

## Voting results for Jericho on March 4

From Town of Jericho's link at <https://jerichovt.org/Elections>  
Of 4302 registered voters in Jericho, 898 voted ballots on Town Meeting Day, Tuesday, March 4. Of those, 194 were absentee ballots.

Jessica Alexander and David Barrington were re-elected to their positions as Town Clerk (841 votes) and Town Meeting Moderator (804 votes).

Selectboard: Peter Booth was re-elected with 762 votes. The next highest vote-getter was Joe Flynn, with 13 write-in votes.

Bert Lindholm won re-election as Cemetery Commissioner, with 802 votes. Nancy Karlson was voted in as the Jericho-Underhill Library District Trustee, with 770 votes; Olivia Strong and Christopher Greenwood were voted in to the Jericho Underhill Land Trust, with 772 and 781 votes, respectively.

There were two positions open on Jericho's ballot for the Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District Board of Directors. The top three vote-getters were Sandra J. Limoge, 622 votes; Kyle Magida, 464 votes; and Thomas G. Ferstle, 249 votes.

There were write-in votes in all of the above contested races except for Library District Trustee but with the exception of Joe Flynn in the Selectboard race, there was no more than one vote for any candidate written in on the ballot.

Jericho's budget for the fiscal year ending 2026, \$4,091,311 including spending unanticipated funds such as state and federal grants and gifts, was approved by voters, 723-164.

Voters appropriated \$573,151 of the total \$1,052,940 budget for the Underhill Jericho Fire Department (UJFD), 821-67.

## Bolton Town Meeting and elections 2025

From the Bolton website, <https://boltonvt.com/>

Bolton returned to its traditional Town Meeting on Monday evening, March 3, 2025 at 7:00 PM, with an in-person Meeting at which the municipal budget was voted from the floor. Voting by Australian ballot took place on Tuesday, March 4, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM; both Town Meeting and voting were held at the Smilie Memorial School Gym.

Town Meeting floor vote results:

ARTICLE 1, the town budget of \$1,709,087, which authorized the Select Board to set a tax rate sufficient to provide the funds, passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 3 asked voters of the Town of Bolton to appropriate \$106,000 in uncommitted general funds to the Hight Projects Fund; passed by voice vote.

Voting results:

Bolton has 1073 registered voters; 171 cast ballots on Tuesday, March 4, of which eight were mailed in.

Leslie Pelch was elected as Town Meeting Moderator, with 159 votes. There was one write-in ballot for another candidate.

There were three separate races for positions on the Bolton Select Board: Victoria Haler won a two-year seat with 148 votes; Richard R. Reid won a three-year term with 157 votes; and Leah Scott was voted in for one year remaining on a three-year term, with 158 votes.

For three positions on the ballot for terms as Cemetery Commissioner, there were: a three-year term won by Penny J. Tinker with 165 votes; a position with two years remaining on a three-year term won by Cheryl A. Mendicino with 160 votes; and a seat with one year remaining on a three-year term, won by Kevin McLaughlin with 158 votes.

Bolton voters approved adding one quarter cent (¼ cent) to the tax rate to support the Conservation Fund, 121-50.

Voters in Bolton authorized financing (for five years or less) the purchase or lease of a double axle plow truck for the Bolton Highway Department, price not to exceed \$300,000, 130-41.

## Westford Annual Town Meeting, voting

Information from <https://westfordvt.us/voting/town-meeting/>

Westford held a Town Meeting at the Westford Elementary School on Monday, March 3, followed on Tuesday, March 4 by Westford voting by Australian ballot, with results as follows:

Out of 1776 total registered voters on Westford's checklist, 774 ballots were received (there were three defective ballots), with 173 voted at the polling place and 598 absentee ballots.

Lee McClenny was elected as Town Moderator (one-year term) with 657 votes.

The race for Westford Town Clerk (three-year term) was contested, with Callie Hamdy winning with 497 votes, followed by Keith Simpson's 251 votes.

For Library Trustee (five-year term), Becky Roy was elected, with 661 votes.

Two Selectboard seats were up for election. For a three-year seat on the Selectboard, William "Nick" Nichols received 407 votes to William Cleary's 332. For a two-year seat on the Selectboard, Julia Andrews bested Eric Harper 411-306, followed by Carol Winfield with 35 votes.

Westford's Town Budget for \$2,307,234 passed, 628-125.

## Vermont Youth Dancers (VYD) presents Oliver Twist, I Will Make It



*Vermont Youth Dancers (VYD) presents Oliver Twist, I Will Make It in three performances Saturday-Sunday, April 12-13 at Mount Mansfield Union High School, Browns Trace, Jericho. VYD will bring their signature blend of hip-hop and lyrical dance to the stage with a dynamic retelling of the classic Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens. With compelling storytelling, current music, and expressive choreography, VYD delivers an unforgettable theatrical experience that blends dance and drama in a way that is both thrilling and moving. This high-energy dance-theater experience is perfect for audiences of all ages. Partial proceeds will go to Spectrum Youth and Family Services. Tickets are now on sale at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/oliver-twist-i-will-make-it-tickets-1246102910349> for the three shows: Saturday, April 12, 1:30 and 6:30 PM, and Sunday, April 13, 1:30 PM. Don't miss this wonderful show!*

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Town Meeting and Australian ballot voting results for Cambridge

From Linda Davis, Assistant Town Clerk

<https://www.cambridge.vermont.gov/2025%20Town%20Meeting%20Results.pdf>

In Australian Ballot voting, Cambridge passed its school budgets as follows: Cambridge Elementary School 274-87; LNMUUSD, 811-358; and GMTCC, 934-232.

At the Cambridge Town Meeting, voters elected Town Officers as follows: Town Moderator, one year, Joel Page; Town Clerk, three years, Dana Warren; Town Treasurer, three years, Dana Warren; Selectboard, three years, Daniel St. Cyr; Selectboard, two years, Angela Pratt; Auditor, three years, Jill Bryce; Listers, three years, Cora Conly; Constable, one year, Mark Schwartz; Delinquent Tax Collector, one year, Dana Warren; Library Trustee, five years, Mark Schilling; Trustee for Public Funds, one year, April Tuck; Trustee for Public Funds, two years, Justin Marsh; Trustee for Public Funds, three years, Jennifer Bartlau; and Cemetery Commissioner, five years, Rebecca Ainsworth.

Cambridge approved to fund expenditures of \$4,946,512.32 (\$2,988,832.32 raised by property taxes (\$1,957,680.00 non-property taxes). Also approved: pay for Selectboard members, \$2700.

Article 3, for the Town of Cambridge to allocate \$165,000 to Cambridge 360 Inc., failed to pass.

Article 8 passed, so the Town will provide notice of the Annual Report by postcard to registered voters.

## Underhill voting and Town Meeting results

From MMCTV archive

<https://archive.org/details/town-meeting-2025-results>

Underhill's Town Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 4 at Browns River Middle School. In voice votes from the floor, Underhill voters re-elected Dan Manz as Town Moderator, approved a \$1.9M budget (\$1.66M raised by taxes), and approved Highway Fund expenditures of \$1,995,739, with \$1,554,739 raised by taxes.

In Australian ballot voting, Underhill voters elected the following Town Officers and School Directors: Selectboard (three years), Robert "Bob" Stone; Selectboard (two years), Maureen Collins-Kolb; Selectboard (one year), Shara Tarule; Town Treasurer (three years), Sherri Morin; Library Trustee, Linda Almy; MMUU School Director, James "Jimmy" Granzow; MMUU School Director, Lisa Pawlik; Park District, Dave Williamson.

Underhill voters appropriated \$2000 for Jericho/Underhill FoodHub, 454-75; and approved spending \$878,000 on a bond or note to be issued to finance removal and replacement of Bridge #7 on Pleasant Valley Road, 458-67.

## Legislature working on school funding, and survey

By Andre Roy, Westford School Board representative

As you are all aware, the Legislature and Governor Scott are engaged in work to address the school funding. The governor has proposed a plan and that will be reviewed by the Legislature.

The following is information regarding what the Legislature will be working on. There is a survey that one can participate in to provide information to the Legislature.

Your Voice on Vermont's Public Education Future — Governor Scott has proposed sweeping changes to our education system and the Legislature is reviewing his proposal this legislative session. We know how important our education system is to our state and we also know that Vermonters have concerns about the increased cost to fund our system. It's a big effort to take on and we need your help!

As we move forward with transforming our public education system, we want to hear directly from you — students, parents, educators, and community members — about what's working, what's not, and what you'd like to see in the future. Your input will help shape the policies and decisions we make in the State House to ensure our public education system remains strong, provides the best possible opportunities for all students, and is a system that Vermonters can afford.

You can read Governor Scott's education plan online at <http://www.governor.vermont.gov/strongerschools>.

I believe there is a survey in that link above. The survey is made up of 20 optional questions and was put together by the Speaker of the House's Office, results will be distributed to state legislators and relevant committees. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts.

In addition, there is a bill introduced by Senator Vyhovsky's counterproposal that she just posted for Education Finance. Here is it is below:

After four years of research and collaboration with education funding scholars, tax policy experts, my fellow legislators, and constituents, I'm proud to introduce S.104 today that will provide immediate property tax relief in the next fiscal year by moving the source of education funding to a simplified income-based tax.

One thing has been painfully clear for years: our current system of relying on property taxes to fund education does not work for most Vermonters. Due to our income sensitivity cut-offs for tax relief that are decades out of date, the highest earning Vermonters on average pay the lowest percentage of their income on school taxes and middle income Vermonters pay the highest. This has to change. We have over ten years worth of studies showing the viability of an income-based tax as a more progressive way to distribute the cost of education and make sure that those with the most ability to pay are contributing their fair share. We have the power right now with S.104 to lower the property tax burden and make this system far more equitable.

As of July 1, 2025, S.104 will:

- raise the current thresholds for income-sensitivity for tax rates up to amounts that makes sense for today's incomes and property values and not what made sense 20 years ago. This will provide immediate relief to low and middle-income earners on their FY26 tax bills as they become eligible for lower rates;
- increase the marginal tax rate for Vermont's top earners to offset the taxes that will not be charged to low and middle income Vermonters. This increase will sunset in 2026 as the system transitions to an all income-based tax system.

As of July 1, 2026, S.104 will:

- establish a new income tax to fund education and repeal the current homestead property tax;
- exempt renters from the education income tax until 2029 when a new renter credit will be available.

With the support of constituents throughout the state who have long called for tax reform and the support of legislators elected to represent them, we can make sure our public schools have the funding they need without sending Vermonters into financial crisis.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Underhill, Richmond Town Meeting video links

By Angelike A. Contis, MMCTV

Catch up on Town Meeting discussions with Mount Mansfield Community TV's (MMCTV) coverage of local Town Meetings:

- Underhill, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFMpOp14Zal&t=7s>
  - Richmond, <https://youtu.be/TMLQg9YF5yo>
- We've compiled voting results for MMUUSD, Richmond, Jericho, and Underhill here at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSjh4qIHM0Q>. (Results are also typed in the Description section if you want to quickly see them.)

Feel free to subscribe on Youtube if you want to support our efforts. Thank you!



## SUMMER CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES



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!

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**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.

**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, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM July 28-31; \$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/4fZmACP>. 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\\_summercamp\\_catalog\\_2025\\_mech\\_single-pages](https://issuu.com/bvcityarts/docs/bca_summercamp_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.retriibe.org/adventure-game-theater](http://www.retriibe.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.retriibe.org/inner-journeys](http://www.retriibe.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.retriibe.org/day-camp](http://www.retriibe.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>.

## 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. Sunday, March 23, Calvary worships at St. James in Essex at 10:00 AM. The other Sundays, Calvary worships at 9:30 AM at the Jericho church. The next Soup/Supper (held the last Thursday of the month) will be March 27, 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 (March 23, April 13, 27) 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 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 web-space! <https://www.facebook.com/SecondCongregationalUCC>

**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 wor-

ship 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.goodshepherdjericho.org](http://www.goodshepherdjericho.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)

**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.

## COMING EVENTS

## Ongoing Events

**It Takes a Village Women's Circle** meets on the last Tuesday of the month (March 25, 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).

**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

Coming events continued on page 5

CHITTENDEN MILLS BEVERAGE

5¢ OFF



FREE COFFEE 12 OZ.

PER GALLON OF GASOLINE

Cannot be combined with other offers. Ad required for discount.



News briefs continued from page 1

## Cambridge Selectboard meetings start time change

By Cody Marsh, Cambridge Selectboard Chair

At the last Cambridge Selectboard meeting, the Selectboard decided to update our meeting start times.

We will now be starting Cambridge Selectboard meetings at 6:30 PM instead of 7:00 PM. Our meetings are still the first and third Tuesdays of the month. This change went into effect at our Tuesday March 18 meeting.

## Westford taxes due March 15

By Callie Hamdy, Westford Town Clerk

This is a reminder that the third quarter tax payment was due on Saturday, March 15. This is a Saturday so we will consider taxes timely if they are postmarked by the 15th or prior, or if they are in the drop box by 8:30 AM on Tuesday March 18. You can also come into the Town Office prior to the March 15, or all day (8:30 AM – 4:30 PM) on Monday, March 17 and drop off your payment inside the office.

## Renew dog licenses in Cambridge by April 1

By Dana Warren, Cambridge Town Clerk

Dog licenses are due to be renewed by Tuesday, April 1 in Cambridge. On April 2, the prices will increase to \$19 for non-spayed/non-neutered dogs, and to \$13 for spayed neutered dogs.

## Opportunities to chat with legislators Squirrel, Graning

By Edey Graning, State Representative  
Chittenden-3 House District

Representatives Edey Graning and Trevor Squirrel will be hosting and attending two events in our community this month.

On Tuesday, March 25, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM they will be at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library for the monthly legislative update. This is designed to be a casual conversation where community members and legislators can share about important issues.

On Monday, March 31, from 6:00 – 7:30 PM they will be joined by neighboring legislators to host a conversation about school governance and funding at Camel's Hump Middle School. More information on this event to come, but please save the date and join if you are able.

As always, please reach out to either Trevor or Edey ([edey.graning@gmail.com](mailto:edey.graning@gmail.com)) if you have questions about anything happening in the State House. Thank you for your continued engagement!

## Bolton dog licenses due April 1; rabies clinic

From the Bolton Gazette, <https://boltonvt.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Bolton-Gazette-March-2025.pdf>

There are several ways to register your dog in Bolton:

- if your dog was registered in 2024 and the town has a current rabies certificate, all you need to do is drop off or mail the correct fee;

- if your dog was registered in 2024 and had a rabies booster, drop off a copy of the updated rabies certificate and the correct fee;

- if your dog was not registered in 2024, download the application and drop off or mail the application, a copy of the current rabies certificate, and the correct fee.

You may stop by during regular Town Office hours, Monday-Thursday, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, 3045 Theodore Roosevelt Hwy. It'll take a few minutes to process the registration and you can leave with your registration and tag.

Or you can mail everything to Bolton Town Office, 3045 Theodore Roosevelt Hwy, Bolton, VT 05676 and your registration and tag will be mailed to you.

Or you can put everything in the 24/7 drop box to the right of the front door of the Town Office and your registration and tag will be mailed to you.

If you do not register your dog, reminders will be sent out beginning April 10.

Huntington and Richmond are having a Rabies Clinic on Saturday, March 29, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the Huntington Town Garage. We have appointments and will also fit in walk-ins. \$20 Rabies / \$35 microchipping.

## Waste issues on Cambridge trails

By Laird MacDowell, CTC Chair

The volunteer Cambridge Trails Committee (CTC) maintains the dog waste station located at the Cambridge Junction trail head and someone has been stealing large quantities of the dog waste bags, over 100 at a time. The dog waste station is serviced once a week where the waste bag dispenser is replenished, if needed, and the waste receptacle is changed.

Theft of the bags has happened several times and leaves the dispenser empty so dog waste can end up on the trail and not disposed of properly. The Town of Cambridge funds the waste station bags through the CTC so your tax dollars are impacted. So — stop stealing all the waste bags, they can be purchased from Amazon for six dollars for 240 bags.

Another waste issue at the Cambridge Junction trail head is parents leaving dirty diapers next to the port-o-let, assuming someone else will dispose of their children's waste. The trail head is a Carry In/Carry Out facility so it is the parents' responsibility to remove and dispose of the dirty diapers. This has been a sporadic problem since the trail head first opened.

*Courage doesn't always roar.  
Sometimes courage is the quiet voice  
at the end of the day saying,  
"I will try again tomorrow."*

— Mary Anne Radmacher, American author and artist

## Westford roads posted for mud season

By Holly Delisle, Westford Town Administrator

Mud season is upon us!

All town roads have been posted and will remain posted until the Road Foreman determines that mud season is over, which will be sometime in April depending on the severity. Occasionally, heavy trucks are permitted on the roads with permission of the Road Foreman. This is determined on a case by case basis. Please contact Sean Cushing (802-879-4306) for any questions pertaining to the roads being posted.

This is a good time to remind people of road maintenance during mud season. If you have lived in Westford for at least one mud season you are aware of how quickly the roads get muddy and ruts appear and how long they stay that way.

The severity of mud season will depend on how deep the frost is and how long it takes to come out of the ground, as well as how much sun and wind there is. The Road Foreman will be checking roads to determine if there are any places that need attention. The road crew will be doing as much as they can to repair roads but without causing further damage, which can be caused by driving heavy dump trucks loaded with stone over unfrozen roads.

The Town appreciates your patience and understanding during mud season. We realize driving the back roads is difficult and hard on your cars and can be frustrating. We strongly suggest residents take the shortest route possible to a paved road even though this may not be the shortest route to your destination. Reducing travel on the gravel roads as much as possible is recommended to minimize damage to the roads. Thank you for your understanding while we maneuver through this season together!

## Underhill list of posted highways for mud season

The VT Legislature has authorized the Selectboard and District Transportation Administrations to post seasonal restrictions on certain town roads and state highways during periods that make the highway systems especially susceptible to damage (e.g., winter thaws, rainy periods, or when the frost is coming out). During this time, no load in excess of the posting is permitted, no new permits can be issued, and blanket permits are suspended.

Below is a list of all Town Highways in the Town of Underhill that have been posted effective Tuesday, March 4. If there are Town Highways, not listed below, that are accessed from a road listed below, that road shall also be considered posted. The expected end date is Thursday, May 15, subject to change as conditions permit.

- TH 2 Mountain Rd.;
- TH 3 Poker Hill Rd.;
- TH 4 Sand Hill Rd.;
- TH 5 Bill Cook Rd.;
- TH 9 North Underhill Station Rd.;
- TH 15 Deane Rd.;
- TH 17 Corbett Rd.;
- TH 18 Daudelin Rd.;
- TH 19 Gert's Knob;
- TH 21 Repa Rd.;
- TH 22 Kelley Rd.;
- TH 24 Lower and Upper English Settlement Rds.;
- TH 27 Harvey Rd.;
- TH 30 Cilley Hill Rd.;
- TH 35 Irish Settlement Rd.;
- TH 37 Stevensville Rd.;
- TH 40 Beartown Rd.;
- TH 42 Krug Rd.;
- TH 43 Paul Cook Rd.;
- TH 44 Range Rd.;
- TH 48 Green St.;
- TH 52 Meadow Lane;
- TH 54 Maple Ridge;
- TH 62 Mt. Vista Rd.

## Westford dog licenses due April 1

By Callie Hamdy, Westford Town Clerk  
and Maria Barden, Assistant Town Clerk

Reminder: All dogs are required to be licensed by Tuesday, April 1. All that is required for licensing is a current rabies vaccine and the licensing fee.

Please note: there has been a statute change (ACT 167) that increases the amount of money to be procured by the State of Vermont for dog licenses by \$2. This means that in 2025 the cost to license has increased: \$13 for spayed/neutered dogs and \$15 for intact dogs. You can read about the change online at <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2024/Docs/ACTS/ACT167/ACT167%20As%20Enacted.pdf>, on page 7.

The State of Vermont uses their portion of dog license fees to pay for rabies control programs, fund low-cost spay and neuter programs across the state, and fund the administration of animal welfare laws in the state. The Town of Westford uses their portion of the dog license fee to properly maintain, house, and administer the dog license records.

Licensing your dog plays an important part in preventing the spread of rabies in Vermont. It can also assist the town in getting your dog back to you faster if they ever go missing by providing important contact information.

If you have any questions or concerns about licensing please contact [townclerk@westfordvt.us](mailto:townclerk@westfordvt.us) or 802-878-4587.

## Town of Cambridge committee opportunities

By Eric Boozan

The Town of Cambridge has several open positions for these Committees and Commissions: Finance Committee, Conservation Commission, Trails Committee, and Town Meeting Modernization Ad Hoc Committee. Committees generally meet once a month, either in person or remotely.

If you are interested or have any questions regarding the roles and responsibilities for these committees, please contact [eric@cambridgevt.org](mailto:eric@cambridgevt.org) or 802-644-2251 Option #2.

## Share your vision for Lamoille County

From Lamoille County Planning Commission

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>.

## Underhill to rehabilitate, renovate the Great Room in Town Hall

By Jennifer Silpe-Katz, Town of Underhill

The Town of Underhill staff, Underhill Historical Society, Selectboard, and other members of the community have been meeting for several years to discuss the most advantageous path forward to rehabilitating the Great Room at the Underhill Town Hall on Pleasant Valley Road. We are now actively seeking a structural engineer and general contractors so we can better understand the scope of the project.

The goal is to preserve the space and its unique architectural and historical components while improving its efficiency and effectiveness as a meeting and assembly hall for Town committees and organizations.

With guidance and recommendations from Preservation Trust of Vermont and grant assistance from the Robert Sincerbeaux Fund Underhill contracted with R. Edwards & Co. to complete the design and lighting schematics.

To learn more about the history of the building and Great Room, see designs and layouts project or obtain the bid requirements (RFP) go online to <https://www.underhillvt.gov/home-page/page/great-room-renovation-rfp>. For more information feel free to contact Jennifer Silpe-Katz at [jsilpe-katz@underhillvt.gov](mailto:jsilpe-katz@underhillvt.gov).

## COMMUNITY COLUMNS



*Poecilographa decora*, August 11, 2024, by bugeyedbernie. A first observation in Vermont. PHOTO BY BERNIE PAQUETTE

## Uncommon insects reported in Jericho (including some "first for Vermont")

By Bernie "bugyedbernie" Paquette, Jericho  
(This article is in the *Vermont Entomological Society* winter/spring 2025 newsletter)

Uncommon: out of the ordinary, unusual, or remarkably great. In 2012, the *Polystoechotes punctata* or giant lacewing was the first recorded in eastern North America in over 50 years — and the first record of the species ever in Arkansas (at a Walmart). Vermont also has had a share of uncommon discoveries.

Community columns continued on page 6

**MAKING SWEET  
MEMORIES SINCE 1986**

**Blue Mall, So. Burlington • 802-863-8306**  
**Factory Location, Route 15, Jericho • 802-899-3373**  
[SnowflakeChocolate.com](http://SnowflakeChocolate.com)

## The Mountain Gazette

6558 VT Route 116, Starksboro, VT 05487

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

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



## HEALTH NEWS

## Richmond blood drive April 2

The next Richmond blood drive will be held Wednesday, April 2, 12:00 – 5:45 PM at the Richmond Congregational Church, 20 Church St., Richmond. Appointments are required; reserve yours by calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or go online to <https://www.redcrossblood.org/> for more information and to make an appointment. Or you may contact [dthomas@gmavt.net](mailto:dthomas@gmavt.net) or 802-434-3654 for further assistance.

We have a long way to go to fill the 85-donor schedule. There are many available slots between 1:15 – 5:45pm. As you start compiling a list of spring projects, please consider this feel-good activity as one of your priorities. All blood types are urgently needed.

## To the Copley Hospital community

From Jill Baker, Copley Hospital

We want to provide you with an update on the steps the Board of Trustees is taking as part of a comprehensive review of the Birthing Center. This process will inform the decision on whether to continue operating, significantly change the current service model, or close the service. Throughout the review, we will always be keeping the expectant mothers in mind, as well as everyone we serve.

To ensure a thorough and objective assessment, the Board has recently engaged an external consultant with extensive experience in the healthcare sector. This consultant will conduct an in-depth evaluation of all aspects related to maintaining or closing the Birthing Center. As part of their review, they will meet with focus groups, including Birthing Center staff and medical providers, analyze state and regional hospital birth data, examine similar hospital closures, and review Copley's birth statistics and financial data. It is essential to incorporate all perspectives and data points to fully understand the impact of the Birthing Center before any recommendations are made.

The consultant's evaluation will consider several key factors, including:

- the steady decline in birth volume at Copley;
- the inherent risks associated with a lower number of births;
- the financial implications of maintaining a fully staffed Birthing Center 365 days a year;
- challenges in staffing the Center amid a tight labor market;
- current quality standards for obstetrical care and potential alternative care models that could meet the community's needs.

These factors, alongside qualitative and quantitative data, will collectively shape the final decision.

Since December 2024, when the possibility of closure was first raised following the Oliver Wyman report, we have listened to input from Copley employees, medical staff, volunteer committee members, patients, and the broader community. We recognize and share many of your concerns. A decision of this magnitude requires careful consideration and deliberation.

While many have voiced strong support for keeping the Birthing Center open, we have also heard from patients who love Copley but ultimately chose to give birth elsewhere due to the availability of greater resources. Their decisions, though difficult, reflect the complexity of this issue.

The consultant's review is expected to take approximately three months. Once their report is submitted, the Board will have a clearer understanding of the long-term sustainability of the Birthing Center and will determine the best path forward for Copley.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we conduct this important assessment. Updates will be posted on the Copley Hospital website and Facebook page as they become available.

Community input can be emailed to [administration@CHSI.org](mailto:administration@CHSI.org).

Thank you for your continued support and for being part of our exceptional Copley community.

## Somatic tools for well-being

From VT DCF Family Services Division

If you've participated in classes, trainings, or coaching through the Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership, you've probably noticed that we focus a lot on the importance of emotional self-regulation. This means being able to notice and work with your own emotional responses.

At <https://www.verywellmind.com/>, emotional self-regulation is defined as the ability to:

- pause before acting;
- support yourself through a challenge — and seek support from others;
- act in ways that are consistent with your values.

Emotional self-regulation takes practice. And it's one of the most important things you can do as a child welfare worker or kin, foster, or adoptive family member. Remember that the young people you care for and work with often attune with you — so your well-being also has a good chance of increasing their well-being. And when you model emotional self-regulation techniques and explain what you're doing, children and youth notice — and then they are better able to start practicing these techniques themselves.

One way to work on emotional self-regulation is by using somatic practices — activities that focus on body awareness, perception, and reflection to help settle your nervous system and increase your awareness of not only your body, but also of your mind and spirit.

Take a look at the articles below to see what might resonate for you and those in your care. Not every technique will be a good fit for every person; this is especially important to keep in mind for those with trauma histories. Check in with your child's team (and, depending on their age and development, with the child themselves) about what resonates with them. Many of us benefit from having a toolbox of sorts — knowledge about a variety of techniques that might support us during stressful moments.

Starting with you: in this article from Somatic Therapy Partners, *Somatic Techniques for Children and Parents* (<https://somatictherapypartners.com/trauma-proofing-your-children/>), you might consider your own history from a somatic lens. You'll also learn about a variety of ways to connect with the children and youth in your life in ways that help to regulate you both.

Nurturing somatic awareness: through this post from The Embody Lab, *5 Ways to Nurture Somatic Awareness and Self-Regulation in Children* (<https://www.theembodilab.com/blog/5-ways-to-nurture-somatic-awareness-and-self-regulation-in-children/>), you'll learn how play, curiosity, and more contribute to self-awareness and self-regulation.

Some techniques to try: this post from Johns Hopkins, *Somatic Self Care* (<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/office-of-well-being/connection-support/somatic-self-care>) shares several techniques, some of which are only five minutes long, to either calm or activate your nervous system.

## SOSVT: free support for Vermonters impacted by flooding

From the VT Department of Mental Health

Starting Over Strong Vermont (SOSVT) offers free, anonymous emotional support and guidance to Vermonters impacted

by the 2024 flooding. SOSVT's outreach workers connect you with local resources and support your recovery within your community. You can contact outreach workers by phone, in-person, or even at your home to help navigate the recovery process.

Disasters can have lasting emotional effects, and it's normal to feel overwhelmed, anxious, or uncertain. SOSVT is here to help because emotional recovery is a crucial part of your overall well-being.

Learn more and get support by calling 802-651-1767 or visiting <https://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/sosvt>. You don't have to face recovery alone.

## Pinkeye

Parents have been asking me some eye-opening questions about whether or not their child might be getting pinkeye. Well, let me see what I can tell you about this problem.

Pinkeye gets its name because it describes the pink or reddish appearance of what is normally the white part of the eye and the inside of the eyelids. We also call this type of redness conjunctivitis.

*Causes and results of pinkeye*

Pinkeye can be due to an infection from bacteria or viruses, allergies, or chemicals that get into the eye. No matter what the cause it will result in redness, tearing, itching, and often a discharge of watery or — in the case of some infections — thick white or yellow fluid. This is affectionately referred to as pus coming out of the eye that can sometimes cause the lids to stick together.

If caused by an infectious germ, pinkeye can be contagious and will spread by direct contact from one infected person to another; or in the case of viruses, by coughing and sneezing.

If you find your child with these symptoms of eye discomfort, having them seen by your child's health care professional can help determine the cause and in turn the treatment.

No matter what the cause, all children benefit from cleaning out the eye discharge with a clean cool wet washcloth. If it is infectious due to bacteria, then prescription antibiotic eye drops or ointment might be recommended.

If a bacterial cause is found, children can return to school after one day of treatment with the drops or ointment as long as eye drainage also stops. If the pinkeye is due to a virus, this may take longer for eye drainage to stop — keep your child home longer.

*What if pinkeye doesn't improve?*

If a child doesn't improve in one to two days or develops a fever, blisters around the eye, or complains of severe eye pain, blurred vision, or increased tenderness and redness around the eye, then please return to your child's health care professional for further evaluation and treatment.

Of course, the best way to deal with your child getting pinkeye or conjunctivitis is to not let it happen. So, have your child wash their hands after interacting with anyone who may have pinkeye and if they themselves develop pinkeye, they should be washing their hands as well.

Hopefully, tips like these will allow you to know what to do in a blink of an eye the next time you are worried about your child having pinkeye.

*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*

*Smell the sea, and feel the sky.*

*Let your soul and spirit fly.*

— Van Morrison

## LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

### Education reform and Vermont House update

By Brenda Steady, State Representative  
Chittenden-25 House District

Saturday, March 1

The Governor's Education Transformation Proposal. The administration's statutory language was released Saturday, March 1, the bill number is H.454.

The Vermont education system is at a turning point and as the work continues to create a sustainable, high-quality future for our schools, your input is essential. The Speaker's office has put together a short survey to gather feedback from Vermonters on education reform.

Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts on what's working, what is not working, and what you'd like to see in the future. I would like to have my constituents have a voice and help shape conversations at the State House. You can also share the survey directly online at <https://bit.ly/4bliMVZ> (short for <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSekaIn7kWtYfaQcY-3cOZzrhfn19A6LqoSfuu4oBELabPtVdQ/viewform>).

Please share this survey with your friends, neighbors, and community members. Every voice matters!

February 25-28

This week a resolution was read on the House Floor in memory of Don Turner from Milton. His family was in attendance. Don was a dedicated public servant, known for his decades of service in the Milton Volunteer Fire Department, his leadership in the State House, his role as town manager, and his service on the Milton Selectboard. He was respected and liked by everyone he met and worked with, treating all with dignity, respect, and kindness. His legacy will live on through the countless lives he touched and improved.

This week, we focused on budget discussions. Each committee received budget recommendations from the governor's office and then prepared a budget for the Appropriations Committee's review. My committee did not adhere to the governor's recommended dollar figure, and I was the only member to vote "no" on the final budget.

One reason for my "no" vote is H.91, an act relating to the Emergency Temporary Shelter Program. This program could become very costly. My experience on the School Board taught me that increasing funding doesn't always solve issues effectively.

Here's the proposed language from my committee: "(c) (1) General Assistance Emergency Housing shall be provided in a community-based shelter whenever possible. If there is inadequate community-based shelter space within the Agency of Human Services district, the household shall be provided emergency housing in a hotel or motel within the district, if available, until adequate community-based shelter space becomes available. The use of hotel and motel rooms shall be capped at 1437 rooms per night throughout fiscal year 2026, including during cold weather months."

IThe cost for 1437 rooms for one day is \$11,496, and for one year, it is \$4,196,040. Removing the cap of 80 days I believe could jeopardize emergency housing for families, veterans, and the disabled. One person has been housed in a hotel room for two years through another nonprofit. This scenario could repeat if the cap is removed from the State of Vermont's Emergency Housing Program.

During my time housing the homeless, I received calls to house individuals exiting hospitals or those affected by house fires, etc. There were some budget requests I found beneficial for Vermonters, but the budget needed to be voted on as a whole to proceed.

March 13

Last week the State House was quiet as we were given a week off for Town Meeting week.

On Monday, the State House walls were buzzing as we entered the doors. My committee continued working on the H.91, An act relating to the Emergency Temporary Shelter Program. The committee is at the mark-up stage. Legislative Counsel attends the meetings and works with the committee on wording.

H.91 aims to establish the Emergency Temporary Shelter Program in Vermont, replacing the existing General Assistance Emergency Housing Program. The legislative intent focuses on eliminating unsheltered homelessness and providing stable pathways to permanent housing for individuals in need. Key features of the bill include the formation of an Emergency Temporary Shelter Program Advisory Committee, which will include individuals with lived experience of homelessness to guide the program's implementation. The bill also sets forth eligibility criteria for households seeking assistance, addressing various circumstances such as age, disability, and recent traumatic events.

I took this summary off the State of Vermont website:

"Furthermore, the bill outlines specific definitions and guidelines for the new program, including the types of shelters that may be utilized, such as community-based shelters and hotel accommodations. It establishes a maximum number of sheltered days based on the statewide vacancy rate and requires participation in coordinated entry and case management for households needing extended shelter. The bill also mandates winter sheltering provisions and requires the Department for Children and Families to file proposed rules for the program's administration by February 15, 2026. Notably, the bill repeals the requirement for the Commissioner for Children and Families to submit an annual report on the General Assistance Program, and it sets the effective dates for various provisions, with the program's full implementation scheduled for July 1, 2026."

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions at [bsteady@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:bsteady@leg.state.vt.us).

### Legislative update; give feedback on Ed proposal

By Theresa Wood, State Representative  
Washington-Chittenden House District

March 11

It was great to see so many people participating in Town Meeting in all three towns! I had lots of good conversations that will help to inform my decisions as we move forward in the session.

This week is what is known as "cross-over week." All bills must be voted out of policy committees this week in order to have action on them and send them off to the Senate for consideration. Friday, March 14 is the deadline to get bills out of committee.

The Education and Ways and Means Committees continues to take testimony and develop a bill to address the quality, equity, access, and cost of education. Also, your representatives and senators will be holding two public information forums in March:

- Monday, March 24, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Harwood Union High School; and
- Monday, March 31, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Camel's Hump Middle School.

Thanks and hope to see you there!

Legislative reports continued on page 6



## Coming events continued from page 2

community singing group which harmonizes together in four parts on Thursday evenings! However you like to sing, bring your voice and join us! 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 [lar.2436@gmail.com](mailto:lar.2436@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>.

**The Underhill Historical Society** meets on the second Wednesday of each month (April 9) 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 about the Underhill Historical Society: <https://underhillhistoricalsociety.org/>

**Craft Group:** meets twice a month on Thursdays (March 20, April 3, 17), 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 (April 3). 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!

**Monday night yoga** in Underhill Center, Mondays through May 26, 6:30 – 7:30 PM, upstairs in the Great Room at the Underhill Town Hall. We will engage the connection between breath, body, and mind to generate heat and build strength and flexibility. *Vinyasa* incorporates a dynamic flow of gradually intensifying postures, with intentional breath, followed by cool down and rest. All levels and abilities are welcome! Bring your own mat and any blocks or props. Cost: \$7 per class or \$30 for 5-class punch card. For more information, go online to <https://www.underhillvt.gov/recreation-committee/page/vinyasa-yoga>

**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 – 10:15 AM; first Friday of the month, 9:45 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.

## Coming Events

### Thursday, March 20

**Learn Together Webinar: Immigration.** 6:30 – 7:30 PM, on Zoom or 2nd Congregational Church, Church St., Jeffersonville. Presented by staff from Migrant Justice, who have insight into how national policies are affecting migrants here in Vermont. Join us downstairs in the church; or to watch on your own, register online at <https://bit.ly/41kJDTz> (short for <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6091111111>). Questions? Contact pastor, the Rev. Sally May, at [revjeffucc@gmail.com](mailto:revjeffucc@gmail.com).

### Friday, March 21

**What's Next for Your Woods — a legacy planning workshop.** 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM, St. Albans Town Hall, St. Albans. Planning the future of your forest can feel overwhelming, but you don't have to do it alone. This workshop brings together experienced estate planning professionals and landowners who have navigated the succession process. Through a mix of presentations, panel discussions, and breakout sessions, you'll gain insights into the steps involved and explore key topics tailored to your specific interests. Whether you're just beginning to think about woodland succession planning, actively making a plan, or haven't started yet, this workshop will provide valuable guidance and practical next steps. Registration fee (includes lunch): \$30 individual, \$50 couple. Co-hosted by Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife and Vermont Woodlands Association. Register online at <https://bit.ly/41lhETx> (short for <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/n89av77/lp/25025194-4c48-48db-9117-99fbed8ff14>).

### Saturday, March 22

**The Many Meanings of Maple.** 1:00 PM, Westford Brick Meeting House on the Common, 1685 VT Rt. 128, Westford. The Westford Historical Society presents speaker Champlain College Prof. Michael Lange, who will examine maple sugaring and its enormous importance to Vermont's economy, ecology,

and heritage. Lange will discuss sugaring based on sugar makers from all over the state. He spent over five years of research, learning from them what sugaring really means to Vermont. His talk focuses on how and why maple has become so important to Vermont's identity, and how and why it helps us shape who we are as Vermonters. For more information, contact Glenn Rogers, 802-878-4524, or Caroline Brown, 802-878-8890 or [carolinebrown802@myfairpoint.net](mailto:carolinebrown802@myfairpoint.net). Free and open to the public; handicapped accessible. Sponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council.

**Spring Equinox evening snowshoe and hike.** 7:00 PM, Westford Elementary School parking lot, Brookside Rd., Westford. The Westford Conservation Commission invites you to meet at the school parking lot and go for an evening walk through the woods. Please dress for the weather and bring a headlamp or flashlight. Snowshoes are not required to join in the fun!

### Sunday, March 23

**Country Breakfast.** 8:00 – 10:30 AM, St. Thomas Parish Hall, Underhill Center. Sponsored by the St. Thomas Parish Knights of Columbus, the breakfast will include juice, eggs, pancakes, sausage, bacon, home fries, and coffee or tea. The cost is a suggested donation of \$12. All are welcome! Please come and bring the whole family to this delicious Country Breakfast. The Hall is handicapped accessible. Questions? 802-899-4632.

**Understanding Palestine: Talk and Conversation.** 3:00 – 5:00 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, River Rd., Jericho. Speakers: Hamed Bakir from Fairfax, retired coordinator at the World Health organization, and Jason Hirsch, organizer with Jewish Voice for Peace and Instructor of Anthropology at St. Michael's College. Moderated by Jean Archibald.

**Concert with Paul Orgel — Music of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms.** 4:00 – 5:30 PM at the Ohavi Zedek Synagogue, North Prospect St., Burlington. This concert is to benefit Full Circle Preschool. Pianist Paul Orgel has concertized throughout the United States, Europe, and China as a recitalist, soloist with orchestra, and chamber musician. Critics have praised his playing for its "subtlety and attention to nuance" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), "rare pathos" (*New York Times*), "brilliant technique, sense of humor and fantasy" (*Bridgeport Post*), "warmth and beauty of sound" (*Barre-Montpelier Times Argus*), and "power and grace" (*Vermont Times*). A full bio, concert program, and ticket information are available at the event website, <https://ohavizedek.org/event/paul-orgel-music-of-bach-beethoven-and-brahms/>.

### Tuesday, March 25

**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 Squirrel of Underhill provide an update on Vermont's legislative session and answer your questions.

### Thursday, March 27

**EV Road Trip movie.** 6:30 – 8:30 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, River Road, Jericho. Come see the movie about the first time Jericho resident Ben Rich rode across the USA on an electric motorcycle! Hear the wild stories of getting four different EVs across the U.S. with sketchy infrastructure. And see who didn't make it all the way... Plus Q&A about EV road trips today, current EVs available, and financial incentives to buy an EV. Wherever you stand, this ride is worth taking! [https://www.drml.org/event/kick-gas-movie-and-discussion/?instance\\_id=5577](https://www.drml.org/event/kick-gas-movie-and-discussion/?instance_id=5577)

### Saturday, March 29

**March Bird Monitoring Walk.** 8:00 – 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.

**Lake Champlain Longbeards annual Wild Game Dinner.** 4:00 – 6:30 PM, Waterbury Fire Department, S. Main St., Waterbury Village Historic District, Waterbury. Enjoy wild game used in our favorite recipes — venison, bear, wild turkey, moose, and more. \$15 per person; under 12 \$5. All proceeds are used for our youth turkey day in April. Reservations requested — contact Ron Lafreniere, 802-434-4274 or [ronhuntsvt@gmail.com](mailto:ronhuntsvt@gmail.com).

**Catalyst Church Children's Ministry spaghetti dinner fundraiser.** 4:00 – 8:00 PM, Catalyst Church, Raceway Road, Jericho. This spaghetti feast supports the Catalyst Summer Bible Camp. Whether you're a family looking for a kid-friendly meal or a church member wanting to give back to your community, the spaghetti dinner is the perfect way to enjoy a tasty Italian dinner while making a difference in young lives. Menu: homemade spaghetti and meatballs, garlic bread, salad, and dessert; Dine-In or Take-Out. To RSVP and for more details please visit <http://www.catalystvt.org>.

### Monday March 31

**Maple sugaring in a changing environment.** 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Community Center in Jericho, Browns Trace, Jericho Center. Tim Rademacher, Director of the Proctor Maple Research Center in Underhill and an Assistant Professor in Plant Biology at UVM, focuses his research on exploring how maple sugaring can help in mitigating global changes (carbon sequestration and biodiversity protection) and on developing sustainable and climate-resilient practices in the maple industry. He will explore the impacts of climate change on maple sugaring, from shifting sap flow patterns to forest health and carbon dynamics. Tim will share his insights on looming risks and opportunities like the latest insights into summer drought impacts on maple sugaring and climate adaptation strategies and ways to enhance forest resilience. For more information on past talks, check out the Transition Town Jericho website: [www.transitiontownjericho.net](http://www.transitiontownjericho.net). Transition Town Jericho's presentation in its resiliency talks series is a free event, handicapped accessible, and refreshments served. RSVP requested; email [Ttjericho.VT@gmail.com](mailto:Ttjericho.VT@gmail.com).

### Wednesday, April 2

**Richmond Congregational Church blood drive.** 12:00 – 5:45 PM at the Richmond Congregational Church, 20 Church St., Richmond. Appointments are required; reserve yours by calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or go online to <https://www.redcrossblood.org/> for more information and to make an appointment. Or you may contact [dthomas@gmavt.net](mailto:dthomas@gmavt.net) or 802-434-3654 for further assistance.

### Thursday, April 3

**Learn Together Webinar: Community Organizing.** 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, on Zoom or 2nd Congregational Church, Church St., Jeffersonville. Learn what we can do to organize ourselves to be more effective in resisting the harmful effects of these policies. Presented by Vermont Interfaith Action Executive Director Melissa Battah and other organizers. Join us downstairs in the church; or to watch on your own, register online at <https://bit.ly/3QCAzV1> (short for <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6091111111>). Questions? Contact pastor, the Rev. Sally May, at [revjeffucc@gmail.com](mailto:revjeffucc@gmail.com).

### Saturday, April 5

**St. Thomas Church Calcutta.** 4:30 PM, Mansfield Barn, corner VT Rt. 15 and Browns Trace, Jericho. A "Calcutta" is an elimination jackpot game coupled with dinner and entertainment. There will only be 100 "balls" sold for a chance to win the \$2000 cash Grand Prize. The event also features multiple prizes during the evening, raffles, a silent auction, and a cash bar. Cost: \$130 per ball, which includes a buffet dinner for two (or buy one dinner/one ball for \$90, email [stthomasvtcalcutta@gmail.com](mailto:stthomasvtcalcutta@gmail.com) first for assistance). Dinner catered by Jericho Café and Tavern. Doors open at 4:30 PM, with dinner served at 5:45 PM. Buy tickets online at <https://www.zeffy.com/ticketing/2025-st-thomas-catholic-church-calcutta>, email [stthomasvtcalcutta@gmail.com](mailto:stthomasvtcalcutta@gmail.com), or visit the St.Thomas website <https://www.stthomasvt.com/calcutta-2025>.

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Community columns continued from page 3

Thankfully, there is no need to travel to Arkansas or Walmart to discover and observe an uncommon insect taxa.

One can appreciate the perseverance of Bryan Pfeiffer, who after searching for two decades discovered (first for Vermont) a rare and elusive butterfly, the Bog elfin, in 2023.

Most of us will never see a Bog elfin, and many will never see a bog. However, uncommon finds can be had closer to home, even in our own yards.

As my list at the first link below demonstrates, the next uncommon insect discovery may be awaiting in your town or your backyard — *uncommon* discoveries; most are from our Jericho backyard and a few are from nearby towns — that I posted on *iNaturalist* in 2024, and a second listing of pre-2024.

Some are “first for Vermont.”

This is a partial view of the wonder of millennia of evolution and the later effect of a most recent changing habitat.

*One town, One yard, One Acre* of habitat containing a multitude of life. To closely observe the many offers an opportunity to stumble upon the uncommon, the rare, or even the unknown.

The list includes hyperlinks to view photos of each of the uncommon species. View the list at <https://vtbugeyed.blogspot.com/2024/11/uncommon-insect-observations-in-vermont.html>.

Lead us to Nature and we will never be lost again. — Bernie

p.s. longing for summer? In an ongoing effort to introduce and embellish the joy of observing and learning about wildlife, in particular bees, I offer a short story (“Bees on the Beach”) based on my observations and including facts from organizations such as Vermont Center for EcoStudies. You can find the story at my blog: at <https://vtbugeyed.blogspot.com/2024/11/bees-at-beach-short-story-by-bernie.html>.

## Along VT Rt. 15 in 1937

Excerpt from *Vermont, A Guide to the Green Mountain State 1937, Works Progress Administration*

(Mileage markers, e.g. “48.1 W,” indicate the number of miles traveling west from West Danville toward Winooski on VT Rt. 15 — Editor)

JEFFERSONVILLE (altitude 480, population 305), 48.1 W, named in honor of Thomas Jefferson by vote of the citizens in 1827, stretches L-shaped along a wide avenue on the broad flats of the Lamoille, with neat lawns and spacious verandas shaded by elms, inducing an aspect of pleasurable living in quiet comfort. The sawmills and lumber stacks along the river indicate that this is a lumbering center primarily. The World War Memorial (L) at the junction in the village center is carved from solid rock, an unusually impressive and distinctive memorial. Jeffersonville is the northern terminus of the Smugglers’ Notch Road, and the central village of Cambridge township. Here is the junction with State 108. West of Jeffersonville, the highway follows the graceful bending course of the river. The George Warner Place (R), 49.7 m., a group of farm buildings dominated by three red-brick houses, illustrates the better and more durable style of architecture employed by the landed gentry of a century ago. At 50.8 m. the highway curves left through an Old Double-Passage Covered Bridge over the broad flow of the Lamoille, and almost immediately beyond crosses a smaller single-passage covered bridge.

CAMBRIDGE (altitude 454, population 237), 51 W, an attractive village situated on a broad interval of the Lamoille at the northwest base of Mount Mansfield, has one of the finest natural settings in the State. The unusually wide main thoroughfare gives an orderly, spacious, and parklike aspect to the village. The macadam of State 15 forms the central strip flanked by elm-shaded grassy parkways, which in turn are bordered by unpaved streets fronting the well-spaced brick and wooden homes. This arrangement was made in order that the militia might drill on the Main St. without obstructing traffic; practical in origin, it also adds to the attractiveness of the village street. The town was settled in 1783. In the heart of the maple-sugar section, Cambridge has, for nearly 150 years, been a major producer of maple products. The Cambridge Inn (L) was built as the Borough House over a century ago, and stands in the strong security of ancient red brick, the dignity of its old-time charm lingering in line, detail, and the delicate fanlight of the entrance motif. The inn is completely furnished with antiques. The Congregational Church (R) has attractive stained-glass windows. The small Catholic Church (R) is finished in dull brown shingles.

Between Cambridge and Underhill, State 15 swings (L) southward, climbing away from the Lamoille Valley to a broken upland region, with rock-strewn pastures and bouldered slopes stretching up on a gentle incline from the shallow valley scooped out of gaunt hills. The Humphrey Homestead (may he inspected with owner’s permission) (L), 60.5 W, is one of the most interesting houses on the route, having a front brick section with the original 1808 cabin in the rear. The cabin stands as it was built, with the hand-hewn beams and hand-made nails. The front part of the house is a veritable museum of early 19th-century furnishings of great variety, conjuring mellowed pictures of family life in pioneer days. The Old Coach House has its original square exterior lamps, and inside are old tools, utensils, and an ancient sleigh. Left from the Humphrey Homestead on a gravel road (now Poker Hill Rd., per the North Underhill Cemetery Association, <https://northunderhillcemetery.com/> — Editor) through pleasant rolling hill country is the Old Underhill Burying Ground, all that remains of the first settlement in the township. Here are old tombstones with strange inscriptions, some of which are dated prior to 1800.

UNDERHILL (Flats) (altitude 796, population township 781), 62.1 W, lies along a level plain, centered around a small tree-studded triangle surrounded by stores, homes, and a small light tan church (L) with a shuttered belfry and spire. A stone fountain plays in the triangle. Mount Mansfield overshadows the village on the northeast, its broad heights carved high against the skyline. Underhill was settled in 1786, and one of the first-comers, Udney Hay, had been commissary general of a Revolutionary division.

Left (and 3 miles) from the triangle in Underhill Flats on a gravel road is UNDERHILL CENTER, a pleasing little hamlet on the lower western slope of Mount Mansfield. The Catholic Church (R) dominates the village center, the largest church in the district, containing a number of excellent stained-glass windows. Right (on Range Rd., 4 miles from Underhill Center) is the U.S. Artillery Range, said to be the largest range in the east and containing 4600 acres. When artillery maneuvers are held here from time to time the quiet countryside is shattered and rocked by the roaring thunder of big guns. Beyond Underhill Center on another road is a white schoolhouse (at 3.4 miles from VT Rt.

15), and turning right from there on a climbing branch road is the exclusive Stevensville Summer Colony, 5.4 m, a mountain resort in the shadow of Mansfield. Beyond the white schoolhouse is the junction with a third branch road (Mountain Road, at 4.2 miles from VT Rt. 15). Right on this climbing road is a Rustic Shelter and Free Camp Site, established by the State Forestry Department. At 7.2 m. is the Halfway House, a white two-story summer inn and refreshment shop, the “jumping-off” place for the hike up Mount Mansfield. One foot trail leads directly up the mountainside to the hotel on the summit. The Sunset Trail runs diagonally to the Chin of Mansfield. Either trail may be taken, but the usual procedure is as follows: climb straight up the summit on the direct route; proceed north along the summit ridge on the Long Trail; and descend the Sunset Trail to the Halfway House.

Between Underhill Flats and Jericho, broad plains stretch on either side of hard-surfaced State 15 toward the foothills. At 62.6 m. is the site of the First Settlement in Jericho (L), marked by a monument commemorating Joseph Brown and family, who hewed a home out of this extreme frontier wilderness in 1774. The Browns were captured here in 1780 by Indian raiders sent out by the British, and taken to Montreal, where they were held until 1783.

At 63.1 m. is the junction with a country road (Browns Trace). Left on this country road through varied farming territory is JERICHO CENTER (altitude 765, population 80), 3 m., attractively settled around a large elm-shaded square. The Congregational Church at the north side of the square was built in 1825, and stands firmly in durable red brick and severe lines, its high white spire rising in clean, towering thrust, visible for miles around. The Jericho Academy Building, southeast corner of the square, was also built in 1825, in the white frame style favored at that time for schools. It now serves as a library (Jericho Town Library).

JERICHO (Corner) (altitude 560, population township 1091), 65.5 M, is a village of well-constructed homes ranked along the level surface of a plain that dips downward at the southern end of the settlement. A few Georgian structures add a touch of dignity and charm to the Main St. The Congregational Church (L) is a pleasing red-brick building, severely plain and gracefully spired, with an old cemetery forming a somber background. The little white Methodist Church (R) is less appealing, with the blunt crenellated tower employed widely in religious structures throughout the State. The Rawson House (L), built in 1790, has received accurate restoration, retaining the serene balance and the clear-cut beauty of Colonial buildings expressed in gray brick, with characteristic end chimneys. The Old Blacksmith Shop (R), a low red-brick building, was erected in 1810, serving as a smithy since that date. The Main St. pitches downhill at the southern end of the village, to small triangle with a war memorial at the junction of roads. A red-brick Georgian House (L) stands in trim-lined eminence on a knoll.

State 15 veers right across a bridge over Browns River, where stand the Chittenden Mills (R), a gristmill (Old Red Mill) founded by Thomas Chittenden, first Governor of Vermont. The sawmill (L) rounds out Jericho’s industrial ventures. The late W. A. Bentley, known as the “Snowflake King,” lived in this town for 45 years and here engaged in his endless photographic studies of snowflakes, which made him the world’s foremost authority in that curious field of research. His 5300 micro-photos of snowflakes constitute the largest collection of its kind in the world; the flakes, caught on a cold board covered with black velvet, were photographed in Bentley’s refrigerated camera-room.

## Big Tech’s privacy gamble

By State Rep. Monique Priestley and State Rep. Angela Arsenault

In July 2020, a man fueled by hate and armed with an address he found online, traveled to Judge Esther Salas’s New Jersey home to murder her. Her 20-year-old son, Daniel, happened to be home that day and answered the door when the killer came knocking. Daniel was shot and killed. His father was gravely wounded. Judge Salas, by sheer chance, survived.

This horrific tragedy exposes the brutal truth of our digital age: Big Tech has made personal information a weapon. While they peddle the illusion of connection and convenience, these unscrupulous data brokers and tech giants are profiting from selling the information that puts our public servants in the crosshairs. They’ve built a system where home addresses and private details are readily available to anyone — stalkers, extremists, and those bent on violent revenge. They are complicit in the danger.

But when it comes to protecting those who protect us, Vermont has a chance to play a leadership role. We should follow New Jersey’s lead and immediately enact a Vermont version of “Daniel’s Law” — legislation to shield the online privacy of our judges, police officers, and other vulnerable public servants from the predators lurking in the digital shadows — which was named after Judge Salas’s son.

Those who dedicate their lives to upholding the law and protecting our communities should not be forced to live in fear, constantly looking over their shoulders, because some tech company decided their safety is worth less than a few advertising dollars.

New Jersey, shocked by Daniel Anderl’s murder, acted decisively. Daniel’s Law restricts the disclosure of certain personal information — home addresses, phone numbers — of covered public servants. It doesn’t hide their official actions; it simply makes it harder for those with evil intentions to find out where they live or how to contact them on a personal phone number.

Vermont must do the same, and for these urgent reasons:

- Immediate threat of violence: Judges, prosecutors, and police officers make tough decisions every day. They deal with criminals, litigants, and others who may leave an interaction feeling angry or even vengeful. Threats are a daily reality, and the ease with which personal information can be weaponized online has dramatically increased the danger. Daniel Anderl’s murder is not an anomaly; it’s a warning.

- Erosion of justice. How can we expect our justice system to function when those who administer it are living under constant threat? Fear breeds caution, and caution can erode impartiality. Protecting the personal information of our public servants is essential to preserving the integrity of the entire system. It allows them to do their jobs without fear of reprisal, ensuring a fairer

and more just society for all.

- Accountability, not secrecy. Let’s be clear: this is not about hiding public officials from scrutiny. Their official actions, their decisions, their records — all remain accessible. This is about preventing the weaponization of personal information that has absolutely no bearing on their public duties. It’s about drawing a line between legitimate transparency and enabling violence. Public officials must be accountable, but their families should not be targets.

- Taking the lead, and protecting our own. Enacting our own version of Daniel’s Law would position the state as leaders in privacy protections and the heightened risk associated with some public servant roles.

The parochial belief that “it can’t happen here” is a dangerous one. The internet knows no boundaries. Big Tech’s reckless disregard for privacy has created a nationwide crisis, and Vermont is not immune. Every day we delay is another day our public servants are needlessly exposed. Public officials across this state have faced threats. Such threats are not widely known because the target often does not like to publicize their experience.

We are not calling for absolute secrecy. We are seeking a responsible, targeted solution to a clear and present danger. A Vermont version of Daniel’s Law is a powerful statement that we will not tolerate the digital endangerment of those who protect us. It’s a recognition that their service should not come at the cost of their sense of safety or their lives.

We implore our colleagues in the Vermont legislature: Take a stand against Big Tech’s ability to place profits over the safety of our public servants. Learn from the tragedy of Daniel Anderl. We must hold Big Tech accountable and begin to fundamentally change how personal information is bought, sold, and used — without the explicit consent of the individual to whom it belongs. This is the first step in a longer fight, but it is a step we should take today. We must begin to dismantle the system that allows Big Tech to profit from jeopardizing lives, and passing a Vermont Daniel’s Law is how we start reclaiming control over our personal information and demanding an end to this appalling practice.

State Rep. Monique Priestley serves on the Vermont House Committee on Commerce & Economic Development and the Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee.

State Rep. Angela Arsenault serves on the Vermont House Judiciary Committee and the Joint Judicial Retention Committee.

Legislative reports continued from page 4

## Vermont Senate update

By Kesha Ram Hinsdale  
Chittenden-Southeast Senate District

March 14

We’re officially at the halfway point of the legislative session, and so much important work is happening. From education finance reform and housing solutions to renewable energy and healthcare costs, we’re tackling big challenges that impact Vermonters every day. As we continue these conversations, I want to make sure you’re informed, engaged, and able to share your thoughts with us.

Vermont tax credits — let’s make sure no one misses out! It’s tax season, and many Vermonters qualify for the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which can provide essential financial relief. But too many eligible people miss out simply because they don’t know they need to apply. Check out the resources and share them with your community at <http://taxcreditsvt.org>. Your help in spreading the word could make a big difference for a neighbor in need!

Incredible summer opportunity for Vermont high school students — do you know a high school student who’s eager to explore new interests, build skills, and meet inspiring mentors? The Governor’s Institutes of Vermont (GIV) offers amazing summer programs where students live on a college campus for one to two weeks and dive into topics they love, including: Arts, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Global Issues and Youth Action, Health and Medicine, Mathematical Sciences, Technology and Design, and Weather and Climate Science. College credit and professional certification are available through most programs. Applications are open until Monday, March 31. Tuition is on a sliding scale — starting as low as \$10! Find out more and apply here: <http://giv.org>. This is an incredible opportunity for students to discover their passions and jumpstart their future. Please share with any young Vermonters who might be interested!

Thank you for staying engaged and being such an important part of this work. Vermont is strongest when we come together to solve problems, support one another, and build a future that works for all of us. I’m always here to listen, [kramhinsdale@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:kramhinsdale@leg.state.vt.us).

## 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.

#### Adults

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.

Thursdays, March 20, April 3, 17, 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 [juliehhehir@comcast.net](mailto:juliehhehir@comcast.net).

Thursday, March 20, 7:00 PM: Board of Trustees Meeting. The monthly meeting is open to all.

Saturday, March 22, 1:00 – 2:00 PM: Jericho Bike & Pedestrian Connectivity Committee Public Forum. Learn about the planned project to temporarily install a protected pedestrian/bicycle path along Raceway Road between Willow Lane and Jericho Market.

Tuesdays, March 18, April 15, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library Fireplace Room: book discussion series on [The Anxious Generation](#), [How the Great Rewiring](#)

Library news continued on page 8



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Concern about pedestrian walkway on Raceway in Jericho**

To the Editor,

I received the postcard from the Town of Jericho offering a survey and announcing public meetings about the proposed trial bike and pedestrian walkway along Raceway. I am unable to attend the public comment meetings (Monday, March 10, 7:00 PM at Jericho Town Hall and Saturday, March 22, 1:00 PM at Deborah Rawson Memorial Library) so I will share my thoughts here. I also filled out the survey.

I have lived in the Foothills neighborhood since 1992 and have frequently used Raceway for running and biking. The road, in its current condition, is dangerous to pedestrians and bikers. In the winter and spring, it is frequently nearly impassible due to potholes. In the summer and fall the potholes often force cars to swerve into the opposite lane to avoid the potholes.

I respectfully submit that it makes no sense to me to encourage bikers, walkers, and runners to use Raceway until the road conditions have been addressed by a total rebuild. I'm not going to advocate for or against paving the road, but it is long past time to rebuild the road to make it safe for all.

Thank you to the Jericho Bike & Pedestrian Connectivity Committee for your work. I support what you are doing and look forward to being able to safely run, walk, and bike on the paths you are proposing.

**Jim Bentlage  
Jericho**

**Raceway Road demonstration project**

To the Editor,

Since I couldn't make the Selectboard meeting, I wanted to take the chance to voice my enthusiastic support of the proposed project on Raceway. We live on Willow Lane, and we would love to allow our kids the independence of being able to walk to BRMS, the library, the store, and Synergy in a few years when they're old enough. This project would move the town one step closer to that by putting up temporary infrastructure, allowing the town to gather data over a few months this summer to inform next steps.

I don't know what I don't know about traffic impacts, but I'm confident any issues around turning in and off VT Rt. 15 and passing distance for two-way traffic can be addressed, and I think the benefit of making this part of Jericho more walkable and bikeable is worth the effort.

**Jessica Hoskins  
Jericho**

**Vermonters demand thoughtful education finance reform**

To the Editor,

Vermonters spoke loud and clear this Town Meeting Day: they support their public schools. With over 90% of school budget proposals winning voter approval and budgets passing in at least 101 districts, the message is undeniable — Vermont communities value their schools and want to see them strengthened, not dismantled.

While there is broad recognition that education finance reform is needed, Vermonters are not interested in a rushed, one-size-fits-all political fix. Instead, they seek thoughtful, well-planned reforms that prioritize the best interests of children, taxpayers, and the future of Vermont's communities.

That is why the Vermont Rural School Community Alliance (RSCA), <https://vtruralschools.org/>, has come together — to advocate for reform that considers the unique needs of rural schools while ensuring financial sustainability. The RSCA represents Vermonters from all walks of life — educators, parents, school board members, and community leaders who understand that Vermont's public schools are the backbone of its rural communities.

The Alliance acknowledges the financial challenges facing Vermont's education system; however, we are deeply concerned about many elements of Governor Scott's education transformation proposal. The plan, as currently outlined, lacks necessary consideration for the potential adverse impacts on students, elementary schools, and local communities. The plan ignores Vermont's history, school culture, and geographic realities, providing an out-of-scale approach that fails to account for significant regional differences.

Furthermore, the proposal relies on the expansion of school choice, which could divert much-needed public funds to private institutions, increasing educational inequities rather than addressing them. And by relying on a hasty, top-down consolidation process, RSCA fears this proposal will lead to widespread, unnecessary and harmful school closures, negatively impacting students and communities alike.

RSCA supports meaningful reform that strengthens, rather than dismantles, Vermont's public education system. Instead of an overly broad, top-down approach, we urge policymakers to consider alternative solutions that respect Vermont's unique educational landscape.

RSCA is eager to work with legislators and communities to promote balanced, research-backed solutions that truly benefit Vermont students, families, taxpayers, and communities. We propose:

- supporting elementary schools as community hubs that enhance early learning and contribute to local economic development;
- encouraging regional collaboration for secondary school education while maintaining flexibility for local needs;
- evaluating laws passed over the last 15 years to highlight lessons learned;
- retaining local voice and decision making which adds value

to our education system at little cost;

- addressing critical issues such as skyrocketing healthcare costs, teacher shortages, school infrastructure needs, and access to student mental health services without further destabilizing the education system.

Vermonters have shown their commitment to public education. Now it is up to policymakers to listen and ensure that any proposed changes to the system reflect the values and needs of the people they serve. Education finance reform should be a collaborative process that strengthens Vermont's schools, not an out-of-scale experiment that risks harming rural students and their communities.

**Cheryl Charles, Ph.D.  
Rural School Community Alliance  
Steering Committee Chair**



**Sugaring early 20<sup>th</sup> century Jericho**

To the Editor,

When I saw the sugaring picture on page 6 of the March 6 *Mountain Gazette* that you took from *Vermont: A Guide to The Green Mountain State* (1937) I was struck by how similar it is to one from that era taken right here in Jericho, which I have attached. Left to right, this is Albert "Ike" Hunt, Arthur Packard, and Ruth Packard, taken at the Packard farm on Orr Road in Jericho. I presume you have heard of Arthur Packard, as he was very well known in his day for being involved with the Farm Bureau, adviser to George Aiken, and had his finger in many things regarding farming, but if not, check out page 86 of *Volume II of the History of Jericho*, as well as his biography in that book as well.

I have also attached another picture of Arthur and Ike, as well as a picture of the Packard home in Jericho Corners, across from what is today the Town Hall, after they moved there from the farm.

I just thought you might find these interesting.

**Gary Irish  
Jericho**

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Library news continued from page 6

of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness by Jonathan Haidt. ReConnect is a group of families from the Mount Mansfield Unified School District (MMUSD) working on the impacts of smartphones and social media on our kids and hosting a four-part discussion series focused on Haidt's book. There will be podcast options as well, so feel free to join even if you don't have time to read the chapters. The remaining meetings are: March 18, part 4 (Collective Action for Healthier Childhood); and April 15, Recap and Looking Ahead: What's next for our community? If you don't have time to read the whole book but would like an overview, here's an interview with the author you can listen to: <https://www.goodinside.com/podcast/7065/the-anxious-generation-with-jonathan-haidt/>.

Sunday, March 23, 3:00 – 5:00 PM: Understanding Palestine: Talk and Conversation. Speakers: Hamed Bakir from Fairfax, retired coordinator at the World Health organization, and Jason Hirsch, organizer with Jewish Voice for Peace and Instructor of Anthropology at St. Michael's College. Moderated by Jean Archibald. *The speakers strongly request that all attendees wear a face mask. Masks will be available at the door.*

Tuesdays, March 25 and April 1, 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.

Tuesday, March 25, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Legislative Update. Vermont state representatives Edye Graning of Jericho and Trevor Squirell of Underhill will provide an update on Vermont's legislative session and answer your questions.

Tuesday, March 25, 7:00 PM: Mystery Book Group. One summer night in 1930, Judge Joseph Crater steps into a New York City cab and is never heard from again. Call (802-899-4962) or visit the library to reserve your copy of *The Wife, the Maid, and the Mistress* by Ariel Lawhon. To attend the discussion via Zoom, email Holly at [drawsonmemlib@yahoo.com](mailto:drawsonmemlib@yahoo.com).

Thursday, March 27, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Kick Gas: Movie and Discussion. The Jericho Energy Task Force presents a screening of *Kick Gas*, the 2013 documentary that follows four people attempting to make Guinness World Records for the longest distance traveled in an electric car, motorcycle, scooter, and bicycle. Jericho resident Ben Rich, featured in the film, will be on hand to answer questions.

Thursday, April 3, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Book Club of One. In this different take on a book discussion group, come prepared to introduce something you read in the last month — book, article, blog, etc. — and what inspired, challenged, or fascinated you. Connect with fellow readers in this fun, low-key environment.

#### 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!

Fridays, 11:00 – 11:45 AM: Stories and Songs with Beth and David London. For kids ages birth to five, with a caregiver. Cozy up with your little ones in our Fireplace Room, while listening to stories, singing songs, and shaking the sillies out. If schools are closed on any Friday, this program is cancelled for that day.

Friday, March 21, 3:00 – 4:30 PM: Chess Club [ages 6+, registration required] Last month's inaugural meeting of Chess Club was a big win, and we are keeping up the momentum. All skill levels are welcome. To register, please visit the library or contact 802-899-4962 or [youth\\_librarian@drml.org](mailto:youth_librarian@drml.org).

Tuesday, March 25, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: STEM Pipe Cleaner Structures [ages 8+] Using only pipe cleaners, create a structure strong enough to hold a cup of pennies.

Friday, March 28, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: LEGO Club [ages 6+, registration required] Build a leprechaun, a lucky charm, or anything else you can imagine. To register, please visit the library or contact 802-899-4962 or [youth\\_librarian@drml.org](mailto:youth_librarian@drml.org).

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.

We want to remind you about our Home Delivery Program at Jericho Town Library (JTL). Patrons who are unable to physically access the library may sign up for our Home Delivery Service. This is offered on a one-time or recurring basis. Folks can request specific items or complete an interest profile on the JTL website. You can sign up by phone 802-899-4686, or contact Catherine at [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

Mondays, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, through April 21: The Artist's Way Creativity Group. Blocked, stuck, or adrift in your artistic endeavors? Curious about ways to live a more creative lifestyle? Join this journey through *The Artist's Way*, the landmark book by Julia Cameron about the creative process. Cameron's tried-and-true techniques of daily freewriting and weekly solo "Artist Dates" combined with the readings and exercises in the book will guide us along a path to higher creativity. You will need a copy of *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* by Julia Cameron (often available inexpensively through online used book retailers), a notebook, and an open mind. Register online at <https://forms.gle/ZLH9MPGGX81ZJfW7>. Contact Amy ([amy@jerichotownlibraryvt.org](mailto:amy@jerichotownlibraryvt.org)) with any questions. Read about the

book online at <https://www.npr.org/2023/09/05/1193447515/the-artists-way>.

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

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.

Come be a part of your library community as we March into spring! Along with snacks (thank you community members for your generous donations), conversations, and various sparks of inspiration, please join us for this month's engaging opportunities.

As always, programs are free and open to the public.

#### Programs

Tuesdays 2:00 – 6:00 PM, Wednesdays, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Genealogy Meet-Ups/Drop-In. Come to an informal meet-up with some of our best local genealogists with over 50 years combined experience to find out more about your family's history. Want to know if your family's stories have some truth to them? Stuck on a particular ancestor and don't know where to look next? No registration required.

Thursdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Coffee and Conversations.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00 AM: Story Time.

Tuesdays, 5:00 – 6:00 PM and Fridays, 12:00 – 1:00 PM: come practice American Sign Language. Feel free to come one or both days. All levels are welcome!

Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Crafternoons.

Friday, March 21, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Homeschoolers Meet-up.

Saturday, March 29, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Make Your Own Wrapper Chain Art.

Find program descriptions and more details on our website <http://www.varnumlibrary.org>.

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 proud to be a participant in the ChildSafe program — we have FREE gunlocks to take. This program is run by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Art is up at the library through the end of March! Long-time Westford resident and visual artist, Thomas Wolfe, will be exhibiting his abstract digitally created images printed on aluminum. Want to purchase some of these great pieces? Proceeds to benefit the Westford Public Library! Contact the library for prices if interested.

No Saturday Story Time in March — we will be back Saturday, April 5 at 10:30 AM!

The Westford Food Shelf is now open twice a month, on the first Wednesday of each month (April 2), 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.

Thursdays, 11:25 AM: Early Literacy Storytime. We sing songs, read stories, move, and do crafts! No sign up needed, all ages are welcome. March 20: Pancakes; March 27: Cats.

Thursdays, March 20, 27, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Lego Club. Grades 4-5; signup required. Kids will ride the bus with note from home. Snack included. We will do a combination of free building, building challenges, and have lots of LEGO fun! Space is limited, so plan to attend weekly and sign up early.

Fridays, March 21, 28, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Crafting Club. Sign up required; grades 3+ (call or email). Kids ride the bus to the library each week with a note from home. Snack and all supplies included. We will work on a variety of projects using a variety of mediums — coloring, paper folding, yarn, etc. Perfect for kids

who are focused on coloring, art, and crafts. Space is limited, so plan to attend weekly and sign up early.

Friday, March 21, 7:00 – 8:30 PM: Making friends with AI by Erin Menut. Are you a little weirded out by all the news about AI? Maybe you feel curious about AI but also a little concerned. In this fun and informative talk, you will learn the basics of ChatGPT - one of the easiest and most versatile forms of AI. ChatGPT is free and readily available to anyone with a cell phone, and it has countless benefits for both personal and business use. If you don't have ChatGPT on your phone yet, you will learn why you might want to get it. And you will learn several of the simple and fun ways you can use ChatGPT to make your life easier. Bring your questions and your curiosity. During the talk, you will have a chance to explore ChatGPT on your own phone if you choose to. It's just an app — you can always delete it. Feel free to come to this talk if you went to Erin's other talk, or you are new to AI altogether — there will be something for everyone!

Wednesday, March 26, 7:00 – 8:00 PM: Adult Book Group discussing *All the Colors of the Dark* by Chris Whitaker. 1975 is a time of change in America. The Vietnam War is ending. Muhammad Ali is fighting Joe Frazier. And in Monticello, Missouri, girls are disappearing. When the daughter of a wealthy family is targeted, the most unlikely hero emerges — Patch, a local boy who saves the girl and in doing so, leaves heartache in his wake. Patch and those who love him soon discover that the line between triumph and tragedy has never been finer. And that their search for answers will lead them to truths that could mean losing one another. A novel about what lurks in the shadows of obsession and the blinding light of hope. Available in Print at the library on Libby.

Thursday, April 10, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Writer's Group. Meets the second Thursday of each month. Facilitated by J Bruscini. Here you can have the opportunity to share and receive feedback on your writing with a low-stakes and supportive atmosphere. So far, together we have done timed writing exercises, responses to a Robert Frost poem, and free writing to our interests. One member is working on another novel! We hope to see you at our meetings soon to continue bringing to light the many shining voices of Westford.

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.

As we head into March, the temporary middle/high school entrance will be closed while that section of the school is under construction. The only way into the school at this time is through the elementary school entrance. If you've been using the middle/high school entrance to access the library, and aren't sure where the elementary entrance is, you can find it in the top right hand corner of the parking lot to the left of the middle/high school door. There is a small courtyard leading to a glass atrium, which is the elementary school entrance. We should hopefully have our own entryway back before the end of April, so easier library access shouldn't be too far off. Thank you all so much for your patience with this process!

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>.

Please sign up at least one week before the program date. All events are free unless noted. Pre-registration required; call or email [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com).

#### Youth events

Wednesdays, March 19, 26, 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.

Fridays, March 14, 21, 28, 3:00 PM: LEGO Club. Kids ages 6+ enjoy themed LEGO play after school. Please register! This event takes place in the library.

Wednesday, March 19, 1:00 PM: "Cake" Decorating. Decorate a cute "cake" and turn it into a keepsake box! Materials provided. Ages 8+ Please contact [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com) or 802-849-2420 to register! This event takes place in the library.

Wednesday, March 26, 3:00 PM: Bread and Butter in a Bag. Learn how to make butter, and bread dough in bags! Materials provided. Ages 8+ Please contact [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com) or 802-849-2420 to register! This event takes place in the library.

#### Adult events

Saturday, March 22, 10:30 AM: Recycled Roses (and other flowers!). It's almost time for spring flowers! If you're impatient for new blooms, learn how to make a bouquet from colorful paper and old book pages. Materials provided. Please contact [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com) or 802-849-2420 to register! This event takes place in the library.

Thursday, March 27, 2:00 PM: Library Book Club. The book this month is *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt. 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 [libraryfairfax@gmail.com](mailto:libraryfairfax@gmail.com) or 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 any away.

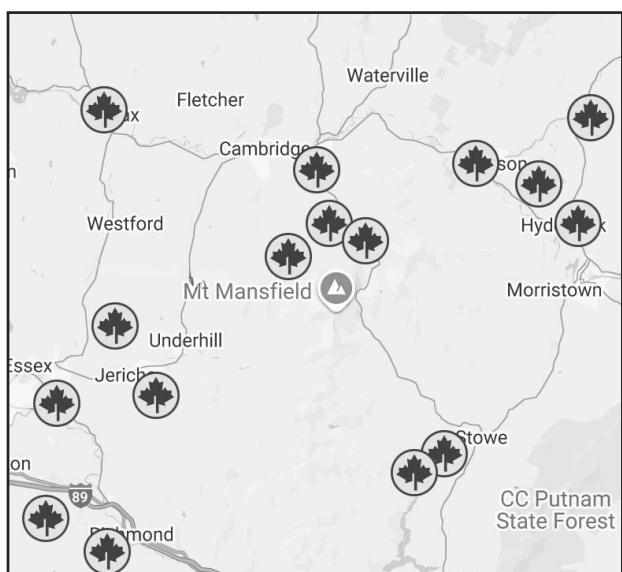
Trustee Meetings are on the second Monday of the month (April 14), 6:30 PM at the Library. All meetings are open to the public. Individuals may also join via Zoom.

Seed Library now accepting seeds! If you're a seed saver or

Library news continued on page 9



## MISCELLANEOUS NEWS



Map showing local sites hosting Maple Open House Weekend, from <https://vermontmaple.org/become-a-maple-partner>. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Vermont Maple Open House Weekend 2025

Enjoy a delightful weekend celebrating Vermont's rich maple heritage! The Maple Open House Weekend — Saturday-Sunday, March 22-23 — offers visitors an opportunity to explore sugarhouses statewide, witness the maple syrup production process, and enjoy a variety of maple-inspired experiences. All participating locations are proud members of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association (VMSMA), ensuring an authentic and high-quality maple experience.

Each sugarhouse offers a unique experience, which may include:

- boiling demonstrations — where you see firsthand how sap is transformed into pure Vermont maple syrup;
- maple treats — so you can enjoy a taste of sugar on snow, maple creemees, or freshly made donuts;
- hands-on activities — so you can try your hand at tapping a tree, sampling different syrup grades, or learning about the sugaring process;
- family-friendly fun — some locations may offer horse-drawn wagon rides, farm tours, or kids' activities.

With numerous sugarhouses participating and each offering something different, planning your route is part of the fun. For personalized suggestions or assistance in mapping out your stops, feel free to reach out to [membership@vermontmaple.org](mailto:membership@vermontmaple.org).

Explore our interactive Maple Open House Map (<https://vermontmaple.org/mohw>) to discover sugarhouses, tasty treats, and hands-on experiences. Click on the maple leaves to explore participating destinations.

Most sugarhouses offer free activities throughout the weekend, but some may have special events or experiences that require a fee or advanced registration. Be sure to check with individual locations for details on their offerings.

Local sugar houses participating in Maple Open House Weekend include Browns River Maple LLC, 375 Browns River Rd. (VT Rt. 128), Essex Junction, 802-324-3157; Cold Hollow Cider Mill, 3600 Waterbury Stowe Rd., Waterbury Center, 802-244-8771; End-O-Road Maple, 89 Fields Ln., Jericho, 802-899-4126; Fielder Farm Sugarworks, 50 Fielder Rd.,

Huntington, 802-434-4562; Golden Dog Farm, 1039 Pratt Rd., Jeffersonville, 513-633-1003; Moose Mountain Maple, 28 Butler Lane, Underhill, 802-734-5678; Mountainview Mapleworks at the Giroux Family Farm, 1324 Kenyon Rd., Richmond, 802-434-5198; Palmer Lane Maple, 19 Old Pump Rd., Jericho, 802-899-8199; Purinton Maple, 190 Pond Rd., Huntington, 802-434-4385; Runamok Maple, 70 Essex Way, Essex Junction, 802-849-7943; Running Saps Mapleworks, 53 Ski Lodge Dr., Huntington, 802-238-3567; Taft's Milk & Maple Farm, 683 Camel's Hump Rd., Huntington, 802-434-2727; The Maple Fix, 75 Highbridge Rd., Fairfax, 802-849-0424; Vermont Maple Outlet, 3929 VT Rt. 15, Jeffersonville, 802-644-5482; and Wyckoff Family Maple, 18 Catamount Ln., Jeffersonville, 802-578-0991.

## Final Lamoille Legislative Breakfast April 7

**By Pat Ripley, Lamoille Economic Development Corporation**  
With the 2025 Legislative Session approaching its climax, Lamoille Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) and Lamoille Chamber of Commerce are pleased to invite you to our final Legislative Breakfast at Smugglers' Notch Resort in Jeffersonville on Monday, April 7, 8:00 – 9:30 AM at Smugglers' Notch Resort, VT Rt. 108, Jeffersonville. Go online to learn more and register today: <https://lamoilleeconomy.org/breakfast/>

The Jeffersonville breakfast is the last of this year's four-part Legislative Breakfast series offering you an opportunity to hear from our Lamoille County representatives and learn about what they are working on at the Statehouse. Attendees will also be allowed a chance to ask questions about the topics on their minds.

These breakfasts have proven to be popular with Lamoille County residents. Each event begins with a light breakfast and coffee, followed by a short briefing by the legislators and an audience Q&A. Be sure to register early since there is limited seating!

## 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 Kin as Parents

The mission of Vermont Kin as Parents (VKAP) is to empower kinship caregivers who are raising children not their own by providing support, resources, and advocacy. We serve kinship families throughout Vermont who need assistance navigating the challenges of raising children in their care.

VKAP fulfills the critical need of providing safe, stable, and nurturing homes for children who are unable to live with their birth parents. We fulfill this need by providing kinship caregivers with access to support groups, educational opportunities, information and referral services, and advocacy efforts. VKAP exists to ensure that all kinship families in Vermont are valued, respected, and supported, and to promote a culture of kinship care that prioritizes the well-being of children and recognizes the strengths and contributions of kinship caregivers.

For more information, contact VKAP at <https://www.facebook.com/VTKinAsParents>, 802-871-5104 or 802-391-8849. VKAP is located at 1205 North Ave., Burlington.

## Prevent Child Abuse VT — WALK

Get involved and support Vermont's children and youth — consider volunteering for the WALK for Safe and Happy Childhoods planning committee!

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont (PCAVT) holds one major fundraising event each year — the WALK for Safe and Happy Childhoods. This event, held in Montpelier on a Saturday in the fall (in 2025, September 20) is more than just a fundraising event; it's a day dedicated to bringing the community together to make a tangible difference in the lives of Vermont's children. With an excellent turnout year after year, this event symbolizes the collective effort of individuals, families, and local businesses coming together to champion the cause of child safety and family support.

But to have an amazing day, we need to do a lot of planning and PCAVT is putting together a volunteer WALK Committee to help make that happen. The WALK Committee will meet once a month until late summer. Committee tasks will include marketing and promotion, seeking food and raffle donations, and arranging for entertainment and children's activities. Meetings will be held virtually with the first meeting in March.

No need for event planning experience, just a desire to be involved and make a difference. If interested, please contact Karen Nevin, Director of Development, [knevin@pcavt.org](mailto:knevin@pcavt.org).

## New online system for Safe at Home address confidentiality program

On Tuesday, March 4, VT Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas announced the launch of a new online system for her office's Safe at Home program, an address confidentiality and protected records service.

Started in 2001 and operated by the Secretary of State's office, Vermont's Safe at Home program serves survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and providers and patients of legally protected healthcare (reproductive and gender-affirming care). The program allows participants to use a substitute address for receiving mail and when creating records with state or local government agencies. Participants can vote, obtain a driver's license, get married, register births, and receive their mail without fear that those records, which are publicly available, will put them at risk of being located. Vermont is one of 35 states that have some kind of address confidentiality program.

"The Safe at Home program is a really important service that our office provides to Vermonters," said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. "It's been one of my top priorities from day one to raise its profile and to modernize our systems, so that we are providing a resource that is as effective and accessible as possible."

ReFrame Solutions, a software design company that specializes in public service platforms, submitted the winning bid to build Vermont's new Safe at Home system. Until now, the program had functioned with paper forms, and systems for managing participants and processing mail that had become outdated. Eligible applicants can now apply using an online portal, participants and victim advocacy organizations can manage their accounts online, and the internal operation of the program will be more efficient.

"This is a big upgrade for this long-standing program, from our back-of-house processes like creating mailing labels to front-of-house features like providing a mobile wallet ID for participants," said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. "From here, my office will be working with victim advocacy organizations like Vermont Network (<https://www.vtnetwork.org/>) to make sure everyone who can benefit from accessing this service as part of

Miscellaneous news continued on page 10

## Library news continued from page 7

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

Through Thursday, March 20: Winter Reading Bingo for Adults. Stop in to pick up a bingo card or show us your completed lines and pick up a ticket. Then pop your ticket(s) into one of four buckets for a chance to win a stack of books.

Tuesday mornings through April 8: Tax Help with AARP. Volunteers working with AARP are meeting with seniors to prepare tax returns in the library community room. Call the library to schedule an appointment.

Wednesdays from 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. 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!

New in our Library of Things: refreshed jigsaw puzzle selection!

#### All ages

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

Thursday, March 20, 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.

Tuesday, March 25, 4:00 – 5:30 PM: 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 in our community room. If you sign up and cannot attend, please reach out to library staff so we can open the spot to someone else. Sign up on the website.

Saturday, March 29, 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.

#### 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

Tuesday, March 18, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Zentangle for adults with Julia Davenport. This art form welcomes slowing down, taking your time, and seeing what happens. Sign up on the website. If you register and can't attend, please call to open the spot for someone else.

Wednesday, March 19, 2:00 – 3:00 PM: Scrabble/Conversation Français. French Conversation and Scrabble. Open to ages high school and above; for levels Elementary II and above. Improve your French while enjoying a friendly game of (French) Scrabble!

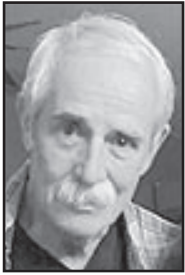
Thursday, March 20, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Trivia Night for adults and teens. Join us for some friendly trivia competition! Light refreshments provided.

Tuesday, March 25, 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.

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## OBITUARIES



**Michael Edward Grady**, 78, of Westford, VT passed away on Wednesday, March 12, 2025. He was born in Burlington, VT to Donald A. Grady and Bernice L. Larrabee on April 1, 1946. Mike grew up in Essex Junction, VT and graduated from Essex Junction High School in 1964. After high school he joined the U.S. Navy and served four years during the Vietnam War. After the Navy he spent over 40 years working in manufacturing at IBM, retiring in 2013. He married Jean Colburn Grady on November 6,

1976. Mike was an avid turkey and deer hunter and was known for his great sense of humor and ready jokes. Mike was preceded in death by his parents Donald and Bernice Grady, as well as his brother-in-law Robert Lamson. He is survived by his wife Jean, his daughter Erica and husband Chris, his stepson Brent Cromie and his son Donald Grady II, his sister Phyllis Lamson, his sister Karen Grady and husband Mike Capron, his brother John Grady and wife Patricia, his brother-in-law Alfred Colburn and wife Linda. He also leaves behind his grandchildren Adam, Andrew, and Joseph Baker and Ryan Grady, as well as several nieces and nephews and his beloved cats Sharky and Captain Hook. The family wishes to extend our sincere thanks to the health care teams at UVM Medical center in Burlington, VT, CVMC, and Woodridge in Berlin, VT for the care he received during his final days. A memorial to celebrate Mike's life with family and friends was held at the Corbin and Palmer Funeral Home in Essex Junction on Friday, March 21, 2025. Mike will be cremated and his ashes spread at his favorite hunting spot at the family's discretion in the spring. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Heart Association, <https://heart.org>.



In Memoriam: **James Patrick O'Neill III**, 1944-2025, University of Vermont Genetics Professor. Pat transitioned peacefully on Saturday, March 1, 2025, at the McClure Miller Respite House, Colchester, VT, with his son Brad by his side. A loving father and brother, he was also a character — opinionated, quirky, a dedicated scientist and EQ wizard. Underhill was his home for the last 40-plus years. Walk in the woods to remember him.



**Ray Atwood**, 83, of Umatilla, FL and formerly of Bolton, VT, passed away on Tuesday, February 18, 2025. Born on April 3, 1941 in New York City, NY, Ray lived a life of adventure, dedication and service.

Ray proudly served in the U.S. Air Force as a weapons mechanic, receiving an honorable discharge. His passion for automobiles led him to own and operate Ray's Auto Body from 1977-2017. A dedicated member of his community, he was named Citizen of the Year in Bolton in 2004 and actively

participated in the Chittenden County Fish & Wildlife Club and the Vermont 1<sup>st</sup> Wildlife Club. He was also a volunteer firefighter and served on the Bolton Selectboard and the Regional Planning Commission for Chittenden County, VT. Ray had many passions, including riding motorcycles — especially dirt bikes, sailing from Burlington, VT to the Florida Keys, building model cars, and flying model airplanes. He cherished time with his family and was known for his adventurous spirit, generosity, and unwavering loyalty. He loved the Green Mountain State of Vermont and later enjoyed his retirement in Umatilla. He is survived by his beloved wife of nearly 65 years, Patricia Atwood; his children Corine Nicholson of Umatilla, Mark Atwood (Tina) of Roebuck, SC, Stephen Atwood of Patchogue, NY, and Kristie Maddox of Greenbelt, MD; as well as by eleven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Ray was preceded in death by his mother Ruth Atwood, father Walter Atwood, and sister Jeanne Schwiecke. He is also reunited with his longtime close friend John Sheehan. A memorial service was held on Saturday, March 15, 2025 at Altoona Methodist Church in Altoona, FL. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Altoona Methodist Church. Ray will be remembered for his adventurous heart, his willingness to help others, and the lasting impact he had on his

Miscellaneous news continued from page 9

their overall safety plan is able to do so. We now stand more ready than ever to help survivors and healthcare providers and patients to feel safe at home."

The Safe at Home online platform can be found online at <https://safeathome.vermont.gov/applicant/sign-up>. A video overview of the program can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTTvPAQ6ce0>.

## Youth Lobby hosts annual Rally for the Planet

On Thursday, March 13 at the Vermont State House in Montpelier, the Youth Lobby held their Rally for the Planet: Day of Action. The Day of Action kicked off with a march to the State House, followed by speeches from youth leaders on the Vermont Capitol steps, meetings with lawmakers, a press conference, and finally testimony in the House committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure. Throughout the day, youth activists urged lawmakers to stay the course on climate action.

"We cannot allow Vermont to be a state that ignores the environment and climate. We cannot comply with these trends in the current federal government. We need to remain a brave little state that knows and acts upon what is best for Vermonters' futures," said Harmony Belle-Devoe, 10<sup>th</sup> grader at Harwood Union High School.

"Keeping Vermont on track for our renewable goals was the right thing to do, not only for keeping Vermont accountable for its emissions but leading other states to do the same, creating a greater impact from those committed to a cleaner planet. This is vital to controlling the impact of climate change, as even though the United States has less than 5% of the world's population, it has contributed 20% of the world's total emissions," said Lucy Badger, senior at Harwood Union High School.

## SENIOR NEWS

## Tax Help with AARP at Richmond Free Library

Volunteers working with AARP will meet with seniors on Tuesday mornings through April 8 in the Richmond Free Library Community Room to prepare tax returns. Please call the library to schedule an appointment — 802-434-3036.

## Bolton Seniors' Dinner

There will be a dinner for Seniors in Bolton on Thursday, March 27, 5:00 PM at the Bolton Fire Station. The menu will be: corned beef, boiled potatoes, cabbage and carrots, Irish soda bread and rolls, and key lime pie.

Please RSVP to Doris, 802-999-4555 or 802-434-3769. Seats are limited.

## Age Well supports older Vermonters in the March For Meals

Age Well is excited to announce its participation in the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual March for Meals, a nationwide campaign led by Meals on Wheels of America. This inspiring movement brings together communities across the country to support our aging neighbors and help them maintain their health and independence at home. As Vermont's largest provider of Meals on Wheels, Age Well delivers over 300,000 meals each year, addressing food insecurity, malnutrition, and social isolation, while fostering the overall well-being of thousands in our community.

"Age Well is so much more than a meal provider — we are a lifeline to older adults in Northwestern Vermont," said Sara Wool, Chief Advancement Officer at Age Well. "The rising cost of food, coupled with the growing need for home-delivered meals, makes our programs more important than ever. Meals on Wheels can serve a senior for an entire year for about the same cost as just one day in a hospital or 10 days in a nursing home. We are deeply grateful for the community's support, but there is still much more to do to ensure every individual in need gets access to these vital services."

Age Well's Meals on Wheels is an essential part of a comprehensive support system, offering not only nutritious meal delivery, but also friendly visits and safety checks. This combination of services helps to reduce healthcare utilization and costs, prevent falls, reduce social isolation, and improve seniors' ability to age in place. Meals on Wheels is an evidenced-based program proven to reduce food insecurity and improve

health, enabling seniors to live independently and safely at home.

The March for Meals celebration honors the landmark moment in March 1972 when President Nixon signed the Older Americans Act Amendments into law, creating a national nutrition program for seniors 60 and older. This federal support has been the foundation for Meals on Wheels programs nationwide, fueling their growth for more than 50 years. As Vermont's aging population continues to grow, Age Well's role in supporting our community is more important than ever to help Meals on Wheels remain strong and sustainable.

Age Well's Meals on Wheels program is made possible through the generosity of community members, local businesses, partner organizations, and more than 1000 dedicated volunteers. To learn more about how you can support March for Meals and help ensure that no older Vermonter goes without this essential support, please visit <https://www.agewellvt.org/giving-back/march-for-meals/>.

## Age Well offers vouchers for free health improvement course

Each month Age Well covers the cost.

The program was developed by professionals from North Carolina State University and the NCDHHS Division of Public Health. Based on the theory of planned behavior, Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less is an online weight management program that uses strategies proven to work for weight loss and maintenance. Each lesson informs, empowers and motivates participants to live mindfully as they make choices about eating and physical activity. Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less is delivered in an interactive real-time format with a live instructor. The program is offered to employers and health plans interested in eating smart, moving more, and achieving a healthy weight.

The Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less 15-week program holds classes on the same day and time for the full 15 weeks, with each class held online with a live instructor (offering one-on-one support outside of class), with convenient lunchtime and evening classes that are accessible on computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Each lesson includes information about why the behavior is important for weight loss/maintenance, practical strategies for adopting the behavior, a three to five minute physical activity break, ways concepts can be adopted by the whole family, opportunity for sharing and celebrating, suggestions for living mindfully, and a guided discussion of strategy for the week.

For more information and a link to registration, go online to <https://esmmweighless.com/>.

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## SPORTS NEWS

## Girls on the Run at BRMS still needs coaches

Girls on the Run Vermont (GOTRVT) is an amazing organization that helps girls build confidence to overcome difficult situations, inspire others to keep going when it's hard, and embrace their confidence to make a difference in their community. It's also a lot of fun! There are girls in grades 5-6 at Browns River Middle School who would like to participate in GOTRVT but we need volunteer coaches to make that happen! Would you be interested in volunteering your time to this fantastic 10-week program this spring?

Make a positive impact and empower young Vermont girls in your community by volunteering as a coach with GOTRVT this spring! Navigating through tough times takes perseverance. Today's girls deserve mentors who teach them how to build their inner strength and keep going, even when it's difficult. GOTRVT's curriculum helps participants build this very confidence. As a coach, you are the one who guides them through this unforgettable journey.

Not a runner? Haven't coached before? No problem! Girls on the Run Vermont provides training, easy to follow lesson plans, supplies, and support for a transformational season. The 10-week season begins the week of March 17, and ends with a celebratory 5K on Saturday, May 31. Teams meet twice weekly for 90-minute sessions to connect, move, learn, and have fun! Team schedules are set by their volunteer coach teams. The BRMS GOTR program will be open to girls in grades 5-6.

Visit <https://www.gotrvt.org/coach> to learn more about coaching or to sign up to volunteer. Learn more about GOTRVT's programs and complete a Participant Interest Form at <https://www.gotrvt.org/programs>, where caregivers can complete a Participant Interest Form, too. Questions? Contact GOTRVT at [stephanie@girlsontherunvermont.org](mailto:stephanie@girlsontherunvermont.org) or 802-871-5664.

## MMU Youth Lacrosse registration still open

By Gregg Schmidt, Mount Mansfield Youth Lacrosse

Mount Mansfield Boys Youth Lacrosse (grades 3-8) 2025 Spring Season and Tiny Sticks (all genders, K-2) registrations are open.

Limited spots are available for grade 3-8 players, so if your child would like to play, please sign up ASAP.

Mount Mansfield Boys Youth Lacrosse (MMBYL) offers lacrosse programs for youth residing in the Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (Underhill, Jericho, Richmond, Bolton, and Huntington) as well as neighboring communities without programs (Cambridge) aged Kindergarten through grade 8. No experience is necessary at any level. All are welcome.

To register and get more information on the program(s), go online to <https://bit.ly/4jxFTq5>.

## Mad River Valley Triathlon April 13

Come participate in a revived Vermont tradition, the Mad River Triathlon — a four-adventure sports event set in central Vermont's Mad River Valley held at Sugarbush Resort at Mt. Ellen, Mount Ellen Rd., Waitsfield. The event consists of a six-mile run, six-mile paddle down the Mad River, ten-mile bike along gravel and road, and finally skiing up and down intermediate terrain at Mount Ellen. Participate in a relay team, as an individual, or just for certain legs.

Mad River Triathlon is a fundraising event for a coalition of four recreation and conservation non-profits. All proceeds support the restoration of the Mad River and the development of sustainable, inclusive, and interconnected recreational infrastructure in the Mad River Valley.

We are making every effort to create an inclusive event by allowing a wide range of equipment, offering group raft rides down the river, allowing you to choose the legs you wish to participate in, and a broad range of categories and accommodations for adaptive athletes. Additionally, if you cannot afford the registration fee, just let us know and we will offer you a reduced registration rate.

This is a green event that strives for zero waste, minimizes its carbon footprint, and restores the riparian forest along the Mad River on behalf of the participants.

For more information and registration, please visit <http://madrivertriathlon.org>.

## Library news continued from page 9

Thursday, March 27, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Publishing 101. Join Rachel Fisher and Rachel Carter of Onion River Press for an overview of the publishing process.

Thursday, April 3, 12:00 – 1:00 PM: Noontime Book Group, reading *The Marriage Bureau for Rich People* by Farahad Zama. Bursting with the color and allure of India, and with a cast of endearing characters, this novel has shades of Jane Austen and Alexander McCall Smith but with a resonance and originality entirely its own. (Good Reads)

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](https://www.essexfreelibrary.org); <https://www.essexfreelibrary.org>.

*“Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.”*

— A.A. Milne, “Winnie-the-Pooh”

## SCHOOL NEWS

## 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.

## BRMS students supporting Spectrum Sleep Out — free books

Brrrrr! It's freezing here, but Vera and Zenya Markowski are braving the cold for a great cause! They will be tent camping on the front lawn of BRMS to raise awareness for the hardships that some teens face. They're participating in the Spectrum Sleep Out to raise money for Spectrum Youth & Family Services, supporting young people experiencing homelessness.

To help them reach their fundraising goals, Vera, Zenya, and their friends are also offering a selection of gently used books from their school library's retired collection! Give a book a new life and support a fantastic cause! The suggested donation is \$1-5 per book — see the list of available books online at <https://bit.ly/3DEK5nA> (short for <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iw04fjxPRhdbw-ov8yf96z9rMEXCrQ4-hkEqkBe10Bo/edit?tab=0>). Watch their video to learn more about why this cause is so important to them: <https://youtu.be/l8ZW0hGFHoA?feature=shared>.

Donate directly to their Sleep Out fundraisers at (for Vera): [https://give.spectrumvt.org/fundraiser/6128714?is\\_new=true](https://give.spectrumvt.org/fundraiser/6128714?is_new=true) or (for Zenya) <https://give.spectrumvt.org/fundraiser/6150233>.

## VSAC news: College & Career Pathways registration open

High schools around the state are invited to bring students to one of this year's College & Career Pathways weekday events being offered at four locations:

- Saint Michael's College — Thursday, March 20, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM;
- Vermont State University Lyndon Campus — Monday, April 7, 8:45 AM – 1:45 PM (in partnership with the NEK College Fair);
- Vermont State University Castleton Campus — Wednesday, April 9, 8:45 AM – 2:00 PM (in partnership with the Rutland Area Guidance Counselors' College Fair).

Find additional details at the website listed above and visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCP2025> to bring students to one of the weekday events.

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).

## JES Farm to School seed sale

Jericho Elementary Farm to School is partnering with High Mowing Seeds to fundraise for the JES Farm to School program. If you order your seeds through this fundraiser, a portion of the proceeds will be donated to our JES Farm to School program. All seeds are 100% organic and Non-GMO.

Orders are due by Saturday, March 29. To order seeds, go online to <https://high-mowing-seed-fundraiser-copy.cheddarup.com/>.

Please note — when an item is out of stock or on backorder, we will substitute it with a similar variety so that your order ships complete. Orders must be placed with JES and not with High Mowing directly. Seed varieties for gift boxes may vary.

Seeds will be sent home with students before April break. If you do not have a student at JES, you will need to make arrangements to pick them up from the school. An email will be sent at a later date with a pickup information.

For growing information, please visit <http://highmowingseeds.com>.

## Winona Smith Scholarship opportunity now open

The League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Fund is now accepting applications for its Winona Smith Scholarship program. Created in 1998 to honor the legacy of League leader Winona Smith, the scholarship is awarded annually to Vermont high school seniors who embody the characteristics and qualities Smith displayed of civic participation and community service.

Three \$2000 scholarships will be awarded to students who demonstrate financial need, scholastic achievement, and come highly recommended by their teacher.

Applications, due on April 30, must be completed online at <https://lwvofvt.org/winona-smith-vermont-scholarship-application/>, where more general information is also available. Students need to submit two essays (300-500 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 from a teacher is also required, submitted online at <https://bit.ly/LWVTeacherRec>.

The scholarship can be applied towards continuation of education in an accredited vocational, technical, or trade school, or at a two- or four-year college or university. Scholarship recipients will be announced on June 1.

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

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

## News from the VT Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)

Do you have students that need help filing their 2025-26 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2025-26 school year? VSAC is offering one-on-one appointments, virtually and in person, throughout February. Go online to the VSAC calendar, <https://www.vvac.org/events/list>, for a full listing.

**FAFSA** — Filing a FAFSA is the first step to getting college financial aid. Need help filing your FAFSA? Visit VSAC's calendar of events to book a one-on-one virtual or in-person appointment.

**Grants** — These are often called “gift aid” as they don't need to be paid back. View VSAC's step-by-step webinar on completing the Vermont Grant application.

**Scholarships** — Use a single application to apply for more than 150 VSAC-assisted scholarships. Don't miss the Wednesdays, February 12 deadline.

**Registration is now open for College & Career Pathways** — VSAC will be offering this free, public event for high school families on Saturday, March 8, 1:00 – 5:00 PM. Families can participate in-person at UVM or virtually via Zoom. Find additional details by visiting <https://www.vvac.org/plan/college-career-pathways>. Also, high schools around the state are invited to bring students to one of this year's College & Career Pathways weekday events (<https://www.vvac.org/plan/college-career-pathways>) being offered at these locations:

- Saint Michael's College — Thursday, March 20, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM;
- Vermont State University Lyndon Campus — Monday, April 7, 8:45 AM – 1:45 PM (in partnership with the NEK College Fair);
- Vermont State University Castleton Campus — Wednesday, April 9, 8:45 AM – 2:00 PM (in partnership with the Rutland Area Guidance Counselors' College Fair).

Find additional details go online to <https://www.vvac.org/plan/college-career-pathways> and visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCP2025> to bring students to one of the weekday events.

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Brady Gouse (center) plays Bobby Strong, who leads the citizens of this dystopian society in a rebellion against the evil owner of the water corporation charging a fee to use the bathrooms. The musical *Urinetown* will be performed by students at Mount Mansfield Union High School, 211 Browns Trace, Jericho on Friday-Saturday, April 4-5, 7:30 PM, and Sunday, April 6, 2:00 PM. Tickets will be available at the door: \$7 for students, children, faculty, and staff, and \$10 for general admission. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## MMU Theatre presents musical satire vs. a dystopia

The Mount Mansfield Union High School (MMU) Theatre Department presents the musical *Urinetown*. Don't let the title scare you off — the themes of the show are extremely current.

The musical *Urinetown* takes place in a dystopian society plagued by a 20-year drought. Facing a water shortage, the government has banned private toilets at the behest of the wealthy and greedy owner of the water facility who charges the people a tax to use the bathroom. The hero of the story rallies his fellow citizens to revolt against these authoritarian regulations.

This smart, hilarious musical satirizes the legal system, capitalism, bureaucracy, politics, and musical theatre itself while also shining a light on the issue of climate change. This musical boldly raises the question: "What would happen if some of our most basic human rights were taken away?" Get ready for some jaw-dropping, hard-hitting (and hilarious) theatre. We hope the audience will come away from the performance with a balanced perspective on the show's humor and deeper meanings.

*Urinetown* will be performed at MMU, 211 Browns Trace, Jericho on Friday-Saturday, April 4-5, 7:30 PM, and on Sunday, April 6, 2:00 PM. Tickets are \$7 for students, children, faculty & staff and \$10 for general admission. Tickets will be available at the door.

### COLLEGE NOTES

Olivia Wade of Underhill, VT has been named to the Fall 2024 Dean's List at Emmanuel College, Boston, MA. Wade is a Biology - Health Sciences major.



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## Spaghetti Dinner

## FUNDRAISER

**March 28, 5pm-8pm**  
**Swanton VFW post 778**

Adults \$10 - 12 & under \$5 - Single Family \$30

Spaghetti, Salad, Bread & Dessert

\*Take out available

**Take a night off from cooking and have some fun!**

FOOD - DRINKS - BAR

SILENT AUCTION - BASKET RAFFLE



All proceeds to benefit the UVM Children's Hospital - Big Change Round Up



\*Thank you to Vermont Custom Masonry for Sponsoring the event\*

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