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A community supported newspaper

Vol. 29, No. 18

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\$1



ALL IN THE FAMILY

Third-generation writer Bianca Stone has been named Vermont's new poet laureate.

PG. 4

AND THOUGH SHE BE BUT LITTLE, SHE IS FIERCE.

Otter Valley middle school students get ready to perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

PG. 12

ENGINES READY

Devil's Bowl Speedway opens for the season Saturday, May 4.

PG. 15



BRANDON IDOL, JR

The grownups were great, but it was the kids who stole the show at last week's Kids Idol. See pictures inside.

PG. 16



SOUND OF SILENCE

The Brandon Town Hall's silent film series returns for its 13th year with "The Gold Rush," starring Charlie Chaplin.

PG. 22



Brandon Artists Guild marks 25 years with a nod to its roots: painted pigs

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Renowned artist and Brandon resident Warren Kimble made a huge splash in the 1990s putting his distinctive twist on 19th-century folk-art styles,

creating a whimsical world of white New England houses and wildly proportioned farm animals. One of those animals turned out to have more significance in his life, and to Brandon as a whole, than he

probably anticipated: the pig.

The humble pig turned out to be the initial source of the funds that enabled Kimble and other artists who had settled in Brandon to purchase and renovate the former five & dime at 7 Center Street and form the Brandon Artists Guild (BAG).

"I was standing in front of the 5 & 10 and the president of the First Brandon Bank, which had just bought the building, came out," recalled Kimble recently at his current studio in the Granary. "I said, 'I heard you bought the building' and he said, 'Yes, but just for storage.' I immediately asked whether we could use the front windows for artwork. He said yes."

By the late 90s, it was, by all accounts, a decrepit building. Old pegboard cov-

(See BAG, Page 28)



ARTIST WARREN KIMBLE, one of the founders of the Brandon Artists Guild, leads a celebration of the Guild's 25th anniversary at the Guild's annual dinner at the Lilac Inn in Brandon on March 25. The Guild is marking its 25th year with a silent auction of artist-decorated pigs, a nod to an early successful fundraiser that garnered much publicity and helped put the Guild on solid financial footing.

Photo by Steven Jupiter

Li's Chinese Restaurant in Brandon to close after 20 years

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—For a town its size, Brandon has a surprisingly diverse range of dining options, including the Chinese restaurant run by the married team of Bo Li and Tiffany Jiang. But Li's Chinese Restaurant served its last customers on Tuesday, April 30.

The decision to close the restaurant wasn't easy, but after 20 years of continuous operation, the Li family could use a break. Running a restaurant is hard work, especially since Bo's parents, who had been helping, recently retired.

"It's very hard to find help," explained Tiffany in a recent after-hours conversation at the restaurant on Park Street, next to the Brandon Inn. "And Bo's father hurt his leg and needed surgery, so he hasn't been able to work. It's just me and Bo."

COVID changed the economic feasibility of running a restaurant as well, they said. Business hasn't returned to pre-pandemic levels and the increased cost of their ingredients has forced

(See Li's Chinese Restaurant, Page 9)



MARRIED RESTAURATEURS TIFFANY Jiang (top left) and Bo Li (top right) with their children, Ryan (bottom left, now 16) and Derek (bottom right, now 18), circa 2014.

Brandon and OV budgets defeated once again

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—In their continued resistance to proposed tax hikes, voters once again rejected the Brandon town budget and the Otter Valley Unified Union (OVUU) budget at the ballot box on Tuesday. While the final tally for the Brandon town budget showed a margin of just 75 votes, with 478 no (54%) to 403 yes (46%), the tally for the school budget was considerably more lopsided, with 1019 no (61%) to 638 yes (39%).

Both votes showed a significant decline in the number of ballots cast compared to the first round on March 5. In March, 1,377 ballots were cast in the Brandon budget vote and 2,216 in the school-budget vote. On Tuesday, by contrast, only 881 ballots were cast in Brandon and 1,657 for the school budget.

OTTER VALLEY

The OVUU budget had originally been proposed at \$27,247,823 in March. After its defeat at the ballot, the OVUU Board reduced the amount by 1% to \$26,979,072 by removing a late-run afterschool bus for the Middle School, the Dean of Students position at Neshobe Elementary, the Nordic ski team at the High School, and \$164K in assessments from OVUU to the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (RNESU) to cover special educators, mental-health professionals, and transportation.

Apparently, a 1% reduction in spending was not enough in a year when school taxes are anticipated to rise up to 18%. The 1% reduction in the budget would have resulted in an average annual savings of \$13.60 per (See Budgets defeated, Page 13)



L TO R: Adeline Druart, Roger Nishi, Senator Peter Welch, Melissa Bounty, Sarah Waring. Senator Welch held a listening session in Waitsfield on Friday to listen to his rural constituents explain their concerns and challenges. Photos by George Fjeld

Senator Welch holds Listening Session in Waitsfield

BY GEORGE FJELD

WAITSFIELD—Karen Lawson welcomed Senator Peter Welch and an enthusiastic crowd to the Lawson's Finest Liquids taproom in Waitsfield last Friday for a listening session focused on rural challenges. Senator Welch opened the meeting by acknowledging the many stressors that face rural Vermont, notably

property taxes and broadband access. He emphasized that rural America has a lot to offer and how crucial it is in the US economy. Welch emphasized the affordability of broadband access to make rural living sustainable in the modern world noting how it can make affordable health-care available to all Vermonters. Welch is the chairman of the

Rural Development and Energy subcommittee of the Senate Agriculture committee.

A panel of local experts including Adeline Druart, CEO, Lawson's Finest Liquids, Sarah Waring, Rural Development State Director, USDA, Roger Nishi, VP for Industry Relations, Waitsfield & Champlain Valley Telecom, and Melissa Bounty,

Executive Director, Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation presented data, options and plans for Central Vermont. Druart focused on Lawson's community engagement and contributions including donations of more than \$300,000 to 24 local nonprofits in the last two years.

Nishi, from the local broadband provider, outlined the work his company has done in upgrading the copper-wire network throughout the area. Now, he states the challenge will be to use the recently approved federal funds to build out fiber-optic network throughout the area, estimating its completion in 3-4 years. Melissa Bounty reviewed some of the programs and initiatives to increase housing in the area, both af-

fordable and more costly single-family homes. Welch chimed in that more concentrated housing will need to be part of the solution.

Sarah Waring from the USDA prides her work as a social-impact investor as she oversees the distribution of 74 grant and loan programs. The focus of these programs is housing, economic development, and infrastructure, such as broadband internet, wastewater facilities, and health-care. Her wish is "to rewrite the Farm Bill" to increase flexibility in spending and more local control as to how the monies get allocated.

Questions and comments from attendees varied from a farm worker commenting about housing and other struggles to a White River Junction resident noting how broadband access in his area improves lives. Senator Welch enjoyed some local refreshments during the session and stayed after to mingle and chat with the attendees. I got to thank him personally for his work in obtaining a federal grant for our Brandon Free Public Library renovation project. His eyes lit up as he enthusiastically recalled how excited he was about our community project.



THE REPORTER'S GEORGE Fjeld (left) with Senator Peter Welch.

Names lost in Vermont, Part 23: Memoe and Cross

BY MICHAEL F. DWYER

In our last installment, I remarked how many Québec families who settled in our area came from St. Hyacinthe, about sixty miles north of the Vermont border. Although I did not anticipate it with this next family, here is another instance of the same migration path. But first, a back story.

In the fall of 1989, three promising students, Donna Brutkoski, Gail Clook, and Ginny Memoe, were in my ninth-grade World History class at Otter Valley Union High School. One of my bi-monthly cooperative group assignments required the students to present news broadcasts, television style, on current world events. These three young women all exceeded all my expectations and actually used a video camera to record the reactions to questions they addressed to people in the community. When Ginny's parents, Chuck and Carolyn Memoe came for parent conferences, they expressed their enthusiasm for this "creative and innovative assignment." This comment coming from such well-respected educators meant a great deal to me. With my predilection for investigating names and never having encountered "Memoe" before, I thought this family has its origins in Italy. Way off on that

speculation!

Meeting Chuck Memoe again just a few years ago, I asked him if his ancestors came from Italy. "Oh no," he responded. "We are French."

On a walk through St. Mary's Cemetery last fall, the imposing Memoe stone, marking the resting place of three generations of this family, commanded my attention and beckoned me to explore their story. More recent footstones clearly marked family relationships. Almost a century separated Chuck Memoe from the birth of his French-Canadian grandfather Peter Memoe (1845-1910).

Chuck's grandfather, Pierre Mimeau, was born in St. Hyacinthe, Québec, eldest son of Pierre Mimeau and Charlotte Pion. It's an uncommon French name. Pierre's immigrant ancestor was Jean Mimeau from Parthenay, Deux Sèvres, France, who wed Catherine Rondeau in Québec City on 29 July 1709. Five generations later, Pierre Mimeau, wife Charlotte, and their four children up to that point, moved to Brandon in the late 1850s.

As recorded in the 1860 census, the Meno family were among Brandon's 333 individuals born in Canada. Young Peter, barely fifteen, was already out of the household, working as a hired laborer. As the name

evolved from Mimeau, I suspect last "e" of Memoe was added to the name to distinguish the pronunciation from the English word "memo!" Peter became a United States citizen in

1868, with his declaration stating his birthplace as St. Hyacinthe.

Peter entered his first and only marriage at the age of 33. The civil record of November 26, 1878 gives the names of the couple as Peter Memo and Carrie Cross, but the church record by the Pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Burlington, Rev. Jerome Cloarec, wrote their names as Pierre Mimeau and Caroline Lacroix. A similar bifurcation in spellings existed when Peter's brother, George Memoe [Mimeau] married Carrie's sister, Minnie Cross, in 1883, her name recorded in the church record as Melanise Lacroix.

Cross is a literal translation of La Croix. These two sisters, Carrie and Minnie, born in Mallet's Bay, represent very early French-Canadian migration to Vermont. Their father, Hippolyte Quevillon dit Lac-

189	Peter Meno	34	M	Paul Labourer		80
	Leilot "	30	F	wife		
	John "	10	M			
	Leleway "	11	F			
	Louise "	8	F			
	Joseph "	4	M			
	Memo "	1	F			

"MENO" FAMILY IN 1860 census. Peter Jr., age 15, was not living with the family, indicative that he was already a hired laborer.

Photos provided

roix (1814-1895) emigrated with his parents and siblings in the early 1830s. Hippolyte eventually anglicized his name to Paul. He married in a non-Catholic ceremony Cesarie "Sarah" Goyette before the birth of their first child in 1838, but their marriage was revalidated in 1841 at St. Joseph's Church in Burlington. They had ten children, the last

of whom, Malona/aka Minnie Memoe, died in 1950, age 90, her obituary noting that her parents, Paul and Sarah Cross "were pioneer settlers of Mallet's Bay." A long generation indeed for Minnie with one parent born before the War of 1812 concluded!

Thanks to photos from the collection of Marguerite Cross (See Name Lost, Page 8)

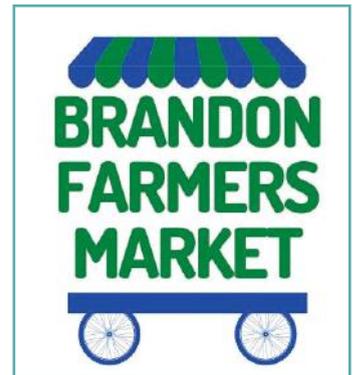
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walk about the park and purchase high quality locally made or grown goods, crafts, meats, produce, artwork, and more!



PETER MEMOE, GRIMES studio photo. Frank Grimes had a studio in Brandon from 1899 to 1904. Other folks in town must have some of his photos.



STELLA A. MEMOE (1880-1943) in her wheelchair, photo circa 1920.

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Third-generation writer Bianca Stone, from Brandon, named Vermont's new poet laureate

BY KEVIN O'CONNOR/VT-DIGGER

When Robert Frost was named Vermont's first poet laureate in 1961, he had just written a new work for then President John F. Kennedy's inauguration, only to recite an old one from memory after glare from the sun prevented him from reading his intended piece.

Six decades later, Bianca Stone understands such a last-minute change in course.

Some days I get up to go for a run

but instead just sit in spandex and write about the fog ...

Such devotion to words may be why Stone has been selected as the state's latest poet laureate. Then again, as the 40-year-old from Brandon continues in "Routine," maybe not.

Some days I get up early to write

but instead clean — the great lie

that I am doing something ...

Stone, appointed by Gov. Phil Scott on Wednesday upon recommendation of the Vermont Arts Council, offers work that "fiercely rejects sugarcoating," author Sandra Simonds has written. Instead, the Vermont-er dives into "the dark things that live in us all — shame, depression, doubt, addiction," bookseller Timothy Otte has summed up.

But that's not why Stone has published pieces in such magazines as *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic*, as well as in five volumes, including her most recent, "What Is Otherwise Infinite," winner of the 2022 Vermont Book Award.

"I'm trying to ask how we can honor our trauma and transmute it into something great that can touch other people and let other people know that we are working on this together," she told

the *Green Mountains Review* in a 2019 interview.

Stone is the daughter of novelist Abigail Stone and granddaughter of the late poet Ruth Stone, who held the state laureate position from 2007 until her death in 2011.

"From a very early age, I thought poetry was intuitive and that everybody did it," the latest writer in her family told the *Green Mountains Review*.

Stone grew up seeing challenges — both her mother and grandmother raised their children single-handedly without much money — and how to process them through creativity.

"A typical day," she wrote in one poem, "is fatalism and utopia."

The new laureate is working with her husband and her twin brother to turn the family's Goshen farmstead into the Ruth Stone House, where she teaches writing, hosts the *Ode & Psyche* podcast, helps edit *Iterant* magazine and dabbles in drawing comics.

The four-year post of state poet has been held by such writers as 2020 Nobel Prize in Literature winner Louise Glück, Galway Kinnell and, most recently, Mary Ruefle.

"Poetry has such an intricate relationship to place, and this appointment speaks to my love of the landscape and people here," Stone said in a statement. "I'm honored to stand with those laureates — including my grandmother — who have come before, continuing the work of cultivating a rich literary tradition in the *Green Mountains*."

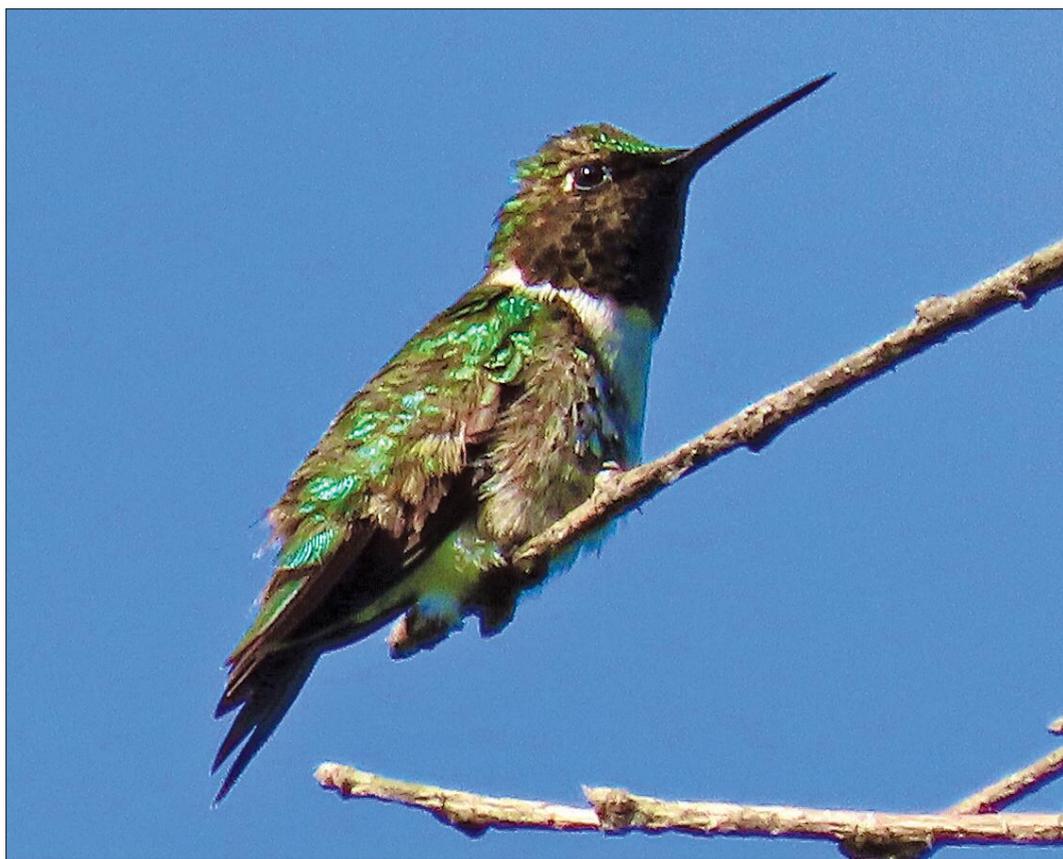
Stone wants to promote the power of poetry by engaging with teachers, students and librarians, as well as all Vermonters.

"I feel like human beings, in general, always feel unseen or

not heard correctly," she told the *Green Mountains Review*. "I don't know how to fix it but it has something to do with

compassion and empathy and allowing yourself to see and be seen. Poetry is one of the places where we can explore frankly

abstract concepts like that that are hard to articulate and need to be talked about."



Bear snacks!

Ruby-throated hummingbirds are on their way north. It has been suggested to get feeders out by the end of April. Photo by Sue Wetmore

Community Forums

Turtles must be left in the wild, to take one home is illegal and harmful

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department says keeping native turtles as pets is prohibited because it can harm the turtle and pose threats to wild turtle populations.

"Capturing a wild turtle and keeping it as a pet, even if only for a short time, is not only bad for that individual turtle but it could hurt entire turtle populations as well," said Vermont Fish and Wildlife herpetologist Luke Groff. "Releasing captured turtles back into the wild can spread wildlife diseases and also affect the genetics of the local population."

Groff explains that adult turtles usually have well-defined home ranges and know where to find food, mates and shelter. However, a turtle released in unfamiliar habitat may roam great distances, increasing the odds it will cross roads and risk

being run over.

For turtles, the loss of even a couple mature females can have serious consequences because they are slow to develop, especially at northern latitudes where the growing season is short.

"Many of Vermont's turtle species do not reproduce until they are at least 10 years of age," says Groff, "and older, sexually mature females are critical to the long-term persistence of some of Vermont's turtle populations."

Two common species you are likely to see are the Painted Turtle and Snapping Turtle. The Wood Turtle, Spotted Turtle and Spiny Softshell are rare in Vermont, and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department urges you to report sightings of these species to the Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas ([\[patlas.org\]\(http://patlas.org\)\). If you see some of Vermont's native turtles in the wild, feel free to take a photo home with you, but leave the turtles in the wild.](http://vther-</p>
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For more information on Vermont's native turtle species, visit Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website or contact Vermont Fish and Wildlife herpetologist Luke Groff at Luke.Groff@vermont.gov.

Green Up Day is on Sat. May 4!

Come out and help keep Brandon looking good!

Event Coordinator Jim Leary will be at the gazebo in Central Park from 8 am to 10 am to hand out garbage bags and route assignments.

The REPORTER

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Letters to the Editor

After learning as much as possible about a confusing topic, it's clear that school financing must change

The loss of the Nordic Ski Program is about so much more than skiing

I was saddened to read that the Nordic Ski Program at Otter Valley U.H.S. was cut. In my opinion, the Nordic Ski Program at O.V. gave students an opportunity to get in shape and enjoy a lifelong sport. The Nordic Ski Program gave the students at O.V. a great place to see and enjoy the great outdoors that Vermont has to offer, in the woods and on the trails, all over Vermont. In my years at O.V., I had

the pleasure to work with many talented and dedicated athletes and also the supportive families involved with the program. The Nordic program was well respected throughout the state of Vermont. The program can boast having produced an Olympian and other highly successful skiers.

Jim Samler
Brandon

After attending the RNESU's April 23rd meeting discussing the revised 2024-25 budget, I have come to the conclusion, ever so hard as it might be, that I will be voting yes on this budget. I would encourage all the voters of RNESU to vote yes on the budget too.

As I said, I attended the informational meeting, along with six other voters, where we were able to ask questions directly to the board, superintendent, and finance manager of the district. No that is not a typo: six people made the time to come to OV to hear about a topic that 1,325

people voted down just over a month ago. You would think more folks would have been interested in understanding why our school district is increasing taxes as high as they are and what the possible solutions may be to slowing this practice down.

Brenda Fleming the finance manager gave a presentation with pure numerical mumbo-jumbo and a sprinkling of statistical and mathematical wizardry which would make even the most accomplished bean counter proud. This is not to degrade Ms. Fleming; it's to bring attention to the way we fund public edu-

cation in the state of Vermont. It is so convoluted, confusing, and downright mystifying that I'd challenge any lawmaker in Montpelier to prove they truly understand it, because they don't. And therein lies the problem: the lawmakers in Montpelier have created this monster that they seem to want us to slay.

It is true that the massive tax increase for education this year has come about because the stars have aligned to create a perfect storm. The hangover from COVID has brought more need for mental-health services (we all
(See 'Vote Yes', Page 7)

How do 'silent' votes from SB members advance or promote the interests of the town?

I attended my first Selectboard meeting in quite some time on April 20. At the commencement of the public comment portion of the meeting, I thought that I had somehow wandered into a "Festivus" celebration (it's a Seinfeld reference). The ensuing "airing of grievances" would have made George Costanza's father

proud. I applaud the Selectboard for its patience, restraint, and equanimity during this portion of the meeting. In my opinion, far too much of this portion of this meeting was devoted to matters of little or no consequence to the great majority of Brandon residents. 'Nuff said about that.

On a different note, a vote

taken by one Board member at the meeting merits scrutiny. A single Selectboard member voted against the already-funded Forestdale Shared Use Path Engineering Study Proposal (a voting pattern that I understand has now become a common occurrence). This member asked no questions about the proposal, he did not voice any issues

or concerns, nor did he suggest how the proposal might be improved. Nevertheless, this member evidently felt that the proposal was not in the best interests of Brandon. Yet he made no effort to explain his thoughts on the matter in an effort to sway other Board members to his point of view. Perhaps this member's vote on the matter

was a reasoned, principled, and thoughtful decision. We'll never know. Whatever the case, his failure to speak up on the matter is a cop-out; ostensibly being contrarian purely for the sake of being contrarian.

It's easy to be the outlier and simply vote "no" on anything and/or everything. The more
(See 'Silent' votes, Page 7)

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Brandon SB presents revised budget ahead of revote

BY GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON-The Brandon Selectboard presented their revised budget to a crowd of about 30 townsfolk at the Town Hall on Monday night. Chairperson Doug Bailey presented the budget complete with detailed graphics to explain the changes made for the revote. The total increase to the budget was reduced from \$450,030 to \$208,730. Paving was cut most severely, from \$300,000 to \$86,000. An additional \$100,000 will be added to the paving budget from the 1% local option tax fund. The replacement police cruisers were cut from two to one.

Brian Coolidge made a statement that he does not support

the budget as he is a conservative who believes in small government. Heather Nelson voiced support for the budget and the cuts and commented that other cuts to the budget were declined as being too hard on employee morale. "Cutting things like police uniforms or office supplies would save \$500 in the budget or 25 cents on the property tax on the average Brandon home but make it a little harder for the police force to do its work. It would decrease morale," she said.

During the question-and-answer session, Judy Bunde applauded the great job the Selectboard has done. She disapproved of all the nitpicking that has occurred over the past

two months. She feels that the disrespect shown to the board by some community members was disgraceful. She asked if the present board members were going to run for reelection when their terms were up. Doug Bailey stated he had already served 6 years previously and is committed to his present 3-year term. Heather Nelson likes the work but deserves to be treated nicely and will not run if that does not occur. Ralph Ethier will run again. Tim Guiles has enjoyed his work and is at the start of a

3-year term. He would like to see people disagree in a neighborly way. Brian Coolidge says he has 2 years left and will see what happens.

Jennifer Stewart wanted to know what was cut from the police budget. Mr. Bailey said one new cruiser was cut. Matthew Craig asked if the increase in taxes was related to the rise in property values. Bailey said that 80% of our tax base is single-family homes. Mr. Guiles said we are due for a reappraisal. Town Clerk Sue Gage said that town assessors

are not raising the assessment on individual homes that have been sold for more than their appraised value. Ninety percent of Vermont towns need to do a reappraisal and there are not enough assessors to complete this quickly. A regular assessment takes 3 years, according to Mr. Bailey.

Matt Craig said that he supports civility in public discussion. Sandy Mayo asked if the board had gone through the budget line by line to find cuts. Bailey answered that they had
(See Brandon SB, Page 7)

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Legislative Report

BY BUTCH SHAW

Legislative race to the finish, no tax relief till 2028

The end of the 2023-2024 biennial session is now clearly in sight and it's a race to the finish. Many of the indicators of adjournment are now visible to most members of the Assembly, the lobbyists, and the usual suspects that roam the halls of the Statehouse. There are several signs pointing to a May 10th adjournment, including Speaker Krowinski calling for token sessions. A token session is a rarely used tool used to advance the calendar without having a quorum of members present to a day in which members are in the building and a quorum can be achieved. The Speaker has also called for a rare Monday session on May 7th, 2024, to address several important pieces of legislation needed for adjournment and to allow Committees of Conference to meet (By rule, Committees of Conference cannot meet when the House and Senate are not in session). The General Fund Budget bill has been returned to the House from the Senate and has been placed in a Committee of Conference. The Transportation Bill, the Capital Bill, and the Yield Bill will be placed in conference committees by the end of the upcoming week, all necessary actions needed for an end-of-the-biennial session. However, for me the most important sign of adjournment is the blooming of the Statehouse tulips. I can inform you that the bloom has started, and I fully expect all the gardens to be in full color by May 10.

A bill that I have been following is H.887 the Education Property Tax bill, otherwise known as

the Yield Bill. This is the legislation that establishes the statewide education property tax. It's usually a one- or two-page document that sets the state's homestead tax rate and the non-homestead property tax rate. However, this year the bill proposes to make several changes to the education finance system, education spending, education taxes, property valuation and taxes over the next three years. Representative Jerome spoke at length in her legislative report last week on the intricacies of funding education in the state of Vermont and the impending perfect storm in this year's property tax-rate increase.

The legislature has been aware of issues facing the education funding system since 2002 and has enacted 38 different studies to come up with a fix to the system and has yet to solve the problem. Unfortunately, H.887 adds another commission and another committee to study education financing and delivery. With the wording in H 887, it appears to me that there will be no tax relief or changes to the education funding formula until 2028. As passed by the House, the Yield Bill will provide for an average statewide homestead property tax increase of 14.97 percent over the previous year and a non-homestead property tax increase of 17.99% over the previous year. The original estimate of an 18% increase was brought down by using all the reserve funds in the education fund along with instituting a 6% cloud tax on prewritten software purchased online and 1.5% surcharge on the current Short Term

Rental Tax. These two taxes are estimated to generate \$27 million for the Ed Fund. It should be noted here that the non-homestead tax rate consists of not only business properties, but also residential rental properties and similar non-commercial properties. H.887 was hotly debated on the House floor with no fewer than 10 amendments offered to the bill with only one technical correction amendment being successful. I offered an amendment to the 1.5% surcharge on short term rentals, which was found unfriendly by the Ways and Means committee even though I offered alternatives to the surcharge which would have seen a de minimis effect on other funding sources that I identified and would not have an impact on our tourist industry. H.887 passed the House without my support and has been passed to the Senate for their review.

Questions, comments or conversation? Please send me an email at bshaw@leg.state.vt.us or please give me a call at 802-483-2398 for more information concerning our legislative district of Pittsford-Proctor you can also leave a message for me at the Office of the Sergeant at Arms of the Vermont State House at 802-828-2228 please leave your contact information.

*Representative Butch Shaw
Pittsford-Proctor Rutland-8
Vice Chair-House Committee
on Transportation
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Vote 'Yes'

(Continued from Page 5)

can use that), federal funds that helped get the schools through the pandemic are gone, state tax revenue that became strong once we could leave our homes has slowed, and the increase in property value due to the mass influx of people realizing Vermont is a better place to live has thrown our CLA (common level of appraisal) into a tailspin. These are some of the reasons the cost of education for the next generation has increased so dramatically.

Another far more consequential reason is that the cost of health insurance for educators will increase by 16% this year. I say this is far more consequential because as far back as I can remember, the cost of health insurance has increased between 7-13% every year. Think about that: every year the rise in health insurance costs outpaces the cost-of-living increase. Now, teachers are notoriously underpaid—don't believe me, think back to the 2019-20 COVID pandemic when you had to be the teacher, remember how tough that was, or better yet volunteer some time in a classroom full of children that are not your

own and then say teachers are not underpaid. So, we compensate them with a good healthcare package which I will repeat is going up 16% this year.

Now you may call me a liberal, or even worse, a socialist but I'm a firm believer in a national healthcare system. If basic healthcare were provided and no longer a burden that we all had to worry about, everyone could pursue the career they wanted, not stay in the career they have, just because it provides healthcare. I ask you to take a moment and just think of what business you might start, or career change you might make if you didn't have to worry about healthcare. A population that is provided basic care stays healthier, which allows them to better contribute to society, and we as a nation save money because catching illness sooner costs less to treat. Let's not forget the fact that health insurance increases every year under the free market system by 7-13% (16% this year.) That is a whole lot of money that is being paid by every school, municipality, and business. There has got to be a better way. Oh, don't all you folks with concierge medi-

cal service get all worked up... you can still be pampered you'll just have to pay for it yourself.

Thank you for the sideline rant, back to the education tax problem. We have this perfect storm that has made landfall, and we are stuck with it. I sure as hell do not want to pay such an increase in property taxes this year and I'm sure most folks feel the same. But here we are and it's not going to get small enough to make much of a difference without seriously impacting the youth of our community, so pay it we must. What really matters, once we have all voted for the revised budget and ensured that the children of RNESU will have their educational needs for the 2024-25 school year taken care of, is that we work to make sure this DOES NOT happen to us again.

The most remarkably intelligent question of the seven citizens the night of the 23rd was "How do we make sure this doesn't happen again?" I believe there are several things we can do to ensure that the educational tax rate does not hit us like a tsunami again.

Start with pushing the legis-

latures to create a better system of educational funding. This could mean creating a corporate income tax that helps ease the burden on property owners by having the companies that need educated employees share in the cost. Or a personal income tax, adding a personal income tax for education would also create a fairer tax system in that those who do not own property would have some skin in the game of education.

While adding taxes is always a rough sale, the local communities can provide a show of good faith by further consolidating school districts to cut costs to the educational system. Vermont, the 2nd smallest state in the country by population, has close to 100 school districts. With that many districts, there is plenty of room for consolidation, which will save money. Yes, this would mean cutting jobs in administration, but they are typically the highest-paid employees, and employees are the most expensive cost of any business. Yes, you might lose some of your "local control" but I'd refer you back to the number of people attending the informational meeting,

we don't really care about local control until our taxes shoot up.

While the legislature is working on a better-balanced educational funding system, and the communities are working on district consolidation, the citizens can begin to work on holding the healthcare insurance board accountable and push for better prices for the school districts, because the yearly increase in healthcare is not sustainable. Oh yes, there will be massive push-back that "we can't help it, it's not our fault, we're doing our best," but that can no longer be acceptable. A strong scrutiny of the healthcare funding and negotiation system must be made. Finally, a citizen-led audit of the central offices of districts should be done every five years to ensure that they don't become top-heavy with unnecessary expenses. There are school districts throughout the United States paying for education in a manner that is understandable and less volatile it is time for Vermont to do the same.

Devon Fuller
Brandon

'Silent' vote

(Continued from Page 5)

challenging part of the exercise is to articulate your viewpoint, and to try to attract others to the merits of your position on the underlying matter to thereby influence the outcome of the vote. Perhaps this Board member will seek to do so in

the future. Otherwise, his "no" votes seemingly are pointless and without the slightest bit of conviction. Put simply, I am at a loss as to how these "silent" votes advance or promote the interests of the town.

Jim Leary
Brandon

Brandon SB

(Continued from Page 6)

spent 3 months doing so last fall and did not repeat the process. Mayo then thanked the board for putting up with criticism. Jen Coolidge voiced support for stopping the mailing of ballots and said it was good to go to the polls. Ms. Gage reminded the audience that the Vermont Secretary of State will be mailing general election ballots in the fall.

Ben Hobeck questioned if the real-estate tax was a flat tax. Town Manager Seth Hopkins responded that it is based on assessment. However, the state has an income-sensitive mechanism to lower property taxes based on the current year's tax

return. 80% of the town benefits from this "prebate."

Carol Fjeld asked what was cut and what is left in the paving budget. Mr. Bailey said that High Pond Road was cut and that North Street in Forstdale and Union Street were kept. Karen Farwell questioned \$5,000 in missing funds from the ARPA monies. Mr. Hopkins stated that he told her when she asked in his office that there was still a bill that might come in and \$5,000 was reserved for that possibility. Ms. Gage was insulted that Farwell would accuse the town clerk of mismanaging money. "We have no missing money," she said.

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Name lost

(Continued from Page 3)
Aldrich, posted on Ancestry.com, we have three studio images of the family. Peter Memoe

[Pierre Mimeau] looks dapper in a studio portrait from Frank Grimes studio in Brandon circa 1900. He died in Brandon, age

65, from heart disease. Peter's eldest son Charles Memoe, formally attired circa 1920, supported his mother through her long widowhood and did not marry until after death in 1933. Charles also provided a home for his sister Stella, seen here in her wheelchair. Stella's obituary, published in The Rutland Herald on 25 October 1943, is a tribute to how she led a full life, all the more remarkable from an era when people with physical handicaps were often relegated to the sidelines:

"Miss Stella Amanda Memoe, 63, afflicted with arthritis since she was 14 years old and confined to a wheelchair since she was 16, died suddenly today of a heart attack...Although a cripple most of her life, Miss Memoe maintained an interest in community affairs and in the children whom she loved to have visit her home and garden. She spent many hours teaching them the beauty in life, in music, painting and reading. Although unable to take an active part in making a garden a garden, Miss Memoe planned and supervised one of the best gardens in town. She was an honorary member of the Brandon Garden club.

Before taking to her wheelchair Miss Memoe was able to be about on crutches when she was 14 to 16. Later she opened a gift and handwork shop which she conducted on Union

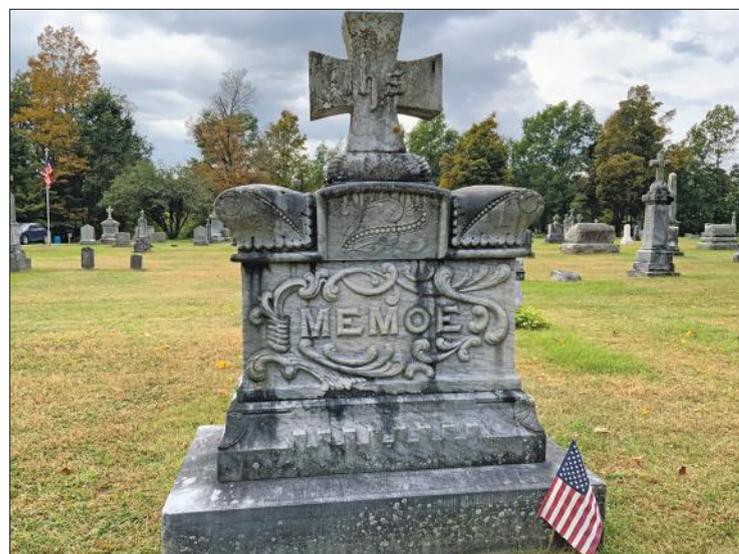


CHARLES P. MEMOE (1888-1949), photo circa 1920.

Street nearly 20 years. Features of the shop were pieces of her own handwork and later her postcards painted in soft pastel shades.

Miss Memoe developed an interest in hobbies making a

study of stamp collections, stampcraft, and later starting a button collection. Her hobbies brought her mail from all sections of the country."



MEMOE STONE IN St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Brandon.

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United States of America,

Vermont District, to-wit:

District Court, August Term, 1868.

Be It Remembered, That at a term of the

District Court of the United States, began and held at Burlington, within and for the Vermont District aforesaid, on the seventeenth day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight and a

Peter Memoe born in *St. Asacinte Canada East*, an alien,

in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *forty-five* at present residing at *Brandon* in the county of *Rutland* in the State of Vermont, did personally appear here in Court, on the *twenty-fifth* day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight aforesaid, and did then and there declare on oath as follows, to wit: "You,

Peter Memoe do solemnly swear that, for three years last past, it has been *bona fide* your intention to become a citizen of the UNITED STATES, and to renounce, forever, all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty whatever, and particularly to *Victoria*, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, whereof you are, at present, a subject: so help you God."

PETER MEMOE'S NATURALIZATION record from 1868.

Li's Chinese Resaurant

(Continued from Page 1)

them to raise their prices.

"It's become very expensive to run the business," said Tiffany.

The Bo and Tiffany have two sons, Derek and Ryan. Derek, 18, is a senior at Otter Valley and has a scholarship to attend the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston next

"There are two or three Asian groceries in Burlington," said Bo, "but they're very small." One of the bigger Asian markets, on Dorset Street in South Burlington, recently closed for unknown reasons.

And their desire to branch out into cuisines other than Chinese is simply the result of

They were introduced by relatives with the hope that they would marry.

"It was like an arranged marriage," laughed Tiffany. "But we had a choice."

Bo's sister brought him up to Vermont to look for a place to open a restaurant outside New York. Their first Brandon location was in the now-empty space between the Post Office and the liquor store on Conant Square. They were there for 8 years. But the rent, which started out at \$1,800/month, eventually reached \$3,700. They knew they'd need to find something that made more economic sense over the long haul.

So, they purchased the building on Park Street, which used to house a bookstore downstairs and a café/music venue upstairs. Their large community of friends helped them move all the equipment from Conant Square to the new location, forming a chain up Route 7 through downtown Brandon.

"The first day we were open was crazy," said Bo. "We were so busy."

The new space allowed them to live above the restaurant, saving both time and money.

But Bo and Tiffany are ready to take a breather before their next venture. They'll spend time with their boys. Bo will continue to create his intricate origami-like paper figures. And they'll continue to cook, for themselves and their friends. In fact, the conversation at their restaurant wrapped up with a gift of packaged rice noodles ("These are the ones Chinese people eat") and instructions on their proper preparation.

Their building is on the market, but even if they sold it, they'd stay in Brandon. After all, their boys were born here and it's been their home for the last 20 years.

"Bobo and Tiffany are hard-working, intelligent, and most of all very kind people," said Tim Shields, a Brandon resident who has become close with the Li family over the years. "I admire their character."

Mary Shields, Tim's wife, recounts that the cultural exchange with the Lis went both ways: Thanksgiving at Tim and Mary's, Chinese New Year at Bo and Tiffany's.

"They're extremely generous and love Brandon," said Mary. "We consider them family."

Many in Brandon feel the same way, leaving cards for Bo & Tiffany as the closing date



BO AND TIFFANY'S wedding photo surrounded by photos of their sons, Derek and Ryan. Bo and Tiffany met through relatives in New York City and began their family while living in Brandon.

year. He plans to study mechanical engineering. Ryan, 16, will be a junior at OV. A desire to spend more time with their boys before Derek leaves for college was another factor in the decision to close the restaurant.

Bo and Tiffany aren't planning to retire, however. After a few months off, they hope to reimagine their first-floor space as an Asian food market and café, with a more manageable menu focusing on a broader range of Asian cuisine, such as dim sum (Chinese dumplings), sushi, and pho (a Vietnamese soup).

their genuine appreciation for food. Even in their spare time, they love to cook, often inviting friends from town over for meals that aren't on the restaurant's menu.

Over the years, they'd sometimes try out different dishes, like Thai curry, as specials, but they learned that their customers preferred their tried-and-true favorites, such as General Tsao's chicken and lo mein.

Bo and Tiffany came to Brandon 20 years ago from New York City, where Tiffany grew up. Bo was raised in Fujian, China but immigrated to New York with his family.



TIFFANY AT THE counter of their first restaurant in Brandon, which was located between the post office and the liquor store on Conant Square. Dozens of friends helped them move all their equipment up Route 7 to their second location on Park Street.

neared.

To mark the last week in operation and to thank the community for its years of support, Bo and Tiffany will prepare a huge feast at their restaurant on Friday, May 3 at 5 p.m. All

are welcome and attendance is free.

"We want to thank everyone for all the support," said Bo. "We've made a lot of good friends here."



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OUR CREATIVE KIDS

STUDENTS: Eden Wilford and
Shennay Ingram

GRADE: 5

SCHOOL: Neshobe

TITLE: The Garden

MEDIUM: Paper and paint

TEACHER: John Brodowski



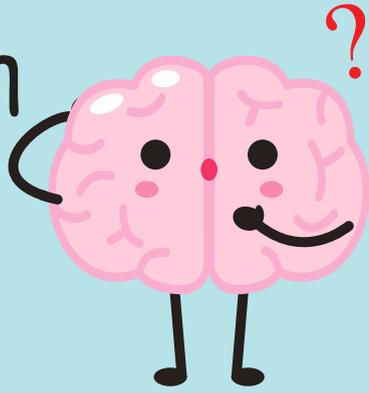
Statement from Eden and Shennay:

Me and my friend got bored and decided to make a garden with trees and flowers. At first it was going to be just trees but then we wanted to make it a garden. We used crumpled up paper towels for the trees and clouds. We painted the branches and used different types of brushes. We added bushes too.

Statement from Mr. Brodowski:

Eden usually starts her paintings by diving right in and she paints fast! It's a bit like watching Bob Ross paint - one moment it looks like smears of paint, the next you have a picture. Shennay worked with Eden on this painting and they made a great team. They had fun with this painting!

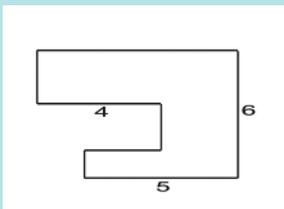
Brandon Brain Buster



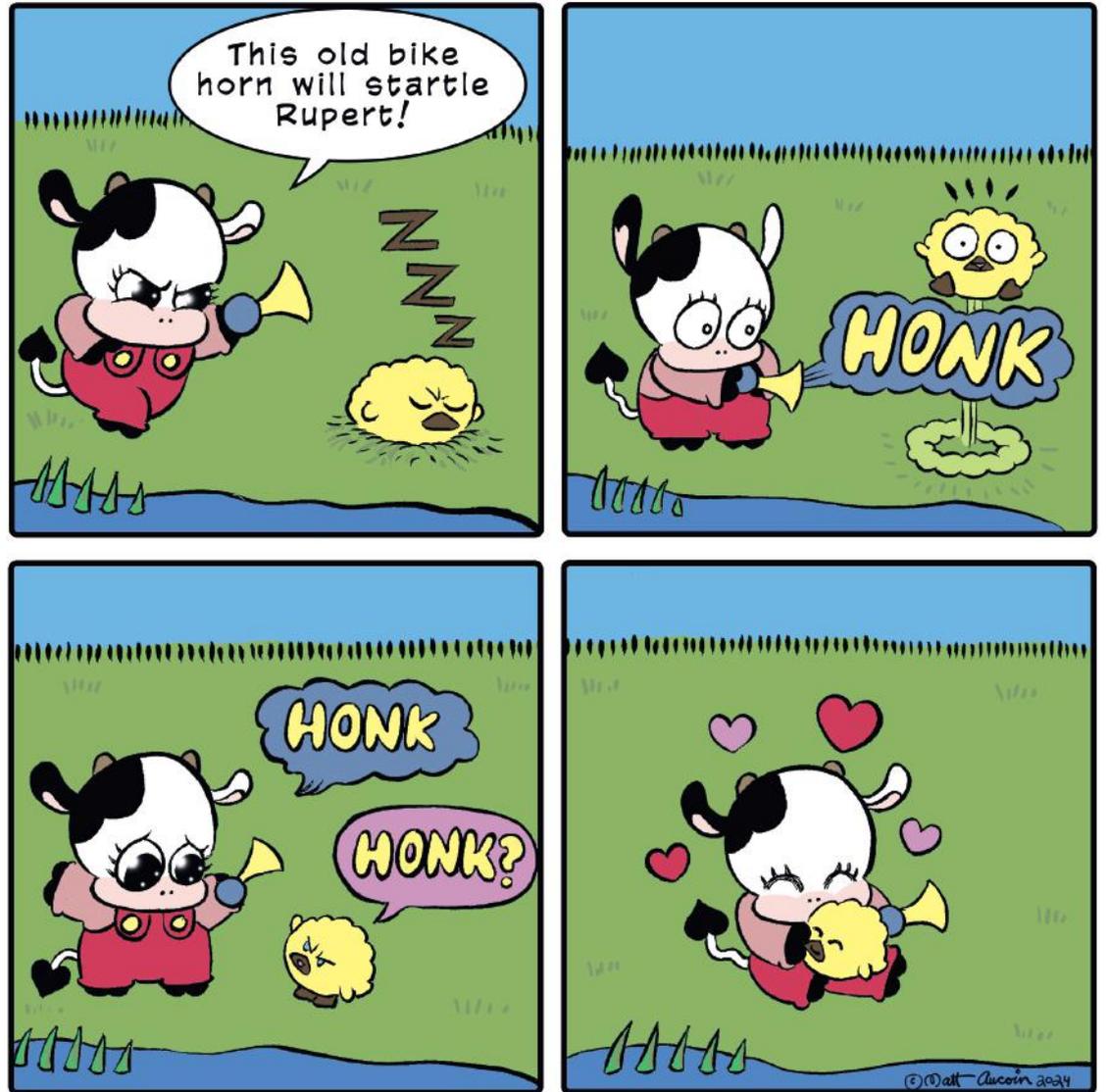
What is the total perimeter of the figure depicted below? (Assume that all lines are straight and all angles are 90 degrees)

- A) 20
- B) 25
- C) 30
- D) 35
- E) Cannot be determined

Answer on page 23.



MAPLE the COW™ by Matt Aucoin



Killington is the East's largest ski resort, developer wants to expand on that in a big way

BY KEVIN O'CONNOR/
VTDIGGER

KILLINGTON — Michael Sneyd may work in a tall office tower in Canada's most populous city of Toronto, but he'd rather talk up the even bigger slopes of this small town in Vermont.

"Killington has long been known as the largest ski mountain in the East," he began a recent video call, "with the highest vertical drop in the East, the best snowmaking in the East, and now arguably the best lodges in the East."

Sneyd, head of the Great Gulf real estate group's resort residential division, believes this community of 1,407 people — who host an eye-popping 1 million tourist visits annually — lacks only one thing: a retail and residential center like those at the state's No. 2 through 5 ski areas at Stratton, Sugarbush, Smugglers' Notch and Stowe.

That's why the businessman who has appeared on television's "Undercover Boss Canada" is heading an effort to build a 450-acre commercial and condominium village at the base of the Killington Resort — part of a larger proposed \$3 billion capital investment in the next 25 years.

"It's a one-of-a-kind master plan with four-season potential," said Sneyd, who has spent much time in Vermont in recent months.

The first phase centers on a new lift lodge designed by the

international architecture firm of Moshe Safdie — whose work ranges from Montreal's Habitat 67 World's Fair housing complex to Singapore's Marina Bay Sands resort — plus some 32,000 square feet of commercial space, 193 condominiums and 32 single-family homes.

In a plan submitted to the state, subsequent stages of the project could add up to 2,300 housing units over the next two to three decades, along with an estimated 1,000 construction jobs and 1,200 permanent jobs.

Newcomers may be surprised by the proposed size and scope of the project, which Forbes.com notes "is one of the largest in environmentally restrictive Vermont in recent years."

But longtime locals have heard resort officials wish aloud for a village since the ski area's founding in 1958.

"The interest shown by Vermonters," the Rutland Herald reported that year, "promises rapid expansion planning."

History has proven otherwise, in part because of state permitting hurdles. Yet after decades of unsuccessful attempts by others, Great Gulf unveiled its latest phase-one proposal to residents and resort visitors over the winter and expects to file its plans with the town's development review board by the end of May.

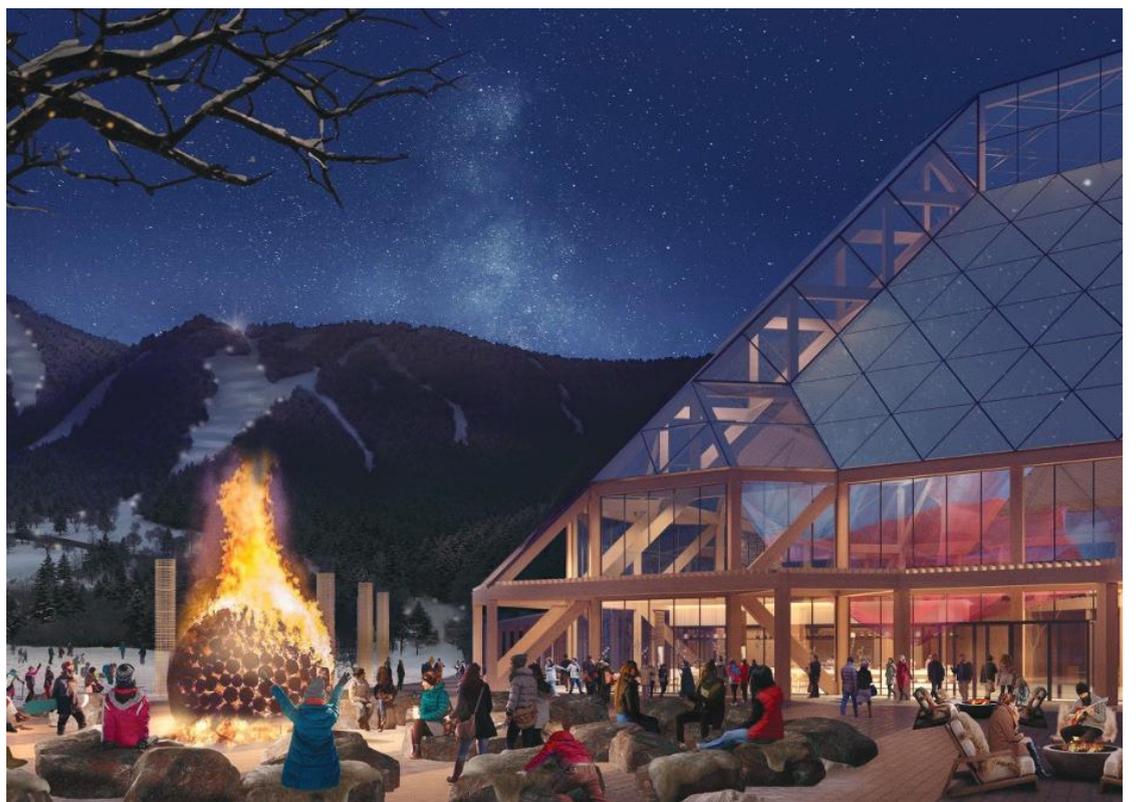
The Canadian company will then face scrutiny from a state district Act 250 land use com-

mission, which received the ski area's initial concept for a village in 1998 and went on to approve another developer's proposal in 2013 and, upon appeal, again in 2017.

Great Gulf hopes to receive its permits for the first phase of construction by the expected return of World Cup ski racing to Killington this November and, "if all goes well and the stars align,"

break ground next spring, Sneyd said.

A subsequent opening as early as 2027 would come nearly three-quarters of a century after (See Killington, Page 31)



PEOPLE GATHERED AROUND a large bonfire outside a modern, glass-walled building at night, with snowy mountains and a starry sky in the background. A proposed Killington resort village lodge to be called "The Crystal," as rendered by the architecture firm of Moshe Safdie.

Illustration courtesy Great Gulf real estate group



SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER and production director Kate St. Raymond (in red) leading her actors through a rehearsal of Shakespeare's comedy "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The play will be performed on Thursday, May 9th and Friday, May 10th by the Walking Stick Theater at Otter Valley. Photo by Mitchell Pearl

A Midsummer Night's Dream comes to Otter Valley's Walking Stick

BY MITCH PEARL

A series of firsts have come together for Otter Valley's Walking Stick Theatre. It is the first time—in anyone's memory—that a play by William Shakespeare will be performed at the school. It's also the first full-length production featuring only middle-school students. And it is the first play at Otter Valley directed by Social Studies teacher Katie St. Raymond, this also being her first year at the school.

Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" will be performed by students in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades on Thursday and Friday evenings, May 9th and 10th, at 7:30. The play is a comedy written by

William Shakespeare in 1595 or 1596. It is set in and around Athens and consists of several interconnected subplots that revolve around a royal marriage. One subplot involves a conflict among four Athenian lovers. Another follows a group of six amateur actors rehearsing a play-within-the-play, which they are to perform for the roy-

al wedding. Both groups find themselves in a forest inhabited by fairies who manipulate the humans—with love potions and spells—while the fairies play out their own quarrels.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" is one of Shakespeare's most popular and widely performed plays. It's funny, silly at times, even involving one character's head being turned into a donkey's. The middle schoolers will perform a shortened version of the play, but Shakespeare's language—the English language of the 16th century, with Shakespeare's own twists—will remain. According to Katie St. Raymond, the students struggled with reading the lines at first, but they quickly learned that Shakespeare is easier to understand when spoken out loud. The students watched a taped performance of the play performed at the Shakespeare Globe Theatre in England and had assistance with the language from Otter Valley librarian Stephanie Hull, who is a Shakespearean scholar. Ms. St. Raymond was

Ms. St. Raymond believes that the themes and conflicts in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" are easy for middle schoolers to relate to—love and jealousy, conflict in friendships and relationships, dreams versus reality, wanting one thing while your parents want another, etc.

also very comfortable with Shakespeare's language. She majored in drama at a performing arts high school in Connecticut, playing one of the lovers in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." She also "unofficially" minored in theatre at Saint Michael's College in Vermont, where she was fortunate enough to be a part of a number of Shakespeare shows.

Ms. St. Raymond believes that the themes and conflicts in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" are easy for middle schoolers to relate to—love and jealousy, conflict in friendships and relationships, dreams versus reality, wanting one thing while your parents want another, etc. The play allows them to act out these conflicts in a fantastical, silly, non-judgmental way. Just like the four lovers in the play, middle schoolers struggle with conflict in friendships. And just like Bottom may feel out-cast after he gets turned into a donkey—from the neck up—middle schoolers struggle with their own changes and rejection.

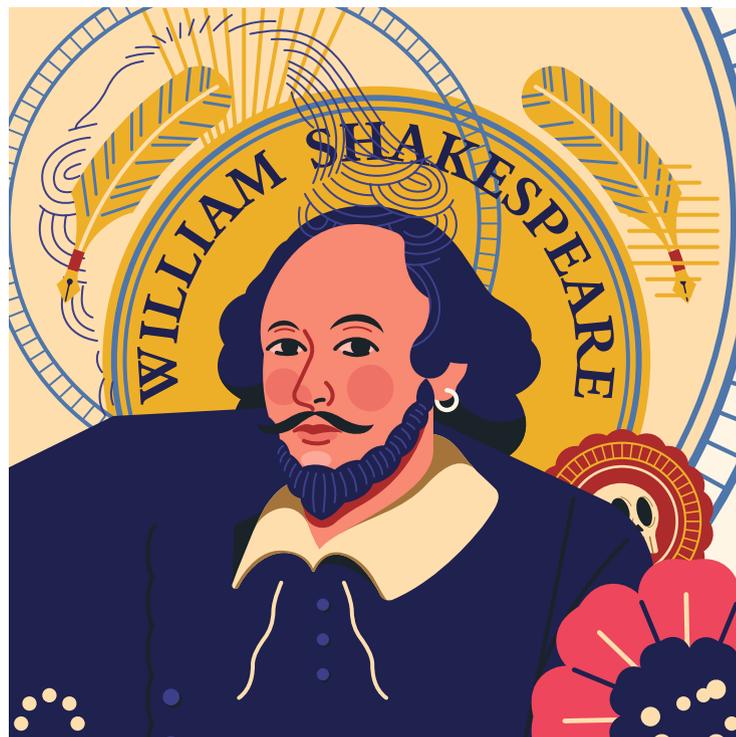
By limiting the cast to middle school students, these younger players can take on the harder and more complicated roles that would otherwise be taken up by upperclassmen. Jeffrey Hull, OV's Theatre Department Director, has been looking for some time to be able to provide this opportunity for the middle schoolers. Katie St. Raymond's background and experience has now made it possible.

There is palpable excitement among the students. Rehearsals start with an improv warm-up, in which students take on different roles that must be made up "on the spot." Then the students do stretching and breathing exercises to channel energy and stay focused. They are to "have fun, but be serious!"

Since they are playing all the lead and supporting roles themselves, the middle school players are forging a real bond of community. And while the students consider the play challenging, they know they still have enough time to rehearse, and they are sure they will "pull it off." Their message to every-

one is to come see the play: "You'll be missing out if you don't come!" They also hope that the middle school play will inspire other students to work with the theatre. If students had any doubt about joining theatre, the cast of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" has a message for them: "Just do it!"

Looking ahead, the upperclasses of Otter Valley's Walking Stick Theatre will be presenting "Huffs"—a new play about a regular boy who finds out he is a wizard—directed by Jeff Hull, on May 31 and June 1.



Budgets defeated

(Continued from Page 1)

\$100,000 of assessed property value across the OVUU district. So, a taxpayer whose home was valued at \$200K would have saved roughly \$27.20 per year and a taxpayer whose home was valued at \$300K would have saved roughly \$40.80. Voters clearly wanted more.

The OVUU Board will now have to revisit its budget and find other expenses to trim, a challenging task, given that the Board had already trimmed \$500K from its budget to arrive at the March proposal. At the time, state law capped property-tax increases at 5% if districts kept their budget increases be-

low 10%. OVUU cut \$500K in order to remain just below that cutoff.

However, the Legislature subsequently felt that districts that would not have approached a 10% increase were “padding” their budgets to stay just a hair below the cutoff and removed the protective cap. OVUU had already cut \$500K to remain below the threshold and now found itself in a position where further cuts were demanded by voters because the 5% protection was no longer available.

In preparing its now-defeated budget, the OVUU had considered a 3% reduction in the March proposal, which would

have entailed cutting world-language instruction in the elementary schools and consolidating some elementary classrooms (allowing the reduction of teaching staff). OVUU Board members rejected that proposal as inflicting too much damage on the educational experience of district students.

A 3% reduction would have saved the average OVUU taxpayer \$40.80 per \$100K of assessed property value. A taxpayer whose home was assessed at \$250K, for example, would see a savings of approximately \$102 per year in school taxes.

RNESU Superintendent Kristin Hubert wrote in an e-mail on

Tuesday night, “Our boards will be meeting in the near future to determine next steps.”

It is not known whether the OVUU Board will now adopt the 3%-reduction plan it previously rejected or devise a different approach with different cuts. Under state law, a school district can borrow up to 80% of its previous year’s budget to cover costs until a new budget is passed.

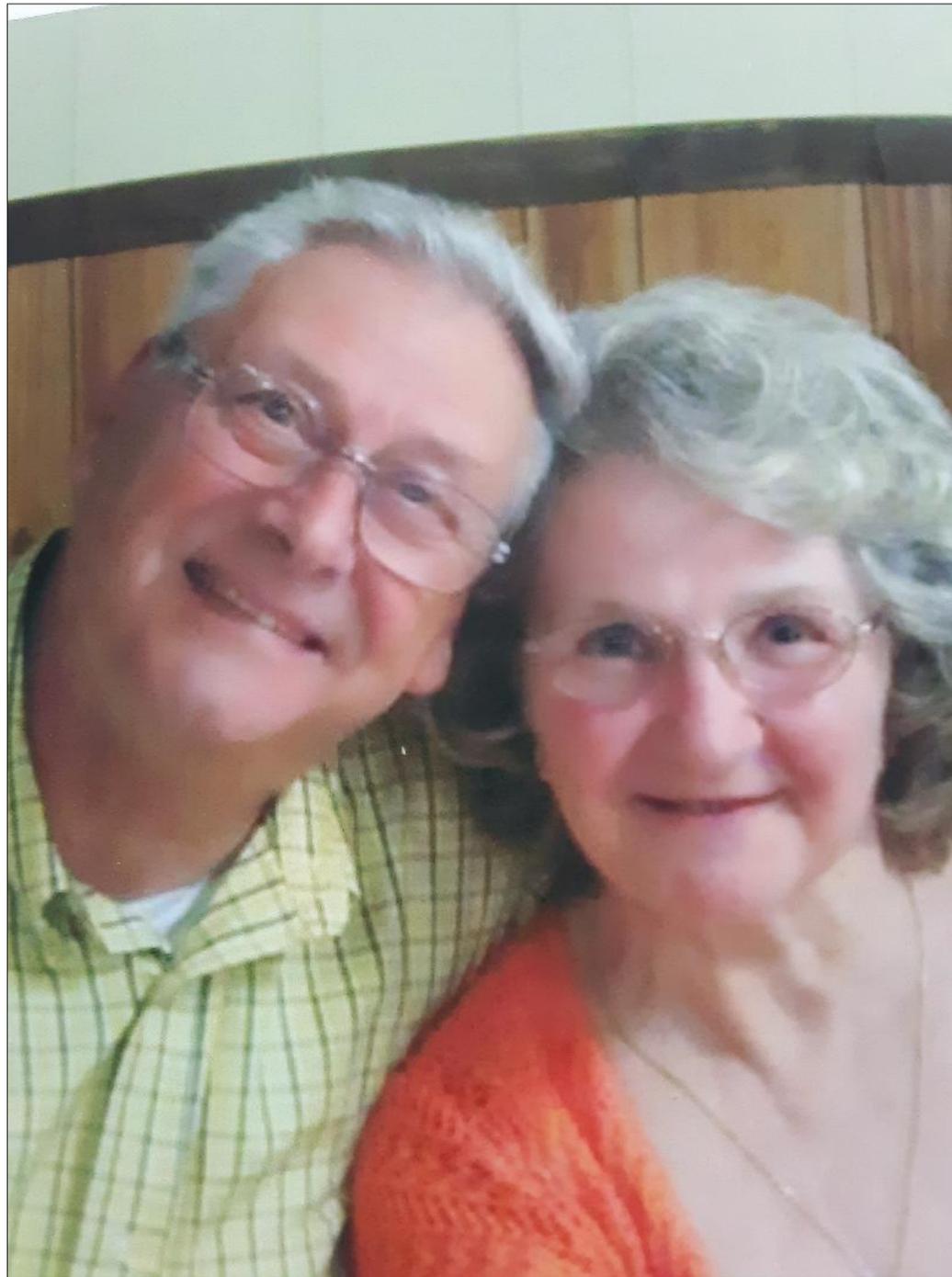
BRANDON TOWN BUDGET

Brandon voters rejected the revised FY2025 budget of \$3,554,880 proposed by the town’s Selectboard, which saw a reduction of \$241,300 from the original proposal of \$3,796,180 that was defeated in March.

The \$241,300 reduction was achieved primarily through reconfiguring the \$300K earmarked for paving in the origi-

nal proposal. Of that \$300K, \$100K was replaced by money from the 1% Local Option Tax, thus avoiding the need to raise that amount from taxpayers again, and \$115K was eliminated by removing the High Pond Road paving project from the FY2025 paving schedule. An additional \$24K was removed from the budget by postponing the purchase of one of the two police cruisers that had been slated for FY2025. Additional savings were realized by eliminating the automatic mailing of ballots to all registered voters in town.

However, these changes clearly did not satisfy a majority of the voters who cast ballots on Tuesday. In fact, the sufficiency of the reductions had been a point of sometimes heated debate in Brandon since they were
(See *Budgets defeated*, Page 23)



Happy Birthday!

CONGRATULATIONS TO MIKE & Charlotte Frankiewicz on their 80th birthdays! Happy birthday! WOW!!!

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Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday May 12th

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MENU

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Appetizer

Caesar Salad in a Crispy Asiago Cheese Cup & Egg Benedict with Grilled Ham & Blue Ledge Farm Goat Cheese Cake with Spring Mix and Balsamic Reduction & Red Beet Salad with Gorgonzola Crumbles

Main Course

Grilled Double Lamb Chop on Curry Coconut Lentil Stew & Roasted Red Bliss Potatoes & Baked fillet of Haddock with Crab Cake on Creamy Lobster Polenta, Lemon Butter Sauce & Seafood Stew with Scallops, shrimp, mussels & available fresh fish on Saffron Risotto
Beef Bourguignon over Angel Hair Pasta & Chicken Cordon Bleu with Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Red Wine Sauce

Dessert

Mother's Day Trio
Key Lime Tart or Raspberry Tart & Flourless Chocolate Cake & French Macaron

Children Brunch menu available

11 Center Street Brandon Vermont a Tel: 802-247-9997

It was a joyful day full of books, crafts, and friends in Brandon

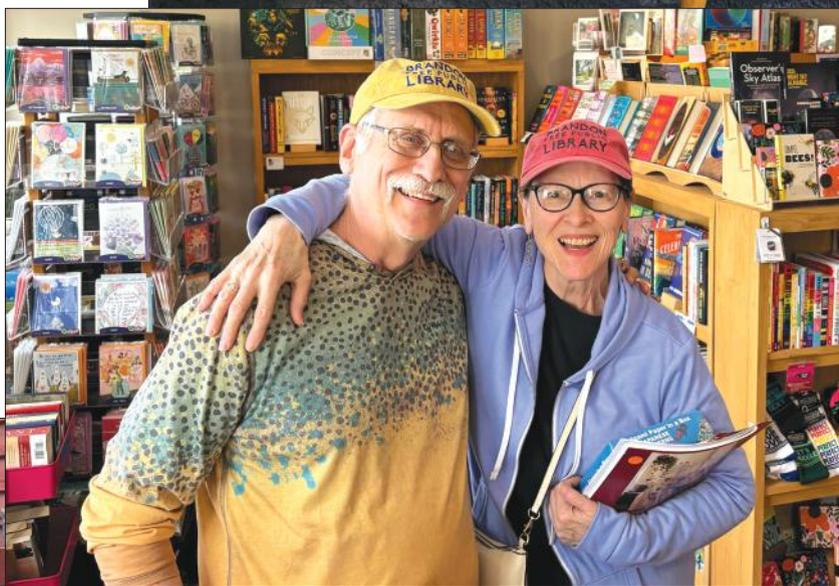
The Bookstore in Brandon celebrated Independent Bookstore Day on Saturday, April 27. Activities included origami, sponsored by Tuttle Publishing, bookmark making, and a “business crawl bingo” that encouraged folks to visit other businesses in town in addition to The Bookstore in order to win prizes.

Independent Bookstore Day is a nationwide event

held on the last Saturday in April, organized by the American Booksellers Association in partnership with book publishers and distributors.

Brandon resident and Bookstore patron Angus Chaney said, “Your local bookstore is a lot more than just the space where books change hands. Saturday reminded me of the serendipity factor. There’s a fellow mountain biker I haven’t

had a chance to chat with since the fall. Here’s a novel by Italo Calvino I never knew about—and my favorite collection by Borges which will make a great gift if there isn’t room on my shelf. Suddenly I’m learning how to fold an origami crane! I suspect that kind of thing doesn’t happen at the big online places. Stay indie and local!”



FOLKS FROM ALL over the area came to The Bookstore on Conant Square in Brandon on Saturday to enjoy Independent Bookstore Day, a day to celebrate those independently owned, local bookshops where you can find community as well as books. Activities included origami and bookmark-making, as well as a “shop crawl” in which Brandon businesses helped fill out bingo cards to win prizes.

BRANDON REPORTER

Sports

Green flag drops on 2024 Season this Saturday at Devil's Bowl Speedway

WEST HAVEN—Devil's Bowl Speedway returns to racing action this Saturday, May 4th at 5:00PM for its 58th season opener.

A brand-new season of racing began with teasers back on April 20th and 27th with practice sessions for all divisions where drivers had a chance to shake down their mounts for this coming Saturday.

Opening night will be presented by Black Diamond Builders & 32B Storage, and feature a special, 32-lap, \$3,200-to-win feature for the Sunoco Sportsman Modifieds in memory of "Matty B" Matt Bilodeau. This race marks the beginning of a new championship trail for a few dozen heavyweight heroes in the headline class.

Tim LaDuc will look to collect his third championship title in four seasons and 4th overall as a headliner, while Justin Comes, who has finished 2nd in the standings three times in the last four years, looks to break through and collect his

first ever track title with the mod squad. They will be tailed closely by Tanner Siemons and Frank Hoard, III, Vince Quennville, Jr., Jimmy Ryan, Billy Lussier and a host of other talented veterans looking for a place in the history books.

Newcomers AJ Munger and Randy Ryan will look to make a splash as well, each contending for Rookie of the Year honors.

The O'Reilly Auto Parts Limited Sportsman, Novice Sportsman, Friend Construction 500cc Mini Sprints, Fisher Auto Parts Mini Stocks and 9th State Cannabis Crown Vics will join the Sunoco Sportsman Modifieds on the opening night card.

General Admission is just \$15 and Infield Drive-In parking is available for \$20, weather dependent. Kids 12 and under are FREE. Pit pass fees are \$28 for members and \$38 for non-members.

Devil's Bowl Speedway is located on Route 22A in West Haven, Vt., four miles north



Photo by Bill McGaffin

of U.S. Route 4, Exit 2, and just 20 minutes from Rutland, Vt. For more information, visit www.DevilsBowlSpeedwayVT.com or call (802) 265-3112. Devil's Bowl Speedway is on Facebook at [facebook.com/DevilsBowlSpeedway](https://www.facebook.com/DevilsBowlSpeedway),

and on Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat at @DevilsBowlSpeed; follow the action using the #DevilsBowl hashtag.

Evaluating a new Rainbow Trout strain for Vermont

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is again stocking a new strain of rainbow trout and is looking for help from anglers to evaluate its performance

"Vermont stocks about 115,000 rainbow trout annually into inland rivers and lakes to provide recreational fishing opportunities for the public," said State Fisheries Biologist Lee Simard. "We are evaluating the new Eagle Lake strain of rainbow trout against our traditionally stocked Erwin-Arlee strain to ensure we are providing the highest quality fishery possible with these stocked trout. The Eagle Lake strain is currently stocked in many states including Maine and Michigan and could be a great fit for Vermont as well.

The two strains are the same species, but genetic differences can impact their behavior and performance. Both strains will be stocked side-by-side into 12 waterbodies across Vermont and will be compared based on their catchability, survivability and growth to see if the Eagle



Lake Strain performs better after stocking.

The two strains look very similar but can be identified by a clipped ventral fin, the paired fins found on the underside of the fish about halfway along its body. A missing left fin indicates the new Eagle Lake strain while a missing right fin indicates the Erwin-Arlee strain

"To help us evaluate the new Eagle Lake strain, we are asking anglers to report to us the rainbow trout they catch from the waterbodies included in this evaluation," said Simard. "Take a picture of the trout that clearly shows the missing fin. Then submit that picture and catch report on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department website or by using the Vermont Outdoors app on your smartphone. Over half of our results in 2023 came from reports submitted directly by anglers. These reports are critical and will directly influence our management of stocked rainbow trout in Vermont.

This is the final year the two strains will be stocked as part of

this evaluation. A final decision about which strain will continue to be stocked in Vermont will be made in 2025

Additional information and a complete list of the waterbodies included in the evaluation can be found on Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/fish/fishing-events-and-programs/rainbow-trout-strain-evaluation>

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KIDS IDOL WOWED the crowd at Brandon Town Hall on Friday, April 26. The contestants showed the grown-ups how it's done and won cash prizes! Clearly some stars in the making!

Kids steal the spotlight at Kids Idol

1st Place: Adeline White, "The Ballad of Jane Doe" from Ride the Cyclone

2nd Place: Lani Heitmann, "Rainbow" by Kacey Musgraves

3rd Place: James Shorey, "Evermore" from Beauty and the Beast (the musical)

Honorable Mention: McKenzie Davis, "Fight Song" by Rachel Platten

Audience Choice Award: Korbin Laughlin, "Wine into Whiskey" by Tucker Wetmore

Congrats to all! Can't wait to hear what you sing next!



**Photos by
Kevin White**



Calendar of events

May

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.

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 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 ath-

Goings on around town

letic 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 story-time. 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."

Wednesday 1st Sunday 5th

Rochester Light and Power

In this musical-comedy premiere, love triangle hijinks meet women's empowerment all set to music in turn-of-the-century rural Vermont. Based on a historical anecdote, the setting is the Rochester House hotel, where four "kept-women" reside. Their men, married businessmen from White River Junction, visit them once a week via the new Peavine Railroad. The hotel is throwing a ball to celebrate the arrival of electric lights, and the mistresses have concocted a plan to turn the tables on their unsuspecting beaux. Will the men see the light? Will the women find their power? Come join us for Rochester Light & Power, the new original musical from the same creative team who brought you Second Chance, Ransom, and The Singing Master. Rochester School Auditorium, 222 S. Main Street, Rochester, VT 05767. Show dates:

Wednesday, May 1st at 7:30 pm

Dress rehearsal: "Pay what you can" preview minimum \$5

Thursday, May 2nd at 7:30 pm

\$18 adult, \$15 students/seniors

Friday, May 3rd at 7:30pm

\$20 adult, \$17 students/seniors

Saturday, May 4th at
7:30 pm

\$20 adult, \$17 students/seniors

Sunday, May 5th at
2 pm

\$18, \$15 students/seniors

Friday 3rd

BAG

25th Anniversary

Celebration

Opening Reception

5–7 pm

Saturday 4th

DaSilva's Karate

Open House

Open house will include intro lessons, martial arts demos, and meet and greet with our instructors!

From 10 am–12 pm at DaSilva's Karate, 41 E. Center St., Unit 206, Rutland, VT. (Third floor of the Dana Center!) Try karate and jiu jitsu. Ages 3–adult for intro lessons.

Introductory class schedule:

10 am Karate

10:20 am Jiu Jitsu

10:40 am Q&A with our instructors

11 am Karate

11:20 am Jiu Jitsu

11:40 am Q&A with our instructors

Enter our raffle to win six months of free classes!

Ask about our other class offerings—yoga, pilates, and boxing!

An Evening with Kat Wright — Elley-Long Music Center

Two sets from Kat Wright, an evening to benefit the Buell Street Dismas House (Burlington) and the East Allen Dismas House (Winooski) to support community members returning from incarceration.

After touring for the last decade with horns & keys blazing, this new era finds Kat Wright being born anew—more herself than ever—revealed simply in a startlingly honest & glimmering naked light. With restrictions imposed by the pandemic, Wright & her cohorts have recently come to enjoy writing & touring in a stripped-down formation, mostly trio or quartet, in contrast to the big band she fronted for the better part of the last decade where she was described “a young Bonnie Raitt meets Amy Winehouse.”

Fans of Wright's singing & style have been thrilled to discover this paired down line up, which puts the group's true talents front & center to shine instead of drenching them in horns and fanfare. You'll still hear the Raitt & Winehouse influences, but now also likenesses with Brandi Carlisle & Norah Jones. The resulting music is more intentional, more distilled, more potent—a direct balm for the trying times we face today. It's truly a scenario of “less is more”—allowing Wright's voice to really finally take center stage, to shine and ache and yearn and howl—unburied, out in the open, beaming.

Only 300 tickets will be sold, and all proceeds will benefit Buell Street Dismas House and East Allen Dismas House, affectionately known as simply Burlington Dismas House. Your ticket purchase will help support those who are working hard to make a successful transition back into our community after incarceration. Thank you for being a part of their success. In addition to two sets from Kat Wright, we will have a brief interlude of resident speakers and awards for exceptional volunteerism.

Divine Gifts & Their Terrible Cost

Reading Emily Wilson's New Translation of The Iliad with Ben Pease

Thursdays 6–8:30 pm: May 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th & June 6th

*The famous god whose legs are bent replied,
'Take heart, dispel these worries from your mind.
I wish that I could hide him far away
from cruel death when harsh fate comes for him
as easily as I can make him armor
so marvelous that any human being
would be astonished at the sight.'*

—The Iliad, Book 18

Use code: 23R3GK3C at checkout for 50% discount!

Emily Wilson opens the introduction to her thrilling new translation of The Iliad by explaining that it “tells two interwoven stories across its twenty-four books. The first describes the overwhelming anger of a Greek warrior, Achilles, and its catastrophic consequences. The second tell how a brave Trojan warrior, Hector, leave his city and family to attack the Greek invaders—and returns home only after death. [...] The beautiful word *minunthadios*, ‘short-lived,’ is used for both Achilles and Hector, and applies to all of us. We die too soon, and there is no adequate recompense for the terrible, inevitable loss of life. Yet through poetry, the words, actions, and feelings of some long-ago brief lives may be remembered even three thousand years later.”

In this class, we will gain a better understanding of not only these two interwoven stories, but also what the epic poem has to say about its sprawling

cast of humans and gods, fate, power, war, love, justice, and more. Focus will be given to the narrative, poetic technique, and the translation itself. We will cover 4 books of the epic per class over the course of 6 weeks and supplement our discussion with the following incisive secondary sources:

“The Iliad, or The Poem of Force” by Simone Weil

“The Iliad as Ethical Thinking: Politics, Pity, And The Operation Of Esteem” by Dean Hammer

“The Poetics of Loss in Greek Epic” by Sheila Murnaghan

“‘Bitch that I Am’: Self-Blame and Self-Assertion in the Iliad” by Ruby Blondell

ABOUT BEN PEASE

Ben Pease is an epic poem enthusiast and has previously read the Robert Fitzgerald translations of the Iliad, Odyssey, and the Aeneid. On receiving Emily Wilson's translations for a Christmas present, he thought it would be a worthwhile venture to start a class about the new version. Much of his work is heavily inspired by the epic form, including Chateau Wichman (Big Lucks, 2017), a book-length narrative poem with a cast of fallible gods and humans, and Furniture in Space (factory hollow press), selections from an epic poem inspired by Pease's hometown friends making movies, and a psychic who gets involved with them in order to have his ultimate vision. Pease is also interested in the art of translation and is curious to see how the new translation compares to others!

To date, 2,039 prior offenders have been provided a therapeutic community and a safe and sober home for up to two years with Dismas of Vermont while they find work, set and meet goals, and repair relationships. 90% of Dismas residents did not get arrested for a new crime. The generous support of our community is what makes all of this possible.

From 6:30–9:30 pm at Elley-Long Music Center, 223 Ethan Allen Avenue, Colchester.

Pre-sale tickets are \$50 each and day-of tickets are \$65.

Polky — Next Stage Arts Project

Toronto's Polky, led by multi-talented immigrant female musicians, delights audiences with Eastern European-style traditional vocals, unusual instruments, and energizing performances. Drawing deep inspiration from Poland's rich cultural tapestry, they push musical boundaries by fearlessly blending Polish traditional music with sounds and rhythms from across the globe.

Polky stands out for its distinctive elements, including the mesmerizing Eastern European-style traditional vocals and incorporating the ‘suka,’ an ancient lap fiddle reconstructed from historical paintings. Lead singer Ewelina Ferenc earned the prestigious Traditional Singer of The Year title at the 2022 Canadian Folk Music Awards.

Marta Soplek is an accomplished suka virtuoso who has performed alongside esteemed Polish artists like Same Suki, Maria Pomianowska, and Nikola Kołodziejczyk. Through their performances, Polky introduces Polish culture to North American audiences, embodying the role of cultural ambassadors for Polish modern traditions.

From 7:30–9:30 pm, tickets cost \$10–\$25. Co-presented with Twilight Music.

Genticorum – Burnham Hall

“The beauty of Award-Winning Trio Genticorum—An intoxicating mix of flute, fiddle, feet, guitar and three-part harmonies.” On Saturday May 4th we welcome Genticorum to Burnham Presents!

It's an honor to have this wonderful group with us for the last show of our first season. They perform all over the world and will be on our Burnham Presents stage in downtown Lincoln! With Juno and ADISQ nominations, and four Canadian Folk Music Awards, GENTICORUM is one of the leading groups in Quebec's traditional music scene. Known for their energy and stage presence, but also for their refined and precisely executed arrangements, the group has already performed

nearly two thousand concerts in twenty countries. Weaving intricate fiddle, flute and accordion lines, gorgeous vocal harmonies, subtle guitar textures and exhilarating foot percussion, the pleasure that these three musicians have creating and playing together is palpable, both in the studio and on the concert stage.

Doors at 7 pm, music at 7:30 for two sets, \$20.00. Homemade refreshments will be available.

Saturday 4th Sunday 5th

Puccini's Messa di Gloria — Castleton and Rutland

Grace Church's Rutland Area Chorus, the VTSU Castleton Chorale and Grace Festival Orchestra present Puccini's Messa di Gloria May 4 and 5. Puccini is best known for his operas Tosca, La Bohème and Madame Butterfly. Messa di Gloria is the largest non-operatic work he wrote. It was premiered in Lucca in northern Italy in 1880. The concert will be performed at VTSU Castleton in the Casella Theater May 4 at 7 pm and at Grace Church, 8 Court Street, Rutland, May 5 at 5 pm. Tickets available from the box office at Castleton for the May 4 concert.

A free-will offering will be accepted at the May 5 concert. For more information, call the church office at 802-775-4301.

Sunday 5th

Lesley Peterson on “Austen Family Theatricals and Jane Austen's Teenage Dramas” — Temple Sinai, S. Burlington Temple Sinai, South Burlington, 1–3 pm, free, ample parking, light refreshments.

What can we learn about Jane Austen if, instead of asking whether she liked the theatre, we ask what kind of theatre she preferred? Does Aunt Norris speak for Jane Austen when she opines in Mansfield Park that, “There is very little sense in a play without a curtain?” Or did Austen prefer to perform, and to write, plays designed for the curtainless stage that Shakespeare wrote for? How did her encounters with the intense process of planning, rehearsing, and performing a family theatrical influence her writing? The presentation will include opportunities for audience participation.

Lesley Peterson is brought to us through a JASN (Jane Austen Society of North America) National Traveling Lecturer Grant. She is the editor of the Journal of Juvenilia Studies and before her retirement was Professor of English at the University of North Alabama.

After Vermont Senate rejects Zoie Saunders, Phil Scott names her interim education secretary

BY ETHAN WEINSTEIN/
VTDIGGER

After a lengthy and dramatic debate Tuesday morning, the Vermont Senate voted against the confirmation of Zoie Saunders as state education secretary — but the fight over her appointment appeared far from finished.

Saunders needed a majority of the 29-member Senate to vote to confirm her, but 19 voted in opposition. Nine supported her confirmation. One senator was absent. The vote fell largely, though not entirely, along party lines — with most Republicans supporting Saunders' confirmation and most Democrats and Progressives opposing it.

Tuesday's vote was the first time in recent memory that the body rejected a nominee for a cabinet-level position.

The result was a striking blow to Gov. Phil Scott, whose administration lobbied heavily for Saunders' confirmation. But immediately after the vote, he made clear that he was not ready to back down.

As soon as the Senate denied her confirmation, Scott said in a press release that, "pursuant

to (his) constitutional authority to fill vacancies," he had appointed Saunders interim secretary of education.

"I'm confident she is the leader we need as we move forward," he said in a written statement. "In her short time at the Agency, she has identified challenges, which she is already addressing, including mobilizing support to help stabilize operations in the field in collaboration with education leaders."

Scott did not indicate whether he would formally nominate Saunders again, which would presumably prompt another Senate vote, or whether he intended for her to serve in an interim capacity in perpetuity.

Scott's press release did, however, suggest that the governor expects Saunders to remain in the role for at least the foreseeable future. It included a detailed "100-day plan" for her tenure.

Sen. Kesha Ram Hinsdale, D/P-Chittenden Southeast, speaks before voting against the confirmation of Zoie Saunders as Vermont education secretary at the Statehouse on Tuesday, April 30, 2024. Photo



WOMAN IN A business suit with glasses speaks during a meeting, with blurred figures in the background. Education Secretary Zoie Saunders speaks at her confirmation hearing before the Senate Education Committee at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Tuesday, April 23, 2024.

Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

by Natalie Williams/VTDigger

How the Senate would respond to Saunders' interim appointment was not immediately clear. Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Baruth, D/P-

Chittenden Central, who voted against Saunders' confirmation, declined to comment.

In an interview soon after the vote, Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Addison, chair of the Senate Government Operations Committee, called it "concerning" that Scott immediately reappointed Saunders.

"I think it sort of circumvents our role as the Senate," she said, "and that's circumventing the constitutional separation of powers and the constitutional checks and balances."

Hardy said she was considering "options" about how to deal with her concerns but wouldn't

say whether her committee could or would take legislative action to prevent Saunders from remaining in the role.

"A brief amount of time in public education"

During the morning's extended floor debate, senators described hearing from hundreds of constituents who expressed opposition to Saunders' confirmation.

"We were hearing from people who care so much about their public schools that they want to make sure that we have the right leader at the top of the education system," said Sen.

(See Zoie Saunders, Page 21)

REAL ESTATE

OPEN HOUSE MAY 4, 9 AM-12 NOON



Come see this unique property, located just south of Middlebury right off of Route 7. The house has had a lot of work done on it over the last 5 1/2 years including an updated kitchen with all new high-end appliances, but there is still room to add your personal touch. The house has lots of storage space in the attic and also multiple out buildings. There is an attached garage with one door but has room for a shop area and at least 4 cars. There is another building that has even more space. A wonderful place to call home with extra space for toys and equipment!

118 Three Mile Bridge Rd., Middlebury. MLS# 4985673 \$439,000



Your host,
Heather

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Zoie Saunders

(Continued from Page 20)

Ruth Hardy, D-Addison.

Sen. Becca White, D-Windsor, said she'd heard from constituents with a cumulative 520 years of public education experience, which she said greatly outweighed Saunders' three months working for a public school district.

"We do not need an education secretary with such a brief amount of time in public education, when the leadership role that we are asking that person to take on is almost exclusively about public education," White said.

Sen. Randy Brock, R-Franklin, said that, unlike other senators, he believed Saunders was a strong fit for the job, particularly due to her executive leadership.

"I do see a vision. But I also see caution — the kind of caution that you'd expect from anyone coming in new to a situation," he said. "We need somebody who knows how to fix things. That's what (an) education secretary does."

Saunders also received the stalwart support of Sen. Brian Campion, D-Bennington, chair of the Senate Education Committee, who called her "exceptional."

Campion said Saunders had "vast experience, remarkable intellect, and deep dedication" to expanding opportunities and improving student outcomes.

Sen. Ann Cummings, who voted against confirming Saunders, characterized the fight over her nomination in extreme terms.

"I feel bad about this. This is the first time I have ever felt bad about a vote," she said, decrying the vitriol ignited by Saunders' nomination. "I have never felt this bad about Vermont, because I'm learning that we aren't any different. We may be blue, but we can — we can reject people. We can be as vicious as anyone else."

Since Scott appointed Saunders to the position in March, she faced scrutiny over her background as an executive at Charter Schools USA, a for-

profit corporation based in Florida, and her brief tenure working explicitly in public education. In the following weeks, a variety of groups — including the state teachers' union and the Progressive and Democratic parties — came out against her confirmation. Last week, the Senate Education Committee recommended her confirmation in a 3-2 vote.

The debate reached a fever pitch over the weekend after Lt. Gov. David Zuckerman sent a campaign email urging senators to vote down Saunders' confirmation. In a response to Zuckerman on Sunday, Saunders wrote that he had made "false claims" about her professional background and views.

In a letter to the Senate on Monday, Scott cited what he called "erroneous comments" by Zuckerman while criticizing the debate around Saunders' confirmation as "toxic" and calling on the Senate to postpone its vote. The Senate declined to do so.

Speaking from the Senate

floor just after Tuesday's vote, Zuckerman publicly apologized to Saunders and the Senate for the campaign email and the "inaccurate representation" of an aspect of her background.

"I want to apologize to the Senate for adding to the heat of the debate," Zuckerman said.

Here's how members of the Vermont Senate voted Tuesday on whether to confirm Zoie Saunders as the state's secretary of education:

- Yes:**
 Randy Brock, R-Franklin
 Brian Campion, D-Bennington
 Brian Collamore, R-Rutland
 Russ Ingalls, R-Essex
 Robert Norris, R-Franklin
 Dick Sears, D-Bennington
 Bobby Starr D-Orleans
 David Weeks, R-Rutland
 Terry Williams, R-Rutland
- No:**
 Phil Baruth, D/P-Chittenden Central
 Chris Bray, D-Addison
 Thomas Chittenden, D-Chittenden Southeast
 Alison Clarkson, D-Windsor

- Ann Cummings, D-Washington
 Martine Gulick, D-Chittenden Central
 Ruth Hardy, D-Addison
 Wendy Harrison, D-Windham
 Nader Hashim, D-Windham
 Jane Kitchel, D-Caledonia
 Ginny Lyons, D-Chittenden Southeast
 Mark MacDonald, D-Orange
 Dick McCormack, D-Windsor
 Andrew Perchlik, D/P-Washington
 Kesha Ram Hinsdale, D-Chittenden Southeast
 Tanya Vyhovsky, P/D-Chittenden Central
 Anne Watson, D/P-Washington
 Becca White, D-Windsor
 Irene Wrenner, D-Chittenden North
- Absent:**
 Richard Westman, R-Lamoille

Can you guess the street?

BY LAURA PETERSON

This is another photo from the Phil Marks collection. As you can see, the photo was taken in Brandon, VT on the 4th of July in 1907. Congress had passed a law making Independence Day a federal holiday in 1870.

I'll bet some of you have photos of a present-day parade from this very same location. If you do, send it in. It would make a nice comparison.



Your mystery for next week!



SUBMIT YOUR BIRTH, ANNIVERSARY, OR WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

news@brandonreporter.com

Classic Chaplin comedy 'The Gold Rush' with live music May 11

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

First up is Charlie Chaplin in 'The Gold Rush' (1925), an epic comedy in which the Little Tramp joins in the Klondike Gold Rush. The film screens on Saturday, May 11 at 7 p.m. at the Brandon Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7, in Brandon, Vt.

Admission is free; donations are welcome to help support ongoing Town Hall renovation efforts.

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

'The Gold Rush,' a landmark comedy and one of the top-grossing films of the silent era, finds Chaplin's iconic 'Little Tramp' character journeying to the frozen wastelands of the Yu-

kon. There as a prospector, the Tramp's search for gold turns into a pursuit of romance, but with plenty of laughs along the way.

The film contains several famous scenes, both comic and dramatic, including a starving Chaplin forced to eat his shoe for Thanksgiving dinner and a heart-breaking New Year's Eve celebration.

As a comedian, Chaplin emerged as the first superstar in the early days of cinema. From humble beginnings as a musical hall entertainer in England, he came to Hollywood and used his talents to quickly rise to the pinnacle of stardom in the then-new medium of motion pictures. His popularity never waned, and his image remains recognized around the world to this day.

'The Gold Rush,' regarded by many critics as Chaplin's best film, is a prime example of his unique talent for combining

slapstick comedy and intense dramatic emotion.

"'The Gold Rush' is still an effective tear-jerker," wrote critic Eric Kohn of indieWIRE. "In the YouTube era, audiences — myself included — often anoint the latest sneezing panda phenomenon as comedic gold. Unless I'm missing something, however, nothing online has come close to matching the mixture of affectionate fragility and seamless comedic inspiration perfected by the Tramp."

The screening of 'The Gold Rush' provides local audiences the opportunity to experience silent film as it was intended to be shown: on the big screen, in restored prints, with live music, and with an audience.

Rapsis, who uses original themes to improvise silent film scores, said the best silent film comedies often used visual humor to create laughter out of simple situations. Because of this, audiences continue to re-

spond to them in the 21st century, especially if they're presented as intended — with an audience and live music.

"These comedies were created to be shown on the big screen as a communal experience," Rapsis said. "With an audience and live music, they still come to life as their creators intended them to. So this screening is a great chance to experience films that first caused people to fall in love with the movies," he said.

Rapsis achieves a traditional movie score sound for silent film screenings by using a digital synthesizer that reproduces the texture of the full orchestra.

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

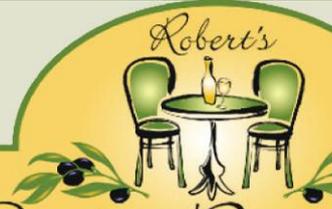
It's the 13th year of the popular silent film series, which gives residents and visitors a chance to see great movies from the pioneering days of cinema as they were meant to be shown—on the big screen, with an audience, and accompanied by live music.

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

(See 'The Gold Rush', Page 27)



Restaurant guide



Robert's

Café Provence

From Provence to You
De la Provence à Vous

Wednesday – Saturday: 11:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Want a reservation? Please book through the website <https://cafeprovencet.com> or call (802) 247-9997

11 Center Street, Brandon, VT



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FOOD, FRIENDS & FUN

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for more information



Hard Tellin'

BY DAVE PRAAMSMA

In Search of a Good Conspiracy Theory

As a Canadian immigrant, I have always been impressed with America's capacity for conspiracy theories. This week I learned that a solid one out of every three Americans believes in at least one good conspiracy theory. A hefty 30%, for example, will tell you that they are sympathetic to a conspiratorial "Deep State" behind the scenes. And no less than 20% will tell you unflinchingly that extraterrestrial visitors have already secretly come to earth. Clearly if I were going to assimilate as a Canadian, I was going to have to find myself a conspiracy theory I could really get excited about.

And what is clearly exciting about our current day is that we are living in the Golden Age of Conspiracy Theories. A kind of Renaissance of creatively unscientific thinking, if you will. I'm not talking about those recycled, garden-variety conspiracies, like the JFK assassination theories. (Which any serious reader of tabloids already knows points to Paul McCartney, which is why a Scottish orphan lookalike took his place years later and went on to back-mask music to promote communism.) I'm talking about those elaborate, masterfully constructed theories going mainstream right now that seem to explain many of today's problems that are just so vexing.

Let me just quickly insert here as an aside that Canadians are not completely above a good conspiracy theory. (Truth be told, we have a long-standing uneasiness about our own suspiciously popular Tim Horton coffee shops, which are inexplicably everywhere.) It's just that the Canadian habit for excessive apologizing really undermines the robust suspicion necessary to get a good conspiracy off the ground. Ask any Canadian about this and he will immediately confirm it. And then tell you he's completely sorry for the shortcoming.

But in my effort to find a good, red-blooded American conspiracy theory, I must say I am still struggling. And finding a good Vermont conspiracy, I'll say, has been even more elusive. The closest I've probably come to really latching on to a genuine, real-life conspiracy was when my wife and I moved to Vermont's rural parts. By the

time of my third or fourth spring, I began seriously wondering if it was beyond coincidence that my farming community spread manure exactly whenever I hung fresh laundry on the line. (A suspicious pattern most of my neighbors could confirm.) That there was a larger, coordinated plot here was not hard for me to imagine. Of course, my American friends have been quick to compliment me on my instincts. But my theory seemed to be missing a kind of prerequisite, large-scale, government-cover-up element, I was told. (Could this be a stealthy way to help amplify those harmful 5G radio waves? And what about substituting "group" of farmers to "cabal," I was advised.)

Clearly, I was out of my league.

To broaden my understanding of conspiracies, some recommended that I turn to the experts. Although, here too, I was advised to retain a healthy dose of skepticism. ("Experts," I was reminded, was one of those touchy words I might be careful with.)

And in this area as well, I quickly learned, American authors are boldly leading the way. In fact, not only are conspiracy books flying out the door, according to Amazon, they are surpassing in all-time sales of even some classics, like Ray Bradbury's dystopian "Fahrenheit 451," which itself is a kind of futuristic conspiracy book about evil governments burning books and suppressing knowledge. So I suppose we can only offer a kind of posthumous 'thank you' to Bradbury for paving the way for books like "QAnon: An Invitation to the Great Awakening" (hardcover \$22.99). Or "Trillion Dollar Conspiracy: How the New-World Order, Man-Made Diseases, and Zombie Banks are Destroying America." (Now in paperback — \$12.89) I can't tell you what "Zombie Banks" are, but clearly here is a handy phrase I will be reaching for when my bank statements aren't properly balancing.

Now if reading these books (OK, at least the book jacket summaries) has taught me anything, it's that I have been far too content with simple answers. Sure, we have all held

to that famous maxim that the simplest explanation is the most probable explanation (circa 14th century). But I don't think folks then even had to live with questions of microchips implanted into vaccines.

Although I haven't yet bounced it off my American friends, I think I am ready to move forward with Conspiracy Theory #2. I'm calling it the "Vermont Dirt Roadways Conspiracy." (It's a working title.) Maybe it's time to stop believing that all those dirt roads are accidental. Could it be that those confounding stretches of unpaved roadways might really be a not-so-subtle strategy to deter out-of-staters from moving to Vermont? A kind of behind-the-scenes population control? (I haven't worked all the details out yet, but I'm wondering if maybe those noisy new F-35 fighter jets now flying over Burlington might also be tied in somehow.)

I'll keep working on it.

In the meantime, keep a sharp eye out, my fellow Vermonters. And go easy on that fluoride in the tap water.

Budget defeated

(Continued from Page 13)
proposed following the defeat of the original budget in March. At Selectboard meetings, on Front Porch Forum, in the pages

of this paper, and in conversations around town, some Brandon residents expressed frustration and anger with what they said was an insensitive process that did not recognize the financial stress many in the community were feeling. Moreover, some members of the citizen panel that had been appointed

to advise the Budget Committee stated publicly that they had felt dismissed during the workshops that culminated in the original defeated proposal.

For the most part, the Brandon Selectboard defended its budget choices, yielding once to community pressure to reinstate Guinness the police dog after he had been eliminated in an early draft of the proposed budget. Otherwise, the board resisted calls to make further cuts, stating that the budget that went to the ballot on Tuesday repre-

sented a balanced approach to town management, weighing management needs against taxpayers' financial limitations.

At the last Selectboard meeting, on Monday, April 22, board member Brian Coolidge defended his public criticism of the board's budget process, which he had called deceptive in that it reduced needed tax revenue without reducing spending.

Regardless of the board's view of its defeated proposal, it will now

have to reexamine the budget and find additional cuts or other means to reduce the tax burden on Brandon residents.

Board chair Doug Bailey wrote in an e-mail on Tuesday night, "We will be having a 'special' board meeting to discuss our next steps next Monday, May 6. I will be meeting with the town manager tomorrow."

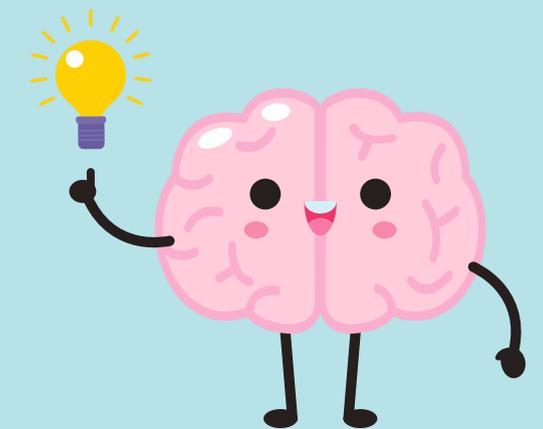
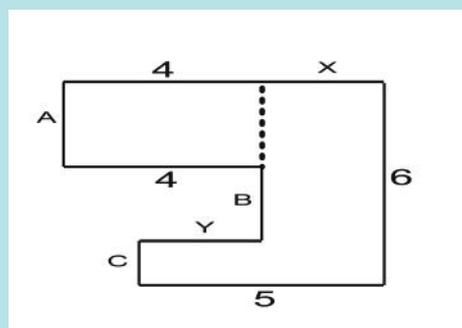
No date has yet been set for the next vote on the budgets.

Otherwise, the board resisted calls to make further cuts, stating that the budget that went to the ballot on Tuesday represented a balanced approach to town management, weighing management needs against taxpayers' financial limitations.

Brandon Brain Buster Answered

Answer: D

If we label the unknown segments of the perimeter, we can use the available information to determine the unknown lengths.



Since all the lines are straight and all angles are 90 degrees, we know that $A + B + C = 6$. We also know that $X + Y = 5$. So, if we add up all these lengths to find the total perimeter, we get $(A + B + C) + (X + Y) + 4 + 4 + 6 + 5 = 6 + 5 + 4 + 4 + 6 + 5 = 30$. The answer is D.

Note that we still cannot determine the individual lengths of A, B, C, X, or Y.

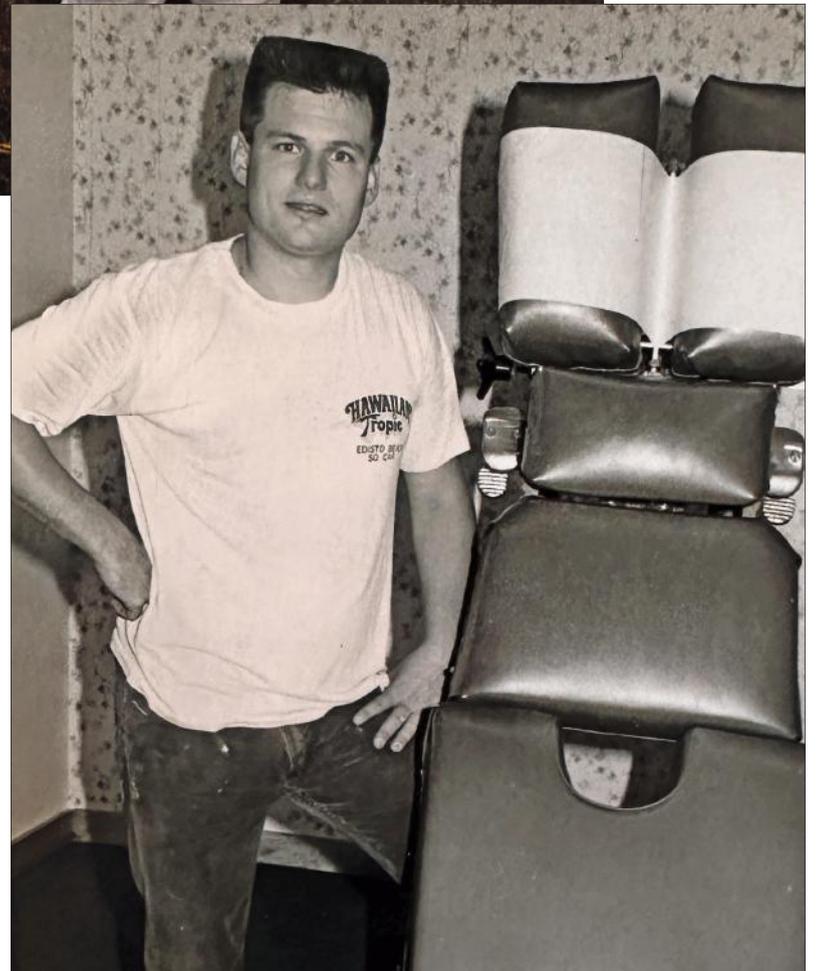
Mim's Photos



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



Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Lions do it
5. In favor of
8. Rest here please (abbr.)
11. Pulpits
13. Leisure activity
14. Fertility god
15. Financial obligations
16. When you anticipate getting somewhere
17. Spanish river
18. Sporting events
20. Type of tree
21. Ceased to be
22. Persons
25. Synthetic resin
30. Relates to photochemical reactions
31. Father
32. Former Cowboys coach
33. City in Finland
38. Run batted in
41. Got through
43. They darken skin
45. In a harmful way
48. Form of weaving
49. City of Angels hoopster
50. Caucasian language
55. Syngman ___, Korean president
56. Sun up in New York
57. Paddled
59. Fishes
60. Affirmative
61. Nimble
62. Doctor of Education
63. Soviet Socialist Republic
64. A small island

CLUES DOWN

1. Cool!
2. Hebrew unit of measure
3. Swedish rock group
4. College army
5. Favor over another
6. Called it a career
7. Egg-shaped wind instrument
8. Israeli statesman
9. Hurries
10. Slog
12. Midway between south and southeast
14. Benedictine monk
19. Self-immolation by fire ritual
23. Family of regulator genes
24. Surrendering
25. Political action committee
26. S. American plant
27. Long-term memory
28. Bark
29. Breathes in
34. Take hold of
35. Everyone has one
36. Valentine's Day color
37. Drivers' licenses and passports
39. Outer walls of castles
40. Enters with force
41. One thousandth of an inch
42. Deceased Chinese politician
44. Sugary secretion of plants
45. Expressed pleasure
46. Shelter
47. Utilizes
48. Forest resident
51. Fashion accessory
52. A sharply directional antenna
53. ___ Kristofferson, actor
54. A bad place to end up
58. MLBer Gordon

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		

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.

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

Level: Intermediate

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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

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

Rutland County Humane Society's Working Cat Program

Everyone knows cats are experts at napping but do you know they're also hard workers? They're natural rodent deterrents, and they love their jobs! If you have a farm, stable, warehouse, factory, greenhouse, nursery, winery, distillery, junkyard, storage facility, repair shop, or retail store, and you have a problem with rodents, our Working Cat Program might be the solution. Cats in the program are spayed/neutered and have at least rabies and distemper vaccinations. These cats are those who aren't socialized enough or have other limitations, preventing them from being placed for adoption in a home environment. This approach allows these cats to receive shelter, access to food and water, and the care they need while offering the service of expert rodent control to their kindhearted adopters. There is no adoption fee for our working cats but a donation is greatly appreciated. To learn more about our Working Cat Program, please call the RCHS Adoption Center at 802.483.6700, or email them at adoptions@rchsvt.org or visit www.rchsvt.org.

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



MEET VIOLET - 2 YEARS OLD. SPAYED FEMALE. DOMESTIC SHORT HAIR. BLACK.

Violet is a sweet girl who has lots of love to give! She loves to curl up in cozy parts of the cat room. She loves to bathe in the sun and admire the world around her as she looks out the windows. Violet does have a playful side as well! She enjoys chasing feather toys and batting around crinkle balls. Violet has a way of comforting those around her; it could be through a gentle head nuzzle or a quiet presence by your side! Violet was surrendered to us on March 28th because the previous owner was losing their housing. We do know that she is good with other cats and tends to enjoy their company. However, we have no known history on how she will do with dogs or children! Violet makes everyday sweeter! If this lovable girl sounds like the right fit for you, please stop by and visit with her!

MEET REESE - 2 YEARS OLD. SPAYED FEMALE. HOUND MIX. CHOCOLATE/TAN.

Meet Reese! She is an incredibly active and energetic gal who is always ready for an adventure! She is a bundle of enthusiasm who is always eager to explore and play. She thrives in an environment that can match her high energy levels. She loves outdoor activities like, running, hiking, and playing fetch—any activity to keep her moving and engaged. She is a social gal who enjoys meeting new human and canine friends. Reese will flourish in an active home where she can participate in regular exercise and mental stimulation. With the right family who shares the same excitement about life, she will make an amazing companion and loyal friend who brings joy and excitement to everyday. Reese came to us on April 4th from a busy shelter in Louisiana. We do know that she likes other dogs; however, she would do best in a home without any cats or small animals. We also do not have history on how she will do with children. She is currently available as a foster to adopt. If she sounds like a good fit for you, please stop by and visit with her. The Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday 11am to 4pm.



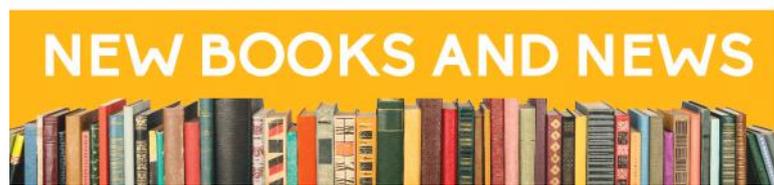
RUTLAND COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

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765 STEVENS RD. • PITTSFORD



**OUR ADOPTION CENTER IS OPEN
TUESDAY-SATURDAY FROM
11AM-4PM.
NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED.**

OFF THE SHELF



Large-print books donated by Brenda Whittaker

The Women by Kristin Hannah

Donated in memory of Edna Jones.

The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon

Donated in memory of Florence S. LaRock.

The Wager by David Grann

Donated in memory of Andy Livak.

After Annie by Anna Quindlen

Donated in memory of Matilda E. Whittaker.

The Hunter by Tana French

Donated in memory of Yvonne Churchill.

New in regular print

The Mayfair Dagger by Ava January

London, 1894, Albertine Honeycombe never wanted a husband, certainly not the one with fifteen children that her cousin, Aubrey, is trying to marry her off to. She reinvents herself as Countess Von Dagga, a private detective aiding the upper echelons of women in society. As the Countess, she is a married woman, with a conveniently absent husband who doesn't actually exist, which allows her far more freedom than being single. When Lord Grendel, from whom she has recovered blackmail letters,

is murdered, Albertine is suspect number one—having been the last person to see him. And when the Duke of Erleigh comes looking for her utterly fictitious husband, she realizes she has landed herself in hot water. When Albertine also becomes the prime suspect in her fictitious husband's death, things are looking grim. Unless Albertine can prove who murdered Lord Grendel and clear her name, her choices are step-mothering enough small children to start a school or hanging from the end of Her Majesty's rope.

Letter to the Luminous Deep by Sylvie Cathrall

A beautiful discovery outside the window of her underwater home prompts the reclusive E. to begin correspondence with renowned scholar Henerey Clel. The letters they share are filled with passion, at first for their mutual interests, and then, inevitably, for each other. Together, they uncover a mystery from the unknown depths, destined to transform the underwater world they both equally fear and love. But by no mere coincidence, a seaquake destroys E.'s home, and she and Henerey vanish. A year later, E.'s sister Sophy, and Henerey's brother Vyerin, are left to solve the mystery, piecing together the letters, sketches and field notes left behind—and learn what their siblings' disappearance might mean for life as they know it.

Interesting Facts About Space by Emily Austin

Meet Enid, a lesbian who's

DID YOU KNOW?

While we don't have our whole seed library available this year, we do have some free seeds to take. Stop in and get your garden started!

a serial dater and deaf in one ear. She works at The Space Agency as an information architect, and when she's not obsessing over true crime podcasts, she's managing her crippling phobia of bald people. As Enid fumbles her way through her first serious relationship and navigates a new family life with her estranged half-sisters, she starts to worry that someone is following her. As her paranoia starts to take over her life, and the personal growth she's worked to achieve, she gradually discovers the one thing she can't outrun: herself.

Really Good, Actually by Monica Heisey

Maggie is fine. She's doing really good, actually. Sure, she's broke, her graduate thesis on something obscure is going nowhere, and her marriage only lasted 608 days, but at the ripe old age of twenty-nine, Maggie is determined to embrace her new life as a Surprisingly Young Divorcée. Now she has time to take up nine hobbies, eat hamburgers at 4 am, and "get back out there" sex-wise. With the support of her tough-loving academic advisor, Merris; her newly divorced friend, Amy; and her group chat (naturally), Maggie barrels through her first year of single life, intermittently dating, occasionally waking up on the floor and asking herself tough questions.

Brandon Police Report

April 22

- Received a walk-in complaint regarding a trespass order violation that occurred on River Street. The suspect was issued a citation to appear in the Rutland County Superior Court for arraignment on 6/3/2024 at 10:00 a.m. on the charge of Unlawful Trespass.

- Served an outstanding arrest warrant on a man at his residence on River Street.

- Vehicle stop on Forest Dale Road and North Street for failure to maintain travel lane. Warning issued.

- Took fingerprints for a nursing license.

- Received a late-reported complaint regarding a vehicle that had been damaged while parked near the National Bank of Middlebury in Brandon. Incident documented for informational and insurance purposes.

- Conducted a welfare check at a residence on Stanton Road for a concerned family member who hadn't been able to reach the residents for some time. Contact was made with both residents, and they were determined to be fine.

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

- Assisted the Rutland City Police in serving a Notice Against Trespass on a resident living on North Street in Brandon. The order was served in-hand without incident.

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for a cell phone violation. Warning issued.

- Attended the Brandon Select Board meeting due to a hearing being held regarding the removal of a dog from the community and to prevent any breaches of the peace at the meeting. No incidents occurred.

- Conducted a patrol in the area of Mulcahy Drive. No incidents reported.

April 23

- Served a subpoena to an individual at the front counter of the police station.

- Responded to a citizen dispute on Mulcahy Drive stemming from an ongoing dog issue. All parties were addressed about the matter and were told that since the dog has left the premises, any further issues between the individuals should cease.

- Responded to a panic alarm activation at a residence on Pearl Street. It was determined that the alarm had been accidentally set

off by the homeowner and everything was okay at the home.

- Assisted Brandon Area Rescue with a medical call on Church Street.

- Served a Finding and Order for Protection on Mulcahy Drive regarding the removal of a dog from the residence and Town of Brandon. The order was served in-hand without incident.

- Received a walk-in complaint regarding damage that was done to the complainant's vehicle sometime over the winter. The damage was documented for insurance purposes.

- Responded with the Brandon Fire Department to Barlow Avenue for a report of a smoke alarm activation. It was determined that there was no fire.

- Attempted to locate an individual with an active arrest warrant in the area of Conway Terrace. The subject was not located.

April 24

- Investigated suspicious lights that were observed on inside of the vacant Cattails Restaurant on Grove Street. The building was checked and it appeared to be secure.

- Attempted to locate two wanted subjects with active arrest warrants at a residence. The subjects refused to come to the door. Attempt to locate the individuals is ongoing.

- Took fingerprints for a nursing license.

- Took a complaint of threats and harassment at the Walgreens on Union Street regarding a disgruntled customer.

- Vehicle stop on Center Street for speeding. Warning issued.

April 25

- Responded to a domestic disturbance on Grove Street. No charges were placed.

- Received a request for a welfare check by an out-of-state family member on an elderly woman residing on Champlain Street. The woman was found to be okay.

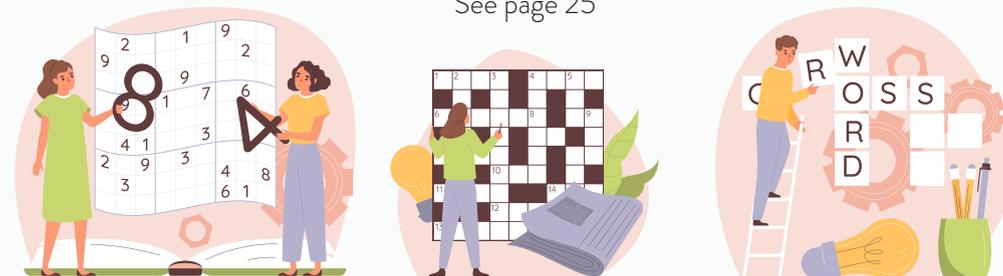
- Received a request from a local business that was the victim of fraud requesting a report be placed on file regarding the issue. It was later determined that federal law enforcement had been contacted because the fraud may have been perpetuated through the U.S. mail.

- Conducted a search warrant on Deer Run Road and took two wanted individuals into custody

(See Police report, Page 27)

Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.

See page 25



Police report

(Continued from Page 26)
on outstanding arrest warrants for drug offenses. The male and female suspects were transported to the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility for lodging.

- Conducted a search warrant on a residence on Deer Run Road after finding evidence of illegal drug activity inside the home while conducting another search warrant for two wanted subjects living there. Evidence of illegal drug possession/dealing was found. The investigation is ongoing with criminal charges likely being sought against both the man and woman residents. The Pittsford Police assisted in the execution of the search warrant.

April 26

- Responded to a residence in Brandon for a domestic disturbance. The female suspect had fled the scene prior to the ar-

rival of the officers. No charges were placed on either party due to lack of evidence obtained on scene and the lack of cooperation on the part of the male victim. The incident was forwarded to DCF for further review due to children being present during the altercation.

- K-9 Unit assisted with a search warrant of a residence on Deer Run Road. Illegal narcotics were located inside the residence.

- Assisted the Vermont State Police (VSP) in locating a suspect vehicle, believed to be in the area of Carver Street, that had caused damage to the boat launch in the Lake Dunmore area. The vehicle was located and its registration information was forwarded to the State Police for investigation.

April 27

- Took fingerprints for a school field trip chaperone.

- Responded to OVUHS for a burglary alarm activation. It was determined that the alarm had been accidentally set off by a staff member.

- Responded to a missing elderly woman with dementia who had wandered off from the area of Middle Road. Police quickly located the missing woman on Forest Dale Road, and she was later transported to the Rutland Regional Medical Center. Officers also transported the woman's dog, which had been with her, back to her residence where it was left with a family member.

- Assisted a woman who had been involved in a verbal domestic incident with her husband while in Brandon and had been left stranded without a way to get back to Massachusetts. The investigating officer was able to get the subject to a friend's house in town so that she would have a place to stay for the night.

- Received a report of a howl-

ing dog on Mulcahy Drive that was reportedly howling all day per the complainant. Upon officers' arrival, no howling was heard and the officer left the area.

April 28

- Assisted the VSP—New Haven with a traffic stop on Route 7, just over the town line in Leicester, in which the operator showed signs of impairment. After sobriety exercises were conducted, the VSP placed the driver under arrest for DUI.

- Vehicle stop on Marble Street for a stop sign violation. Warning issued.

- Vehicle stop for a motorist reportedly failing to maintain their travel lane on Route 7, traveling southbound into Brandon. The operator was found to be elderly and had a wrist injury that was causing the issue. No alcohol or drug impairment was determined and the operator was

released.

- Found a lost dog on West Creek Road and brought it to the Rutland Humane Society until the owner could be identified.

- Conducted traffic enforcement on Grove Street.

- Conducted traffic enforcement at the intersection of Franklin Street and Park Street. One operator was stopped for a traffic control signal violation.

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

- Vehicle stop on Grove Street for defective equipment. Warning issued.

- Vehicle stop on Grove Street for following too closely. Warning issued.

- Assisted a keyholder of a residence by securing the outside and inside of the residence.

'The Gold Rush'

(Continued from Page 22)

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

The screening of 'The Gold Rush' is sponsored by Bill and Kathy Mathis in memory of Maxine Thurston

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

- Saturday, June 8, 2024, 7 p.m.: "The Thief of Bagdad" (1924) starring Douglas Fairbanks Sr. Celebrate the 100th anniversary of this eye-popping cinematic spectacle; starring Fairbanks in top form as Arabian adventurer who must complete a series of epic tasks to save his beloved. Timeless tale told imaginatively and on a grand scale, complete with cutting edge special effects.

- Saturday, July 20, 2024, 7 p.m.: "The Cameraman" (1928) starring Buster Keaton. In 'The Cameraman,' Keaton tries to impress the gal of his dreams by working as a newsreel photographer. Can he get a break and get the girl? Classic visual comedy with Keaton at the peak of his creative powers; set in NYC and includes 1920s shots of Midtown Manhattan and the old Yankee Stadium.

- Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024, 7

p.m.: "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" (1921) starring Rudolph Valentino. Sweeping drama of a divided family with members caught up on opposite sides during World War I. Breakthrough film for Rudolph Valentino, introducing the sultry tango and launching him to stardom. The real deal! Shown both in honor of the 110th anniversary of World War I's outbreak and the anniversary of Valentino's untimely death in 1926.

- Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024, 7 p.m.: "Speedy" (1928) starring Harold Lloyd. Harold's final silent feature cis a tribute to New York City, baseball, and the idea that nice guys can indeed finish first, highlighted by one of the most exciting races to the finish in all silent cinema. Complete with an extended cameo from none other than Babe Ruth!

- Saturday, Oct. 19, 2024, 7 p.m.: "Phantom of the Opera" (1925) starring Lon Chaney. Long before Andrew Lloyd Webber created the hit stage musical, this silent film adaptation starring Lon Chaney put 'Phantom' firmly in the pantheon of both horror and romance. Just in time for Halloween!

- Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024, 7 p.m.: "Barbed Wire" (1927) starring Pola Negri, Clive Brook. During World War I, the French government commandeers a family farm for use

as a camp for German POWs, setting the local population at each other. Intense drama about forbidden love and the human condition, with a special holiday twist.

See Charlie Chaplin in the

'The Gold Rush' (1925) with live music on Saturday, May 11 at 7 p.m. at the Brandon Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7, in Brandon, Vt. All are welcome to this family-friendly event. Admission is free, with

free will donations accepted in support of ongoing Town Hall renovations.

For more about the music, visit www.jeffrapsis.com.



WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

ARIES March 21–April 20
Aries, it's challenging for you and a romantic partner to get together this week and that may lead to stress. Over time you will be able to reconnect and get things back in sync.

TAURUS April 21–May 21
Taurus, normally you are very open, but all of your communication channels seem to be 'blocked' of late. Don't be too hard on yourself as things will return to normal soon enough.

GEMINI May 22–June 21
Gemini, if a family member has been in a bad mood or is feeling unwell, it is up to you to get to the root of the situation. Provide whatever assistance you can.

CANCER June 22–July 22
Cancer, you may feel like you don't want to get involved if a friend or colleague is

in trouble. But this person can really use your help at the moment and you should step up.

LEO July 23–Aug. 23
Don't let your career get sidetracked by gossip and office politics, Leo. You should stand up for yourself if others are speaking poorly about you. Avoid getting involved in gossip.

VIRGO Aug. 24–Sept. 22
Virgo, what seems to be bad news about your financial situation may not be as bad as it once appeared. Double-check the details before you become panicked.

LIBRA Sept. 23–Oct. 23
Libra, you may be inclined to protect loved ones from the truth this week, but they need to hear all of the details in this instance. Break any news to them gently.

SCORPIO Oct. 24–Nov. 22
Scorpio, you are a workaholic by nature, but when fatigue hits you this week, you'll need to step back and give yourself time to rest. There's a lot coming your way soon enough.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23–Dec. 21
A person who is no longer in your life may be on your mind a lot these days, Sagittarius. Cherish the fond memories you

have of this person and don't worry about being preoccupied.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22–Jan. 20
Capricorn, misinformation may be spreading around you and it can be tempting to add your own input to the discussions. Make sure your contributions can be backed up.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21–Feb. 18
You are finally putting some of your longstanding plans in motion, Aquarius. However, this week you may receive some information that might delay progress.

PISCES Feb. 19–March 20
Someone may try to mislead you with some inaccurate information this week, Pisces. Conduct your own research and you'll get all of the details you need for to draw your own conclusion.

~~~~~

**FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS**

May 3 James Brown, musician (d)  
May 4 Sharon Jones, singer (d)  
May 5 Michael Palin, actor (81)  
May 6 George Clooney, actor, (63)  
May 7 Rabindranath Tagore, poet (d)  
May 8 Raoul Trujillo, choreographer (69)  
May 9 Sophie Scholl, anti-Nazi activist (d)

# BAG

(Continued from Page 1)

ered the walls. It was not anyone's idea of a professional art gallery. But a group of artists and friends, including Kimble, Liza Myers, Dolores Funari, Jackie Foley, and David Martin, rolled up their sleeves and scrubbed the place down.

"We cleaned the place as much as we could," recalled Kimble. "The earliest meetings of the Guild were at a beat-up old conference table. We'd meet and go to dinner at Sully's afterward." Sully's was across the street in the space now occupied by The River Pub.

In 2003, however, Kimble had a brainstorm that set the BAG on a successful course for the next 20+ years.

"I heard the city of Chicago was putting big fiberglass cows everywhere," he said. "Saratoga Springs was doing horses. Why don't we do pigs?"

And so they did.

Kimble recruited 40 artists from Brandon and its environs to decorate life-size fiberglass pigs. They were able to raise \$20,000 from local sponsors in 2 weeks to pay for

the plain statues (at \$500 a pop).

"It says a lot about our town that people would give that kind of money for a crazy idea," said Kimble with amusement and pride.

The artists received unadorned pigs and returned fantastically reimagined sculptures that delighted everyone. The sheer joy of artistic creation was obvious in the results, which ran the gamut from wings to underwater seascapes to farm scenes to musical scores to Latin inscriptions. All the pigs were given names and biographies.

The show, titled "The Really Really Pig Show" in a sly reference to Ed Sullivan, was a major hit, generating massive publicity for the BAG. On Memorial Day weekend that year, the pigs were unveiled in a parade through Brandon and then displayed around town. That September, the pigs were auctioned off, raising over \$100,000, a sum that allowed the BAG to purchase and renovate the old 5 & 10. The pigs, one could say, provided the financial footing that has allowed the BAG to grow into the robust professional gallery it is today and weather all the eco-



**ABOVE: BARBARA EBLING and Matt Gibbs pull Matt's "Porcus Latinium" in the "Really Really Pig Show" Parade in 2003. Below: some of the amazingly decorated pigs that were auctioned off, plus some of the artists posing with the unadorned fiberglass statues.**



nommic twists and turns Brandon has had.

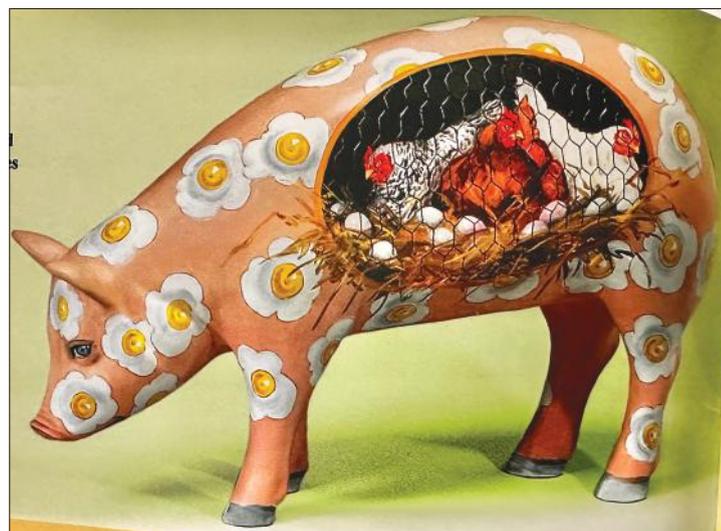
The pig show was such a success that in subsequent years, the BAG did birdhouses (2004), rocking chairs (2005), clocks (2011), and quilts (2018), to name just a few of their fundraising art projects. And this year, to mark the 25th anniversary of the formation of the BAG, they're returning to their roots with another pig show: "Brandon's Art of the Pig."

On a somewhat smaller scale than in 2003, the BAG's artists and willing friends will embellish wooden pig-shaped cutouts, about the size of a cheeseboard, which will be sold off in a silent auction from August 16 through August 18 at the Brandon Town Hall, with a "Piglet Preview Party" at Café Provence on Friday, June 7. Between the preview party and the auction, the pigs will be displayed in windows around town. As per the BAG's tradition, a portion of the proceeds will go to local schools to pay for art supplies.

At 25, the BAG can absolutely call itself a success. Along with the advent of Café Provence, the BAG's presence in town helped revive Brandon's economy after the closure of the Brandon Training School in the 90s, giving Brandon a reputation for artsiness that has brought tourists to the downtown for dining and shopping.

"The BAG is probably the best guild gallery in Vermont," said Kimble. A cooperatively run space, members who are accepted into the organization are expected to help run the gallery.

A visit to the BAG today reveals a bright, crisp space filled with paintings, photographs, ceramics, jewelry, glass, fiber arts, and jewelry. A wide variety of styles in a wide variety of media.



"The BAG has great sustainability," said Kimble. "We're constantly bringing in new people and new art."

Current BAG President Stacey Stanhope Dundon noted that

despite the initially slim odds of the BAG's survival, the gallery is thriving 25 years later.

"Why? Because of an art fundraiser held early on," Stanhope (See BAG, Page 29)



# BAG

(Continued from Page 28)

Dundon wrote in an email to The Reporter. “The Pig Fund-raiser, which raised enough money, allowing us to buy our building. It has been 25 years of the most supportive community and artists any small business could ask for. I foresee another 25 great years in our future. I am just happy to have been a part of it.”

Liza Myers, who participated in the first Pig Show, wrote, “The Brandon Artists Guild ‘tipped’ Brandon. Our lovely little village was having hard times, teetering on the brink of economic success or sliding into an economic morass. Our efforts with the arts brought new life and pizzazz back to the town. We were called the ‘Art and Soul of Vermont’ by Yankee magazine! I am very proud and grateful to have been part of that effort.”

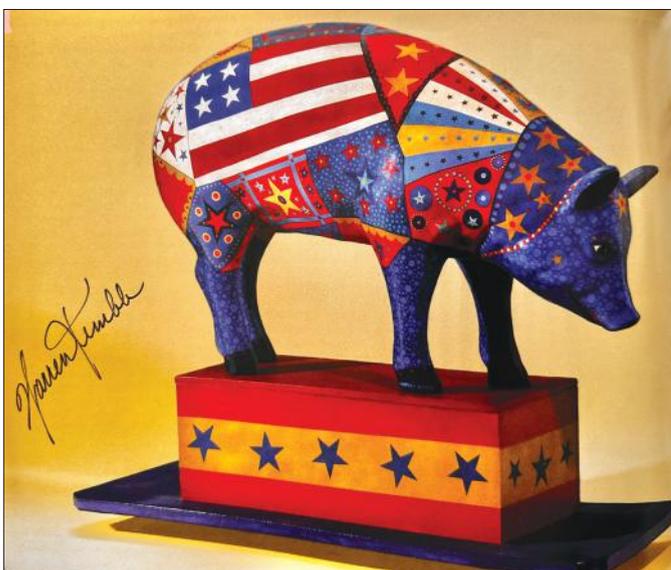
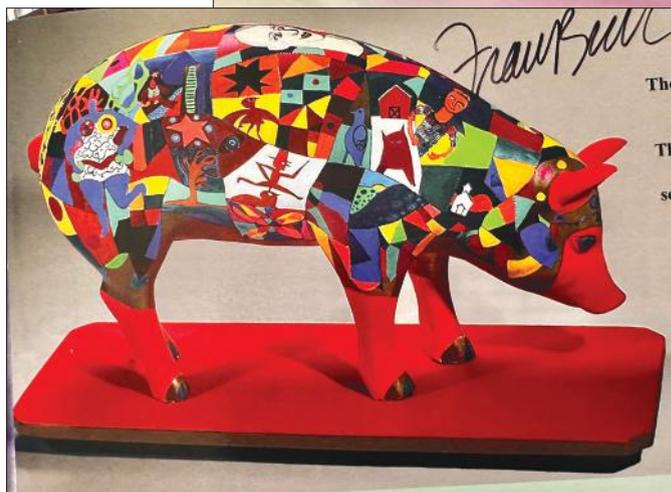
Robin Kent, a Brandon artist who now shows with Kimble and Medana Gabbard at the Vermont Folk Art Gallery on Park Street, juried into the BAG’s very first cohort of new members in 1997.

“It’s like raising a kid,” said Kent. “It takes on a life of its own. It’s standing on its own two feet now.”

New member Peter Root said at a recent event at the BAG, “People love this thing they created here. It’s really special being invited to join.”

“I think we’ve evolved into what’s needed,” said Kimble.

There will be a 25th-anniversary reception at the BAG, at 7 Center Street, on Friday, May 3 from 5 to 7 p.m. All are welcome.



A SAMPLING OF the 40 decorated pigs that were auctioned off by the Brandon Artists Guild in 2003, a fundraiser so successful that the Guild was able to buy its own building with the proceeds.

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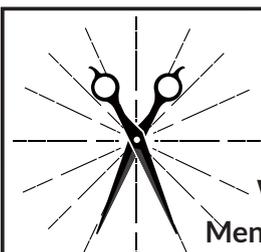
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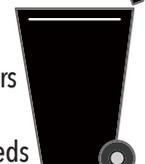
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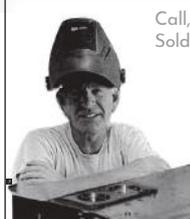


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# Killington

(Continued from Page 11)  
the resort's conception, capping a dramatically long series of twists and turns to the finish line. 'Now we know where we can grow'

The idea for a village dates back 70 years to 1954, when Preston Smith, then a visiting twenty-something honeymooner, decided to develop Killington Peak, Vermont's second-highest summit, into a ski area.

"Here, in 1763, legend says the Rev. Samuel Peters christened the entire Green Mountain section 'Verd Mont,'" the Rutland Herald reported in its story on the plan.

Installing trails, lifts and snowmaking, Smith spent his life turning the property into the biggest ski resort in eastern North America. But his hope for a retail and residential center was hampered by the fact the U.S. Forest Service owned the most conducive slopeside acreage.

Turning its attention to trails in the 1980s, Killington aimed to expand into 2,500 wooded acres known as Parker's Gore. Enter environmentalists, who argued the forest was a prime bear and wildlife habitat.

After more than a decade of inaction, Smith sold Killington to the American Skiing Company in 1996. That spurred business, government and environmental leaders to agree to a land swap in which the ski area exchanged Parker's Gore and its expansion plans there for a 1,000-acre state parcel near the base that was big enough for a village.

"Now we know where we can grow," a Killington official told the Wall Street Journal of the deal that then Gov. Howard Dean called a "win-win."

Unveiling a master plan at the turn of the millennium, Killington soon received Act 250 approval for a village. But various blueprints have sat on the

drawing board amid a series of challenges and changes, including the resort's sale to the Powder Corp. in 2007 and Great Gulf's purchase of a previous developer's holdings last year.

"One of the difficulties is there's more than \$50 million of public infrastructure that has to go in before we can do anything," said Sneyd, who began working on the project in 2018.

In response, local, regional and state economic leaders have created a tax increment financing (TIF) district that received town voter approval last year. A resulting "Killington Forward" package will fund more than \$60 million in public road and water infrastructure improvements through grants, forgivable loans and tax increment financing.

'Largest ski area development opportunity'

Crews arrived in April to reconstruct the main access Killington Road artery, starting at

its intersection with Route 4 and, in future phases, continuing upward, where they're set to add a roundabout at the village.

Contractors also have begun a multiyear public water project to install two wells, a 750,000-gallon storage tank and pipelines for the village and other businesses along Killington Road that have found PFAS chemicals in their drinking supplies.

As the town builds infrastructure, Great Gulf and the Killington Resort have pledged \$700,000 to allow the town to buy a 70-acre plot elsewhere on the mountain for 300 affordable workforce housing units in a cluster of apartment buildings and single and duplex homes.

"We all know the area is in need of this type of development," Killington President Mike Solimano said in a statement, "which will provide housing for the workers who support the whole community and will

be integral to the success of the new ski village."

Great Gulf has yet to publicize a price tag for its overall retail and residential project or individual housing units, although it paid \$43 million for the village land and estimates annual construction there could average \$118 million.

"Killington's major competition has benefitted from development of base area villages in recent years, while land ownership hurdles left Killington without," the Canadian company wrote in one submission to the state. "The master plan entitlements make Killington the largest ski area development opportunity in North America."

Great Gulf wants to center its village around "The Crystal," a glass-sheathed hub that would replace the current Snowshed and Ramshead lodges. Such a structure would echo back to the resort's first building, which Smith envisioned in 1958 as a "modernistic, glass-enclosed base shelter," according to the company's history.

"It's been a long time coming," Sneyd said of the overall project.

Great Gulf will need to return to the town and state for approval of expansions past the announced first phase. But the proposal has yet to spark the ferocity of questions that came before all sides agreed to the land swap in 1996.

"I think most of the plans will conform with our zoning by-laws," Town Manager Michael Ramsey said. "People are overwhelmingly supportive of it, and I can attest there's no one outside my office with a sign saying 'No Village.' In my opinion, this is going to be huge for Killington, the Rutland region and the state."

The town manager notes the project's new waterline would solve the local PFAS problem, while everything else would boost local and state tax revenue by adding an estimated \$285 million of property value over 10 years.

"It is stretching our capacity," Ramsey said, "but we're definitely up for the challenge."



## St. Patty's/Easter Pageant by the Silver Bells of the Brandon Area Toy Project is once more a big fundraising success

EVERYONE HAD A great time at the Brandon American Legion on Sunday, April 28. The pageant raised \$506 for the Ladies Auxiliary of the Brandon American Legion. Many thanks to all of our amazing contestants who made this possible! In addition, contestants brought supplies for veterans in nursing homes, snacks for OV students, and toys for next year's project!

Photo by Heather Lynne Photography

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# Artifacts Roadshow returns to Brandon!



THE ARTIFACTS ROADSHOW returned to Brandon Town Hall on Thursday, April 25. Archaeologists and Vermont State U. professors Matt and Ellie Moriarty examined and identified artifacts brought in by local residents. Folks brought in relics found in attics, basements, yards, or handed down in their families. Objects ranged from Native American to 20th century. The Moriartys also run a 3-D scanning lab at Castleton and used the technology to scan some of the artifacts in Brandon for further study. If you missed them this time, they will be holding other such events, so dig out all those relics you've always wondered about! Sponsored by the Brandon Museum.



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