audience a glimpse of the fire in their bellies.

As always, the evening was ably emceed by the 2023 Brandon Idol winner, Shannon Wright, who can be seen in the upcoming original musical "Beethoven: Live in Concert" at the Fort Salem Theater in New York on April 19, 20, and 21.

Mr. Wright, improbably dressed in a black tuxedo rather than in the torn denim or black leather more in keeping with rock's conventions, wasted no time getting the music going. He quickly called to the stage guest singers

Jess Crossman and Bill Moore, who lit the place up with their rendition of "Proud Mary," which took its cues from the Tina Turner version rather than from the original Creedence Clearwater Revival. Ms. Crossman started slow and then got rough, with Mr. Moore providing bass

Americans have invented a lot of amazing things but perhaps none as viscerally enjoyable as rock n' roll. It gets the blood pumping unlike any other genre, its driving rhythms providing an outlet for raw emotion.

lows and falsetto highs as backup. Matthew Graham, with his trademark pompadour and rockabilly vibe, was completely in his element as he delivered "Old Time Rock n' Roll" by Bob Seger, made immortal by Tom Cruise in 1983's "Risky Business." The flames on Mr. Graham's shirt matched the fire in his performance as he made the song his own.

Up next was Miranda Snyder with Joan Jett's "I Love Rock n' Roll," a slightly-punk 80s song with an iconic chorus that's virtually impossible not to sing along to. We all wanted to put another dime in the jukebox when Ms. Snyder was done.

Peggie Sue Rozell came out with Lita Ford's "Under the Gun," a smoky 80s scorch on the sultry side of rock. It gave

Ms. Rozell an opportunity to show off her vocals: there's nowhere to hide in a ballad. If Ms. Rozell was feeling under the gun, she certainly wasn't showing it.

Venus Diamondis brought the tempo back up to full speed with Avril Lavigne's "Sk8ter Boi" from 2002. The song tells the story of a girl who spurns the titular "sk-8ter boi" but later regrets her choice when he hits the big time as a musician and she's left all alone. Ms. Diamondis kept up with the song's breakneck lyrics. And with her pink hair, plaid skirt, and combat boots, she captured Lavigne's early-aughts punk-pop sensibility.

Jordan Bertrand took to the stage with Bon Jovi's "Livin' on a Prayer," one of the biggest rock hits from the 1980s. Another song with an iconic chorus that just begs for a singalong, the audience was more than halfway there as Bertrand took us for a ride with Tommy and Gina.

Bethany White, who missed last month's show, returned to Brandon Idol in fine form with Metallica's ballad "Nothing Else Matters." A departure for the quintessential hair-metal band, the song is a heartfelt lament. Ms. White captured the heartbreak while looking every bit the rock chick, down to her black lipstick. The audience turned on their phone flashlights and the room briefly turned into an arena full of swaying lights.

When Ms. White was finished, she mentioned that she'd missed last month's performance for health reasons and asked for assistance with a GoFundMe to help manage the costs of her complex regional pain syndrome. The campaign can be



found at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/donate-to-bethanys-fight-crps-medical-fund>

When one's health is compromised, nothing else matters.

LEFT: BILL MOORE and Jess Crossman singing "Proud Mary." Top: the entire crew singing "We Will Rock You." Middle (l to r): Baker LaRock, Venus Diamondis, Matthew Graham. Bottom (l to r): Bethany White, Miranda Snyder, Jordan Bertrand.

Photos by Steven Jupiter

Baker LaRock took the audience back to rock's beginnings with his tribute to The King. Mr. LaRock busted out Elvis's "Jailhouse Rock" and got the whole room looking around for a wooden chair. It was a fun, raucous

rendition that absolutely did not feel confined to a cellblock.

Calvin Ladd followed with "That's All," an early-80s romp from the prog rock band Genesis, which brought both Phil Collins and Peter Gabriel to global attention. For this Gen X kid, it's always gratifying to see our music taken up by today's young'uns and Mr. Ladd made an interesting choice with this one. We felt it from our head down to our toes.

Unfortunately, contestant Maddox Bashaw had to drop out of the competition because of scheduling conflicts and contestant Hilary Collier was unable to attend this month's performance, but she will return next month.

Guest performer Doug Ross rounded out the solo portion of the evening with 1979's (See Brandon Idol, Page 24)

Can you guess the street?

BY LAURA PETERSON

Last week was a photo of the Douglass House (not to be confused with the Stephen A. Douglas house, aka the Brandon Museum). The Douglass House was a hotel facing the train tracks at the bottom of Union Street. Later the building housed the Grand Union (c. 1910). By the early 1980s, it had fallen into disrepair and was demolished. A low concrete building was built in its stead. Maynard Auto supply occupied the building until Brian and Stephanie Jerome bought it to use as their business headquarters (Visual Learning Systems). Now it is used for housing.

Congrats to Steve Bisette, who correctly identified the location of the original building.



THE SITE OF Douglass House today (left) and in the early 1900s (below).



Your mystery for next week!

2024 eclipse expected to bring traffic jams to Vermont

BY BABETTE STOLK/
VTDIGGER

As the 2024 total solar eclipse draws near, so do the hordes of people expected to visit Vermont to see it. Public safety officials say they're doing what they can to minimize risk.

Although the exact number of people coming to Vermont remains unknown, estimates range from tens of thousands to 160,000 visitors, according to Christine Hinkel Ianni, a spokesperson for the state Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

"We envision the potential for a lot of individuals to wake up on Monday morning in a 400-mile radius and decide that they might want to go see an eclipse," Eric Forand, director of Vermont Emergency Management, said of the April 8 event.

To prepare for the event, officials have been working to ensure adequate access to cell service and bathrooms, among other necessities, according to

Forand, and all state police officers will be deployed that day.

"As a state, I feel like we are ready to go into this," he said.

He added, "We're going to continue to push the messaging about individual preparations and planning and that's what's going to make this go smooth."

Burlington, which lies in the path of totality and is therefore expected to draw many eclipse tourists, is expecting anywhere from 25,000 to 100,000 visitors, according to Zach Williamson, the city's events and festival director.

Williamson said the city expects to establish large viewing sites across Burlington's parks, with hundreds of portable bathrooms, extra trash receptacles and dumpsters, and emergency personnel.

"You just might be sitting in traffic for a little while," Williamson said. "But from an actual safety standpoint, we feel good about it."

State officials say they are confident that the eclipse will not result in major incidents.

"We've talked to a couple of other states that have had similar events and for the most part they were pretty calm," Forand said. "People come, they watch the event and they go home."

However, it is the "going home" part that might cause problems.

"We are anticipating that travelers will try to exit immediately following the eclipse in the afternoon," said Jayna Morse, the director of finance and administration for the Agency of Transportation and incident commander for the event. She said an influx of visitors is expected to start days before the eclipse.

"There will be a backup in the areas most closely aligned with the center of the pathway of the eclipse," Morse said, including northern parts of I-89, Route 100, Route 7, Route 2, Route 5 and Route 22A.

Morse said state agencies have been planning for the eclipse since the fall.

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REAL ESTATE



Attractive Greek Revival on beautiful Park Street. Features a family kitchen with center island, cozy fireplaced living room that opens to the formal dining room via a columned entry, and a downstairs bedroom with en-suite bath. The partially covered deck overlooks a spacious backyard with a 2 story carriage barn-garage. \$375,000



802-236-9112 • Wendy@RoweRealEstate.com
RoweRealEstate.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 kate@brandonreporter.com if you can identify someone in these photos.

Or call us at 247-8080

Recognized



Catching up continued! Thanks for your patience, Sepi (Designer at *The Reporter*)

You can also reach us at kate@brandonreporter.com



Bob Gearwar of Brandon was able to identify this little one as Hillary Gearwar, daughter of Chris Gearwar of Brandon. This photo is from a long time ago when Hillary was about 5-6 years old (editors note: maybe 2-3?) and was very sick. Folks held a fundraiser for her and her family. Hillary is now about 35 years old.



Kurt also recognized Ann (Fenning) Stevens on the left, and beside her is her sister Mary (Fenning) Newton, all of Brandon. This was taken at Ann's wedding shower.

Sierra from Brandon also recognizes Ann and Mary Fenning at the wedding shower.

Elizabeth Gould was able to identify the children in this photograph as Jeremy Benoit holding his baby sister Mercedes.



Ms. Gould was also able to identify the students in this picture from "Ms. King's business class of 1994 to 1995." She writes, "We worked with Autumn Harp in Bristol to produce Otter Balm." (From L to R): David Hazelton, Not sure, Not sure, Hannah Maxwell, Jessica Pomainville, Not sure, Sara Loscher, Kevin Hier, Jessica Pearson, BJ Israel, Elizabeth Gould, Autumn Rakowitz, Krystal Martell, Lisa King.



Kurt Kimball identified this cutie as Chris Conlon, of Brandon. He is in his 50s now.



Norma Smith of Neshobe House in Brandon recognizes the woman on the left as Sandy Burke and beside her is Annie Griffin.

Connie St George was also able to identify the woman standing on the left in this picture as Sandy Burke. She writes, "[Sandy's] husband Donald ran Burke's store in Forestdale until his health deteriorated."

Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Excessively theatrical actors
5. Footwear
10. A way to disfigure
14. Exchange rate
15. Hawaiian wreaths
16. North-central Indian city
17. Bungle
18. Extremely angry
19. A short note of what's owed
20. Criminal organization
22. Mimic
23. Try to grab
24. U.S.-born individuals
27. Some are covert
30. Order of the British Empire
31. Don't know when yet
32. Payment (abbr.)
35. Winged angelic being
37. Variety of Chinese
38. A way to be anxious
39. Famed wrestler Hulk
40. Partner to cheese
41. Slang for sergeant
42. Canadian flyers
43. Actress Ryan
44. Highly unpleasant vapor
45. Body part
46. Halfway
47. Cool!
48. Consume
49. Salts
52. Upper bract of a floret of grass
55. Housepet
56. Cavalry-sword
60. Symbol of a nation
61. Frocks
63. Used to carry food
64. Portuguese folk song
65. Sharp mountain ridge
66. Ireland
67. Where golfers begin
68. Greek mythological sorceress
69. Fluid suspensions

CLUES DOWN

1. "Mad Men" leading man
2. Water (Spanish)
3. Annoy
4. Bulgarian capital
5. Japanese title
6. Capital of Zimbabwe
7. Giraffe
8. A mixture of substances
9. Midway between south and southeast
10. Staffs
11. Turkish title
12. Type of acid
13. Thin, flat strip of wood
21. Russian river
23. Ribonucleic acid
25. Partner to flow
26. Airborne (abbr.)
27. Earthy pigment
28. Genus of earless seals
29. "Key to the Highway" bluesman
32. By or in itself
33. Hot fluid below the earth's surface
34. Partner to trick
36. British Air Aces
37. Ammunition
38. Supervises flying
40. Health care for the aged
41. Flanks
43. Millimeters
44. Where wrestlers perform
46. Not around
47. Flightless bird
49. Bell-shaped flowers of the lily family
50. Expressed concern for
51. Satisfies
52. Flew off!
53. Wings
54. Load a ship
57. Vigor
58. British title
59. Whiskeys
61. ___ Adams: founding father
62. Body of water

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20				21		22				23				
			24		25				26					
27	28	29		30				31				32	33	34
35			36			37				38				
39					40				41					
42					43			44						
45			46				47				48			
			49				50				51			
52	53	54				55				56		57	58	59
60					61				62		63			
64					65						66			
67					68						69			

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.

		8						
	5			1	3			
			5			8		2
2				7			8	
		4						7
				6		4		5
	6				9			
			3	7		2		
8		3					7	4

Level: Intermediate

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

S	T	O	S	V	E	D	M	S	E	E	T	E							
R	I	E	T	E	R	V	E	O	D	D	F	A	V	E					
T	R	A	V	S	I	S	A	R	G	V	A	G	F	L	A	V	E		
B	B	V	T	C	I	V	E	T	V	E	P	A	V	E					
T	A	V	E	H	D	I	M	R	A	V	E								
V	M	S	V	M	G	M	E	C	A	V	R	C	H						
E	G	R	V	S	O	W	M	N	V	G	O	H							
R	V	E	F	N	I	M	U	B	E	H	C	O							
T	W	P	T	G	B	E	G	S											
	S	N	V	I	E	V	A												
H	C	R	E	P	E	I	F	A	V	E	M								
T	I	H	C	E	T	V	R	I											
V	G	V	S	U	K	V	H	O	I	G	V								
L	U	V	M	S	E	O	H	S	S	W	H								

4	7	9	1	5	6	3	2	8
1	6	2	8	7	3	6	4	5
8	5	3	9	4	2	1	9	7
5	3	4	2	9	1	7	8	6
7	2	1	5	8	6	4	3	9
9	8	6	7	3	4	5	1	2
3	7	6	9	5	9	5	6	3
9	6	7	3	1	8	2	5	4
3	9	5	4	6	7	2	8	1

Easter Safety Tips from Rutland County Humane Society

Spring has arrived, and while you are getting ready for the Easter holiday, you might have chocolate bunnies, Easter grass in baskets, and lilies at home! The Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS) wants to remind you to also think of your pets during the holiday. Lilies, beautiful and fragrant, are deadly to cats so please be very aware of your felines if you have lilies in your home or garden. All parts of the lily, including pollen, are toxic to cats and cause sudden severe kidney failure and death, if not treated promptly. Chocolate could harm our furry friends, therefore should be kept out of reach of curious canines and felines. Easter grass, if eaten, can pose a deadly threat. It's enticing due to the interesting sounds it makes, how it feels on an animal's gums, and its movement in the breeze, but it can be very harmful if ingested. Keep an eye out for your pets this spring so you can enjoy them without worries. For any questions, please contact the RCHS Adoption Center at 802.483.6700.

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



MEET YURI - 11 MONTH-OLD. SPAYED FEMALE. GERMAN SHEPHERD MIX. WHITE.

This majestic beauty has a magnetic personality. Yuri was pulled from an overcrowded shelter in Texas, and arrived in Vermont at the beginning of March. She is gentle with children and other dogs. Yuri has a desire to please and is very easy to handle. She loves hiking, learning, and playing outside. Yuri will thrive with an active family, and would prefer a yard at her new home. If you're looking for a loyal sidekick to join your family, please call or stop by to visit her! The Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday 11am to 4pm.

MEET DANDELION - 2 YEARS OLD. NEUTERED MALE. DOMESTIC SHORT HAIR. ORANGE.

Dandelion has the sweetest face! He loves attention and will be the first one to greet you in the cat room! He loves to investigate your shoes and will rub against your legs until you give him attention. Once you get him purring, he will not stop! He will make a great addition to the family. Dandelion came to us on March 15th from a busy shelter in New Jersey! He absolutely loves his feline friends, but we have no known history on how he will do with children or dogs! He is a lovely boy who loves everyone and everything. Dandelion will make a great sidekick to his forever people! If this lovebug sounds like the right fit for you, please stop by and visit with him! Dandelion will be waiting for you. The Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday 11am to 4pm.



RUTLAND COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

802-483-6700 • WWW.RCHSVT.ORG
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OUR ADOPTION CENTER IS OPEN
TUESDAY-SATURDAY FROM
11AM-4PM.
NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED.

OFF THE SHELF



DID YOU KNOW?

We have FREE eclipse glasses—one per person while supplies last!

Large-print books donated by Brenda Whittaker

Still See You Everywhere by Lisa Gardner, donated in memory of Maxine Sawyer

The New Couple in 5B by Lisa Unger, donated in memory of Mary Blackmer.

New in adult fiction

The Princess of Las Vegas by Chris Bohjalian

Crissy, the star of a beloved Princess Diana tribute show in Las Vegas, and her estranged sister Betsy, a therapist who works with children and adolescents in Vermont, find themselves in a dangerous web of greed, crypto-mafia schemes, and murder in Las Vegas.

Floating Hotel by Grace Curtis

The Grand Abeona Hotel is home to the finest food, the sweetest service, and the very best views the galaxy has to offer. It endlessly moves from planet to planet, pampering guests across the Milky Way. It's the last word in sub-orbital luxury and a magnet for intrigues such as: How many Imperial spies are currently on board? What is the true purpose of the Problem Solvers conference? And perhaps most pertinently, who is driving the ship? At the center of these mysteries stands Carl, one-time stowaway, longtime manager, devoted caretaker

to the hotel. It's the love of his life and the only place he's ever called home. But as forces beyond Carl's comprehension converge, he has to face one final question: when is it time to let go?

Fervor by Toby Lloyd

Hannah and Eric Rosenthal are devout Jews living in North London with their three children and Eric's father Yosef, a Holocaust survivor. Both intellectually gifted and deeply unconventional, the Rosenthals believe in the literal truth of the Old Testament and in the presence of God (and evil) in daily life. As Hannah prepares to publish a sensationalist account of Yosef's years in war-torn Europe--unearthing a terrible secret from his time in the camps--Elsie, her perfect daughter, starts to come undone. And then, in the wake of Yosef's death, she disappears. When she returns, just as mysteriously as she left, she is altered in disturbing ways.

The Morningside by Tea Obreht

After being expelled from their ancestral home in a not-too-distant future, Silvia and her mother finally land in a place called Island City. They end up living and working at The Morningside, a crumbling luxury tower where Silvia's aunt, Ena, has been serving as the superintendent. Silvia feels unmoored in her life, but in Ena, there is an opening: a person willing to give Silvia glimpses into the folktales of her demolished homeland, a place of natural

beauty and communal spirit that is lacking in Silvia's new home.

Song of the Huntress by Lucy Holland

Britain, 60AD. Hoping to save her land and her people from the Romans, Herla makes a desperate pact with the king of the Otherworld. But as years pass unheeded in his realm, she escapes to find everyone she loved long dead. Cursed to wield his blade, she becomes Lord of the Hunt. For centuries she rides, leading her immortal warriors and reaping souls. Until she meets a woman on a bloody battlefield--a Saxon queen with ice-blue eyes.

James by Percival Everett

A retelling of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn as told from Jim's point of view. When Jim overhears that he is about to be sold and separated from his wife and daughter forever, he decides to hide on nearby Jackson Island until he can formulate a plan. Meanwhile, Huck Finn has faked his death to escape his violent father, who has recently returned to town. Thus begins the dangerous and transcendent journey by raft down the Mississippi River toward the elusive promise of the Free States and beyond.

Brandon Police Report

March 18

- K9 Unit assisted Middlebury Police with a vehicle stop in which the passengers were suspected of transporting illegal drugs. K9 Guinness indicated the presence of drugs on the passenger's side of the vehicle. Further investigation revealed that the passenger had concealed drugs inside her person.

- Observed a vehicle on Grove Street that was failing to maintain its lane. After stopping the vehicle, the officer observed an overwhelming odor of intoxicants. The operator was arrested and charged with DUI. A citation was issued to appear before the Rutland County Superior Court for arraignment on 4/8/2024 at 10:00 a.m.

- Responded to Carlisle Hill Road in Goshen after receiving a walk-in complaint that a motorist had observed a silver Ford sedan flipped over in a ravine in the river. The responding officer climbed into the ravine to check on the vehicle, which had flipped onto the rocks and was partially under water. No one was inside and the river was checked downstream to make sure that no one had been washed away. Troopers with the Vermont State Police arrived and took over the investigation.

- Received a call from a woman asking to speak with an officer about applying for a Stalking Order.

- Assisted Brandon Area Rescue (BARS) on a medical call and while at the location, discovered that a family member at the home was a wanted individual and had an active warrant for her arrest. The suspect was cited and released per the instructions on the warrant.

- Received an anonymous call regarding a man who had allegedly been physically assaulted by his brother and may be near Hannaford Supermarket. The area was checked, but the individual was not located.

March 19

- Received a late walk-in report regarding the theft of a walking stick from a car parked at the Green Mountain Garage on Franklin Street. Damage was also sustained to the vehicle.

- Conducted a welfare check on an elderly woman residing on Champlain Street. It was determined that the woman was dropped at home earlier by a family member and was safe and sound.

March 20

- Conducted a foot patrol in downtown Brandon on Center Street.

- Took fingerprints for a Florida conceal carry permit.

- Took fingerprints for a school volunteer.

- Took another set of fingerprints for a school volunteer.

- Received a report of a vehicle being operated in an erratic manner on Forest Dale Road.

- Received a report of a possible violation of a stalking order at the Otter Valley Union High School. The incident was investigated, and it was determined that no crime had been committed.

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for failure to maintain travel lane. Warning issued.

- Received a report from a neighbor of a civil violation on Carver Street regarding a burn permit. The residents were extremely cooperative and subsequently extinguished the fire.

March 21

- Responded to a 911 hang-up call on North Street at New England Woodcraft. Contact was made with employees who indicated that everything was okay.

- Conducted a civil standby on Conant Square so that an individual could pick up some belongings from his former residence.

- Responded to a "Be On Lookout" for an underage juvenile operating a vehicle in the Brandon area. The vehicle was located and the juvenile was stopped on Grove Street. The vehicle was towed and the incident was reported to the Department of Children & Families. Investigation is ongoing.

- Responded to a hold-up/panic alarm at Neshobe Family Medicine on Court Drive. It was determined that the alarm had been set off accidentally by a patient in an examination room.

- Received a walk-in complaint regarding ongoing domestic abuse. The incident was later found to have occurred outside of Brandon. The victim's statement was documented and the incident was referred to multiple outside agencies.

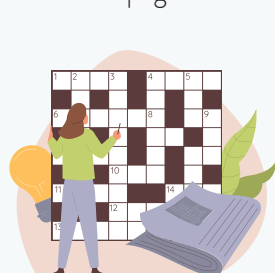
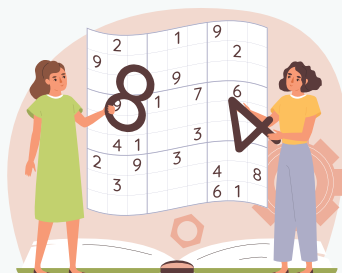
- Vehicle stop on Conant Square for a traffic control signal violation. Ticket issued.

- Conducted a welfare check at a residence in Brandon. No contact was made with the persons of interest.

(See Police report, Page 19)

Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.

See page 17



Police report

(Continued from Page 18)

- Vehicle stop on Park Street for no taillights. Warning issued.

March 22

- Received a report of abandoned property at the Hanford parking lot.
- Assisted with a vehicle eluding the Pittsford Police Department. The vehicle was stopped on High Pond Road. The operator was arrested for DUI.
- Conducted a patrol in the area of Conant Square.

- Vehicle stop on Conant Square for taillight violation. Warning issued.

March 23

- Received a call from a landlord that some family members had entered her tenant's apartment and removed some belongings. It was determined that the tenant was very ill and that the family may have been there to secure items for the individual. Investigation ongoing.
- Assisted a motorist that had

struck a snowbank at the intersection of Newton Road and North Street. The operator was able to leave the area after the officer assisted him in freeing his vehicle.

- Assisted a motorist on Forest Dale Road at Churchill Road who ran out of gas. Gas was provided by a local tow company and the motorist left the area.

- Vehicle stop on Park Street for a red light violation. Warning issued.

- Received information regarding reported drug activity.

March 24

- Vehicle stop on Park Street at the Brandon Inn for an obstructed windshield. Warning issued.

- Responded to Franklin Street near the American Legion Hall for a report of an elderly woman whose car had broken down by the side of the road. The area was checked, but the vehicle had left.

- Responded to OVUHS for a

motion alarm activation. It was determined that the alarm had accidentally been tripped.

- Vehicle stop on Forest Dale Road at Stone Mill Dam Road for failure to maintain travel lane. Warning issued.

- Assisted BARS on a call involving an attempted suicide by overdose of pills. The individual was located and transported to the hospital for treatment.

Gardening corner

(Continued from Page 2)

Next, draw your garden plots and label what's in them. Rotate the families of vegetable plants every year. Write down what varieties worked and what didn't. Most of your perennial flowers also need digging up and splitting every three to four years (there are some exceptions). Identify, identify, identify, and then double check with UVM Extension, they'll have good ideas about solutions. UVM Extension's master gardener helpline is:

<https://www.uvm.edu/extension/mastergardener/helpline>.

Change out the host plant. Choose your seeds and plants with a view to buying disease-resistant varieties. If your favorite bee balm, impatiens, phlox, or lilac had powdery mildew, look for resistant varieties. Plants bred to resistance are much easier to grow than ones that haven't been. Also, we are all being encouraged to wash every plant we buy and remove all soil before we put them in our gardens. Then we

won't be importing soil-borne pests (like jumping worms) and diseases. Little changes can have big results.


Are bugs a problem? Encourage bugs that will eat the pests you don't want. Most bugs are beneficial. A tiny fraction of insects are harmful. Those that are, wow, they do damage. Plant plants that the good bugs like, or that the bad bugs dislike, or both. We were introduced to

the "attract, repel or push, pull" idea. If this interests you, there is a YouTube video called "Kenyan farmer push pull system."

Learn about the most beneficial insects. Lady beetles spring to mind (ladybugs is a misnomer-they aren't bugs) including the Asiatic ones, the ones that overwinter in your house. They rank among the absolute best at controlling harmful insects. Fungus, doesn't it look like it

sounds? We need fungi. We are surrounded by fungi, and most do great good, and some harm. Fungi are highly adapted to survive; we can only try to manipulate the environment so they don't choose our plants. Stake your plants, water them with drip hoses, and don't water at night. Mulch them so rainwater doesn't splash up on them and plant them so the air can circulate. There is so much I've had to leave out, but it's a taste. I cannot recommend the course highly enough. And keep on weeding! "One year's weeds make seven years seeds."





WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

ARIES March 21–April 20
Grit and guts will get you what you deserve this week, Aries. You may have an opportunity to make a good deal of money, so give this plan careful consideration. Ask for advice if the need arises.

TAURUS April 21–May 21
Taurus, there has been change in your life and you may want to blame the stars. Things will move out of your comfort zone and you will have to sharpen your ability to adapt.

GEMINI May 22–June 21
Gemini, you may be questioning the relationships in your life at the time being, but don't worry too much. If you hit a rough patch, things will clear up in a few days.

CANCER June 22–July 22
A big shift in your perception and attitude will bring new components to your life that

you may not have anticipated. This week you'll certainly have a few eyes-wide-open moments.

LEO July 23–Aug. 23
There will be no hiding out this week, Leo. You will soon learn that things will come your way at a rapid pace. Do your best to keep up, mighty Lion, as it's bound to be exciting.

VIRGO Aug. 24–Sept. 22
Virgo, you might be willing to throw caution to the wind and get away on a moment's notice. There are affordable ways to do this if you are willing to do your homework.

LIBRA Sept. 23–Oct. 23
Libra, even though some drama may be swirling in your universe, you find it tolerable because it's coming at you in small portions. Just stay on the sidelines as much as possible.

SCORPIO Oct. 24–Nov. 22
Scorpio, if boredom has set in, it's better to look to new experiences instead of doing something rash just for the thrill. See which classes you can take or find new restaurants to explore.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23–Dec. 21
Self-care and healing are what you should

focus on right now, Sagittarius. You may have been pushing your needs to the side lately and you need to make this a priority.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22–Jan. 20
You are not normally characterized as "impulsive," Capricorn. But you may surprise everyone this week. An opportunity to travel or another adventure could drop in your lap.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21–Feb. 18
Try to create some tranquil spaces at home, Aquarius. You can use a haven, especially when a lot of stuff is thrown at you outside your home.

PISCES Feb. 19–March 20
Pisces, you may be on a mission this week to get things done. Don't rush in your efforts to complete everything or you are bound to make mistakes that are not easily fixed.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

March 29 Eric Idle, comedian (81)	March 30 Francisco Goya, artist (d)
March 31 Octavio Paz, poet, Nobel laureate (d)	April 1 Milan Kundera, novelist (d)
April 2 Charlemagne, Holy Roman Emperor (d)	April 3 Jane Goodall, primatologist (90)
April 4 Dorothea Dix, social reformer (d)	

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JEFF SACKS OF Brandon (left) and Andy Gates (right), co-owner of Red Clover Ale Company of Brandon. Though the weekend's snow delayed festivities at Baird Farm in Chittenden, folks turned out to enjoy the farm's renowned maple syrup and a maple-infused stout specially prepared by Red Clover.
Photos by George Fjeld

It's Maple Season at Baird Farm

BY GEORGE FJELD

CHITTENDEN—The biggest/only snowstorm of the season delayed the festivities at the Baird Farm for the Maple Open house until Sunday, but that bright sunny day upped the enthusiasm of the crew gathered for all things maple. Rosemary waffles topped

with maple syrup, excellent coffee sweetened with maple syrup and Red Clover Sapsucker stout made with, you guessed it, maple syrup satisfied the appetites and thirst of the crowd. Musical entertainment was provided by Ethan Nelson and Walter Stone. A tree tapping demonstration

was presented by Bob Baird with help from a squirrel. Really, a squirrel, named Justin Trudeau. Jacob Powsner claimed he came down from Canada to get some really good maple syrup! And nibbled on a few tap lines on the way in!



KIDS SLEDDED ON the fresh snow, people mingled while they ate waffles with rosemary-infused syrup and drank Red Clover beer, and Rob Baird (above) greeted his guests

House bills now carry \$100 million-plus in wealth, corporate taxes

BY SARAH MEARHOFF
& SEAN ROBINSON/
VTDIGGER

Legislature and administration's sparring over state spending — and taxing — are coming to a head.

Upon begrudgingly signing this year's budget adjustment last week, Gov. Phil Scott warned that "there just isn't any money" in state government — or, at least, not enough to fund the Legislature's appetite for spending.

He may be about to see more.

New spending proposals are headed for the House floor next week that would invest in long-term housing programs, expand Medicaid coverage and increase judicial branch staffing. In order to pay for that, the House Ways & Means Committee has added language that would also put significant new taxes on wealthy Vermonters and corporations.

There are at least three bills that include significant new taxes. One, H.829, would raise funds by creating a new top

personal income marginal tax bracket for Vermonters who earn more than \$500,000 in a year, at a rate of 11.75%, and increasing the property transfer tax to 3.25% for property valued over \$600,000. Two other bills, H.721 and H.880, propose increased corporate taxes and securities registration fees.

In total, the changes would increase tax collections annually to the tune of more than \$100 million, according to the Scott administration. (The majority of that increase would take effect in fiscal year 2026, the Joint Fiscal Office notes show.)

For Scott, raising taxes at all is a nonstarter.

"This is while the projection for property tax increases in FY25 are over \$241 million, and the childcare contribution payroll tax begins in July with a projected revenue estimate of over \$80 million for FY25," Commissioner of Taxes Craig Bolio wrote in a Thursday letter to lawmakers.

The bill proposing a new tax

surcharge on high earners comes on the heels of an open letter signed by 31 wealthy Vermonters this week, including Ben & Jerry's co-founders Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield.

"We are willing to pay additional taxes to raise revenue for fundamental government services," they wrote, adding that the state finds itself in an "urgent moment" with "an acute housing crisis, chronic underfunding of state services, and a need for immediate investments in our infrastructure and environmental protection."

Scott acknowledged the letter at his weekly press conference on Wednesday but remained a skeptic given the relatively small number of signatories. In his letter to the committee on Thursday, Bolio took a swipe at House Ways & Means for taking testimony "mainly from advocates and proponents of the new personal income tax bracket, saying that tax flight of high-income individuals is a myth."

"To be clear, the Adminis-

tration is not raising questions about this policy as an attempt to shield high-income earners from taxes, or to make a claim that such a tax will result in those taxpayers becoming destitute; they're going to be fine," Bolio wrote. "The question is not can they afford it; the question is how does the policy impact the tax base of Vermont?"

By Thursday afternoon, the administration was blasting the committee's proposals on social media, writing in a post on the governor's Facebook page, "There they go again. Today, the House Ways & Means Committee just voted to raise another \$100 million in taxes."

The post did not specify who would pay the brunt of the tax hikes: high earners and corporations.

"State government needs to live within its means, just like Vermont families and small businesses do," the post added.

Even the state's Agency of Agriculture jumped in on the social media brouhaha, repub-

lishing the governor's message with the unusually political post, "More taxes proposed from the Vermont House."

House Ways & Means Chair Emilie Kornheiser, D-Brattleboro, told VTDigger on Friday afternoon that what is important is where those taxes come from: Vermont's wealthiest.

"At the end of the day, what I believe Vermonters want is for their communities to work — for the roads to be paved, or graded, depending on which kind of road you live on, and for someone to answer the phone when you call to ask a question," Kornheiser said. "That's what taxes pay for, and I think most Vermonters know that."

"And so I think when we talk about all taxes in blanket terms as a bad thing, we're eroding trust in government," she continued. "And in Vermont, trust in government is trust in our own communities, right?"

Murder case against 14-year-old headed to juvenile court after prosecutor reverses course

BY ALAN J. KEAYS/
VTDIGGER

Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos pictured in Addison County Superior criminal court in Middlebury on Feb. 12. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger Credit: Glenn Russell

MIDDLEBURY — The Addison County state's attorney told a judge on Monday that she does not object to defense attorneys' request to move a 14-year-old murder suspect's case to juvenile court, where it would be closed to the public.

Eva Vekos, who originally brought a second-degree murder charge against the teen in adult court after police said he shot and killed another 14-year-old boy in Bristol, made the comment during a brief hearing Monday afternoon in Addison County Superior criminal court.

The defendant took part in Monday's hearing by video, seated alongside his attorney, Marshall Pahl, Vermont's deputy defender general. VTDigger generally does not identify juvenile defendants and is not doing so in this case at this time.

The suspect is accused of killing 14-year-old Shelburne resident Madden Gouveia last October. Police said he was

waving a gun around in a car when it discharged, killing Gouveia, who was among the teenage passengers.

At the last hearing in the case, in late January, Pahl said he was awaiting results from a psychological evaluation of his client and that he would file a motion to transfer the matter to juvenile court.

"We did file that motion to transfer and had some discussion with the state," Pahl said during Monday's hearing. "My understanding is the state is in agreement."

Vekos then spoke, telling Judge David Fenster, "We are in agreement with the motion and that's based on a review of an evaluation that the defense has allowed us to review."

The defense's one-page request does not include any details of the teen's evaluation. The attorneys did not reveal those during Monday's hearing.

Fenster did not grant any motions on Monday. Instead, he asked Vekos to submit a filing indicating that she would not object to transferring the case to family court.

In that event, the proceedings — and the outcome — would be shielded from public view.

A conviction of second-de-

gree murder in adult court carries a penalty of 20 years to life in prison. In family court, judgments are based on the specifics of each case but do not include adult prison sentences.

Vekos' decision to charge the 14-year-old, who is Black, as an adult drew opposition from civil rights and social justice advocates, including the Rutland-area branch of the NAACP.

Speaking outside of court following a hearing last November, Vekos called the adult murder charge a "starting point."

Several of Gouveia's relatives attended Monday's hearing. Outside the court after it concluded, they decried the attempt to move the case to juvenile court.

Speaking through tears, his mother, Kelly Gouveia, said she didn't believe the shooting was an accident. She cited reports in authorities' charging documents describing attempts to hide the firearm after the shooting and that no one came to her son's aid.

"I'm just so upset by this," Kelly Gouveia said.

She said she would prefer the case not take place in the secrecy of family court.

"I'd like it to be held in adult court so the whole world can

see," Kelly Gouveia said.

She said that she and other family members would be meeting soon with Vekos to talk more about the case.

The defendant has been released on conditions and into his parents' custody since November.

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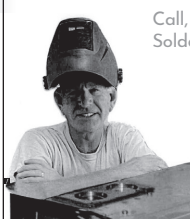
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TOWN OF PITTSFORD Notice of Vacancies

Do you live in Pittsford, VT? Are you interested in being on a Board or Committee? If so, the Town of Pittsford wants to hear from you!

The following positions are up for appointment:

- 2 3-year terms on the Zoning Board of Adjustment
- 5 3-year terms on the Planning Commission
- 1 3-year term as the Planning Commission Alternate
- 1 term on the Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District

Please send a letter of interest to the Town of Pittsford, attn: Select Board, to manager@pittsfordvermont.com, that includes a brief description about yourself and the skills/values that you will bring to make a better Board. **Letters of Interest are due by April 17, 2024.**

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PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY MOSQUITO LARVICIDES

On or after April 15 th, 2024, the Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District (OCW) will be applying ground and possibly aerial treatments of mosquito larvicides on surface waters in the towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Proctor, and Salisbury to control mosquito larvae populations. Those treatments will use *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), *Bacillus sphaericus* (BS), and Spinosad, which are bacterially derived larvicides. Ground applications of Cocobear (mineral oil) and Methoprene may also be used in selected wet areas to target mosquito pupae and prevent adult emergence.

Exclusion requests need to be renewed annually. Please send a written request to the OCW mail or email address below.

In accordance with paragraph 6.06 (a) of the Vermont Rule for the Control of Pesticides, the OCW has been granted a permit to conduct larvicide applications from the Secretary, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

Further information can be obtained from:

Jeff Schumann, OCW Board of Trustees Chair or
Will Mathis, OCW Operations Coordinator
Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District

P.O. Box 188

Brandon, VT 05733

(802) 247-6779

ocwicd@gmail.com

<https://ocwicd.com>

Comments or complaints about OCW larvicide operations should be addressed to:

Director, Public Health & Agricultural Resource

Management Division

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets

116 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

(802) 522-6973

Steve.dwinell@vermont.gov

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY MOSQUITO ADULTICIDES

On or after May 1st, 2024, the Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District (OCW) may be making ground applications of adulticides along the public and private roads in the towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Proctor, and Salisbury to control adult mosquito populations. Applications of Perma Sease (a synthetic pyrethroid insecticide) and Fyfanon (in the malathion family) will be made with ultra-low volume truck-mounted sprayers. Zenivex E-4 RTU (a non-ester pyrethroid) may be substituted for Perma Sease or Fyfanon.

At least six hours in advance of spraying to control adult mosquitoes, specific route information and the pesticide(s) to be used will be posted to <https://ocwicd.com/public-notice>. The OCW also provides email notifications of all planned spraying. To subscribe to the spraying notification email list, please send a request to: ocwicd@gmail.com.

The OCW's published spray routes can be viewed at: <https://ocwicd.com/route-maps>.

The OCW call center phone number is (802) 247-6779; the call center will take requests for treatment during the season.

If you wish to opt out of all adult mosquito treatment and not have the road(s) abutting your property sprayed, please send a written request to the OCW. If you submitted an opt out (No Spray Zone) request for your property last year AND there have been no changes in ownership, contact information, or property boundaries, an email to the OCW containing your 911 address and requesting No Spray Zone status again this year will suffice. If you did not submit an opt out request last year and/or there have been changes in ownership, contact information, or property boundaries, please send a letter to

the OCW address given below listing the name(s) of the property owner(s), his/her/their contact telephone number(s), the 911 address of the property, and a property map which clearly shows the property boundaries along the public right of way. Property maps can be obtained from Town Clerks or online at

<https://maps.vcgi.vermont.gov/ParcelViewer>. Upon receipt of your request an OCW employee will contact you and then will mark your property as a No Spray Zone. Opt out requests must be renewed annually.

In accordance with paragraph 6.07 (a) of the Vermont Rule for the Control of Pesticides, the OCW has applied for a permit to conduct truck-mounted mosquito adulticide applications from the Secretary, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

Further information can be obtained from:

Jeff Schumann, OCW Board of Trustees Chair or

Will Mathis, OCW Operations Coordinator

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Comments or complaints about OCW adulticide spraying operations should be addressed to:

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Management Division

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Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

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steve.dwinell@vermont.gov

Brandon Idol

(Continued from Page 14)

“Let’s Go” by The Cars, a clear precursor to the New Wave of the early 80s. Anyone who was alive back then surely has memories of this song on the radio while driving to the mall. Mr. Ross, who performs regularly at the Red Clover open mic on Thursdays, has obvious respect and affection for the music he plays and this was no exception.

A necessary shout must be given out to the Brandon Idol Band: Bryon Billado on guitar, Kenny Cifone on bass and keyboard, and Ross Edmonds on percussion. These guys were clearly loving what they were playing, and each musician had moments of joy and virtuosity. Well done, men!

All the singers came back to the stage for a literally stomping performance of Queen’s “We Will Rock You,” after which

Miranda Snyder was once again revealed



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Peggie Sue Rozell, Doug Ross, Calvin Ladd, and emcee Shannon Wright, who was the 2023 Brandon Idol winner. Next month’s genre will be pop music!

as Fan Favorite. Congrats, Miranda!

And congrats to all the performers for another terrific installment of Brandon Idol.

Next month’s genre: Pop. Can’t wait to see what the singers come up with!



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