

## Ballots available for Underhill May 6 Special Town Meeting

By Sherri Morin, Underhill Town Clerk  
 Ballots are now available for the Tuesday, May 6, 2025, Special Town Meeting. There are two Articles to consider, a Bond and the purchase of tandem dump truck. An informational meeting on the Articles will be held on Thursday, May 1, at 7:00 PM.

At the Special Town Meeting voters will consider two Australian Ballot questions. The purpose of this Special Town Meeting is to rectify an oversight in public notification as it relates to a Bond vote. A Bond question for the replacement of Bridge #7 appeared on the 2025 Annual Town Meeting warning in March. However, notice of the Bond vote was not properly warned and published in our newspaper of circulation, *Seven Days*. This Special Town Meeting will revisit the Bond question.

In addition, it has come to the Town's attention that our existing 2018 tandem axle dump truck is in need of replacement, two years earlier than anticipated, and there will be an additional Article for the voters to consider regarding that purchase.

If you'd like a ballot mailed, please email [smorin@underhillvt.gov](mailto:smorin@underhillvt.gov) or call the Town Clerk's office at 802-899-4434 ext. 1. You are also welcome to come to Town Hall and vote in person Monday-Thursday 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM and Friday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

## Jericho town-wide reappraisal

From Jericho Head Lister Lori Dykema, Lister Martha Prince, and Assessor Terri Sabens

The Town of Jericho is now in the process to reappraise all property in the Town for the 2026 Grand List. The goal of any reappraisal is to create fairness. Similar homes should have similar assessments. Similar market values should have similar assessments. Data collection is a key part of maintaining fair assessments.

The Town has contracted with New England Municipal Recourse Center LTD (NEMRC) to do a complete reappraisal of all property within the town. This process will be completed for the 2026 Grand List. The data collectors from NEMRC have started to collect property data, you will receive a postcard in the mail letting you know that they will be in your area. These postcards are mailed as needed for data collection. If you receive your postcard and have ANY questions, please call the number on the card to reach the Listers' Office, please don't call other departments as they won't have the answers to your questions. The Listers' department hours are Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. The Listers' Office is closed on Fridays but feel free to leave a message for a return call (802-899-2640 Ext. 107).

NRMRC uses qualified field appraisers to gather the information. They are collecting exterior measurement data, exterior and interior construction data, verifying property age, and taking photos. Each appraiser has identification; please feel free to call Listers' Office at 802-899-2640 Ext. 107 to verify any information about these individuals.

If you are not at home when the NEMRC appraisers visit, a door hanger with instructions for making an appointment or doing your online data verification will be left. If you do not wish to have the appraisers on your property without your presence, or you wish to make an appointment for an inspection or choose for a phone interview to verify the property data, you must call the Listers' Office at the number above and inform them. You are not required to let them into your homes — a front door, face-to-face interview will suffice.

Property owners who rent the property are asked to notify the renters of the inspection procedure and that the appraisers will inspect, measure, and take photos of the exterior building(s). If you would like the interior data verified, please grant the renter authorization to let the appraiser inspect the interior. If you

## 4-H'ers compete in Chittenden County Hippology

On Friday, March 28, Chittenden County 4-H hosted its annual hippology contest, which brought 18 4-H'ers from northern Vermont to the University of Vermont (UVM) campus to compete.

The multi-phase competition got underway with a written exam, followed by rotation through judging, information, and slide identification (horse-related images) stations, all designed to test the participants' equine knowledge. Overall individual placements were determined by combining scores from all phases of the competition.

Placements were as follows:

- 8- and 9-year-olds: Fiona Adams, Milton (first); Julie Merlo, Swanton (second).
- 10- and 11-year-olds: Saige Prisco, Milton (first); Nora Kidder, Cambridge (second); Ian Kascha-Hare, Milton (third); Catherine Baker, Milton (fourth); Grace Peterson, Essex (fifth).
- 12- and 13-year-olds: Jane Curry, Burlington (first); Emma Babyak (second) and Claire Romano (third), both from Fairfax; Elizabeth Stinton, Northfield (fourth); Locklan Bertrand, Highgate (fifth); Josie Kascha-Hare, Milton (sixth); Kinzi Grindle, St. Albans (seventh).
- seniors (age 14-18): Mikayla Tobey, Fairfax (first); Kelsey Paradee, Swanton (second); Aubri Richards (third) and Silje Kruse (fourth), both from Milton.

The competition, organized by UVM Extension 4-H Educator Martha Manning, served as practice for 4-H'ers who planned to take part in the 2025 State 4-H Hippology Contest on Saturday, April 12 in Rutland.

For more information about the Chittenden County 4-H horse program, contact Manning at [martha.manning@uvm.edu](mailto:martha.manning@uvm.edu).



For five 4-H'ers, ages 10 and 11, it was all about friendly competition at the 2025 Chittenden County 4-H hippology contest, held Friday, March 28 at the University of Vermont in Burlington. Competing in this age group were (from left) Saige Prisco, Milton; Nora Kidder, Cambridge; Ian Kascha-Hare, Milton; Catherine Baker, Milton; and Grace Peterson, Essex.

PHOTO BY AMANDA GIFFORD

would rather call the Listers' Office to make an appointment for a phone interview to verify the property data, please call the Listers' Office once you receive your postcard letting you know the data collectors will be in your area.

When the field-listing phase is complete, NEMRC will begin an analysis of properties sold in the Town of Jericho to determine the fair market value of your property. Fair market value is best described as that value you might reasonably expect to receive if you were to sell your property. For the purposes of this reappraisal, the value set will be the fair market value as of April 1, 2026.

When the valuation process is completed, NEMRC will submit preliminary assessments to the Listers and Assessor. After review, NEMRC will mail a booklet of preliminary value to each property owner. The notice in the booklet will include instructions for scheduling an informal hearing with NEMRC. This process is in addition to the normal grievance process.

For further information, please see the reappraisal explanations online at <https://jerichovt.org/reappraisal>.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance.

## VT school funding: equity and affordability Snapshot April 16

By Bee Drapa, Librarian Westford Public Library

This Vermont Humanities Snapshot offering seems like it might be interesting to the community, based on recent events.

"Vermont is one of the only states where school taxes are shared, but that hasn't solved the problem of all schools getting the resources they need. Stephanie Yu, Executive Director of Public Assets Institute, explores the purpose of public education, the history of Vermont's funding system, and how to equitably provide kids with the best education possible."

Vermont School Funding: Equity and Affordability: Vermont Humanities Snapshot Series, Wednesday, April 16, 6:30 – 7:30 PM at the Brownell Library in Essex Junction. Register online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/vermont-school-funding-equity-and-affordability-tickets-1242478519699?aff=oddtcreator>.

## Seeking public input on Cambridge Hazard Mitigation Plan

By Eric Boozan

Cambridge Town Administrator

The Town and Village of Cambridge are in the process of updating the Cambridge Hazard Mitigation Plan. Hazard Mitigation Plans must be updated every five years for the Town and Village to remain eligible for state and federal funding following a declared disaster.

The Town of Cambridge Selectboard and Village of Cambridge Trustees are seeking public input on the working draft, which can be viewed online at [https://www.cambridge.vermont.gov/DRAFT%202025%20Cambridge%20Hazard%20Mitigation%20Plan\\_4.4.25.pdf](https://www.cambridge.vermont.gov/DRAFT%202025%20Cambridge%20Hazard%20Mitigation%20Plan_4.4.25.pdf).

You may share your comments in-person or remotely by attending the Tuesday, April 15 or the Tuesday, May 6 Selectboard meeting and/or submitting written comments to [eric@cambridgevt.gov](mailto:eric@cambridgevt.gov) by Wednesday, April 30.

## Share your vision for Lamoille County

By Sam Lotto, LCPC

Town of Cambridge representative

Share your vision for Lamoille County! The Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) is amending the County's Regional Plan to address current issues and statutory updates.

The LCPC has developed a survey to gather input on topics including flood resiliency and flood recovery, housing development, economic growth, and land use. Your response will help us plan for the future you want to see.

To take the survey visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CBRR3Y>. Thank you for your input!

For more information see the Regional Plan Survey Flyer on LCPC's home page at <https://www.lcpcvt.org>.

## Jericho Town Forest dam removal project

By Karina Dailey

Jericho Conservation Commission

The Jericho Town Forest Dam is a sheet metal dam that is approximately 10' tall and 60' wide. The dam is owned by the Town of Jericho and is located in the Jericho Town Forest. The dam was historically built as a water supply dam by the Village Water District for the Starbird Road subdivision but was abandoned over 30 years ago as development expanded in this area and an alternative and more efficient water supply was constructed.

This derelict dam is in poor condition and is leaking around its margins, and the impoundment behind the dam is filled with sediment and blocking natural stream flow. The dam impounds two headwater spring seeps that originate just above the impoundment. Downstream of the dam (at the outflow) a small tributary flows into the Lee River, which flows into the Browns River, then the Lamoille River and ultimately into Lake Champlain.

In May of 2023, the Town of Jericho was awarded a grant (written and submitted by the Jericho Conservation Commission) from Watersheds United Vermont (WUV) in partnership with VT Department of Environmental Conservation (VT DEC). Fitzgerald Environmental Associates (FEA) was hired to conduct preliminary design for the removal of the Town Forest Dam. FEA's results were shared at public meetings on April 18, 2024, October 29, 2024 and in front of the Selectboard on October 17, 2024. The preliminary design report is available upon request to [kdailey@vnrc.org](mailto:kdailey@vnrc.org).

Subsequently, and upon receiving approval from the Selectboard, the Jericho Conservation Commission applied for a second round of grant funding for (1) final design and (2) dam removal and channel restoration. The grant was awarded this winter and the design work is underway, with removal most likely planned for summer 2026.

News briefs continued on page 2

# Happy Easter

## SUMMER CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES

**Online VT summer camp finder** — Now is the time to research summer camp opportunities for kids! VT DCF has a great partnership with Vermont State Parks — go online to <https://campfindervt.com/> to learn more about camp opportunities across the state for kids! Is a Day Camp best for your kids? Sleepaway camp? Special themes? Find out more by following the link and have a GREAT summer!

**Green Mountain Conservation Camp** registration is open — If you are 12-14 years old and want to learn about Vermont's wildlife and gain outdoor skills, consider attending one of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife (VT F&W) Department's Green Mountain Conservation Camps this summer. If you are a GMCC alum, 16 or younger, consider coming back for another summer. The one-week camp programs are held at Lake Bomoseen in Castleton and Buck Lake in Woodbury. Campers participate in hands-on learning about fish and wildlife conservation, ecology, forestry, orienteering, safe firearm and archery techniques, swimming, canoeing, fishing and more. Natural resource professionals come to the camp to share information on their programs and take campers out for field activities. Conservation Camps open June 22 and continue until August 22. Tuition is \$250 for the week, including food, lodging and equipment, and financial assistance is available. Information and registration are available at <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/learn-more/gmcc>. For more information, contact [FWGMCC@vermont.gov](mailto:FWGMCC@vermont.gov) or call 802-522-2925.

**The Cottage at Lake Eden** offers a wide-ranging multi-age program with an individual approach, with painting, sculpture, puppetry, storytelling, gardening, animal studies, nature journals, Forest School opportunities, and other meaningful outdoor adventures! Join us this summer Monday-Friday, June 30-August 1, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Breakfast and snacks are provided. Children will be invited to explore new ideas, materials, and learning environments at the Cottage School at Lake Eden. Interested in enrollment? Call or text Barbra Becraft at 954-589-6227 or contact [thecottageschoolatlakeeden@gmail.com](mailto:thecottageschoolatlakeeden@gmail.com).

**Chittenden County Soccer School 2025** — Registration is open for Chittenden County Soccer School (CCSS) 2025, to be held Monday-Friday, July 14-18, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM at Mills Riverside Park in Jericho. There are half- and full-day camp options; age groups range from 5 to 16+!

All players receive a camp tee and team award. We have a dedicated and experienced coaching staff returning again this summer to bring the "love of the game" to all our players. Individual ball skills, teamwork, game tactics, full-sided and small-sided games, and goalkeeper training are all part of our daily plan!

Please email Eric Barker of Underhill, [barkereric15@gmail.com](mailto:barkereric15@gmail.com) with any questions, or visit our website at <http://chittendencountysoccerschool.org>.

**Saxon Hill School summer camp** — Registration is open for summer camp at Saxon Hill School in Jericho. Weekly camps at Saxon Hill provide the ideal experience for children looking to explore the wonders of nature through discovery and adventure. The camps engage children ages 3-6 with art, adventure, creation, construction, nature, and fun. All weeks of summer camp will include outside play and time for self-guided exploration. At Saxon Hill School, our approach is to follow the lead of children and learn through play. In the spirit of child-led adventure, counselors will aim to focus each week on children's interests and passions as identified on the registration form. Registration is now open! Camps run weekly from June 16-August 22, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. See our website for more information and to register: <https://saxonhillschool.org/summer-camp.html>.

**Summer Fairy Camp, Underhill** — Registration for Poker Hill Arts summer Fairy Camps is open. These usually fill fast — find information, pictures, videos, and dates at our website <https://www.pokerhillarts.com/magical-fairy-camp>.

**Poker Hill Children's Theatre** may still have openings for the week of July 28-August 1. This musical theatre camp located in Underhill is for students entering second grade through fifth grade. If your child loves singing, dancing, arts and crafts, and water time, this is the camp for them! Here is the link for more information and to register: <https://bit.ly/410wT5j>.

**Canciones y Cuentos: Kids Spanish Camp** — Sing songs, read stories, play games, make art, and move your body! All levels, ages 4-9 at the Community Center in Jericho, Browns Trace, Jericho Center. The session will run Monday-Thursday, July 28-31, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM; \$275 for the four-day session, or sign up two kids for \$500. Contact Christie Moulton, [christiemoulton@gmail.com](mailto:christiemoulton@gmail.com), to register. Campers should come with a water bottle, morning snack, and lunch.

**The lineup of Burlington City Arts' (BCA's) 2025 summer camps** is live online at <https://bit.ly/4ZmACP>. At BCA's award-winning camps, students work closely with professional teaching artists for a full week of in-depth studio arts experience. Every camp includes high-quality art materials and a final celebration. Come for a half-day, or pair a morning and afternoon camp together at BCA Studios to make a full-day experience. Camps at the BCA Center run for the full day. Registration for all classes is open and class waitlists are active. Browse the digital guide online at [https://issuu.com/bvcityarts/docs/bca\\_summertime\\_catalog\\_2025\\_mech\\_single-pages](https://issuu.com/bvcityarts/docs/bca_summertime_catalog_2025_mech_single-pages).

**ReTribe's 2025 Summer Camps** — Registration is open for ReTribe summer camps in Underhill. We invite teens to embark on a Rite of Passage at one or both of our teen retreats:

Adventure Game Theater: Ages 12-19. July 3-12. Transform through a live action adventure. Become a hero, a rogue, a sorcerer. Face death and protect life as you fight with foam

swords and magic. Does your teen love D&D, fantasy series, or improv? This retreat is for them! Sign up at [www.retribe.org/adventure-game-theater](http://www.retribe.org/adventure-game-theater).

Inner Journeys: Ages 14-19. July 20-August 3. Being a teenager can be overwhelming. During this two-week retreat we'll engage with practices to help us find our center, connect with peers, and feel at peace among the forest and streams. Discover more of yourself using transformative practices including Breathwork, a wilderness solo, shamanic journeying, and meditation. Sign up at [www.retribe.org/inner-journeys](http://www.retribe.org/inner-journeys).

Retribe also offers Day Camps for ages 5-12, Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Choose among seven weeks. Is your kid ready to unleash their wild side venturing on quests, playing games, and practicing earth skills this Summer? Check out our youth camp options at [www.retribe.org/day-camp](http://www.retribe.org/day-camp).

Questions? Reach out to Julia Martin at [ReTribeTransformation@gmail.com](mailto:ReTribeTransformation@gmail.com) or 609-933-0877.

**Water Wanderings** offers summer camps for everyone from infant to adult with camps for youth, teens, young adults, and families. It's a great way to get outside, learn, and play. Campers sleep in tents, build fires, canoe, and learn through doing with our curriculum that explores creativity, sustainability, equity, ecology, and outdoors skills. 2025 camps are as follows:

- Youth, ages 9-12: Monday July 7-Friday, July 11 (four nights);
- Teens, ages 13-15: Monday, July 14-Monday, July 21 (seven nights);
- Young Adults, ages 16-18: Wednesday, July 23-Wednesday, July 30 (seven nights);
- Grandparents Day: July 31;
- Family Camp I: Monday, August 4-Wednesday, August 6 (two nights) For families with kids ages 1-7.

Our Family Camp II: Thursday, August 7-Saturday, August 9 (two nights) is full.

All camps happen on the Green River Reservoir in Hyde Park and have a maximum group size of 12. The youth and teen camps have three counselors and nine campers while the young adult camp and the family camps have two counselors and ten campers. For more information (including sliding scale cost), go online to <https://www.waterwanderings.org/register.html>.

**Davis Meadow Rides Horse Camp** is for kids ages 6-9 and 10+ who love horses and want to ride and learn about them and enjoy horse-related activities — riding, anatomy, caring for horses, horse painting, horse bathing, crafts, and other fun activities. There are three Monday-Friday camp sessions: June 23-27 (ages 6-9), July 7-11 (ages 10 and up), and July 28-August 1 (ages 6-9). The camp is located on Cilley Hill Rd., Jericho. To learn more and to register, go online to <https://davismeadowrides.com/> or contact 802-923-0369 or [dvselea@gmail.com](mailto:dvselea@gmail.com).

## COMING EVENTS

## Ongoing Events

**It Takes a Village Women's Circle** meets on the last Tuesday of the month (April 28), 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the Waterville Town Hall, 544 VT Rt. 109, Waterville. Pot-luck — so if you can please bring something to share; if not, whatever the reason, just bring yourself! Also bring a journal and pen. Donation based; suggested donation \$5 goes to the upkeep of the Waterville Town Hall. But all are welcome, always! <https://www.facebook.com/events/1071704021631117?ref=newsfeed>

**Square Dancing** — Tuesdays, September-May, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Tuttle Middle School, S. Burlington. Tuttle Middle School, S. Burlington. If you can walk to music, you can learn to square dance! Join the Lake Champlain Squares to exercise bodies and minds through square dancing. All ages and experience levels are welcome.

**Burlington Literature Group** — a weekly virtual book group that meets weekly, Tuesdays at 6:30 PM, on Zoom. We welcome new committed readers to our sessions. The group has been in existence for years meeting in a physical space but, since the pandemic, has changed to online Zoom sessions. We break down interesting, challenging books into weekly segments of 60 to 100 pages, discuss form, content, and our impressions in a friendly online forum. Details can be found at <https://nereadersandwriters.com/> or by emailing [info@nereadersandwriters.com](mailto:info@nereadersandwriters.com)

*nereadersandwriters.com*. Our next book is Thomas Pynchon's postmodern epic *Gravity's Rainbow*. Here's the schedule: April 15: Chapter 2 through Chapter 2 "But perhaps, in the hours just before dawn..."; April 22: Chapter 2 "The great cusp -" through end of Chapter 2; April 29: Chapter 3 through Chapter 3 "That's where I broke through the speed of sound..."; May 6: Chapter 3 "The Zone is in full summer" through Chapter 3 "They both start cackling insanely there, under the tree."; May 13: Chapter 3 "Slothrop comes to in episodes" through Chapter 3 "and the dogs run barking in the backstreets."; May 20: Chapter 3 "When emptied of people" through Chapter 3 "orchestra plays *Tristan und Isolde*."; May 27: Chapter 3 "They come out into the last of the twilight." through Chapter 3 "Safe passage through a bad night..."; June 3: Chapter 3 "The Schwarzkommando have got to Achtfaden" through end of Chapter 3; June 10: Chapter 4 through Chapter 4 "There are things to hold on to..."; June 17: Chapter 4 "You will want cause and effect." through Chapter 4 "just at the other side of dawning, you can see a smile."; June 24: Chapter 4 "In her pack, Geli Tripping" to End.

**Mountainsong Community Chorus** — Thursdays. 6:30 – 8:00 PM, at the Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 195 VT Rt. 15, Jericho (across from Packard Road). If you love to sing, come join Mountainsong, a volunteer-run community singing group which harmonizes together in four parts on Thursday evenings. Whether you learn by ear or read

music, you'll be comfortable in our group. You don't have to be a "great" singer — our aim is to sing for the joy of singing. We have almost no performances, except maybe to sing a few songs for a local assisted living facility and one short event for family and friends at the end of the season. We sing most weeks, although you can come as often as you are able, and if you miss the first one or two (or more), no worries! Cost: \$1 a week for using the space. We also ask for a small contribution for purchasing music (to be announced when we have our first meeting). Questions? Contact: Lynne Robbins, 802-899-2436 or [lar2436@gmail.com](mailto:lar2436@gmail.com), or Jean Archibald, 802-899-5219 if you have questions, or just show up on a Thursday evening! We look forward to singing together!

**The Underhill-Jericho Walking Club** meets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 5:30 PM, at the United Church of Underhill on Park St., Underhill. We walk for 30-45 minutes; we don't walk if it is raining or snowing. Please bring yak tracks and a headlamp. Join us whenever you like!

**The Jericho Historical Society** meets at the Old Red Mill, VT Rt. 15, Jericho on the second Thursday of each month (April 10) at 6:00 PM. Visit our website for more information or to request a zoom invitation: <https://www.jerichohistoricalsociety.org/events.html>.

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The goal of the work is to remove the man-made dam and reconnect the cold-spring headwaters with the Lee River, which is a significant brook trout fishery. River reconnection will restore natural sediment transport, natural channel formation, aquatic organism passage (AOP), and floodplain reconnection. Ideally, this work will lower water temperature, increase dissolved oxygen, and restore natural transport of sediment and nutrients to improve water quality, species diversity, and climate resilience benefits.

You can learn more about the benefits of derelict dam removal at <https://freevermontrivers.org/> and <https://www.americanrivers.org/>. The Jericho Town Forest Dam was also the subject of a 2022 WCAX news update that you can find at <https://www.wcax.com/2022/11/22/hunting-vermonts-ghost-dams/>.

## Underhill Planning Commission openings

The Underhill Planning Commission is seeking volunteers to fill several newly vacated seats. Serving on the Planning Commission is a great way to be involved in planning the future of our town. Whether you own or rent or live on a road with your family name on it, or moved here last year, or have ever volunteered for local government, please consider joining.

Planning Commission meetings are held at 6:00 PM on the first and third Thursday of each month at Town Hall. If you're interested in learning more, please contact Larry at [pcadmin@underhillvt.gov](mailto:pcadmin@underhillvt.gov).

## News from Jericho

Community news — this month we feature Affordable Housing Committee member Friederike Keating. To read more, go online to <https://jerichovt.org/Celebrating-Each-Other>.

Thank you volunteers — a note of appreciation for Jericho's volunteers. Whether serving on a Town Committee or giving time to participate in other events like Green Up Day, your time and work are important to our community. Thanks to those who have recently ended terms of service, and for those with renewed appointments. Did you know? Vermont ranks fifth in the country for informal helping and thirteenth for formal volunteerism. You can read a summary of the state's civic health report at <https://outside.vermont.gov/dept/sos/Civics/vermont-chi-executive-summary.pdf>.

Dog registration — it is important to vaccinate your dog against rabies and keep a current rabies certificate on file with the Town. In fact, it's the law. For information, go online to <https://jerichovt.org/dog-registration>.

Town Meeting Reimagined (TMR) — the TMR task force has met three times over the past two months to review and discuss suggestions and comments related to the three-part budget process that culminated with the Australian Ballot vote on March 4. The task force was pleased with the outcomes of the first year of implementing the process voters set in motion on Town Meeting Day of 2024. We also recognize there are ways we can improve the process. The task force met on Thursday, April 3 by Zoom to discuss the draft report to the Selectboard, including recommendations for how to improve the process for the coming year.

Planning Commission — the Jericho Planning Commission (PC) met Tuesday, April 1 at Town Hall and via Zoom. Main topics of the meeting included additional discussion of Section 13: Riverside Form-based Code and Section 10: Permits and Review Procedures.

# CHITTENDEN MILLS BEVERAGE

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Coming events continued from page 2

The Underhill Historical Society meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 PM. Meetings are at the Old Schoolhouse, 32 Pleasant Valley Rd, Underhill Center, spring through fall, and at the Town Hall in the winter. Visit our website for more information: <https://underhillhistoricalsociety.org>.

**Craft Group:** meets twice a month on Thursdays (April 17, May 1, 15), 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, 8 River Rd., Jericho. Open to anyone interested in coming with any craft they like: crocheting, rug hooking, knitting, needlepoint, watercolors, jewelry making, macramé... you name it! If you have any questions please contact Amy Tower, 802-355-9671 or [atowerinvt@gmail.com](mailto:atowerinvt@gmail.com), or Julie Hehir, 802-899-3199 or [juliehehir@comcast.net](mailto:juliehehir@comcast.net).

**Waterville Country Church hosts a Community Meal** the first Thursday of each month (May 1). Come enjoy a relaxing homemade meal with neighbors at the church or pick up meal(s) to go. Donations accepted. All donations will be given to a local nonprofit, charity, or community service organization. For information contact Susan Schill or Kim Pitt, [watervillecountrychurch@gmail.com](mailto:watervillecountrychurch@gmail.com). Ask about delivery to shut-ins!

**Tai Chi at the Cambridge Community Center (CCC)**, 22 Old Main St., Jeffersonville — Come join our community of friends staying fit on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Tai Chi is sometimes described as moving meditation. The art contains movements, which are so varied that they put into play every part of the body with harmonious design and graceful patterns. Each form flows with the grace of a specific aspect of nature, working with nature's energy, such as the swaying motion of willow branches being coerced by a gentle breeze or clouds slowly changing shape or form. Movements are slow and deliberate without exerting force or power. The speed of the breathing matches the speed of the movement. Wear clothing that is comfortable and easy to move around in. All ages, beginners and experienced participants welcome! Contact Instructor Wade Prescott for easy registration at 727-557-4469 or [inst.wade@gmail.com](mailto:inst.wade@gmail.com), or just come on down.

**Bone Builders Class:** at the Jeffersonville Church (Second Congregational Church of Christ, 16 Church St., Jeffersonville) from 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM on Mondays and Thursdays. It is a drop-in class, but first-timers have a couple of pages to fill out and sign. It is free, but a donation bucket is available for those wishing to reimburse the church for the use of the space. All are welcome. We have a good time — be prepared for some laughter as well as improving your strength and balance. Call Melody Tobin (802-644-2409) to discuss, or just show up.

**Bone Builders Class:** at St. Thomas Catholic Church, Underhill Center, on Mondays/Wednesdays/most Fridays, 9:00 – 10:30 AM; first Friday of the month, 9:45 – 11:15 AM. Sponsored by the United Way of Northwest VT, RSVP Bone Builders is a free exercise program for men and women, designed to prevent the negative effects of osteoporosis. For more information contact Danielle Schwer, 802-861-7821 or [danielle@unitedwaynwvt.org](mailto:danielle@unitedwaynwvt.org).

**RSVP Bone Builders** program, Westford Common Hall, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:30 – 11:30 AM. Free! Please wear comfortable clothing and bring water. This program focuses on balance and light weight training to protect against fractures caused by osteoporosis. Per studies by Tufts University published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, those who participated in the program just twice a week, gained muscular strength, balance, and increased bone density. Contact Jocelyn Chauvin, 802-999-6387.

**Early Birder Morning Walks**, Sundays, May 4-June 30, 7:00 – 9:00 AM, Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd., Huntington. Join us for an early morning ramble in our forest and meadows. Enjoy the start of the day with us, birds, and other woodland inhabitants. Walks are led by experienced birders familiar with Vermont birds. Come to several walks to hear the changes in who calls and when! Finish the walk with bird-friendly coffee at the viewing window inside the Museum. Bring binoculars and good walking shoes. Early mornings are often damp with dew and boots are definitely in order. Don't forget bug spray/tick repellent! Park in the Museum parking lot. Best for adults and older children. Max 12; suggested donation: \$5-\$15. Register at <https://sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum> for the walk(s) of your choice.

## Coming Events

**Wednesday, April 16**

**Knotweed Management Talk at Jericho Research Forest**, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, University of Vermont Jericho Research Forest and Conservation Center, 127 Tarbox Rd., Jericho. Do you like to fish? Want to learn about invasive species in Vermont? Join

UVM's Rubenstein School students for a hike, chat, and chew to learn about Japanese Knotweed in Jericho Research Forest. Learn from keynote speakers Jessica Wikle of UVM and Dave Barch of Trout Unlimited on the impacts of knotweed on trout populations, streambank health, and what to do about managing it. Enjoy a short hike and pizza from the JRF wood fired oven!

**Friday, April 18**

**Discovery After Dark**, 6:00 – 9:00 PM, Echo Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, 1 College St., Burlington. This fundraiser hosted by the Junior League of Champlain Valley is an adults-only (21+) fundraiser filled with interactive exhibits, live music, a silent auction, cash bar, and Burly Axe throwing! With a Volunteer Fair with local community partners, including Spectrum Youth and Family Services, Wood4Good, and COTS. We will be collecting products for Street CATS Burlington. We'll also have dozens of desserts (macarons, cookies, and cupcakes) from local bakers. Tickets \$40 per person can be purchased online at [https://vms.aqli.org/?nd=p\\_vms\\_registration\\_event\\_detail&registration\\_id=109394&lretry=1](https://vms.aqli.org/?nd=p_vms_registration_event_detail&registration_id=109394&lretry=1). There will be incredible local prizes at our Silent Auction, including a one-year family membership to Shelburne Farms, a private educational tasting for two at Shelburne Vineyard, two all-mountain lift tickets to Sugarbush, goodie packages from Urso Major, Empower MedSpa, Butterfly Bakery, and more! The Junior League of Champlain Valley is an organization of women whose mission is to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

**Saturday, April 19**

**Backyard Compost Workshop and Organics Recycling Facility Tour**, 9:30 – 11:30 AM, CSWD Organics Recycling Facility/Green Mountain Compost, 860 Redmond Rd., Williston. Discover how your kitchen scraps and yard waste are transformed into nutrient-rich, eco-friendly compost that's perfect for your garden and essential for building healthy soils. This interactive experience combines practical composting tips and troubleshooting with an up-close look at the composting process in action. After the workshop, join us for a tour of our Note, you will be walking and standing for at least 30 minutes on the tour. Sign up online at <https://bit.ly/41NvBtL> (short for [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0944ACAB23A6FDC25-49839354-composting#](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0944ACAB23A6FDC25-49839354-composting#/)).

**Thursday, April 24**

**Soup and Bread Supper**, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, Calvary Episcopal Church, 370 VT Rt. 15, Jericho. Enjoy delicious homemade soups, including vegetarian. All free-will donations go to a deserving charity.

**Saturday, April 26**

**April Bird Monitoring Walk**, 7:30 – 9:00 AM, Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd., Huntington. Birders — current, experienced, newbie, and would-be — welcome! Join our monthly monitoring walk to record birds at the Museum's trails, forest, and meadow. Learn something new, share what you know, or both! Please bring your own binoculars, and dress for weather. We recommend bringing tick repellent and a water bottle. Maximum group size 12 people. Free; suggested \$5-15 donation. Register at <https://sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum> or call 802 434-2167. This one is just in time for National Go birding Day (<https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/go-birding-day/>)!

**VT Genealogy Library Open House**, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, 57 River Rd., Essex. Learn what resources we have to help you find your ancestors. We will be giving tours of our facility, along with 30-minute demonstrations. Check out the websites we subscribe to. Chat with other researchers while enjoying refreshments. There will also be many new and gently used books for sale. Free and open to the public. Bring a friend!

**Sunday, April 27**

**Music for Mud Season concert/fundraiser for LHHA**, 2:00 – 4:00 PM, Jenna's House, Johnson. Please join us for an afternoon of uplifting music in support of our local home health agency. The Second Annual Music for Mud Season Concert will feature local musicians: Vermont's Freedom & Unity Chorus, St. Norbert's Community Handbell Choir, the Lamoille Union High School *Jamtones*, Debbie Yacovone, and Musical MC Danny Granstaff. Admission is by donation. The event will also include a 50/50 Raffle and Bake Sale. All proceeds will benefit Lamoille Home Health & Hospice, which has been bringing quality healthcare home since 1971. We all know of someone who has or who is receiving healthcare services, and the important role LHH&H plays in keeping our community healthy and safe at home. Please support this important work. Can't attend and would like to support our work? Call 802-888-4651 to donate. 50/50 Raffle tickets can be purchased in advance by contacting the office at 802-888-4651.

**Richmond Historical Society Annual Meeting and Program**, 3:30 PM, Richmond Free Library Community Meeting Room, Richmond. Join Richmond Land Trust Board Members Fritz Martin and Lou Borie for a visual account of the effort to save Gillett Pond after State officials notified the owner in 2103 that the failing dam at the end of the pond needed to be removed or rebuilt. Historical and contemporary photos and maps will trace the history of the pond and the 10-year undertaking to rebuild the dam and save this community treasure. Before the program there will be a brief business meeting and election of officers for the Historical Society. For more information contact [RHS@richmondvthistory.org](mailto:RHS@richmondvthistory.org).

**Tuesday, April 29**

**Meet with Underhill/Jericho Representatives**, 6:00 – 7:00 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, 8 River Rd., Jericho. Vermont state representatives Edye Graning of Jericho and Trevor Squirrell of Underhill provide an update on Vermont's legislative session and answer your questions.

**Wednesday, April 30**

**Spring Wildlife Tracking and Trail Cams**, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, Brewster Uplands, Cambridge. There are plenty of animal signs on the landscape during the non-winter months. Come explore them with naturalist educator, consulting ecologist, and certified wildlife tracker Sophie Mazowita of Tracking Connection. She will cover what to look for when searching for signs of animals. Plus, we'll delve into wildlife trail cameras: how they work, where to place them and other best practices. Great for beginners and intermediate folks interested in learning more about wildlife sign and behavior, from teens to retirees. Free; donations accepted. Contact [sam@vlt.org](mailto:sam@vlt.org) with questions and accommodation requests. Register at <https://vlt.org/events/spring-wildlife-tracking-and-trail-cams-at-brewster-uplands/>.

**Friday, May 2**

**Third Annual Steps Social Kaleidoscope**, 6:00 – 9:00 PM, The Barns at Lang Farm, Upper Main St., Essex Junction. Join Steps to End Domestic Violence to celebrate our organization, our community, and the arrival of spring! There will be an update on our work and vision for the future of Steps, survivor speakers, appetizers from Poorhouse Pies, live music from Vermont Cello Duet and Tessa Gordon, a photo booth, and a cash bar; a silent auction and raffle prizes from local businesses. Can't attend in person? You can still support Steps by sponsoring an event ticket for an advocate or by purchasing raffle tickets online at <https://give.stepsvt.org/event/3rd-annual-steps-social-kaleidoscope/e668971>.

**Friday-Saturday, May 2-3**

**Rummage Sale/Bag Sale 2025**, Friday 1:00 – 6:00 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Fairfax Community Center, 1210 Main St., Fairfax. Clean clothes, books, toys, and white elephant. Benefits United Church of Fairfax missions. For information, contact 802-849-6313 or [ucffairfaxvt@gmail.com](mailto:ucffairfaxvt@gmail.com).

**Saturday, May 3**

**Cornhole Tournament to benefit MMU Project Grad**, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Mount Mansfield Union High School, Browns Trace, Jericho. Competitive and Social Divisions. Registration 9:00 AM, \$50/team; tournament play 10:00 AM. For registration information, go online to <https://bit.ly/4jrD1Kj> (short for [https://drive.google.com/file/d/10YWe04SHq5t99XzU7wvIPj2vZkvUEv1I/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/10YWe04SHq5t99XzU7wvIPj2vZkvUEv1I/view?usp=drive_link)).

**Spring Volunteer Work Party**, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd., Huntington. Lots to do, indoors and out, so please help us prepare the Museum for the open season. From trail maintenance to hanging art, we have opportunities for all. Come for an hour or all day, bring yourself, a friend, a family. Further trail and garden work will happen in May, when the weather is that much nicer. Pre-register at <https://sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum> so we have enough sandwiches (drop-ins with their own lunch are welcome). Questions? 802-434-2167 or [museum@birdsofvermont.org](mailto:museum@birdsofvermont.org).

**Finding the Stories of Your Ancestors**, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM, VT Genealogy Museum, 57 River Rd., Essex and on Zoom. Do you find ancestry charts to be boring? Lynn Johnson did, so she was reluctant to get involved in genealogy — until she started to learn the stories that went with the names and dates. Lynn will use examples from French-Canadian family lines to introduce you to an array of sources that can help you uncover their stories. While the examples will be about French-Canadians, the general principles can be applied to lines of inquiry for any country or ethnicity. The cost is \$10. Please visit [www.vtgenlib.org](http://www.vtgenlib.org) to register.

## EASTER SERVICES

### Easter week services and events

**Eggstravaganza** — Waterville Country Church will host its second Annual Easter Communitas Eggstravaganza on Saturday, April 19, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Multiple age-group egg hunts, fun for all ages (and maybe a seasoned adult egg-hunt). For more information contact Robby Pitt, 818-319-02217 or [watervillecountrychurch@gmail.com](mailto:watervillecountrychurch@gmail.com).

**Bubble Party at the Jeff Church Easter Sunday** — Pastor Sally May and the Jeff Church invite you and your family to a Bubble Party! It will be held outdoors at the Second Congregational Church, 16 Church St., Jeffersonville, after Easter Sunday (April 20) worship — just after 11:00 AM (until 12:30 PM). Join us for worship at 10:00 AM and also celebrate new life, Spring, and Easter with bubbles for all ages! We will supply wands of varying sizes and the bubbles. You supply the breath, the joy, the laughter, and create community!

**Holy Week morning devotions** — During the weekdays of Holy Week (Monday-Friday, April 14-18), the churches in Essex, Jericho, and Underhill will again join together for a time of centering and nourishment. All are welcome to gather each day at 6:45 AM for a 15-minute devotion (scripture, song, and reflection led by area clergy) followed by a time of refreshment (yes, that includes coffee). There will also be a parallel children's devotion (target age PreK-elementary) offered each day at the same time. On Friday, the children will join the group in the sanctuary, leading the morning devotion. Whether you're deeply

familiar with the old, old story or curious to hear it for the first time, you are most welcome to join in the journey. All devotions will be held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 273 VT Rt. 15, Jericho.

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Holy Week, Easter services:** Monday-Friday, April 14-18, 6:45 – 7:00 AM: Ecumenical Prayer service, led by clergy and members of local churches, followed by a light continental breakfast and conversation time. Maundy Thursday, April 17, 7:00 PM: service with communion. Worship focuses on the last night Jesus was with his disciples, the foot-washing, and the Lord's Supper. Good Friday, April 18, 4:00 PM: virtual service via Zoom. Candles on a cross are gradually extinguished as the Good Friday story is told. Zoom link is provided via Good Shepherd's e-Bulletin at noon. Good Friday, April 18, 7:00 PM: in-person Tenebrae service. Tenebrae is a Latin word meaning shadows. Candles on a cross are gradually extinguished as the story of Jesus' suffering and death is told. Easter Sunday Worship, April 20, 9:00 AM: service with communion. Festive worship with joyful hymns and choral music. Easter potluck brunch follows. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 273 VT Rt. 15, Jericho.

**Annual Ecumenical Good Friday Walk** — Area churches will again gather for a Good Friday Walk on Friday, April 18, 12:30 – 3:30 PM. All are welcome to join the pilgrim procession as we recall Christ's suffering and death in contemplation and connection with our neighbors. Clergy from several

Easter services continued on page 5

**MAKING SWEET  
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## The Mountain Gazette

6558 VT Route 116, Starksboro, VT 05487

802-453-6354 • [mtngazette@gmavt.net](mailto:mtngazette@gmavt.net)

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One letter per writer, per calendar month.

Must be signed for attribution with writers address and phone number. Send your news to [mtngazette@gmavt.net](mailto:mtngazette@gmavt.net)

## HEALTH NEWS

**Community CPR Class May 28**

The Underhill-Jericho Fire Department will host another community CPR/AED class on Wednesday May 28, 6:00 – 9:00 PM at the Underhill Fire, 420 VT Rt. 15, Underhill. The cost is \$12; spots are limited and fill fast. If you are interested, please contact Katie Forsberg, [Kmf0508@comcast.net](mailto:Kmf0508@comcast.net).

**Dementia Family Caregiver Center seeking mentors**

The Dementia Family Caregiver Center at UVM Medical Center is seeking volunteer mentors to connect with mentees new to dementia caregiving in this rewarding program. Share your skills, give back, ease isolation, and offer listening, guidance and compassion.

To learn more contact UVM Medical Center Dementia Family Caregiver Center at [DFCC@uvmhealth.org](mailto:DFCC@uvmhealth.org) or go online to <https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/departments-and-programs/neurology/dementia-family-caregiver-center>.

**When they won't eat vegetables**

Parents have been quite picky with their questions about what to do if their toddler won't eat their vegetables. Well, let me see if I can toss up some tips, and not just asparagus tips, about children not eating vegetables.

First, not liking vegetables probably gets its origin from the strong preference infants, children, and even their parents have for sweet-tasting foods, making less-sweet vegetables a less-desirable option.

Add in toddlerhood where toddlers say “no!” to express their autonomy or self-control even when they might want to say “yes.” Understanding this key toddlerhood concept of toddlers wanting self-control allows you as a parent to better understand things you can do to encourage vegetable eating. For example, the vitamins and nutrients found in most vegetables can also be found in other foods that your child may want to eat — including meat, fish, and other fruits — so forcing vegetables is not the answer.

*Suggestions to increase vegetable consumption*

First, if you do want your child to at least try vegetables, don't give in to your toddler's food preferences. Even though a toddler will want to eat the same things day after day, don't go there.

Instead, offer a variety of foods. For example, you could ask them to choose from among two or three options per meal or you

might ask a preschooler to help you prepare the vegetables for the family meal and that may be all it takes to get your young child to consider eating a vegetable.

Studies have shown it can take ten tries with the same new food before a child will accept it, so keep trying. Smaller portions of a vegetable on bigger plates can be more palatable to a toddler, especially if paired with foods your child likes.

Making a fun face with vegetables such as cucumber eyes, a tomato nose, a green bean mouth and shredded carrots for hair may also get your child to give veggies a try.

Parents, you need to set a good example. Eat with your child and eat the vegetables you want your child to eat — and if you aren't getting them to try a new vegetable, watching their peers eating that new vegetable might be the secret weapon that can get your child to eat it too.

Don't forget that raw vegetables can be a choking hazard for young children — make sure they are cut into small enough pieces, so a choking problem doesn't occur.

Hopefully, tips like these will whet your appetite when it comes to getting toddlers to eat their vegetables.

*Lewis First, MD, is Chief of Pediatrics at The University of Vermont Children's Hospital and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Vermont's Larner College of Medicine*

## LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

**Senate update: Freedom and Unity**

By Kesha Ram Hinsdale,  
State Senator, Chittenden-Southeast Senate District  
[KRamHinsdale@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:KRamHinsdale@leg.state.vt.us)

April 11

As your state senator, I work hard to make sure Vermont's laws reflect our values. One of our most important values is in our state motto: Freedom and Unity. That means standing up for people's rights, helping those in need, and supporting our communities during hard times.

Recently, this value was tested. Vermont's Secretary of Education sent a letter asking school districts to sign a statement about race and school programs. The language came from a vague and extreme federal order. It caused fear and confusion — especially in diverse school districts working to support all students.

I spoke out, because this request could hurt students and undo decades of civil rights progress. It especially put Chittenden County school districts at risk — districts that serve many students of different races and backgrounds. These schools, and all of our schools, work hard to make every student feel welcome.

Now, we are asking the Secretary of Education to not certify the dangerous federal request — one that would conflict with our own state laws and values — and to instead submit a letter certifying that we are complying with Title VI, as most of the states around us have done. We believe this is now what is in the works, but we are working every day to advocate and confirm that we do not bow to lawlessness and chaos at the federal level.

We know that these issues are already hitting extremely close to home. I am working with VT Treasurer Mike Pieciak to create an Immigrant Defense Fund. The goal is to accept private donations to help Vermonters facing deportation, like the two CVU students whose cases have deeply affected our community. We are grateful they and many other humanitarian parolees have had their deportation halted by a federal judge for the time being.

Another issue your Senate delegation is working on is the confusing and costly rollout of the three-acre stormwater rule. This rule protects water quality but has placed undue burdens on neighborhoods, farms, and landowners. I'm working with other lawmakers to find short-term relief and long-term solutions — like grants, better support, and more sensible rules.

You're invited to share your thoughts at our next Virtual Town Hall on Sunday, April 27, 5:00 – 6:15 PM, with Senators Virginia Lyons, Kesha Ram Hinsdale, and Thomas Chittenden. We'll talk about what we've done this session and what's still ahead. You can ask questions at the event or send them ahead of time to Erin at [estoetznerv@vtDemocrats.org](mailto:estoetznerv@vtDemocrats.org) (this is not a partisan event). The Zoom event is limited to 100 participants, so please RSVP to save your spot: <https://www.mobilize.us/vtdems/event/771623/>.

As always, I am grateful for your ideas, your honesty, and your stories. You help me ask better questions, write better laws, and stay focused on what really matters at such an uncertain and difficult time for our country. With your help, we'll keep working toward a Vermont that truly lives up to Freedom and Unity.

**Update from the Vermont House**

By Thomas Stevens, State Representative  
Washington-Chittenden House District  
[tom@stevensvermont.com](mailto:tom@stevensvermont.com)

April 1

This last week saw the House of Representatives considering the bills passed through policy committees prior to crossover, with a focus on “money bills.” This includes the Transportation Bill (T-Bill), the Capital Bill (our investments in many facets of Vermont buildings and programs, such as Clean Water), the Yield Bill (setting a state tax rate for education financing), and the so-called “Big Bill,” which is the Fiscal Year 2026 budget.

Please keep in mind that these bills have only passed the House of Representatives. They now reside in the appropriate Senate committee and will likely change, and those changes will be ironed out during a conference committee.

Also keep in mind that these bills did not include H.91, which is proposing a new program that will help create an organized way of dealing with General Assistance and our unhoused neighbors and where we can help make their lives a little more stable, nor did they include the wide-ranging education finance and governance issues, which will be handled in different upcoming bills.

Remaining in the background is the Budget Adjustment Act, which the Governor continues to threaten to veto over keeping some of our Vermonters housed in motels until June 30. While he issued an executive order to protect some of them, he is blaming a lack of a plan (as proposed in H.91) for refusing to keep Vermonters as safe as possible during a time of unsettled weather and politics. And if he vetoes the bill again, important

elements of our government will continue to suffer as well, including our Veterans Home in Bennington, Medicaid providers and nursing homes that are near financial failure, and even our state employees, who we agreed to appropriate funds to help cover some of an outrageous health insurance premium increase.

With respect to the Big Bill, please know this: there were serious needs addressed in the base budget, but many were unaddressed by the Governor's budget proposal. The Appropriations Committee heard from the other committees and what their priorities were, as well as individual legislators, advocates, and representatives of many facets of our system (including state colleges, UVM, hospitals, the food bank, regional conservation commissions, affordable housing). We listened to constituents, and we listened to administration officials. In the end, nearly \$300M in requests were made, and we had nowhere near that amount of money to appropriate to these departments and organizations.

And so rather than list all the things we did in the budget, please know that the final list of what we were able to fund above and beyond the base budget of keeping the lights on will not be settled until the budget is finished at the end of the session.

Finally, please know that the chaos in Washington is loud and active. We are learning every day of both real and possible cuts that are mainly affecting the poorest and oldest Americans and Vermonters. Food for the foodbank, health care through Medicaid, the Social Security Administration, the Department of Education, the VA, the Post Office, the National Parks, USAID, and more and more, every day. Some of these cuts have been rescinded, and some folks have retained their jobs, but the Trump Administration is taking a chain saw to many things that mean something to Vermonters and may take months or years to repair. It puts your state government at a disadvantage because we can't know how and where the cuts are going to affect us, and so we are preparing for whatever changes may happen in the near future.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out.

**Legislative update**

By Brenda Steady, State Representative  
Chittenden-25 House District  
[bsteady@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:bsteady@leg.state.vt.us)

March 29

On Friday, March 28, Governor Scott issued an executive order to extend the Cold Weather Extension for the Hotel/Motel program, originally set to end on Tuesday, April 1. This extension applies to medically vulnerable individuals, including those using lifesaving devices requiring electricity, undergoing cancer treatment, receiving home-based nursing services, and women in their third trimester of pregnancy. The traditional summer General Assistance program will continue, while the state works to expand shelter capacity for families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

My committee, Human Services, has the following bills on the agenda for this coming week:

- H.92: an act relating to Human Services Board fair hearing proceedings;
- S.36: an act relating to the Medicaid payment model for residential substance use disorder treatment services.

On the floor, H.218, an act relating to fiscal year 2026 appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund, was presented. I requested a roll call vote to divide the additional \$1.1 million allocated for the Safe Injection Site in Burlington from the bill. Governor Scott vetoed the Safe Injection Site last session, and the supermajority overrode his veto. I supported dividing this section to align with Governor Scott's stance and prioritize funding for recovery sites to help individuals with addiction.

While I disagreed with the Safe Injection Site funding, I supported other initiatives in H.218, including:

- \$1.2 million for recovery sites;
- \$800,000 for contingency management support;
- \$800,000 for homeless shelter programs;
- \$309,000 for opioid-related services in Windham County;
- \$850,000 for employment services for individuals with opioid use disorder;
- various smaller grants for training, intervention, harm reduction, and recovery support programs.

The vote to divide the Safe Injection Site funding failed with 87 “yes” and 58 “no,” meaning it remained part of H.218. During the third reading on Friday, I again requested a roll call vote. The bill passed 119 “yes” and 24 “no.” I voted “no” and explained my decision and emphasized my continued support for Governor Scott's veto and my belief that recovery options are a better use of these funds.

April 4

This week, we bid farewell to our current pages, and on Monday, another group of eighth graders will walk through the Capitol doors. These students run errands for representatives and

senators, deliver correspondence and legislative materials, and assist with various tasks.

The floor was relatively quiet this week. One of the bills that passed is H.91, an Act Relating to the Vermont Homeless Emergency Assistance and Responsive Transition to Housing Program. This bill originated from my committee, Human Services. I listened to many weeks of testimony on this legislation. While I understand its concept and recognize some positive aspects, I have concerns about the \$10 million startup cost, which includes additional staffing to implement the program. My concern lies in what will happen once the \$10 million is exhausted — where will the funding come from to sustain the additional staffing? You can find the Fiscal Note for this bill [https://lifo.vermont.gov/assets/Publications/2025-2026-House-Bills/GENERAL-381670-v5-2025\\_H91\\_GA\\_Housing-HHS-Passed-v2.pdf](https://lifo.vermont.gov/assets/Publications/2025-2026-House-Bills/GENERAL-381670-v5-2025_H91_GA_Housing-HHS-Passed-v2.pdf).

Another issue I raised was the removal of the 80-day cap for the hotel/motel program length of stay. I suggested including language that would allow a re-evaluation process for intake personnel to determine if additional days are needed. Unfortunately, this recommendation was not incorporated into the bill, and there is currently no cap. I still believe the core issue is the need to simplify Act 250 and permitting processes for developers to build affordable housing. Until these challenges are addressed, I fear we are simply kicking the can down the road. Without affordable housing, there will be no long-term housing solutions for the homeless population.

My committee also continued hearing testimony on H.92, An Act Relating to Human Services Board Fair Hearing Proceedings. We heard testimony from the Executive Director of End Homelessness Vermont, the Chief Hearing Officer of the Human Services Board, the Chair of the Human Services Board, staff attorneys from Vermont Legal Aid and the Agency of Human Services, a representative from Aging and Independent Living, General Counsels for the Department of Disabilities and the Department for Children and Families, parents. Next week, we will begin marking up the bill.

Additionally, testimony was heard on S.36, an Act Relating to the Medicaid Payment Model for Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services. Those testifying included the Medicaid Director of the Agency of Human Services, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare reporter for the bill, the Executive Director of Northeast Kingdom Human Services, the Executive Director of Recovery House All committees are live streamed. Visit the [GoldenDomeVT.com](http://GoldenDomeVT.com) website.

**Weekly legislative update**

By Theresa Wood, State Representative  
Washington-Chittenden House District  
[twood@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:twood@leg.state.vt.us)

March 29

Again, this week we saw the bulk of the remaining bills that met the crossover deadline and will move from the House to the Senate for consideration:

- H.244 — a bill modifying state standards for advertising;
- H.401 — a bill regarding updating the exemptions for food manufacturing establishments;
- H.474 — a bill providing miscellaneous changes to election laws;
- H.481 — a bill to update provisions for stormwater management, including the three acre rule;
- H.167 — establishes the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant Program;
- H.218 — a bill making appropriations from the Opioid Abatement Settlement Special Fund (this was from my committee);
- H.237 — a bill enabling doctoral-level psychologists to prescribe certain medications;
- H.397 — a bill with miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing emergency management and flood response;
- H.479 — a bill impacting several housing programs;
- H.488 — is the annual transportation programs bill;
- H.342 — is a bill to protect personal information of some public officials;
- H.106 — a bill updating laws about the selling of real property in FEMA flood hazard areas;
- H.491 — a bill setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate;
- H.493 — a bill relating to the state budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2025;
- H.494 — a bill relating to capital construction and state bonding (this bill contains the language enabling the transfer of the “Randall Meadow” to the town of Waterbury, see pages 28-29 of the bill).

The House of Representatives voted (in H.491) to lower

**Legislative reports continued on page 5**

## Legislative reports continued from page 4

property taxes this year (estimated by the Governor's administration to be 5.9% on average, across the state) by utilizing \$77 million in surplus funds.

If you are interested in seeing the language in any of these bills, go online to <https://legislature.vermont.gov/> and insert the bill number in the search area.

April 8

Last week, the majority of time was spent in committee with most House bills having made their way to the Senate already. One notable exception was H.91, dealing with an integrated and coordinated community-based program for individuals who are homeless, replacing what has become known as the "hotel/motel program." H.91 passed the House this week and is now in the Senate for consideration.

Only one other bill saw final action in the House. S.9 – an act relating to after-hours orders against sexual assault, is a Senate bill which the House amended and has now sent back to the Senate for further consideration.

In other activity last week, Adjutant General Gregory Knight delivered the first State of the Guard address to members of the Legislature. Knight, a Huntington resident, shared the significant accomplishments of the VT National Guard and highlighted several members for special recognition, including Waterbury's James Bourdeaux. The biggest challenge facing the Guard is recruitment. Knight encouraged those present to spread the word about the personal and professional value that Vermonters can gain by becoming a National Guard member. Significant gains in transparency and the roles of women have been gained under Knight, and we wish him well as he has decided to not seek another term.

Upcoming this week will be debate on the House version of an education bill. I will provide a link to the bill as soon as it makes its way to the House calendar this week.

Thanks for reading and remember you can find a wealth of

information on the Legislature's website <https://legislature.vermont.gov/>.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Thanking Underhill/Jericho Community for help with Battery Blitz

To the Editor,

We are incredibly grateful to the amazing Underhill and Jericho community for helping Mrs. Bernier's third- and fourth-grade class at Underhill Central School win the Battery Blitz challenge!

With your support, we collected and saved 1330 pounds of batteries from ending up in the landfill — an incredible accomplishment for our small but mighty school. We couldn't have done it without the help of local businesses who kindly let us place collection boxes, and every single person who chose to make a difference by recycling their batteries.

We were up against some big communities like Essex, Burlington, and Williston — but with your help, we showed what a determined small town can do!

Thank you for being true Earth-keepers and for supporting our class in making a positive impact on the planet.

Abbie Bernier  
Underhill

### Milk Matters fundraiser to help food shelf clients

To the Editor,

Aunt Dot's Place is a community food shelf located at 51 Center Road in the Town of Essex. We serve residents of Essex, Essex Junction, Jericho, Underhill, and Westford. If you are in need, check out our website <https://www.auntdotsplace.com/> for hours of operation.

Also, we are always in need of food drives, donations, and volunteers. Currently, we are running a Milk Matters campaign to raise \$10,000 to cover the cost of milk for our clients for one year. To learn more about this campaign, go to <https://givebutter.com/Eiu13J> to donate.

All our kids deserve access to milk.

Sue Miyamoto  
Board President  
Aunt Dot's Place

## WORSHIP SERVICES

#### Calvary Episcopal Church

Calvary Episcopal is a welcoming, caring, Christian community called to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ, grow our spiritual gifts, and serve our neighbors. Calvary is located at 370 VT Rt. 15 in Jericho. Most Sundays, Calvary worships at 9:30 AM at the Jericho church; Sunday, April 27, worship will be held at St. James, Essex, 10:00 AM. The next Soup/Supper (held the last Thursday of the month) will be April 24, 5:00 – 7:00 PM. The parish administrator can be reached at [calvarychurchjericho@gmail.com](mailto:calvarychurchjericho@gmail.com) or 802-899-0453. The Spirit is stirring in this little church. Come be a part of it!

#### Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Sunday services at MMUUF are held at 9:30 AM on the second and fourth Sundays (April 27, May 11, 25) of each month, September-June. Services are led by members of the fellowship and by invited guest speakers, including visiting UU ministers and leaders of other faiths. Each service explores a different topic. Worship, reflect, and sustain one another, within an inclusive spiritual community, built on values of honoring and affirming the worth of every person, striving for justice, participating in the world community, and respecting the natural web of existence. Services will be held at our Barn, located opposite Packard Road at 195 VT Rt. 15, Jericho, and also over Zoom; please contact [info@mmuuf.org](mailto:info@mmuuf.org) or 802-899-2558 for how to join virtually. Learn more at <https://mmuuf.org/> and [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org).

#### Jericho United Methodist Church

Jericho United Methodist Church welcomes you to grow in Christ with us. We hold dear the United Methodist Church's motto: "Open Doors. Open Hearts. Open Minds." We recognize that our faith journeys are all unique, just as we as individuals are all unique. Know that whoever you are, whatever you do, you are welcome here. We believe that we grow together or not at all. All

#### Easter services continued from page 3

congregations will lead brief reflections along the way, this year drawing from the text of Psalm 22. The walk begins at St. Thomas Church, Green St., Underhill Center and proceeds down River Road and into Underhill Flats, stopping at the covered bridge, the United Church of Underhill, Calvary Episcopal, and concluding at Catalyst on Raceway. In order to leave room at St. Thomas' parking lot for their 3:00 PM mass, please arrange to be dropped off at the church, or carpool and use the lot at Moore Park. Thank you in advance to all the drivers who will proceed with extra vigilance as the group makes its way from Underhill Center to Raceway on April 18.

**Calvary Episcopal Church Holy Week and Easter** schedule: Ecumenical Holy Week Devotions (Monday-Friday, April 14-18), held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 6:45 – 7:15 AM; Maundy Thursday (April 17) dinner, 5:15 PM, and service, 6:15 PM at St. James in Essex Junction; Good Friday (April 18) Stations of the Cross at St. James, 12:00 PM; Ecumenical Good Friday Walk (April 18) leaves from St. Thomas Catholic Church at 12:30 PM; Easter worship with Communion (Sunday, April 20) at 8:30 AM. Calvary is located at 370 VT Rt. 15, Jericho. The parish administrator can be reached at [calvarychurchjericho@gmail.com](mailto:calvarychurchjericho@gmail.com) or 802-899-0453.

**Jericho Congregational Church**, on the Green in Jericho Center —Maundy Thursday Service, April 17, 7:00 PM; Easter Sunday Service, April 20, 10:00 AM. 802-899-4911; [officejcc@comcast.net](mailto:officejcc@comcast.net); [www.jccvt.org](http://www.jccvt.org).

**The United Church of Fairfax Easter Services:** Easter Sunrise Service, Sunday, April 20, 6:00 AM, Bellows Farm, 1408 Main St., Fairfax (VT Rt. 104 northbound, Brick Farmhouse on the left just before VT Rt. 104A). Please join us as we joyfully celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. This is a rain, shine, or snow event, so please dress appropriately! Questions? Please contact [ucffairfaxvt@gmail.com](mailto:ucffairfaxvt@gmail.com). Easter Service, Sunday, April 20, 10:00 AM, 8 Fletcher Rd., Fairfax VT. Please join us as we come together with hopeful hearts and a renewed faith as we remember what the resurrection of Jesus represents. Questions? Please contact [ucffairfaxvt@gmail.com](mailto:ucffairfaxvt@gmail.com).

**St. Thomas Catholic Church, Underhill Center, and St. Mary's Catholic Church, Cambridge Holy Week** schedule: Wednesday April 16, 7:30 PM at St. Thomas, Tenebrae Service; Thursday, April 17, 7:00 PM at St. Mary's, Holy Thursday "Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper" (Maundy Thursday); Good Friday, April 18, 3:00 PM at St. Thomas; Saturday, April 19, 8:00 PM at St. Thomas, Easter Vigil; Easter Sunday Mass, April 20, 8:30 AM at St. Thomas and 10:30 AM at St. Mary's.

are welcome! Join us Sundays at 10:00 AM. There will be music, prayer and message from our pastor, Rev. Taeseob Cho. Please contact Rev. Cho at the church phone number, 802-899-4288, or his email, [umccho@gmail.com](mailto:umccho@gmail.com). Located next to the Jericho Town Hall on VT Rt. 15.

#### United Church of Underhill

The United Church of Underhill is an active, vibrant community. We are young and old; straight and LGBTQIA; singles, couples, and families; believers, questioners, and questioning believers. We are an Open and Affirming and Reconciling church, which means all ARE truly welcome. We are the Old Fashioned Harvest Market Church, the Clutter Barn Church, and a church of fellowship, mission, and service. We gather to worship together virtually and in-person every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM for a traditional but lively service with music, and Sunday School and nursery for the children. We welcome you to join us for worship or just come in, be still, and contemplate your faith. Located at 7 Park St., Underhill. Pastor's office (with voicemail) 802-899-1722; church secretary email [secretary@ucu.church](mailto:secretary@ucu.church). For instructions on joining worship from home, please see <https://united-churchofunderhill.com/joining-worship-from-home/>.

#### Second Congregational Church, Jeffersonville

The Second Congregational Church in Jeffersonville would like to invite all who feel called to join us for our online church services, Sundays at 10:00 – 11:00 AM, in person or on Zoom. Know that no matter who you are or where you are in life's journey, you are welcome at our church; or in this case, our webpage! <https://www.facebook.com/SecondCongregationalUCC>

#### Waterville Union Church

We meet in person at 9:30 AM at the church; masks recommended. Zoom is only available when there is bad weather or illness of a speaker. We do not post our recorded services to Facebook. But information can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/watervilleunionchurch>, [watervilleunionchurchvt@gmail.com](mailto:watervilleunionchurchvt@gmail.com); 32 Church St., Waterville.

#### Jericho Congregational Church

"An Historic Church Proclaiming an Eternal Message"

On the Green in Jericho Center, VT  
Senior Pastor, David Coons and Youth Pastor, Pete Anderson  
Sunday School at 8:30 AM for all ages  
Fellowship time at 9:30 AM  
Worship Service at 10:00 AM  
Nursery care provided  
Youth group 6:15 PM Sundays in our Sunday school building  
802-899-4911; [officejcc@comcast.net](mailto:officejcc@comcast.net); [www.jccvt.org](http://www.jccvt.org)

#### All are welcome at Good Shepherd, Jericho

You are invited to worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on VT Rt. 15 at 9:00 AM every Sunday. The building is accessible — all are welcome! There are varied musical styles in worship services, including Folk, Contemporary, Celtic, Latin American, and traditional. Weekday online offerings include Centering Prayer. We are an open-minded Christian community with a focus on social justice issues, where people from different faith traditions, along with those who aren't sure where they belong or what they believe, seek the support of a spiritual home. We welcome you in the name and love of Christ. More information is at [www.goodshephrdjericho.org](http://www.goodshephrdjericho.org).

#### St. Thomas Catholic Church

"Worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass"

On Green Street in Underhill Center  
Weekend Masses: Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 8:30 AM  
Weekday Masses: Wednesday 6:30 PM, Friday 8:00 AM  
Pastor: Rev. Domenico Pizzonia; Deacon: Peter Brooks  
Religious Ed. Coordinator: Laura Lynch Wells, 802-899-4770  
Parish Secretary: Theresa Gingras, 802-899-4632  
email: [office@stthomasvt.com](mailto:office@stthomasvt.com); website: [www.stthomasvt.com](http://www.stthomasvt.com)

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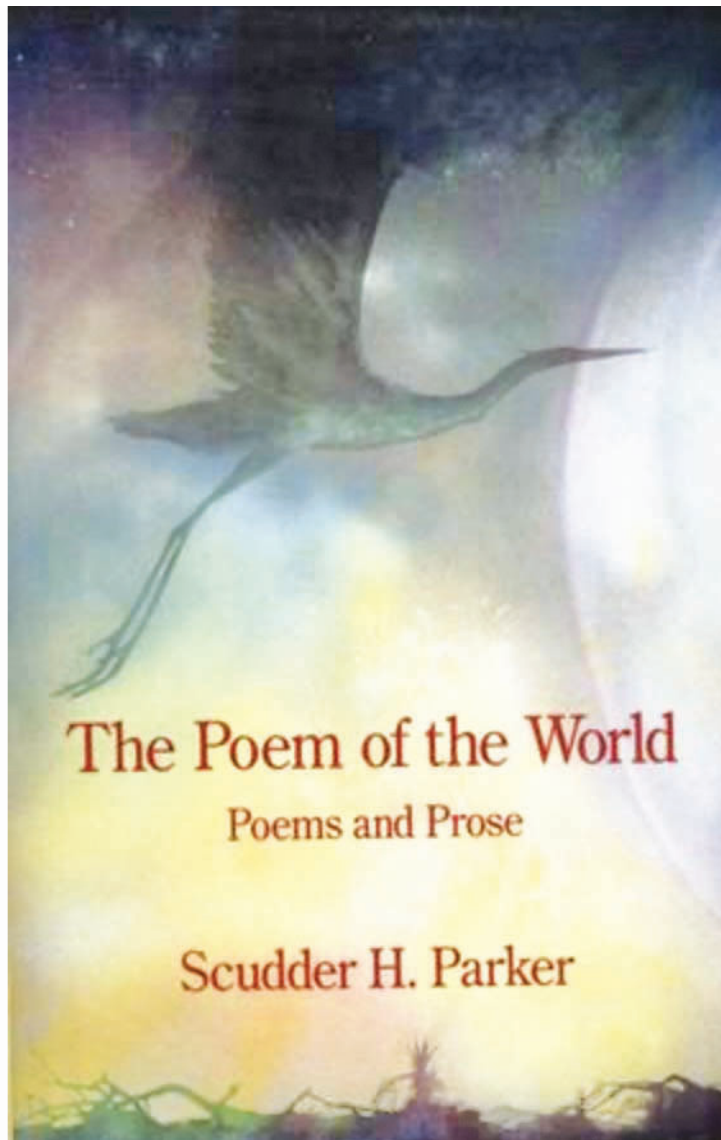
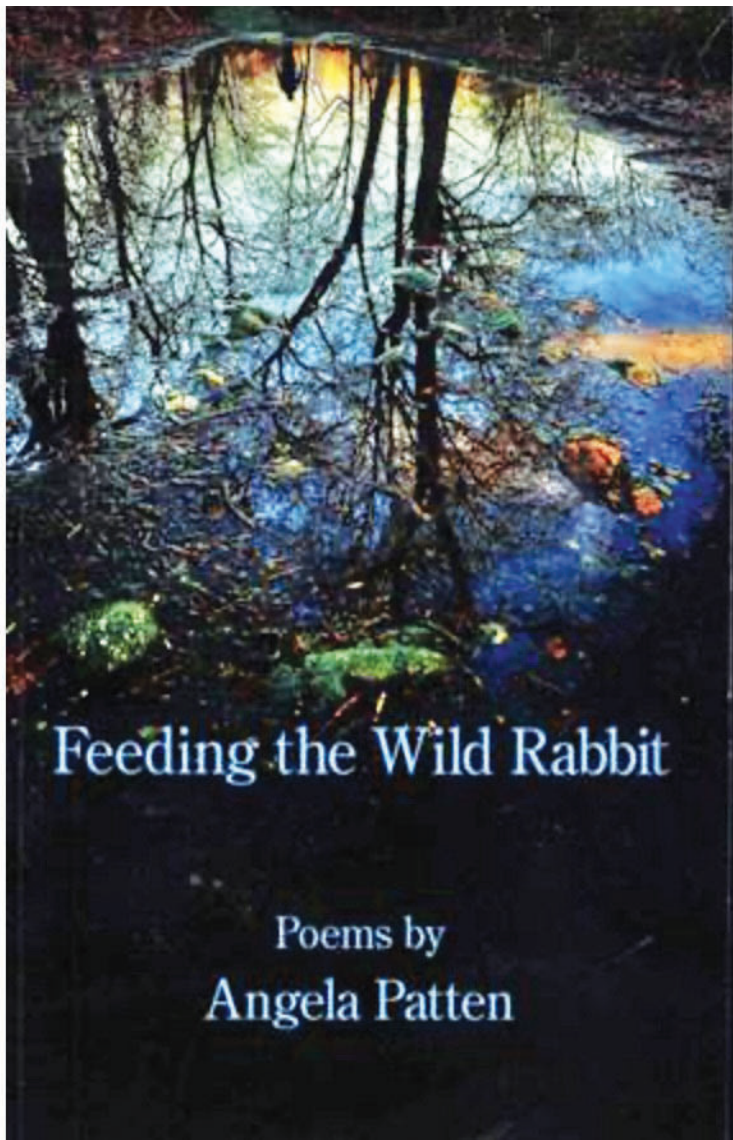
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ART / MUSIC / THEATER



Her ability to see and convey to us her readers the trajectory of her own sensual emergence as a young woman as described in the meanderings of an upland river gaining mass and torrent, we experience her skill as an observer of her life and her ability to convey this within the limitation of words. We come to see ourselves through the window of her lyricism.

If, like me, you're too easily mired in the quotidian darkness of the day, give yourself a gift and read this beautiful collection by Angela Patten.

In the second new poetry release, Scudder Parker's *Poem of the World* immerses us in his life in Vermont. In a forenote to the reader, he writes, "I reflect on early family life, a first career as Protestant preacher, midlife changes, evolving relationships, and a longing to find intimacy with the mystery and specificity of this world." After which he urges us to read the book sequentially. I followed his advice and was rewarded. Few poetry collections ask this of us, but in the case of this remarkable life trajectory, his advice is well taken.

The riverine theme meanders through several generations of Parker's life in Vermont.

**Going Back**

Our childhood brook crept through Hummocked marshes dove under Canopies of roots paused and pooled by granite boulders thrilled me with speckled many colored trout. I captured their sleek elusive

bodies.

Bu they flourished in that trickle almost to the first of spring – welling With its liquid song of leaving.

I knew every riffle pool from that spring to the Burroughs Road and for a few years every change the seasons or the beaver wrought. At North Danville School when we sang about the land of the free I knew this was what they meant hours to feel the water in my shoes – still home for chores by three.

Scudder Parker's new collection of prose and verse poems is among the best I've ever read about Vermont. Like a series of modest tributaries flowing into a river of practical, cultural, and spiritual exposition, it buoys our understanding through several generations of life in rural Vermont and, more broadly, our finite time on earth.

The *Poem of the World* ranks for me alongside Robert Frost. It will be my gift to my dearest friends.

**Choose the letters to feed your day**

By Bernie Paquette, Jericho

Got up  
read the paper  
my Alphabet cereal  
spelled D O O M

I dunked the D  
an N rose  
swirled and twirled  
turned them around  
to spell Moon

Got up  
read the paper  
My Alphabet cereal  
spelled Disaster

I ate it all down  
burped in Despair  
milk bubbles  
out my nose.

Got up  
newspaper's great for Starting a Fire  
My house is now warm  
though frosty out there.

Left the Alphabet cereal in the cupboard  
forecast calls for record highs  
Toast burnt  
I am covered in a Jam

Got up  
A bit later than usual  
oatmeal is cold and lumpy  
but cinnamon atop is spicy

Sun  
homemade date squares  
placate  
rise and shine

Art / Music / Theater continued on page 7

**April is Poetry Month**

By Bill Schubart

I often ask myself if depression is circumstantial or anatomical. Although it runs deep in my family, current events certainly play a role, and I know I'm not alone. But which is it? Both?

I turn to three resources for relief. One is simply acknowledging my own powerlessness. Another is escaping into the natural world of woods and water, and a third is immersing myself in beauty.

Two recent collections of poetry have lifted my flagging spirits, reminding me again of the solace found in beauty.

Angela Patten's most recent collection of poems *Feeding the Wild Rabbit* deserves your time and attention. Captive of both her passion for the language, the innate lyricism of poetry, all seeped through the filter of a Catholic upbringing in her native Ireland, her work is a celebration of her love of words, birds, and her coming-of-age memories.

Like an illuminated manuscript, the opening poem enlightens uncommon words: "clavichord, clavicle, tangent, serpentine, sin, and venial" — the meaning and sound of each, a small epiphany.

Patten's migration from the moral rigors of Catholicism to the freedom of agnosticism reminds us how we never fully escape our religious upbringings.

"Yet even now in foreign cities, lacking one iota of religious belief, I visit churches to light white votive candles, pay homage to their long hard labor and remember their romantic souls, their spirit-shone servitude."

Like all great poetry, Patten's work emerges from her life experiences, a panorama of joy and pain. But unlike many poets, Patten is able to revisit these memories without false packaging or delusion and shares them with us openly and even occasionally with sly humor.

In *Why I Would Like to Be a River*, Patten's self-knowledge and clairvoyance shine out:

**Why I Would Like to Be a River**

Because it begins as a whisper  
in a lonely place high up  
among the bracken and the sedges,  
unnoticed, trivial.

At first slender as a girl  
collecting sallies in her apron,  
a river swells with rainfall,  
shrinks with drought,  
may slacken to a stingy trickle  
or strengthen to a torrent.

Reed buntings skim its surface.  
An emerald dragonfly and kingfisher  
flit and dazzle above its banks.

Its voice is never jabber, only song.

A river may appear impressionable,  
Foolish, easily led. And yet,  
if turned aside, will in the end  
come round to its intended course.

It cannot be contained by fences,  
ditches, levees, dams. Leaves  
everything it has ever owned  
behind it in the past.

It runs its own way home, holding  
a kiss in its watery mouth.

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We know it isn't your litter but Vermont needs our help to be beautiful! Pick up your free Green Up supplies from your Volunteer Town Coordinator and spend an hour or two picking up litter around your town. It makes a huge difference and it feels great to give back to your community.

Art / Music / Theater continued from page 6

Stay in bed?  
I might as well be dead  
pancakes lumpy  
River of maple syrup, I'm no longer grumpy

Got up early  
left the newspaper at the door  
Breakfast will wait  
spelling my own words today

Planting O A K Trees  
Acorn breakfasts soon  
Planting berry bushes  
Strawberry, BB, Raspberry, berry, berry, berry  
good

Rise and shine  
I tell the sun  
Catch up with me  
Grow me a tree.

The day is young  
The day is promising  
I am hungry  
for what Nature  
Spells out for me.

My trees and shrubs  
grow leaves  
A Caterpillar's breakfast  
some.

A bluebird delighted my morning view  
swooped down

to breakfast  
caterpillar for her young.

Buds and blooms  
spell summer  
a bowl of  
perfumed butter.

This is news of life  
no matter rain  
no matter clouds  
no matter thunderstorms  
no matter the forecast.

My breakfast bowl  
laden with fruit and nuts  
Every day I get up  
Earlier

Watch the S combine with U, combined with N  
Makes me smile  
At night, the trees are dunked in darkness  
The moon floats up — their night light

I get up  
Pick all my letters  
Outside  
Breakfast has never been so good

News can be sharp enough to cut  
Choose your letters carefully  
and make your way  
into every day  
delightful.

**Burlington Choral Society presents *Saul*** on Saturday, April 26, 7:30 – 10:00 PM at the Elley-Long Music Center, Saint Michael's College, Ethan Allen Ave., Colchester. The Burlington Choral Society (<http://www.bcsvermont.org>) will present this work by George Frederic Handel's *Saul*; tickets are on sale at <http://sevendaystickets.com> or at the door. Handel's *Saul*, an epic oratorio for five vocal soloists, orchestra, and chorus, dramatizes the life of King Saul, who lived c.1000 BCE. Saul's jealousy of David (later King David) forces Saul's three children to choose between the two, which leads to a tragic end. The Burlington Choral Society's performance will feature vocal soloists countertenor Timothy Parsons (as David) and soprano Madeline Healey, co-directors of the Richmond-based early music vocal ensemble *Ampersand*. Burlington Choral Society's Artistic Director Richard Riley says, "I believe that the dramatic impact of this powerful work, one eerily present in our own country today, will stay in the memories of all who are there."

**CAC Sidewalk Art Festival** — Back by popular demand, the Cambridge Arts Council (CAC) is pleased to announce our 16<sup>th</sup> Sidewalk Art Festival on Saturday, August 9, 2025. For the last four summers we have been having multiple, smaller shows (dubbed the Jeffersonville Art Jam). This year, in partnership with the Visions of Vermont Fine Art Galleries and the Bryan Memorial Gallery, we are returning to our larger format. This is a "gently" curated show that showcases fine art of all media. Our sidewalk art festival also features local food vendors, live music, and children's activities. The booth fee this year is \$40 (\$25 for students). Please join us on Main Street in Jeffersonville from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM (rain date Sunday, August 10). For more information and to register for the festival, go to <http://www.cambridgeartsvt.org/fota/>. Please feel free to contact Monica, 802-644-1418, if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to hearing from you. If you are an artist who would like to sign up to have a booth at the event, please go online to <https://www.cambridgeartsvt.org/fota/>.

**Opening day for *Birds and Myth Art Show*** is Thursday, May 1, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Birds are some of our teachers, not only through our senses and observations, but also through our stories about them. These stories can be factual accounts, broader myths, or something in between. Legends, beliefs, representations, truth, insight, guidance, metaphors, meanings, and understandings all play a part. The Birds of Vermont Museum's 2025 art show is centered on the ideas of birds, myth, meanings, metaphors, and guides. Discover art that uses birds and their meanings to retell an old story, weave several together, represent beliefs, or create a myth for the future. Show is open through October 31; included with Museum Admission. Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd., Huntington; 802-434-2167; [museum@birdsofvermont.org](mailto:museum@birdsofvermont.org); <https://www.birdsofvermont.org>.

**Grants news from the VT Arts Council:** *Cultural Facilities Grants* help Vermont nonprofit organizations and municipalities enhance, create, or expand the capacity of an existing building to provide cultural activities for the public. Deadline Thursday, May 15. Learn more about Cultural Facilities Grants online at <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/find-a-grant/organizations/cultural-facilities/>.

*Arts Project Grants* support nonprofit organizations, municipalities, and schools in their efforts to add vibrancy to Vermont communities through projects that provide equal and abundant access to the arts. Deadline Tuesday, May 20. Learn more about Arts Project Grants online at <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/find-a-grant/organizations/arts-project/>.

*Arts Operating Grants* provide funds to arts organizations that offer year-round, high-quality arts programs and services that support the Council's mission to "cultivate and advance the arts and creativity throughout Vermont." Deadline Wednesday, May 14. Learn more about Arts Operating Grants at <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/find-a-grant/organizations/arts-operating/>.

**Burlington City Arts**, 135 Church St., Burlington, presents spring exhibitions *Bunny Harvey: Worlds Within Worlds* (<https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/exhibition/bunny-harvey-worlds-within-worlds>) and *Stéphanie Morissette: Speculative Future* (<https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/exhibition/stephanie-morissette-speculative-future>), on view through Saturday, May 24. On the first floor, *Worlds Within Worlds* features the landscape paintings of Vermont-based artist Bunny Harvey. Focusing on large-scale oil paintings and more intimately scaled works on paper, the exhibition debuts several new paintings created by the artist over the last year. In the Roth Gallery on the second floor, artist Stéphanie Morissette explores the conflicting relationship between humans, nature, and technology in *Speculative Future*. Using insightful observation and dark humor, the artist imagines a future where biological specimens and mechanical technology have merged to create a new, hybrid species of birds and flying creatures. Morissette's speculative future is not as fantastic as it may appear.

Join BCA gallery educators for a fun tour of the BCA Center that encourages thought-provoking conversation. Participants engage in hands-on art activities that explore exhibition themes, materials, and artistic processes. We welcome public, private, and homeschool students in grades pre-K to 12 and beyond. Groups are invited to apply for a partial or full scholarship. Learn more at [burlingtoncityarts.org](http://burlingtoncityarts.org) or contact Curator/Director of Exhibitions Heather Ferrell at [hferrell@burlingtoncityarts.org](mailto:hferrell@burlingtoncityarts.org) to reserve a visit.

Celebrate Earth Day by making art together at Family Art Saturday! Join BCA outside on Church Street, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM, for a drop-in activity inspired by the landscape paintings of Bunny Harvey currently featured in *Worlds within Worlds*. Create a 3D collage that explores sound, memory, and perspective. Participants will use a mixture of natural and craft materials to express the shapes, colors, and patterns that come to mind when you imagine a favorite place you enjoy outdoors.

**Art from the Heart** seeks volunteers to visit patients and family members at UVM Medical Center and Children's Hospital to help make the hospital a more comfortable and creative place through the arts. Volunteers in this program visit patient rooms and waiting areas, working one-on-one and in small groups. A visit with a patient or family members can start as simply as talking about favorite TV shows and music. If interested, please contact Art from the Heart coordinator Rebecca Schwarz, [rschwarz@burlingtoncityarts.org](mailto:rschwarz@burlingtoncityarts.org).

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## LIBRARY NEWS

## DEBORAH RAWSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM; Wednesday and Friday 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Saturday 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM; Sunday 1:00 – 4:00 PM.

All programs are held at the library and open to all, unless otherwise noted.

The library is closed on Sunday, April 20, for the spring holidays.

## Adults

Note rescheduled date for this final discussion in the series:

Tuesday, May 6, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library Fireplace Room: book discussion series on The Anxious Generation, How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness by Jonathan Haidt. ReConnect is a group of families from the Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (MMUUSD) working on the impacts of smartphones and social media on our kids, and hosted this four-part discussion series focused on Haidt's book. The focus of this final meeting is *Recap and Looking Ahead*. We've had some great conversations over the past few months about navigating the world of smartphones and social media with our kids (and ourselves!) At our final discussion we'll be talking about what's next for our community. We hope to make some plans and discuss how to keep our momentum going, so we hope you'll come be a part of the conversation regardless of whether you've been at earlier discussions or read the book. All are welcome! If you want to be a part of the conversation but can't attend, please reach out to [kate.mcconlogue@gmail.com](mailto:kate.mcconlogue@gmail.com). Learn more about ReConnect at [ReConnectVT.com](http://ReConnectVT.com).

Wednesday, April 16, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Special Music Event — Craftsbury Chamber Players violinist Mary Rowell and cellist Frances Rowell present a concert and chat, featuring the music of Haydn, Bartok, Schulhoff, and Bach, It's a little history, a little science, and a lot of magic!

Wednesdays, April 16, May 7, 21, 2:00 – 4:30 PM, Program Room: Quilting and Sewing Group. Meets the first and third Wednesday of the month. Please bring a project to share or one you are currently working on. Sewing machines are welcome. There is plenty of table space. Bring an extension cord if you have one.

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Seated Tai Chi for Health & Balance [registration required] This starter-level course in person and on Zoom is for older adults and people with chronic health conditions. Email instructor Jo Osborne at [joannosborne2@gmail.com](mailto:joannosborne2@gmail.com) for the registration link.

Wednesday, April 16, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: A Symphony of Two. Craftsbury Chamber Players violinist Mary Rowell and cellist Frances Rowell present a concert and chat, featuring the music of Haydn, Bartok, Schulhoff, and Bach, It's a little history, a little science, and a lot of magic!

Thursday, April 17, May 1, 15, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Crafters' Group. Bring a craft you're working on and join the camaraderie and conversation. For more information, please contact Amy Tower, 802-355-9671 or [atowerinv@gmail.com](mailto:atowerinv@gmail.com), or Julie Hehir, 802-343-0034 or [juliehehir@comcast.net](mailto:juliehehir@comcast.net).

Thursday, April 17, 7:00 PM: DRML Board of Trustees Meeting. The monthly meeting is open to all. Those who wish to attend remotely may email [drawsonmemlib@gmail.com](mailto:drawsonmemlib@gmail.com) to receive the link.

Tuesdays, April 22, 29, 7:00 – 8:00 PM: French Conversation Chez Henry. All levels of French speakers, as well as the French curious, are welcome to this informal conversation group.

Thursday, April 24 at 6:30 PM: *Plastic People*. The Jericho Energy Task Force is celebrating Earth Week with a showing of the this award-winning feature documentary investigates our addiction to plastic and the growing threat of microplastics on human health. Acclaimed author and science journalist Ziya Tong visits leading scientists around the world and undergoes experiments in her home, on her food, and her body in an urgent call to action for all of us to rethink our relationship with plastic. Light refreshments will be served at this waste-free event — please bring your own mugs and plates. For more information contact Catherine, [catherine.mcmains@gmail.com](mailto:catherine.mcmains@gmail.com).

Saturday, April 26, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Community Coffee/Tea Hour. Please join us. Topic of conversation to be decided by the group. What's on your mind?

Tuesday, April 29, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Legislative Update. Vermont state representatives Edye Graning of Jericho and Trevor Squirrel of Underhill provide an update on Vermont's legislative session and answer your questions.

Tuesday, April 29, 7:00 PM: Mystery Book Group. Atlee Pine, an FBI agent with special skills assigned to the remote wilds of the southwestern United States, must confront a new threat and an old nightmare. Call (802-899-4962) or visit the library to reserve your copy of Long Road to Mercy by David Baldacci. For a Zoom link, email Holly at [drawsonmemlib@yahoo.com](mailto:drawsonmemlib@yahoo.com).

## Youth

Please note: children under age 8 must have a caregiver in the building at all times.

Tuesdays, 10:30 AM: Baby Toddler Story Time. For kids ages birth to Pre-K, with a caregiver. Join Mz. Abbey and the other story time regulars for singing, bouncing, finger games, and, of course, stories!

Thursday, April 17, 3:00 – 5:00 PM: Animation Club [Registration required] [Ages 8+] Create your own short stop-motion video, or experiment with hand-drawn animation apps. To register, please visit the library or contact 802-899-4962 or [youth\\_librarian@drml.org](mailto:youth_librarian@drml.org).

Friday, April 18, 3:00 – 4:30 PM: Chess Club [Registration required] [Ages 6+] Please note: Children under age 8 must have a caregiver in the building at all times. All skill levels are welcome to learn and to play. To register, please visit the library or contact 802-899-4962 or [youth\\_librarian@drml.org](mailto:youth_librarian@drml.org).

Tuesday, April 22, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Oil Spill Science [Ages 6+] Test the absorptivity of different materials (called sorbents) to discover which ones are best at removing oil from water.

Friday, April 25, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Seed Planting [Kids of all ages] Start some colorful flowers from seed to take home or plant at the library and make a wildflower seed bomb to toss in a place where you have permission.

Friday, April 25, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: LEGO Club [Registration required] [Ages 6+] Whether you build a giant ship or a tiny scene, there's no wrong way to play with LEGO. To register, please visit the library or contact 802-899-4962 or [youth\\_librarian@drml.org](mailto:youth_librarian@drml.org).

[librarian@drml.org](mailto:librarian@drml.org).

Wednesday, April 30, 3:00 – 4:30 PM: Read to Wyatt the Therapy Dog [All ages] Whether you want to read to him or just need a little dog time, Wyatt is here for you.

For complete details on these programs and all that the library offers, please visit our website at <https://www.drml.org/>.

Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, 8 River Rd., Jericho. Please visit [drml.org](http://drml.org) or call 802-899-4962 for the most up-to-date information. Contact information: [rawsonlibrary@drml.org](mailto:rawsonlibrary@drml.org); [www.drml.org](http://www.drml.org); 802-899-4962.

## JERICHO TOWN LIBRARY

Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM; Wednesdays, Thursdays, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Fridays 12:00 – 6:00 PM; Saturdays 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM.

Home Delivery Program at JTL — Patrons who are unable to physically access the library may sign up for this service on a one-time or recurring basis. Folks can request specific items or complete an interest profile on the JTL website. Contact 802-899-4686, or Catherine, [catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org](mailto:catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org).

Help make a radio show at JTL (kids 9+) — do you have kids interested in writing, theater, sound editing, podcasts, or radio shows? Sign them up to help launch a brand-new radio show — created for kids by kids! Program participants will choose a name for the radio show, write scripts for different segments, and record the show, with help from JTL staff and the WRUJ-LP radio project. WRUJ-LP is a low-power FM community radio station that will eventually have a physical radio station in Richmond. Until the station is built, they will be hosting an internet radio station, which will feature this show. The program will run for eight weeks — from the end of April to mid-June — for an hour each week, with exact timing decided by interested participants. Please fill out this form to express your interest and help us select a time: <https://forms.gle/8WjLcJRKPBXL6gE6>. Questions? Email [catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org](mailto:catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org).

Jericho Town Library is launching a new book/discussion group for adults, starting this spring: the Current Events & Societal Issues Book Club. This group is for adults interested in thinking about and discussing important issues in our local communities and in greater society. Each month, we will center our reading and discussion around a particular topic, with a suggested nonfiction book to help focus our conversation. For those who are interested in participating but cannot commit to reading an entire book, we will also share recommendations for relevant articles, podcasts, and videos. Interested? Please fill out this form to let us know what times and days work best for you, as well as what topics you might like to discuss: <https://forms.gle/eaRTFMdmMHwDRiHXA>, or alternatively, reach out to [catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org](mailto:catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org) or call us at 802-899-4686.

## Weekly events

Tuesdays, 8:00 – 9:00 AM: Gentle Yoga, a donation-based class for adults taught by local instructor Deanna Bartlett. Donations are optional. Second floor.

Tuesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Story Explorers Playgroup, a read aloud and loosely structured playgroup for kids ages 0-5 and their grown-ups. Second floor.

Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Embodied Wisdom Women's Group. Please join Project All Together Now (ATN) and Deanna Bartlett for a weekly multi-generational Women's Yoga Circle! This group is meant to serve women of all ages in building connection with themselves and each other. Gather up your friends, moms, aunties, grandmothers, mentors, and any female-identifying people in your life that could use some more spaciousness in their weeks and explore how restorative yoga can support you in rest and connection. Second floor.

Thursdays, 9:30 – 10:00 AM: Move and Groove, a movement-based storytime for kids ages 0-5 and their grown-ups. We'll sing, play with scarves and shaker eggs, pretend to be animals as we practice some yoga poses, and read a story together before ending with a bubble dance party. First floor.

Fridays, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Restorative Yoga, a donation-based class taught by local instructor Deanna Bartlett. Donations are optional. Second floor.

Saturdays, 9:00 – 9:30 AM: Romp and Rhyme, a storytime for babies, toddlers, and their caregivers. First floor.

## Monthly or twice-a-month

Early Release Days in Jericho (usually the second Wednesday of the month): 1:00 – 2:00 PM: Crafternoon, followed by a movie screening. Registration is required due to limited space: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1005405995397?aff=oddtcreator>.

Building accessibility note: We are working hard on a project to make our library accessible to all, but our historic building is not yet fully accessible; a set of steps leads up to our front entrance. Please reach out to discuss accessibility needs; we may be able to offer programs in a hybrid format or move them to an alternate location with advance notice.

Find us on Facebook and Instagram ([@jerichotownlibrary](https://www.facebook.com/jerichotownlibrary)) for regular updates on our programs, services, and collections. 802-899-4686, [library@jerichotownlibraryvt.org](mailto:library@jerichotownlibraryvt.org), [www.jerichotownlibraryvt.org](http://www.jerichotownlibraryvt.org).

## VARNUM MEMORIAL LIBRARY JEFFERSONVILLE

## Programs

Find all these program descriptions and more online at [www.varnumlibrary.org](http://www.varnumlibrary.org). Programs are free and open to the public.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00 AM: Story Time for all ages.

Tuesdays 5:00 – 6:00 PM and Fridays 12:00 – 1:00 PM: American Sign Language meet-up. All levels are welcome!

Thursdays, 10:00 AM: Coffee and Conversations.

Wednesdays, 3:30 – 4:30 PM: Crafternoon.

Friday, April 18, 10:00 AM: Homeschoolers Meet-up.

Saturday, April 19, 10:30 AM: Nora's Beads will be bringing their powerful message of love and hope. This incredible program helps destigmatize mental health, especially for our youth, and all are encouraged to attend this free event. We are so grateful to Heathy Lamaille Valley for their sponsorship of this program. All materials will be covered, so please bring a friend!

Saturday, April 26: LEGO Club is back!

Hours: Sunday/Monday — closed; Tuesday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Wednesday/Thursday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Friday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM; Saturday 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

We're always happy to see you at the library! [www.varnumlibrary.org](http://www.varnumlibrary.org), 802-644-2117.

## WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Library hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Wednesdays and Fridays 1:00 – 7:00 PM, and Saturdays 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM, no appointments needed.

Patrons of all ages are welcome; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. If you feel you need curbside service, for whatever reason, please email Bree at the library ([westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com](mailto:westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com)) and we can work something out. We want nothing to impede you from using the library.

The Westford Library is part of the ChildSafe program — we have FREE gunlocks to take. This program is run by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The Westford Food Shelf is now open twice a month, on the first Wednesday of each month (May 7), 4:30 – 5:30 PM, and on the third Saturday (April 19), 8:00 – 9:00 AM. With increased openings, they need more inventory! The Westford Public Library has food collection bins at all curbside pickups from now on. These bins are for non-perishable food and household items.

Tuesdays, 10:30 – 12:00 PM, Coffee and Cards. Meetup with folks at the library for coffee, conversation, and cards — a great opportunity to socialize and keep those card playing skills sharp. Open to anyone but especially looking to connect with seniors.

The Westford Public Library, 1717 VT Rt. 128, Westford; 802-878-5639; [westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com](mailto:westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com), Bree Drapa, Librarian. Find us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/westfordpubliclibrary](http://www.facebook.com/westfordpubliclibrary)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/WestfordVT\\_pl](http://www.twitter.com/WestfordVT_pl)).

## FAIRFAX COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Library hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

You can check out more than just books! Our library of things has snowshoes, a telescope, a microscope, STEAM kits, jewelry supplies, Bloxels, and a C-Pen ReaderPen.

The library also offers passes to local museums and parks — you can view our full list of passes at <https://fairfaxvtlibrary.org/passes.html>.

The library will be closed during BFA's April break. We will be closed from Monday-Saturday, April 21-26 while water and power are shut off for construction work. Make sure to stop in before April 21 to stock up on books! If you can't make it in, you can use Libby to borrow ebooks and audiobooks on your device while we are closed. If you have any questions about Libby, please feel free to contact us at 802-849-2420, or [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com), and we'll be happy to help!

Please sign up at least one week before the program date!

All events are free unless noted. Pre-registration required; contact 802-849-2420 or [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com).

## Youth events

Wednesdays, April 16, 30, 10:30 AM: Preschool Story Time. Join us for stories and songs! Children's books will be available to check out as well. Before you leave, pick up an activity to make at home! This event takes place in the library.

Friday, April 18, 3:00 PM: LEGO Club. Kids ages 6+ enjoy themed LEGO play after school. Registration required; contact 802-849-2420 or [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com). This event takes place in the library.

Wednesday, April 30, 3:00 PM: Bird Feeders. Use recycled materials to make bird feeders! Materials provided. Ages 8+ Registration required; contact 802-849-2420 or [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com). This event takes place in the library.

## Adult events

Thursday, April 24, 3:00 PM: Library Book Club. The book this month is *The Editor* by Sara B. Franklin. A Zoom link will be available for anyone who wants to attend remotely. If you would like to borrow a copy of the book, or request the Zoom link, please contact the library at [fairfaxlibrarian@gmail.com](mailto:fairfaxlibrarian@gmail.com) or call us at 802-849-2420. All are welcome!

Fairfax Community Library, 75 Hunt St., Fairfax; 802-849-2420. For up-to-date info about programs, visit our website [www.fairfaxvtlibrary.org](http://www.fairfaxvtlibrary.org), where you can also find a link to the interactive Google calendar.

## RICHMOND LIBRARY

Library hours: open for in-person browsing and pick-up at the circulation desk on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Wednesday, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM; and Saturday, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

COVID-19 Tests are available at the circulation desk. We also encourage you to visit <https://covidtests.gov/> to order a set of four free at-home tests through the mail and to check the expiration date on your existing tests. Many tests have an extended shelf life, so check before you throw away.

Trustee Meetings are on the second Monday of the month (May 12), 6:30 PM at the Library. All meetings are open to the public. Individuals may also join via Zoom.

Seed Library — if you're a seed saver or are looking for a home for your unused seeds, consider donating them to the library. Seed donations must include the following information: plant type and varietal, harvest date, and location. If you are saving your own seeds, please note that we can only accept open-pollinated (non-GMO/hybrid) seeds. Email [rhegg@richmondvt.gov](mailto:rhegg@richmondvt.gov) with any questions. Stop in to "check out" some of our seeds generously donated by High Mowing, FedCo, and Seed Savers Exchange. If possible, plan to save and bring back some of your harvested seeds for next year! Stop in or email [rhegg@richmondvt.gov](mailto:rhegg@richmondvt.gov) for more information.

Seeking artists and collectors — We are currently scheduling art shows for our walls and display case in 2025. If you have framed pieces (art, photography) and would like to schedule a show, please contact us. No professional experience is necessary, just a willingness to share your talent. We're also seeking interesting collections for our foyer display case. If you are a collector of thimbles, old books, feathers, nut crackers or anything else that would fit in our case that you would be willing to share, we would love to hear from you. Call or email the Library.

## Adults

Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Knitting & Stitching Group. Drop in to knit, embroider, or otherwise needlecraft with your neighbors.

Saturdays, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM: Chess Club. Join us in the Mezzanine Lounge for an all-ages chess club, which will be led by a local chess coach. BYOB (Bring Your Own Board) or use one of ours.

## Children

Weekly/monthly children's programs at the library run from September-May and follow the MMUUSD schedule for vacation days and weather closure days.

Wednesdays, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Playgroup & Storytime.



## COMMUNITY COLUMNS

## Rural Vermonters define educational equity

By Katie Grenon

Equity is meaningless when it is defined by those in power, rather than by stakeholders. Legislators need to keep this in mind as they reimagine Vermont's education system.

Living in a rural area is a social determinant of health, of educational outcomes, and, I would argue, of power. Nearly 65% of Vermonters live in small towns, rural, or remote areas. This means that policies with unique impacts on rural communities affect a substantial majority. Legislators should be quick to consult rural constituents about our experience of the factors that most influence educational outcomes.

If they asked rural folks, this is what they would hear: Retaining our local elementary schools is the most important factor in supporting educational equity.

My family's story illustrates the importance of access to education locally. I live with my husband and two young children in Waterville, which is rural and geographically remote, hemmed in by a deep valley that prohibits any east-west travel. Whether I choose to drive north or south as I leave home, it's nearly 40 minutes to a big grocery store. In an emergency, our 911 calls go to the Williston State Police barracks, 50 minutes away. We have minimal access to daycare, and no extended-day options for preschool. Without any closer full-day alternatives, we sent my daughter Mara to a private preschool that cost my entire full-time income. It was the only available option along our regular commute and required her to spend almost two hours in the car every day.

Despite the excellent staff, appealing curriculum, and lots of time outdoors, Mara struggled with her daily routine when she commuted to school. She fought hard against going every morning. Once there, she frequently required exceptions to the rules and one-on-one attention. She had a runny nose year-round, and her sunny disposition was lost to moody fatigue. Anticipating Mara's transition to public kindergarten, her teachers were concerned, offering to plan and advocate by calling, writing letters, and even visiting Waterville Elementary School in-person. They told me that no classroom teacher would be able to give her the on-demand attention and behavioral intervention she'd required. This suggested to me that Mara would need extra support, including personnel resources that would cost the district money.

But this year, the transition to a local school changed our lives. Mara enjoys class and dresses herself each morning enthusiastically; she hasn't required any dedicated staff support during the school day. Now embedded in our local community, she delights in seeing school staff at the Waterville store, town dance, and trick-or-treating. We can now carpool with local families when we're in a pinch and find time for short social visits after school. I think that Mara's educational success is largely the result of cutting out almost two hours of daily commute, and because we are building stronger and deeper relationships knowing these connections will last a lifetime, even outside school walls.

Our story echoes what I hear from my rural neighbors, the rural school community, and in the consensus platform of the Rural School Community Alliance. The reason why our towns are small, why our school is relatively small, and why we can't afford to lose it is because of our rurality. Between extreme winter weather, transportation barriers, and daily responsibilities, we often teeter on the edge of what we can reasonably accomplish in a day. A bright spot in the daily grind is the way our school supports our students, and the committed involvement of parents and community members is only possible because our school is accessible to us at the end of our daily commutes. The presence of an accessible elementary school is exactly what we need to



**Art from the Heart is currently seeking volunteers to visit patients and family members at UVM Medical Center and Children's Hospital to help make the hospital a more comfortable and creative place through the arts. Volunteers in this program visit patients' rooms and waiting areas, working one-on-one and in small groups. If interested, please contact Art from the Heart Coordinator Rebecca Schwarz, [rschwarz@burlingtoncityarts.org](mailto:rschwarz@burlingtoncityarts.org).** PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

equitably meet the unique educational needs of rural children.

Let's revisit the difference between equal and equitable. As we know, equal means "the same." Equitable means fair and reasonable, implying a proper balance of conflicting interests in a way that accounts for differences between groups.

People's perspectives on educational equity are likely, and understandably, centered on their individual experiences. To my ear, it sounds like Vermonters who live in densely populated areas assume educational equity means offering equal programming options, such as foreign language classes or athletic teams, at all school locations. On the contrary, many rural Vermonters see access to local educational opportunities as far more important than any particular program or resource. Since most Vermonters live in rural and remote areas, our perspectives ought to be a substantial driver of policy; while state-level standards are important, it is not fair or reasonable to require everyone to achieve them in the same way despite regional differences.

The cost of education is critically important. But per-pupil costs in Vermont's Unified Union Districts increased after Act 46's district consolidation and associated small school closures. Nationally, researchers have found no consistent correlation between cost and quality in relation to school size. In fact, once the cost of transportation is factored in, school closures don't produce the savings anticipated. Vermont data from recent school closures also bears this out. Without a clear plan for cost savings, all we can confidently anticipate is that closing schools is damaging to children, communities, and equitable access.

Rural voters have the right to demand equitable distribution of educational access. From the horse's mouth: There should be no forced consolidation of Vermont's community elementary schools.

*Katie Grenon is a rural Vermonter, Speech Language Pathologist, wife, and mother of two living in Waterville. She joined the Rural School Community Alliance at <https://vtruralschools.org/>*

## Our young people are leading in the arts

By Bill Schubart

Twice former chair of the Vermont Arts Council

Dark times in America... Even as Vermont's only a small part of the whole, our own Senator Bernie Sanders is adding disproportionate reach to our small footprint at a critical time and doing so in a voice that millions of Americans can hear.

When I zoom in from my sad country to my home state, I search for glimmers of light. Although we're not engineering a fascist state like the current federal leadership, we're facing daunting challenges in how to fund and improve our own fundamentals of democratic society:

- a quality public education infrastructure within our communities;
- a healthcare system that's accessible to Vermonters;
- a criminal justice system that delivers the constitutional right to a speedy trial and favors safe reentry over long-term incarceration;
- universal housing, nutritional security, and a sustainable food system;
- managing a benign environmental impact by Vermonters on our landscape;
- a fair and equitable tax code and regulatory system that supports a common good.

Even as these fundamentals of a sound democracy are being shredded nationally by selfish little boys and girls dressed up as grownups, here in Vermont for the most part, we have many committed Vermonters trying to address these problems. We just lack visionary and courageous leadership.

So I look for the light. I find it in the faces of young people, especially those committed to artistic endeavor.

Vermont has a plethora of artistic opportunities for young people seeking to express themselves through the arts. The beauty of the arts is that they demand more than inspiration, they

Community Columns continued on page 10

## Library news continued from page 8

Join us for free play followed by stories and action songs in the Library Community Room. Co-sponsored by the Library and the Lund Center. Kids infant to age 5 and their grownups are invited to join the fun — we will start with Playgroup at 10:00 AM and then finish up the morning with a short storytime at 11:30 AM.

Mondays, 10:30 AM: Baby Laptime. This short, active storytime is for our youngest little book lovers and their grownups. We'll look at picture books, sing simple songs, do some rhyming and bouncing, and sometimes get out the shakers and scarves. Designed for infants and early toddlers.

Contact us at 802-434-3036 (leave a message after hours) or [rfl@gmavt.net](mailto:rfl@gmavt.net).

Richmond Free Library, 201 Bridge St., P.O. Box 997, Richmond, VT 05477; 802-434-3036; fax 802-434-3223; <http://richmondfreelibraryvt.org>.

## BROWNELL LIBRARY, ESSEX JUNCTION

Ongoing drop-in programs

Community Puzzle: spend some time working on a puzzle in the library. Puzzles rotate as they are completed.

Community Loom: collaborate on our community loom!

Pattern Swap, Puzzle Swap, Magazine Swap, Coupon Swap  
Brownell Library, 6 Lincoln St., Essex Junction. Contact Main Desk 802-878-6955, Youth Desk 802-878-6956, Reference Desk 802-878-6957, or [frontdesk@brownelllibrary.org](mailto:frontdesk@brownelllibrary.org).

## ESSEX FREE LIBRARY

Hours: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 AM – 8:00 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Phone: 802-879-0313

All programs are free and open to the public.

Accepting book donations! Two boxes accepted per household per week that are easy for us to carry. Fiction and nonfiction, juvenile and adult, hardcover and paperback, in very good condition that we may put into our collection or sell in our June book sale to benefit the Children's Summer Reading Program. No library discards, textbooks, magazines, VHS, encyclopedias, multi-volume sets, technology or travel books over five years old, mildewed, stained, or smoky items please. Thank you!

We still have free COVID tests, harm reduction packs & gun locks! Copies of the U.S. Constitution, too!

All ages

Artists from Hand in Hand Childcare will display their art throughout the library during April.

Display Case: Birds of Vermont Museum has lent us their display about bird migration. If you're inspired to go birding, the library loans binoculars and field guides.

Cache Odyssey — Essex Free Library is proud to be Vermont's Cache Odyssey site, a nationwide geocache adventure with a unique letterbox-hybrid cache in every state. Great for families or seasoned explorers. Each cache is fully accessible. See [www.cacheodyssey.com](http://www.cacheodyssey.com) for more information.

Children's and teens' area

Saturday, April 26, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM: Dungeons and Dragons for grades 9-12. Do you yearn for adventure? And free food? The Essex Free Library wants you to join our program! Every other Saturday.

Thursday, April 17, 4:30 – 6:30 PM: Perler Bead Open Studio. Come and hang out in the Community Room to make a perler bead creation! No registration needed, ages 7 and up.

Saturday, April 19, 10:00 – 11:30 AM: Read to Chewy the Therapy Dog! Kids and families can sign up for a 15-minute slot and choose a book to read to Chewy and his human, Cindy Turcotte. Sign up on the website.

Weekly activities

Exploration Station: ongoing. Check out the blue table for this week's challenge.

Mondays, 11:00 AM: Musical Mondays with Miss Noreen. Come spend time rockin' and reading!

Wednesdays, 11:00 AM: Storytime with Emily. Stories, songs and activities for young patrons.

Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: LEGO Club. Grades 1-5. Kids in grades 4 and younger need to come with an adult.

Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Pokemon Club. Grades 1-8. Decks available for card games. Themed crafts. Participants may bring gaming devices for Pokemon Go and other Pokemon games.

Fridays: Grab'n'Go Craft Kits. While supplies last.

Adults

Wednesday, April 16, 2:00 – 3:00 PM: Scrabble/Conversation Français — French Conversation and Scrabble. Open to ages high school and up, for levels Elementary II and above. Improve your French while enjoying a friendly game of (French) Scrabble!

Thursday, April 17, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Trivia Night for adults

and teens. Join us for some friendly trivia competition! Bring a group, bring a friend or bring yourself. Light refreshments provided.

Tuesday, April 22, 6:00 – 7:30 PM: Board Games for Ages 18+. Bring your friends and enjoy the library's board game collection (or bring your own to share with the group). Light refreshments provided.

Thursday, May 1, 12:00 – 1:00 PM: Noontime Book Group reading *James* by Percival Everett. National Book Award and Kirkus Prize Winner. A brilliant, action-packed reimagining of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as told from the enslaved Jim's point of view.

Thursday, May 8, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Evening Book Group reading *Gather* by Kenneth Cadow. Vermont Humanities' Vermont Reads 2024 Selection, and Kirkus Prize Winner. A debut novel by a Vermont writer and educator portrays a challenging coming-of-age.

April is Financial Literacy Month! Celebrate it by attending these talks by Essex resident Cathy Duffy, Financial Planner at Baystate Financial and Champlain College adjunct accounting professor. Feel free to attend one, two or all three:

- Thursday, April 24, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: PlanWell™ by Investing Well. This session covers the basics of investing and how different kinds of investments work.
- Thursday, May 1, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: PlanWell™ for Retirement. Learn the basics of retirement planning — strategies, sources of retirement income, and key risks to consider.

Weekly events

Ongoing: Relaxation Station. Slow down, enjoy a hot beverage and a relaxing activity at our main table.

Tuesdays, 10:30 – 11:30 AM: Tech Time. Drop in with your device and your questions. We'll do our best to answer them! No appointment needed.

Tuesdays, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Drop-In Needlecraft Group. Enjoy chatting with other crafters as you work on your project.

Fridays, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Rummikub for adults.

Social media: check us out on Facebook and Instagram for updates on events!

Essex Free Library, 1 Browns River Rd., Essex; 802-879-0313; [@essexfreelibrary](mailto:@essexfreelibrary); <https://www.essexfreelibrary.org>.

## MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

## Clutter Barn accepting donations May 3, 10; tag sale May 24

The United Church of Underhill's Clutter Barn will accept donations on Saturdays, May 3 and 10 from 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM. We are only taking spring and summer clothing — no winter clothes please. We are not taking shoes and sneakers, but we take clean boots. Also, no cookbooks. For a complete list of items we can no longer accept, please go to our website, <https://www.unitedchurchofunderhill.com/serve-together/clutter-barn>.

Our first Tag Sale is Saturday, May 24, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Visit the church website for a complete list of donation days and Tag Sales for the season.

Here's the drill for donating:

Before you donate, you are required to sort your donations. At home, please sort and box, bag, or crate your items into the following categories to speed up the drop-off process: toys, games and puzzles; spring and summer clothing (separate bags for baby, children, and adult); small electronics and appliances; household items, glasses, dishes; linens and bedding; fabric, sewing, and craft items; sports; books (separate bags for children and teen, and adult); boots; pictures and frames; tools; wooden items; office supplies; holiday decorations; small pieces of furniture, such as chairs and tables (no fiberboard furniture please).

Procedures for dropping off donations:

- Do not pull up in front of the Clutter Barn. No donations will be accepted at the front door. Instead, drive to Park Street. Enter church driveway on Park Street (between tan apartment building and white house).

- When you enter the church driveway from Park Street, a volunteer will greet you. The volunteer will ask if your donations are sorted into the categories listed above. If so, the volunteer will direct you to pull forward and direct where to wait in line until it is your turn to unload. The volunteer will provide a donation receipt if you desire one. And, be sure to ask for our business card which has the dates for all donation days, Tag Sales, and Harvest Market in 2025.

A final note: please, please do not drop off your gently used items on the Clutter Barn doorstep midweek. They often get ruined by the weather and end up in the landfill... something we are trying to avoid.

The regular Clutter Barn crew greatly appreciates all the help we receive from community members. If you are interested in volunteering at the Clutter Barn, contact Kathy Williamson, 802-899-3122, or Sharon Damkot, 802-899-3572.

## St. Thomas Church Yard Sale donation days

The first Donation Day for the annual St. Thomas Church "Spring into Summer" Yard Sale will be Tuesday, April 22 (two days after Easter), 4:30 – 6:00 PM at the rectory.

Community columns continued from page 9

also require great skill that takes practice and commitment to achieve, skills that enable other successes in life.

We are blessed. We have the Young\_Writers\_Project, the Vermont\_Youth\_Orchestra, Young\_Tradition\_Vermont, The Governor's\_Institutes\_of\_Vermont\_(The\_Arts\_Institute), Peter Gould's\_Get\_Thee\_to\_the\_Funnery, and my own personal favorite, The\_Youth\_Opera\_Company\_of\_OCM(Opera Company of Middlebury.)

Add two and two together here and you're apt to get five. I can't wait. The idea of young people performing grand opera says so much to me about our hopes for the future of civilization.

In December, we saw a cast of 140 young singers perform Purcell's 1680 opera *Dido and Aeneas* at Mount Abraham auditorium to a sold-out crowd.

The pain of what's happening to my country was briefly eclipsed by this supernova of young talent. Hope glimmered for a country that will soon be in the hands of the ascendent generation.

As we devolve from a free and fair world that understands and commits to our common good and instead uses wealth and power to bring forth an oligarchy controlled by unimaginable wealth, to see and experience the commitment to artistic rigor and beauty performed by our emerging leaders brings me hope.

Art lifts us beyond the quotidian world of our immediate wants and desires. It asks more of us. It infuses discipline with the grace and beauty of human connection.

In a world that has come to measure self-worth in terms of consumption and ownership or subservient power, we look to the arts to better understand how we are connected beyond the smallness of ownership and control. We can see and share a vision of common good and beauty.

There has never been a better time to reach out and support artistic endeavors and to support our children and grandchildren who have committed to the beauty that surrounds us.

## City Nature Challenge April 25-28

By Bernie Paquette, Jericho

This April will mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the City Nature Challenge (CNC), a four-day bioblitz held every April. Cities worldwide compete and collaborate to find species, make observations, and connect people with nature in urban areas. It started in 2016 as a friendly contest between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Since then, it has grown into an international event, with 690 cities and nearly 2000 local organizers participating last year.

Mark your calendar for CNC 2025! Here are the key dates:

- Friday-Monday, April 25-28: make observations;
- Tuesday-Sunday, April 29-May 4: upload observations on *iNaturalist* and help with identifications;
- Monday, May 5: results announced.

Jericho residents can join at <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2025-gericho-vt>. Bolton has already set up their CNC project on *iNaturalist* at <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2025-bolton-vt>.

Read more at <https://www.inaturalist.org/blog/107296-celebrate-10-years-of-the-city-nature-challenge-with-inaturalist>.

Observing nature is like a treasure hunt as close as your backyard.

After that, Donation Days will then be 8:30 – 11:00 AM on Saturdays and 4:30 – 6:00 PM on Tuesdays until our sale! Please pull right on up to the garage at 6 Green St., Underhill Center, and volunteers can help you unload.

So, what are we looking for?

*Please sort through those boxes in the cellar, garage and barn.*

*Look for the forgotten craft supplies, fabric and yarn,*

*The outgrown puzzles, games, toys and books,*

*Sports equipment and housewares stored in all of the nooks!*

*Linens and lamps and holiday decorations,*

*Tools, garden supplies, and camping stuff for your various vacations!*

*Bring us your small working appliances, pictures, boots and shoes,*

*Office supplies and knickknacks you no longer use!*

What don't we want? Clothes, except for jackets; large luggage (carry-ons and backpacks okay); beds, bed frames, mattresses, box springs; baby equipment such as cribs and car seats; computers/monitors/printers etc; large appliances; wall fixtures, like sconces, ceiling fans; telephones/TVs; large exercise equipment; encyclopedias, textbooks, magazines; VHS and cassette tapes; skis, boots, poles; Christmas trees; health, beauty powders, perfumes. New this year is no particle board/MDF/composite furniture. It doesn't sell and the thrift stores won't take these things either. Please hold onto your larger furniture, i.e. dressers, sofas, etc. until the week before the sale. The sale is Friday-Sunday, June 20-22.

Please make sure that everything is clean and in working order. As our late yard sale volunteer Patti Jacobs used to say, "We want your toaster, not your toast!"

Questions? Please email Mary Bibb, [mvbibb@outlook.com](mailto:mvbibb@outlook.com).

## Six vie for one local seat on VT Electric Co-op Board of Directors

Nine candidates are contending for four district seats up for election this year on the Board of Directors of Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC). Three of the districts have uncontested races, while one – West Zone-at-Large – has six candidates vying for the single seat.

The West Zone-at-Large includes these towns in our local area: Bolton, Cambridge, Essex, Fairfax, Hinesburg, Huntington, Jericho, Johnson, Richmond, Underhill, Waterville, Westford, Williston (and several other towns). The six candidates seeking the Board seat to represent these towns are Peter Ehrlich, Jerry Elliott, John Hango, Vinnie Jiwatram, Mark Larivee, and Bonnie Pratt.

VEC members can vote for candidates by mail or online through Friday, May 9. The election winners will be announced at VEC's Annual Meeting, on Saturday, May 10 at Jay Peak Resort.



*Sand Hill Cemetery (pictured above) is Underhill's only town-owned cemetery, up high above River Road where it meets Sand Hill Road. A local group, with training from the Vermont Old Cemetery Association, will begin this summer to learn to clean and repair some of the old headstones. Any who would like to volunteer is welcome to come to a clean-up day on Friday, May 23 and Saturday, June 21. Contact Curt Belton, 802-318-0235, or Sue Belton, [suebelton1234@gmail.com](mailto:suebelton1234@gmail.com) for more information.*

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Sand Hill Cemetery

By Sue Belton, Underhill

Many Underhill residents are unaware that only one of seven cemeteries in Underhill is town-owned. This cemetery sits at the foot of Sand Hill Road on the corner of River Road and is so high up the hill it can barely be seen. It has a long history spanning from 1821 when it was donated to the town, to the last documented burial circa 1921. There are 175 known graves, including many veterans, a minister, and is thought to include some from Underhill's poor farm residents.

In conjunction with town officials, a small group of interested people have recently met to move forward with plans to give it some renewed TLC. There are several aspects to this project, which will address both short-term and long-term needs.

We're looking for volunteers for two days of general spring clean-up. There is a fair amount of weed and brush cutting to be done. In addition, the fence is in need of repair or replacement. The more volunteer work we do on routine maintenance, the more budget funds can be allocated to the higher-cost needs.

Clean-up days are Friday, May 23 and Saturday, June 21. Please mark your calendars if you can help. Groups looking for community volunteer projects are welcome!

In addition, many of the headstones need cleaning, straightening, or are broken and in need of repair. On Saturday, August 9, representatives from the Vermont Old Cemetery Association (VOCA) will be onsite to train for this kind of care. At least 12 able-bodied people are required in order to fulfill

VEC members attending the Annual Meeting are invited to a complimentary breakfast starting at 8:00 AM. The meeting starts at 9:30 AM and runs until about 11:00 AM. The meeting will feature a presentation, "Navigating a Clean Power Supply," focusing on how VEC procures electricity for members today and into the future. There will be an opportunity for Q&A and a drawing for prizes, including an electric smoker courtesy of Downs Rachlin Martin, a battery-powered string trimmer donated by Efficiency Vermont, as well as gift cards, a gift certificate to the Jay Village Inn, and more.

For more information about VEC's Annual Meeting and candidate profiles, go online to <https://vermontelectric.coop/annual-meeting>.

## Draft housing targets for Chittenden County

By Emma Vaughn, Chittenden County  
Regional Planning Commission

Finding a place to live in Chittenden County, particularly one that is affordable, has become more difficult over the years. For decades, housing production hasn't kept up with the needs of our communities, making it difficult for families to put down roots, workers to live near their jobs, and employers to find staff.

To help communities plan for the future, the VT Department of Housing and Community Development, at the direction of the VT Legislature, has introduced new statewide and regional housing targets. These data-driven targets are presented as ranges and take into account the housing Vermont needs — not only to house new residents, but also to accommodate downsizing seniors, replace older homes that can't be repaired, and help address homelessness.

Overall, Chittenden County has a housing target range of 15,783-47,407 new housing units by 2050. As required in the HOME Act (Act 47 of 2023), the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) has divided the regional housing targets into targets for each city and town in Chittenden County. These targets, once adopted, will be integrated into city and town plans to help address the urgent need for housing in Chittenden County.

The first draft ranges can be viewed online at <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/housing>. Residents, business owners, and community leaders are invited to review the draft housing targets and provide feedback and generate ideas to help increase housing in Chittenden County. Comments will be accepted through Monday, May 19, 2025.

For more information on the draft housing targets and to provide comments, go online to <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/housing>. Contact Taylor Newton, CCRPC Planning Program Director, with questions, [tnewton@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:tnewton@ccrpcvt.org).

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our commitment to this effort. These "able bodied" people must be able to lift and move at least 40 pounds. The headstones are currently being evaluated for repair, but we know there are many. To properly care for these very old headstones, they should not be touched, lifted or moved without special training.

Further information will be provided prior to these dates, however, a roster of names is required by VOCA. Please consider adding your name so the town can receive this valuable training on August 9. Contact Curt Belton, 802-318-0235, or Sue Belton, [suebelton1234@gmail.com](mailto:suebelton1234@gmail.com). All are welcome to join this small volunteer group. Research efforts about the cemetery's history are also ongoing. Stay tuned for future announcements.

## Cambridge Conservation Commission nature report

By Jayne Lukens, Cambridge Conservation Commission

April 3

Holly saw a bobcat by Black Creek near her home. She said it's a major wildlife crossing and often sees many fascinating animals passing through!

Jayne saw the resident bald eagle over the Lamoille near the roundabout.

Sara has seen barred owls, a red-tailed hawk on a wire, and two bear scats in the woods. She also saw fresh moose scat and stripping on the trees while skiing around Mount Mansfield.

Dede has seen signs of animals, like a snakeskin in her wood pile, a Cooper's hawk, and an evening grosbeak at a friend's feeder.

Olivia saw a large healthy fox on VT Rt. 108 by the RV park. Send us your nature sightings! We love to hear from you.

## Hyperlocal programs, eclipse memories

By Angelike A. Contis, MMCTV

Tired of the news cycle? Then take a few minutes to dig into some hyperlocal content at [youtube@mmctv](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmmctv) and on Mount Mansfield Community TV's (MMCTV) Comcast Cable 1076 and 1086 channels.

*Breaking News at the Library* (link:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzXcJLIOWa4>) made at the MMCTV/RFL middle school workshop is one example. Other recent programs include *Sugaring in a Changing Climate*; *The Future of VT Public Education*; *Huntington Storytellers*; and *A Journey to Morocco*.

If you'd rather be on the other side of the camera or mic, we are still looking for volunteers to provide play-by-play voiceover help to MMCTV's coverage of MMU Spring Sports. Please email us at [mmctv@mtmansfieldctv.org](mailto:mmctv@mtmansfieldctv.org) to provide commentary on the mic at games you are already attending.

Finally, a year after that amazing Eclipse Day, we're re-sharing our feel-good crowdsourced video from the event made by... you! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhaefogveqE>.

Miscellaneous news continued from page 10

## United Way volunteer opportunities

CONNECT TO COMMUNITY BY VOLUNTEERING – United Way’s Volunteer Connection site is set up to help connect agencies and volunteers. Here is a link for Volunteer Connection — <https://unitedwaynwvt.galaxydigital.com/> — to learn more about these and other opportunities.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF VERMONT offers volunteers many ways to make an impact: be a mentor and spend time with a youth doing things you both like to do in the community, mentor an elementary school student during your lunch hour, share your love of sports with a young person as a spectator or participant, share your career/trade/skills with a young person at your place of business, and more. Volunteers 18 and older can make difference in the life of a child! Background checks and references are required. For information, go online to <https://bbbs.tfaforms.net/f/BBBSVTBIGINQUIRY>.

TAKE A WALK! – COTS annual Walk will take place on Sunday, May 4, and they are in need of volunteers to help make the event a success. Share in the fun by volunteering! For information and to volunteer, go online to <https://cotsonline.org/cots-walk>.

MENTOR! MENTOR! – King Street Center has three mentoring programs for volunteers to get involved in: Volunteers aged 21 and over can be matched with a youth to spend time together in the community sharing mutual interests. A one-year commitment is needed. Peer mentors ages 14-18 can also be matched with a grade K-5 student to spend time together each week. Book Buddies, age 16 and older, can be matched with a K-5 grader to read and play educational games each week. The commitment is through the school year or for the Summer Program from the end of June through August. You can make a difference in a child’s life! Be a Mentor! Contact Gabriella, 802-862-6736, Ext. 105, or [gabriella@kingstreetcenter.org](mailto:gabriella@kingstreetcenter.org).

TUTOR! TUTOR! – King Street Center also offers personalized homework help and academic enrichment. They are specifically looking for Math and English tutors during their flexible summer schedule. Training and guidance are provided. Contact Gabriella, 802-862-6726 or [gabriella@kingstreetcenter.org](mailto:gabriella@kingstreetcenter.org).

COMMUNITY SUPPORT – Milton Family Community Center has many volunteer opportunities that vary with the seasons. Recurring needs include Food Shelf support, cleaning and organizing, minor building maintenance (painting, handiwork), gardening and grounds maintenance, and much more. Contact Ben, [bgilbert@miltonfamilycenter.org](mailto:bgilbert@miltonfamilycenter.org).

HELP END THE VIOLENCE – Steps to End Domestic Violence provides 24/7 hotline direct service to those affected by intimate partner violence. Hotline volunteers offer emotional support, safety planning, and connections to services such as emergency housing, legal, and youth programs. Volunteers are needed to answer the hotline, chatline, and emails to provide information, advocacy, support, referrals, and crisis management. Training is provided, and volunteers are asked to take at least two 4.5 hour shifts a month, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. For information and to complete a volunteer application, email [izzyl@stepsvt.org](mailto:izzyl@stepsvt.org).

COME TO THE FAIR! – The Franklin Country Community Volunteering Fair will take place on Thursday, May 22, 3:00 – 6:00 PM at St. Albans City Hall. Come and meet your new favorite volunteer organization and learn about organizations that welcome volunteers of all ages to help serve their communities. For information email [erin.creley@vermont.com](mailto:erin.creley@vermont.com).

GREEN IT UP!!! – Vermont’s annual Green Up Day will take place on Saturday, May 3. Join your neighbors in picking up and cleaning up our great outdoors. Together we can help save nature and keep our beautiful state GREEN! Learn more at <https://greenupvermont.org/you-can-make-a-difference/>.

## Cambridge Fire Department Calcutta fundraiser May 31

By Taylor White, Jeffersonville

Cambridge community — here is your chance to win up to \$1500 while supporting your local emergency services! The Cambridge Fire Department is hosting its annual Calcutta Fundraiser on Saturday, May 31, 5:00 PM at VT State University, Johnson Campus, Stearns Dining Hall. Tickets, \$120 each, include entry to the event and dinner for two.

Here are the basics of the game: we sell 98 tickets. The final two tickets (numbers 99 and 100) will be raffled off the night of the dinner. The cost for a chance to win one of these two tickets is \$10 a chance.

Tickets 99 and 100 are guaranteed winners and are not placed into the game until after draw #90. Winning one of these raffles allows for a second chance at the game!

Top five prizes are: draw #96, \$125; draw #97, \$175; draw #98 \$200; draw #99, \$300; draw #100, \$1500.

If you are interested in a fun evening with your local Fire Fighters, contact [taylor@vtlegacyhomes.com](mailto:taylor@vtlegacyhomes.com) or any member, for a ticket. Thank you for your support!

## The Rover is coming for Chittenden County residents’ hazardous waste

CSWD’s mobile household hazardous waste collection unit, the Rover, is coming to a community near you. The Rover accepts a wide variety of household hazardous waste at no charge from Chittenden County residents (businesses must make an appointment at the Environmental Depot). This year on the Saturdays listed, 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM, the Rover will be in at the drop-off centers in Milton (April 26), Essex (May 17), Hinesburg (June 14), Williston (September 6), and Richmond (September 20). Go online for the complete schedule to <http://cswd.net/information-library/the-rover/>.

What goes where? How to dispose of aerosol containers: Many people often wonder how to dispose of aerosol cans the right way. First, check if it contained hazardous materials or not. Then, see if it’s empty or still has contents. Here is how to tell exactly where it belongs!

If it contains hazardous material (paint, pesticides, chemicals)?

- Not empty? Bring to CSWD’s Environmental Depot.
- Empty? Place in scrap metal at our drop-off locations.

If the can contains non-hazardous material (food, beauty products)?

- Not empty? Toss in the trash.
- Empty? Recycle in your blue bin.

Just a reminder: Never put aerosol cans in the blue bin if they had contained hazardous materials!

## Spring is springing toward the St. Thomas yard sale

Spring cleaning yet?

The annual St. Thomas Yard Sale will be held Friday-Sunday, June 20-22 this year. Please gather your clean, serviceable, and quality treasures for the sale.

Starting on Tuesday, April 22, we’ll be having Donation Days on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Thanks in advance for your donations!

## Vermont Coverts offers forest stewardship training

If you love your woodlands, enjoy seeing wildlife, and want to learn how a healthy forest can enhance wildlife habitat and

provide recreational and timber benefits, this workshop is for you! Learn about managing your woodlands and reaching out to others in your community. This program connects you with resource professionals, landowners, and others while learning how you can improve your woodlands.

This stewardship training will be offered twice this year: in spring, Friday-Sunday, April 25-27 at Northwoods Stewardship Center, East Charleston; and in fall, Friday-Sunday, September 12-14 at Keheo Conservation Camp, Castleton.

To learn more, apply online, see a sample agenda, or download an application, visit our website at <https://vtcoverts.org/calendar.html> and find the date you are interested in, or contact Lisa Sausville, [lisa@vtcoverts.org](mailto:lisa@vtcoverts.org).

## LRSWMD SWIP public meeting notice

From Erika Schaper, LRSWMD Board

The Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District is currently updating its Solid Waste Implementation Plan (SWIP).

The SWIP is used to outline and fulfill the requirements of the VT Agency of Natural Resources Materials Management Plan (MMP), formerly known as the State Solid Waste Plan, which “provide(s) a framework for the State and its citizens to prevent waste from being generated and expand reuse, recycling, and composting efforts to attain Vermont’s statewide goals over the next five years.”

A public meeting will be held to receive community feedback on the SWIP on Thursday, May 29, 5:30 – 6:30 PM at the LRSWMD Administrative office, 29 Sunset Dr., Suite #5, Morrisville. An option to attend via Zoom will be available and details will be posted to the LRSWMD website at <https://www.lrswwmd.org/>.

A copy of the Draft SWIP will also be available to view on our website after it has been reviewed by the Board of Supervisors.

## Free workshop for federal workers, nonprofit staff impacted by cuts

Free Resilience Workshop for federal workers and nonprofit staff impacted by the cuts to programs — if you’ve lost your job, or are impacted by the cuts to federal programs, here’s a resilience program that might be of interest. You’ll be met with compassion, and skillful support to develop grounded resilience. The workshop teaches skills for deep, effective practices to handle stress, and empowering, relational skills to connect. Based in neuroscience and psychology, by the Center for Grounded Action. Interactive, lots of practices.

Concretely, what you’ll gain from the Resilience workshop: two effective inner practices to handle internal stress and reactivity, and two empowering, relational skills to manage these stressors; practice, hands-on experience, and immediate application. People can put these skills to work right away and manage difficult situations with more ease. Staffed by skilled trainers, you’ll engage in lots of practices and have the space to be heard and helped. Participants described this workshop as “a ray of light and hope in a dark time,” “soul-filling, nurturing, informative and much needed training.”

For sign up, timing details, and more please see details online using one of these links:

• Constant Contact, <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/znf83r2/lp/9188394a-635b-48bf-8888-d0e4d1b5a5d0>;

• Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61574820202160>;

• Linked In, <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7310285196849827841/>.

For more information contact Jen Wofford, MSW, LICSW, [www.CenterforGroundedAction.org](http://www.CenterforGroundedAction.org).

## SCHOOL NEWS

### Final call for applications to Winona Smith Scholarship

The deadline for applications to the League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Fund Winona Smith Scholarship (<https://bit.ly/LWVScholarshipDetails>) is quickly approaching.

Applications (online at <https://lwvofvt.org/winona-smith-vermont-scholarship-application/>), due on Wednesday, April 30 by midnight, can be completed online. Students need to submit two essays (500 words), one on issues concerning voting rights, and the other on the impact of a recent civic, national, or world event. A letter of recommendation (<https://lwvofvt.org/recommend-scholarship-applicant/>) from a teacher (<https://bit.ly/LWVTeacherRec>) is also required.

Three \$2000 scholarships will be awarded to three students who demonstrate financial need, scholastic achievement, and come highly recommended by their teacher. The scholarship can be applied towards continuation of education in an accredited vocational-technical or trade school and two- or four-year college or university. Scholarship recipients will be announced on June 1.

Created in 1998 to honor the legacy of League leader Winona Smith, the scholarship is awarded annually to local high school seniors who embody the characteristics and qualities Smith displayed of civic participation and community service.

Last year, LWV scholarships were awarded to students from Essex and Winooski High Schools and St. Johnsbury Academy.

Questions can be directed to Scholarship Coordinator Audrey Grant, [hvovfvt.edfund@gmail.com](mailto:hvovfvt.edfund@gmail.com).

### Youth Leadership Conference at VTStateU Lyndon, June 20-22

Cambridge Area Rotary will be sponsoring students to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Academy, to be held on the campus of Vermont State University, Lyndon, Friday, June 20, 8:00 AM through Sunday, June 22, 1:00 PM. This weekend conference will focus on developing leadership, communication, and team-building skills.

Join students from VT, NH, and Québec to share, evolve, and learn to be a more effective and self-confident leader in your

school, on teams, and in your community. Learn by experience and action, explore personality traits and how to bring out everyone’s talents, learn about your own traits and talents, and have fun!

Students currently enrolled in their high school sophomore year are eligible to apply online at <https://bit.ly/4bPbgJ3> (short for [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScmYnHvd3eMYo\\_awHbKiGo-KLPIaYKMKi77hQJFEzo6laLPeA/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScmYnHvd3eMYo_awHbKiGo-KLPIaYKMKi77hQJFEzo6laLPeA/viewform)).

### Seeking host families for high school students

By Dylan Charter, Jericho

I’m working with a non-profit (Borderless Friends Forever) that matches high school exchange students with host families in the U.S. We have several students still looking for a host family for the 2025–26 school year, so if you think you could be interested — or know anyone in northern Vermont (or even across the lake) who could be interested — in welcoming a new member to your family for a year, please reach out to me (or have them reach out to me) for more information, including more personalized bios of the students.

I’ve studied abroad myself (in Russia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan), so I can assure you it’s a life-changing opportunity not just for the student, but also the host family and community. It’s a great way to expand your worldview, get to know a new culture, change your perspectives, and make a difference in the student’s life. I think Vermont would be a great representation of the U.S. for any incoming exchange student.

Please share this message with anyone who may be interested. Thank you!

I can be contacted at [dylanvt@me.com](mailto:dylanvt@me.com) or WhatsApp at +996 220 240 460.

### VSAC news: College & Career information

High school student To-Do list — the pace of post-high school planning is picking up. There’s a lot to get done before the end of the school year. You can prepare using VSAC’s free junior- and

senior-year checklists for the 2024-2025 academic year:

• Junior Checklist: [https://www.vvac.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf\\_resources/HS\\_Junior\\_Year\\_Planning\\_Checklist.pdf](https://www.vvac.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf_resources/HS_Junior_Year_Planning_Checklist.pdf);

• Senior Checklist: [https://www.vvac.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf\\_resources/HS\\_Senior\\_Year\\_Planning\\_Checklist.pdf](https://www.vvac.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf_resources/HS_Senior_Year_Planning_Checklist.pdf).

**Kinship Families:**  
**Nature’s Way of Supporting the Young**

When Parents Can’t Provide, Kin Step In:  
If an eagle parent is injured, another eagle might assist or even adopt the young, ensuring survival.

In human families, Kinship Caregivers do the same.  
When a child’s parents face challenges, relatives like grandparents, aunts, uncles, or family friends provide a loving home.

Join VKAP (Vermont Kin as Parents) and VINS Nature Center to share a **FREE day** at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Enjoy the day’s activities, the nature trails and the facilities to reflect on the power of kinship families, showing resilience and care through life’s ups and downs.

**JOIN US FOR A FUN, INFORMATIVE, AND FREE EVENT!**

For FREE TICKETS email [Lori@vermontkinasparents.org](mailto:Lori@vermontkinasparents.org) or call (802) 871-5104

10:00 am to 11:00 - Fiddlehead Foray  
11:00 am to 11:30 - Raptors Up Close

12:30 pm to 12:50 - Songbird Aviary Tour

2:00 pm to 2:20 - Animal Encounter  
2:30 pm to 3:00 - Raptor Feeding Time  
4:00 pm - VINS closes.

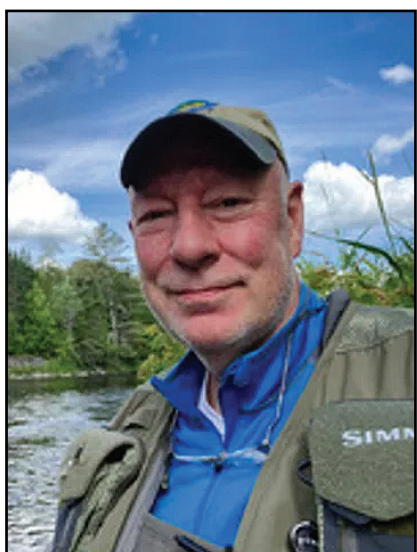


www.vinsweb.org

**LOCATION:**  
Family-Friendly & FREE!  
Saturday, May 3rd, 10:00 AM  
145 Nature Way  
Quechee, VT

OBITUARY

On the morning of Monday, March 31, 2025, Daniel Leon Simmons left the world as we know it. He is survived by his wife, Pat; his son, Ethan; his mother, Joan; and his brothers, David and Duncan. While the loss is immense, we take some comfort in knowing he is now reunited with his father "Sonny Clyde" Simmons, and beloved daughter Erin, whom he missed



"wickedly" since her passing in 2019. Dan also leaves behind his absolute best friends the "Mudhenz," a tight-knit crew who were family in every way that mattered. Their decades of friendship, adventure, and laughter were one of the great joys of his life. Dan was a hard-working man, who lived fully and documented life every step of the way. He had a dry sense of humor, a stubborn streak, and a deep appreciation for the natural world, especially the backwoods of Vermont. A native of Craftsbury, VT, he found joy in simple pleasures. A well-cast fishing line, a dirt road motorcycle ride, the quiet of the Crooked Spike Lodge, time spent with family, and dogs — so many dogs. Dan had a steady hand with woodworking tools, and an unmistakable talent for seeing beauty in ordinary things. Professionally, Dan spent 20 years at IBM, where he played a critical role supporting the development of cutting-edge technology used in some of the most advanced aircraft and the iconic gaming consoles that defined recent decades. He took pride in being behind the scenes a man who valued quality over flash, substance over show. He had no patience for vanity, especially when it came at the expense of others. Sailing, volleyball, family hikes, Ski-Doo rides, ice fishing, or just sitting around a fire at camp with family swapping stories, Dan wasn't known to sit still. We are heartbroken as a family to lose another so soon. The world is a bit less spicy without Dan in it. We know he's with Erin hanging out at camp with their pups Lani, Luci, Otie, and Boomer.

SPORTS NEWS

Lake Monsters game June 1 benefits Cambridge Little League

Come to a FUNdraiser for Cambridge Little League! Join neighbors at a Lake Monsters game at Centennial Field, University Rd., Burlington on Sunday, June 1, 5:00 PM. Cambridge Little Leaguers will be encouraged to attend and spread the word to families, friends, and neighbors. Let's fill a section with Cambridge baseball and softball supporters! Half of the \$8 ticket price will come back into the League to help fund new equipment purchases. Help jumpstart our sales at https://www.ticketreturn.com/prod2new/GroupPortalPEC.asp?HoldID=34117&SponsorID=17597&EventID=346966. There are handicapped accessible seats, as well. If you have questions, email us at cambridgeyouthbaseball@gmail.com.

Pump-it-Up 5 Miler on May 10

Come and join us for Pump-it-Up 5 Miler on Saturday, May 10, 9:00 – 10:30 AM! The race starts and ends on Old Pump Road in Jericho, between the Jericho Post Office and Palmer Lane Maple. We have a lots of local raffle prizes for pre-registered runners, and Brew House coffee will have 20% off coffee and breakfast items for runners after the race. Even better — pre-registration is only \$15. To register and for more information, go online to https://gmaa.run/schedule/pump-it-up-5-miler/.

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Happy Easter

Happy Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025 Set your table and decorate your home with lovely bouquets, beautiful roses or flowering plants from Maplehurst FLORIST SINCE 1943 10 Lincoln Street Essex Junction 802-878-8113 www.maplehurstflorist.com WE DELIVER LOCALLY.

Planning on a dig? Call first for safety! DigSafe.com Do you have spring planting or digging projects? If you plan to do any type of digging on your property, you or your contractor must contact Dig Safe™ at 811 at least 48 hours prior to digging. Dig Safe will notify member utilities, who will locate of buried facilities they own and ensure they are clearly marked. How to Detect a Gas Leak Smell: Natural gas is normally odorless. Sight: You may see a white cloud, mist, fog, bubbles in standing water, or blowing dust. Sound: It may result in an unusual noise that replicates the sound of roaring, hissing, or whistling. Move immediately to a safe location. Call VGS at 800-639-8081 or call 911 with the exact location. Be safe Scan the QR Code or visit vgsvt.com/be-safe for more safety information. VGS

SATURDAY, APRIL 19TH 10:00-NOON Free EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA EGG HUNT • SPRING CRAFTS HEALTHY SNACKS

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