

The REPORTER

Brandon • Pittsford • Proctor • West Rutland

Lake Dunmore, Leicester, Whiting, Sudbury, Goshen

Vol. 27, No. 7

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

75¢

Guiles, Blais face off in selectboard race

BY ANGELO LYNN

BRANDON — In the one contested race in Brandon this year, one-term incumbent Tim Guiles will face challenger Marielle Blais for a three-year seat on the Brandon selectboard. This past week The Reporter sent each candidate seven questions to address in a question-answer format and given a word limit per answer.

What follows are brief profiles of each candidate followed by their responses to the seven questions. We've separated their responses so readers can read all the comments of each candidate to get a fuller sense of the candidate's positions on the issues addressed. A candidate's forum by the Brandon Chamber of Commerce was to be held Tuesday night, Feb. 15.

Incumbent Guiles runs for second 3-year term

BRANDON — Tim Guiles, 62, was born in Waterville, Maine, and got his first job (age 12) as a paperboy. He graduated from Gorham High School in Maine in 1977, then studied engineering at Dartmouth College receiving two degrees in 1981.

After college, Guiles used his "computer skills to do robotics for different large and small firms." In 1989, he entered the PHD program at Johns Hopkins University in their environmental engineering department. His thesis, he wrote, "focused on social and environmental sustainability issues. In 1992, I decided to leave academia to pursue (See Tim Guiles, Page 2)



TIM GUILLES

Blais jumps into race with career in teaching

BRANDON — Marielle Blais grew up in a large family in Derby on a small dairy farm until, she says, she and her family moved to Newport, where she graduated from Sacred Heart Schools. After graduating from UVM, she earned graduate degrees from UVM, Middlebury College, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

She taught a variety of subjects in her teaching career and retired in 2020 after teaching as a speech language pathologist in the Addison Central and Rutland Northeast Supervisory Unions for 18 years.

She now volunteers, among a few other places and groups, for the Rutland County Humane (See Marielle Blais, Page 3)



MARIELLE BLAIS



Fading snow?

CLEAR SKIES DOMINATED the area early this week, accompanied by another bout of sub-zero weather ahead of temperatures that will reach 50 F on Thursday with rains that are almost certain to melt snow throughout the area, including on fields shown here of the Neshobe Golf Course.

Reporter photo/Angelo Lynn

Brandon selectboard Oks solar site, spends \$500,000 in ARPA funds

BY ANGELO LYNN

BRANDON — The Brandon selectboard on Monday threw its support behind a proposed site for 2,200 kW solar array on private land off of Steinberg Road that has a small window of visibility from Routes 7 and 73.

Among the other significant decisions that night, the board approved motions to finance a major water project serving 58 homes in Forest Dale and par-

tially finance a sewer pump station on Newton Road.

The Brandon Planning Commission had already approved the large solar project, commission Chari Liz Gregorek said at the meeting. The commission recommended the selectboard also OK the project and draft a memorandum of understanding to aid in the developer's proposal to the Vermont Public Utility Commission (PUC). After dis-

cussion, the selectboard gave its unanimous support.

The developer, MHG Renewables, said the site sits more than 1,300 feet from Route 7 and 300-plus feet from Route 73, and they are developing plans to shield visibility of the solar array with tree planting and other vegetation.

Explaining why this site was chosen, MHG noted under "com- (See Brandon selectboard, Page 22)

Proctor preps for Town Meeting

Zion Growers pursues Marble building

BY ANGELO LYNN

PROCTOR — In addition to planning for the annual Town Meeting, Feb. 28-March 1, the Proctor selectboard heard an update on plans to revitalize the former Marble Museum complex at 52 Main Street by Zion Growers, which would operate

an industrial hemp processing facility.

Zion Growers has been working with CEDRR and the Vermont Community Development Specialists to work through all the details that will be needed to cement a potential deal. The last time The Reporter followed up

on this development, the project seemed like a possibility. Two months later, Town Manager

(See Proctor, Page 24)



Tim Guiles

(Continued from Page 1)

my interest in sustainability by moving to Vermont.”

In Vermont, Guiles said he has done “many different kinds of jobs. I worked as a farm hand for several years. I trained to become a small town librarian. I trained to become an EMT with the Williamstown Ambulance Service. I ran a tiny house building company.”

Through all the years, he continued, “I have made some (or all) of my living by playing the piano. I was the music director for several big shows at the Montpelier Lost Nation Theater. Currently I am the rehearsal accompanist for the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Chorus, and, more locally, I play for the Middlebury College Community Chorus. I also maintain a small group of music students, young and not-so-young, who want to improve their music making skills.”

As for his concerns, passions and hobbies, Guiles wrote that “in addition to environmental concerns, I am very interested in restorative justice. In the past I was an active part of rebuilding the Brandon BRAVO restorative justice program. Before COVID, I volunteered 3 days a week teaching piano lessons at the Rutland prison. I enjoy being part of the Brandon Greenways group that promotes walking trails both downtown and more rurally in Brandon.”

He has a son, Zachary, 31, who is an orchestral trombonist and lives in Japan with his wife.

Guiles responses to the seven questions are below:

1)

A: The next large infrastructure project facing Brandon is the wastewater treatment plant. This is an aging facility that has been upgraded over the years to keep up with the necessary tightening of environmental regulations. With this work over the next year or two, our treatment facility will be more capable of handling the momentary surges of rain events that have sometimes overwhelmed the system in the past. This is clearly the most responsible thing for our generation to address. We are accessing available grants so that the final bill to the sewer ratepayers will be quite reasonable.

There are several smaller water/sewer projects that we are hoping to use the recent flush of ARPA funds from the federal (and state) governments. These are necessary improvements that will save us money in the long run.

Our roads are well maintained and we have a good strategy for keeping them that way. Another important infrastructure project that is a more pressing need is high speed internet FOR EVERYBODY. The town is part of the Otter Creek Communications Union District which is focused on how to solve the last mile challenges of high speed internet for homes and businesses.

2)

A: All over the United States there are older homes that need to be rehabilitated to make them more affordable by reducing their energy costs. I have rehabbed two homes in Brandon that included insulating them to current best practice standards, installing heat pumps for heating/cooling, replacing older appliances with newer more energy-efficient ones, and, importantly, installing solar panels on the roof to drive the cost of operating the home down to make it more affordable.

I believe that there are ways to harness local resources, financial and volunteer people power, to help homes become more affordable by making them environmentally more friendly.

In addition to rehabilitating, I have been active in a small group that gathers to discuss how to create more affordable housing in Brandon. There are several programs at the regional and state levels that may be helpful in helping Brandon create small, affordable homes.

In the past, affordable housing has often meant that it needed to be *subsidized* by the government. I disagree with that model. I believe that the way to create affordable housing is to build small 2-3 bedroom “starter” homes that can be sold for \$120,000 - \$140,000 — and they are affordable because they are hyper efficient and they create almost all of their power requirements with solar panels on the roof — thus the cost of living is very low.

3)

A: Brandon is a beautiful, successful, and welcoming Vermont community. We are attractive to people who are considering coming to Vermont. We have a healthy economy with several businesses that employ local people (example: New England Woodcraft in Forest Dale), and we have an easy commute to Rutland to the south, and Middlebury to the North.

We are in a great location for our residents to enjoy the Vermont seasons — the ski mountains are nearby, bicycle tours

abound, and Lake Champlain is only 25 minutes away in Orwell. We have a fine recreation department for all ages. Our roads are well maintained. We have a fiscally conservative select board that keeps our taxes reasonably low and wisely managed.

I think we need to keep being the fine community that we are — and good people will keep finding us.

4)

A: It is appropriate for the GreenWays group to pursue their dream of creating wonderful parks and trails systems throughout Brandon. In my opinion, it is appropriate for the GreenWays group to request support from the town either in the form of funding, or, when it would be helpful, manpower and equipment.

I believe that the town manager and the select board are ready to be supportive of the GreenWays group’s efforts. I do not think that the town needs to be more involved in creating a walking/biking trail system.

5)

A: Locally, Brandon is in great shape. We are well managed — we have a strong financial position with relatively little debt — we are paying attention to what needs to be addressed in a responsible way. However, Brandon is also part of a much larger picture. There are state and national issues, which will reverberate in Brandon. Here are four examples, from smaller to larger:

A) Marijuana sales — The move towards the decriminalization of marijuana is, in my opinion, a good thing. While I do not use marijuana, I believe that marijuana usage is on the same scale as alcohol consumption. A large number of people in our community are going to consume alcohol/marijuana. I believe that our communities will be safer when we remove the criminal element that has (in the past) produced the needed supply. I believe that we need to continue to address substance abuse primarily as a health problem — thus, we need to promote: good education to help people avoid problems of substance abuse, and necessary treatment programs for those who need help overcoming an addiction.

B) Policing — First, let me say that I think the Brandon Police are doing a good job. In my lifetime, policing has evolved a lot. In my opinion, some of today’s policing challenges are a result of asking the police to do too much. They are often being

The seven questions:

1) After 4 years of work around the Segment 6 project, what other infrastructure projects does Brandon need to address and what do you think should be the town’s top priorities?

2) Every town in Vermont faces a housing shortage, and particularly an affordable housing shortage, what can Brandon do to help alleviate that problem?

3) In what other ways (other than creating new affordable housing) can Brandon attract new workers and young families?

4) Local committees have done good work on creating GreenWays, parks, and trail systems throughout the community. Should the town play a bigger role in creating a walking/biking trail system and other recreational opportunities? If so, in what way and what would be the end goal?

5) What do you see as the three biggest problems facing Brandon in the next 5-10 years? And how would you begin to address them?

6) Every select board member brings a particular expertise or issues they want to focus on during their terms. What are those issues for you, and how would you address them?

7) Why are you proud of Brandon and, in the short-term, what could the select board do to make the town better?

put in a position of dealing with mental health issues that would be better handled by a mental health professional. I think that it is likely that our country will evolve a new way to provide police services to a community that could be a blended mix of social service professionals acting in harmony with more traditional police men and women. The needs of the community will be better met and there will be fewer tragic outcomes.

C) Racial Equity — While Brandon is doing a very good job about trying to be self aware of possible shortcomings when it comes to racial equity, it is important, in a state as “white” as Vermont, to be constantly vigilant about any possible unintended impediments our rules, policies, and staff protocols might produce. Our country is grappling with how to make our schools, businesses, government, and every aspect of living in our country more equitable for all people. This is a worthy endeavor.

D) Global Warming — Vermont has a goal of meeting 90% of our energy needs with renewable resources, and reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 75% from the 1990 level. Brandon is on a solid path towards doing its’ part to meet those goals. We must keep looking for ways to insure our success. I have been an active part of getting SolarFest to come to Brandon where they intend to

build a community solar project for people who are unable to put solar on their own homes for various reasons. Another useful tool to help Brandon succeed is the Green Fleet Policy (which I introduced), which ensures that we will try to replace our gas consuming equipment and vehicles with electric ones whenever feasible.

6)

A: There are two aspects to almost every issue that comes before the Brandon select board: fairness and environmental stewardship. When asked to make a decision, I try to understand all sides of an issue and look for the fairest solution. I am always mindful of the importance of taking care of the environment on which we all depend.

I have a strong engineering background so I tend to approach problems with that logical problem solving attitude. Another strength is my many years of experience with promoting energy efficient lifestyles. I am always ready to talk with people about the economic, social and environmental benefits of using less energy.

7)

A: See number 3 above! And I think our select board needs to keep having open and honest conversations about how to move forward, one day at a time.

Marielle Blaise

(Continued from Page 1)

Society, the Brandon Restorative Justice committee, and the Four Winds Nature Program at Neshobe School. She says she enjoys “reading, gardening, knitting, baking, and practicing Tai Chi” as some of her favorite hobbies or pastimes.

Below are her responses to the seven questions asked:

1)

A: Making the town more walkable requires the expansion of road paving and improved sidewalks on streets just outside the Segment 6 project. Ongoing work on wastewater treatment and the Union Street sewer is essential.

It’s hard to tell from downtown traffic that pedestrians have the right of way at crosswalks, where it is not unusual for more than three cars to drive right past a pedestrian waiting to cross. This trend is not a mere annoyance, but a potential cause of a serious accident. The crosswalks need to be marked more clearly.

Bicyclists would like more racks in town for parking and locking their bikes. A dream project, put on indefinite hold, is adding a sidewalk from Otter Valley Union School to Neshobe School that walkers and bicyclists could use to get safely past several dangerous blind curves.

The town is considering a Brandon Solar Farm, which could provide significant energy savings.

2)

A: Like many towns in Vermont, Brandon has very few apartments, condos, or houses for rent or sale. This severe shortage did not develop overnight and cannot be resolved quickly. Creating housing for a broader range of incomes is a multifaceted challenge. We need a survey of existing housing stock to see which units could be renovated and retrofitted to be more energy efficient. Some larger existing homes might be converted to duplexes or triplexes.

When it comes to newly built homes, we should be building smarter, greener, smaller ones. Home sharing can be mutually beneficial to a homeowner who can provide housing and a housemate who needs a safe home.

We might have to consider changing zoning regulations and move away, in some cases, from “one lot, one dwelling.” Small, accessory dwelling units can be ideal for singles, couples, or small families. Brandon is considering a revolving loan fund, the Brandon Housing Coalition, to help finance renovations and retrofits. Vermont is allocating \$150,000 in coronavirus funding for building or renovating housing stock.

We have potential partners in this challenge: Efficiency Vermont, Neighborworks, Benning-

ton Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC), Yestermorrow Design Build School, Rural Studio of Auburn University, etc.

3)

A: Brandon is a wonderful town, which I thought had great curb appeal even before the Segment 6 project. In 2008, I became a first-time homeowner when I bought an old house in Forest Dale. One of my first Brandon events was the Great Brandon Auction. Yes, there were amazing bargains, but the best part was how much fun the sellers and buyers were having.

Brandon has a number of town-wide events that draw good crowds, at least before COVID. A young newcomer told me he bought his house here because “Brandon is an up and coming town.”

How do we attract more singles, couples, and young families to come to Brandon? We do a better job of advertising the town’s many advantages—arts, music, food, craft beer, independent bookstore, distillery, beautiful downtown, great natural resources, friendly people.

One of my fondest memories in Brandon is getting down and dirty with my neighbors during the post Irene cleanup.

What makes Brandon so great? It’s the community. Let’s talk it up—in person and online—and let’s talk to our newcomers and learn what brought them to Brandon.

That, and better Wi-Fi. (Bristol has townwide Wi-Fi that’s really easy to access.)

4)

A: Downtown Brandon Alliance is already playing a big part in GreenWays, parks, and trail systems, but in this case, bigger IS better. One proposal is a walking path from Estabrook Park to downtown. I’d like to smell the flowers along the paths by adding community garden sites, which have been discussed, but not created—yet.

Gardening can be widely accessible to a wide range of people of varying ages. It provides exercise, fresh air, new skills, food, and flowers. Imagine native pollinator plants—monarchs on milkweed—and blackberries along walking paths. Think about harvest dinners, contributions to the local food shelf and senior center.

Oh, and we need a rec center so teens can have a safe, cool place to hang out and the rest of us don’t have to drive to Middlebury to play pickle ball.

5)

A: We have an aging population, declining school enrollment in a community with limited diversity. (A fourth problem is the climate crisis, which may “solve” the other problems, but let’s hope

not.) The aging population faces the Alzheimer’s epidemic, which is a huge public health concern—we have nowhere near the facilities to house and the staff to care for the Alzheimer’s population.

I don’t know what the solution is, but I know this is something we need much more public awareness about.

The only solution to declining school enrollment is attracting young families to Brandon, *diverse* families to Brandon. Why diverse? Because American demographics are changing. Census projections predict that by 2042 Hispanic, Black, Asian, and other ethnic and racial minorities will have become a majority of the population. So, if we want to attract young families, we are going to have to welcome diverse families.

In January 2021, the Brandon select board unanimously voted to accept a Declaration of Inclusion, which is a good step. If we genuinely want to be an inclusive town, we need honest and civil discussions about what it means to be inclusive. Inclusivity doesn’t just happen, we have to make it happen. We have good hearts, let’s use them to make Brandon a welcoming home for all residents, present and future.

6)

A: I keep up with select board issues by periodically attending meetings, reading select board minutes, reading *The Reporter*, and talking to other Brandon residents. I wouldn’t say I have select board expertise, but I do have good and relevant skills. I have a long history of working cooperatively with groups, as a teacher, colleague, union activist, and volunteer.

People want to be heard and I listen, ask questions. I deliberate over tough decisions. Initially, with a new group, I’m often more of a quiet observer while I develop a sense of how the group works. Learning about select board issues will be a challenge to me, but I like to learn. Since I became a select board candidate, I’ve heard from people I might not otherwise have gotten to know.

One woman told me she considers select board meetings a “hostile environment.” I responded that the select board members may come across as a little stiff and formal in meetings, which they, as they should, take very seriously. I said they’re generally nice guys. Generally, because I don’t know them that well. I’d like to think that my presence on the select board could make the meetings a little more welcoming to people who feel intimidated by formal meetings.

7)

A: I’m proud of Brandon because:

- When I do something silly, like get my car stuck in the snow, the town manager and the town rec director—people my mother would

have thought of as “*les big shots*”—come out of the town offices with a shovel to push and dig me out.

- I always run into people I know everywhere I go.

- One of the most happening places in town is the transfer station.

- We have a lot of comedians.

- I share a raspberry patch with my neighbors who have three great kids and a dad who cleaned out my driveway after a recent big snow-storm.

- We have a nice mix of people whose families have been here for

generations and people who started their families here.

- Our library and bookstore have good selections and great staff.

- We don’t always pass the bonds, but we do pass our school and town budgets.

- After the Brandon Pizza building was washed into the road during Tropical Storm Irene, they relocated the business to a new spot.

- This is where I want to grow old(er).

- Unhurried, unspoiled, unforgettable.

A 44-Year Middlebury Tradition of
Trusted & Caring Dental Excellence!

\$0 Cleanings!

For most insured patients. Call for details.

Further Heightened Sterilization Standards



Welcome Before & After Work or School!

The Reporter

Periodicals Postage Paid at Brandon, Vt. 05733

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

Published every Wednesday in Rutland County by the Addison Press, Inc., 58 Maple St., Middlebury, VT 05753.
Member Vermont Press Association; New England Press Association; National Newspapers Association.
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$45.00 • OUT OF STATE SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$55.00
The Reporter assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertisements but will reprint that part of advertisements in which the typographical error occurred. Advertisers please notify the management immediately of any errors which may occur.

Op Ed

Proposal hike threshold for Social Security tax exemption

BY MONICA WHITE,

Gov. Phil Scott has a plan to return over \$50 million to Vermonters by expanding existing tax credits, and offering new ones, to make Vermont more affordable for those that already live here, and to help us to be more competitive in attracting new residents.

Many of these changes are reflected in his affordability package (H.527), and one of the most important proposals increases the income thresholds for the Vermont Social Security income tax exemption. This change directly impacts Vermonters served by the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL).

DAIL's mission is to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability — with dignity, respect and independence. Additional tax relief will help older Vermonters further enjoy their well-deserved retirements and enhance their financial security — directly contributing to our mission. I care deeply about this from both a professional and personal perspective.

I am extraordinarily fortunate that three of my grandparents, all in their 80s, live near me here in Vermont (my husband's grandfather too, in his 90s). Grammy and Grampy enjoy camping, travel, and spending time with their six children and dozens of grandchildren and great grandchildren. Memmere is a social butterfly who loves kayaking and dancing, and enjoying lunches with her friends. Grandpa still runs the tractor on the family farm, haying in the summer, wood-working in the winter, and giving me hunting tips in the fall.

All of them have worked incredibly hard throughout their lives, and they all deserve less of a tax liability in their retirement years. This proposal, to increase the income threshold for the Vermont Social Security income tax exemption, will directly and positively impact all of my grandparents, and thousands of other Vermonters, too, in providing greater financial stability.

Vermont's population is one of the oldest in our nation and expanding the income threshold that qualifies for the Social Security income tax exemption will help to improve the quality of life for older Vermonters. This demographic is one of Vermont's biggest consumers of services, and this proposal will help to put money back into Vermont's economy. Also, in planning for retirement, savvy potential retirees

understand what various states have to offer them in terms of affordability, and most states have more generous treatment than Vermont, including full exemptions in Massachusetts, Maine, and New York.

This proposal is in alignment with the Older Vermonters Act of 2020, specifically:

- Financial security. Older Vermonters should be able to receive an adequate income and have the opportunity to maintain assets for a reasonable quality of life as they age. If older Vermonters want to work, they should be able to seek and maintain employment without fear of discrimination and with any needed accommodations. Older Vermonters should also be able to retire after a lifetime of work, if they so choose, without fear of poverty and isolation.

In the needs assessment conducted for the current Vermont State Plan on Aging (FFY2019-22), older Vermont respondents reported that:

- Their top three most identified concerns for the future were financial security (57%), health care (57%), and maintaining independence and dignity (55%).

Our most recent State Plan on Aging needs assessment (conducted in 2020), provides detailed insight into the importance of financial stability for older Vermonters, including that more than three-quarters of Vermonters age 60 and over rely on Social Security as a source of income.

Taxing Social Security income makes it more challenging for older Vermonters to enjoy the retirements they have earned, along with making it increasingly difficult to pay for basic living expenses such as food, housing costs, and medications. AARP, the Community of Vermont Elders, and Vermont's five Area Agencies on Aging are in full support of a reduction to the tax liability on older Vermonters' Social Security benefits.

In conclusion, we all want to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability, with dignity, respect, and independence. Reducing the tax liability on Social Security income, if the Legislature supports the governor's proposal, is a great step we can take toward achieving this mission.

Editors note: Monica White is the Commissioner of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living

**Stunning steeple**

NO MATTER THE angle, the steeple atop Brandon's Congregational Church presents a stunning view to passersby.

Reporter photo/Angelo Lynn



Legislative Report

BY BUTCH SHAW

Legislative Wrap-up, week 6

While doing research for my bi-weekly reports to you, I have discovered that I have written many times on the privilege of representing you in our historic State House. I have extolled the virtues of the beautiful and carefully preserved architecture of the building and most importantly the openness of the building to the general public. It is a source of pride to me and my legislative colleagues that anyone, according to Chapter 2 Article 8 of The Vermont Constitution, "The admission of all persons 'who behave decently' may enter the State House."

However, the Constitution also provides in the same article that "when the welfare of the State may require them to be shut..." they shall do so. Unfortunately, COV-

ID-19 has forced the in-person access to the State House to be limited and in some instances "to be shut" at certain times.

I've also written many times of the small size of some of the committee rooms and lack of a robust ventilation system to provide good airflow throughout the building. To overcome these shortcomings, the Legislative Advisory Committee on the State House, of which I am a member, worked diligently to ascertain how to make the building a safe workplace for members and the public to enter. To that end, five small committee rooms were closed, and the displaced committees moved to formerly public spaces throughout the building thereby removing those spaces from public use.

The Hall of Representatives and The Senate Chambers have limited the public access to balcony seating only removing approximately 80 to 100 public seats in the House and 40 to 45 seats in the Senate chambers.

The always popular cafeteria space has a capacity of 50 down from 150 dining spaces. The glorious Cedar Creek Room, normally used for press conferences and lobbyists receptions, now has a limited capacity of 30 persons down from the normal 100. The public hallways and even the bathrooms have limited occupancy restrictions. I tell you all of this because I would normally invite all of you to visit the State House for a tour and to check in on your local legislators to (See Legislative Wrap, Page 6)

Letters to the Editor

A flag that I can believe in

Having moved to Brandon a few months ago and have been busy taking care of the usual issues that pop up when settling in. Lately I have been thinking about the American flag the past owners left hanging outside the house. It's quite tattered and looks as if it has hung there for years.

It's time for a change. Before doing this I think it's necessary to connect with the community regarding its removal.

I love the American flag, which makes this next part hard to talk about. I started questioning the flag's meaning on Jan 6, 2021 when I witnessed a crowd of 'Proud Boys' on the Capitol steps abusing the Capitol and others people there that day. When I watched one person thrusting an American flag into someone's torso, I was truly offended.

I turned my back on the flag. Of course, this act of violence was not the fault of the flag. Still, I was crushed that MY flag, the flag that has always meant life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to me was used to harm others. Those others included Capitol guards, states' people, our representatives and senators, to mention a few.

My mind filled with mixed thoughts and my heart, mixed emotions. The flag, MY flag, was used, abused and disrespected with the riot that took place that day, plain and simple.

To continue to honor that flag, MY flag, I thought that I too would be considered an insurrectionist if I flew the flag; that in my silence I supported storming the Capitol that

day and injuring others. My silence was saying that I too had no respect for anything other than power and control, and would kill needlessly to get it; that I would not take the time to sit in open discussions regarding the issues at hand, and come up with solutions that all could agree to.

Most importantly, that I must believe in a man who would not own up to being the spark that lit the fire which ended with the death of others. We all saw him, standing at the top of Pennsylvania Ave, and we all heard his speech. It was televised throughout the free world! To pretend we did not hear, that he did not say those things, I would be lying to myself and others.

But, I cannot go on living in fear that if I do anything with MY flag, I will offend Brandon's Proud Boys. I refuse to carry the shame of Jan. 6 and the violent actions of others.

I am re-aligning myself with what patriotism means to me. I say the American flag is mine. It still means life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to me! It is still MY flag, too, and I have a right to support those ideals.

I love the Brandon community and look forward to making new friends. In publishing this statement I do not wish to offend anyone, only to state my reasons for hanging another flag outside my house, one that sends an equally important message of peace for humankind.

I continue to support the American flag because I too am a patriot!
Sandy Mayo
Brandon

Brandon Museum asks for support

Many residents of Brandon think of the small white house next to the Baptist Church as the Stephen Douglas Museum and assume it's focused entirely on the life of one of Brandon's most famous natives. But the reality is that the Brandon Museum's mission is to educate the public about the people and history of Brandon, from the time of Brandon's founding in 1761 to the present day.

Douglas was an important part of our history, but there's so much more for us to be proud of. We've used the pandemic as a time to reorganize and revitalize the museum and want to take this opportunity to reintroduce ourselves to the community and ask for your support. Specifically, we're asking the public's support to increase a line item in the town budget financing the museum from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Here's why:

- Our plans for the next few years include new exhibits, programming, and partnerships to deepen our community's understanding of its own rich history and culture.

For example, we're currently planning a major new exhibit on Thomas Davenport, a resident of Forest Dale, who invented the electric motor in the 1830s. Davenport is a major figure in scientific history, and he deserves more recognition in his hometown. We've already built partnerships with the physics department at UVM and the Energy Committee here in Brandon to help get this exhibit up and running in the next year or so.

We hope the exhibit will make clear how important Davenport and Brandon have been in American history.

(See Brandon museum Page 6)

All Vermont's children deserve healthy meals

We, the School Nutrition Association of Vermont (SNA-VT), urge the Vermont legislature to pass S.100, the Universal School Meals for All bill, because a healthy breakfast and lunch is a fundamental part of every student's school day.

We must ensure that no child has to learn what hunger feels like at school. Thanks to federal waivers in place since mid-March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been operating successfully with a universal meals model in place. The past two years have seen an increase in participation in school meals and an inclusive service model that creates a more equitable school climate.

School meals at no cost to families is a source of stability for students, educators, and parents that has had proven and far-reaching benefits.

We know that food insecurity remains prevalent in Vermont, and that too many families fall outside the eligibility guidelines for free school meals and federal

aid programs such as 3Squares-VT. Without Universal School Meals many of our students, through no fault of their own, don't get to eat at school and go through their day hungry, embarrassed, feeling shame, unable to focus and learn.

In 2021, SNA-VT distributed a survey to parents, teachers, administrators, and school nutrition staff. We received nearly 700 responses from across 40 Vermont school districts, the following results are notable:

- 85% of parents expressed that universal school meals directly benefited their children;
- 96% of school nutrition personnel want to continue a non-pricing model citing increased meal participation and the opportunity to focus solely on quality meals as part of student education;
- 97% of teachers cited positive impacts on their students and classrooms including improved focus and readiness to learn, a more equitable climate, and greater peace of mind for

teachers worried about hungry students.

Returning to the old system of paid meals, income applications and collecting unpaid debt means returning to a system of shame, bullying, hunger and decreased student achievement. Universal School Meals levels the playing field, keeping Vermont students nourished and equipped to learn.

Ultimately, passing S.100 does more than support our future Vermont leaders and their families. It establishes school nutrition as a valued and intrinsic part of the educational system and a real demonstration of equity and equal opportunity in our schools. Permanent implementation of Universal School Meals for All is what we know is necessary. It is overwhelmingly supported by school nutrition professionals, administrators, teachers, parents and caregivers. It is the only way forward.

The School Nutrition Association of Vermont
Scott Fay, Board President

THINK SPRING SALE!



2020 TOYOTA TUNDRA
DBL Cab, 4x4 TRD Pro, 5.7L V8, Auto, 16k miles
\$48,995 - SPECIAL PRICE



2013 SUBARU CROSSTREK
4-Cyl, Auto, AWD, 156k Miles
\$12,995



2016 DODGE CHARGER
SXT Rallye, V6, Auto, AWD, 74k Miles
\$23,995



2016 NISSAN FRONTIER
Crew, V6, Auto, 4x4, 127k Miles
\$22,995



2015 NISSAN ROGUE
Select, 4-Cyl, Auto, FWD, 132k Miles
\$12,995

**AFFORDABLE, SAFE & RELIABLE
USED CARS AND TRUCKS**
We also buy cars,
locate specialty orders
& consider consignments
Call Dave for an appointment

Wimett Trading Company
at the Big White Barn in Leicester
David Wimett, 35 Years Experience
C. Michael Jackman, 40 Years Experience
802-465-4688
2668 Route 7 • Leicester, VT 05733 • wimetttradingco@gmail.com

More than
a decade
of delivering
Quality!

SUBSCRIBE
THE BRANDON REPORTER

Annual subscription for just \$45.
brandonreporter.com

WE NEED U

Legislative wrap

(Continued from Page 4)

observe the proceedings, but under the current conditions I would urge you to wait until we are fully open and you can enjoy the experience of visiting the State House and observing how your government works.

The Legislature does recognize that with the occupancy restrictions the Joint Rules Committee has put in place, the public has a right and the Legislature has a responsibility to provide some form of public access to their proceedings. To assure this access, the Legislature has invested \$500,000 in Covid-19 Relief Funds to upgrade and expand the live streaming capabilities of our proceedings beyond the current audio format. The public can now view all House and Senate proceedings along with all legislative committee meetings in real time via a live stream link to YouTube. This can be accomplished by logging into the legislative home page at leg.state.vt.us and click on committees and select your committee of interest.

If you would like to testify before a committee on an issue, you just follow the same link and e-mail the committee assistant with your request. You will be able to schedule testimony and participate in a Zoom meeting from your home. Should you need help scheduling, please contact me for assistance.

Meanwhile, as the Legislature

slogs through this public health crisis, House members are meeting in person in our committee rooms and on the House floor with special provisions for members to meet virtually if they have a Covid-related health issue.

Meanwhile, the Senate is meeting in a hybrid format of virtual and in-person meetings with most members attending from their homes. As a matter of fact, only four Senate members were in the State House last week and I'm happy to report Rutland County Senator Brian Colamore was among them.

If you would like to contact me, my mailing address is P.O. Box 197, Pittsford, VT 05763, or you can reach me at 802-483-2398. E-mail me anytime at bshaw@leg.state.vt.us. I am always available to have a conversation with you on all subjects concerning our Legislative District and the State of Vermont.

*Representative Butch Shaw
Brandon-Pittsford-Sudbury
Vice Chair-House Committee on
Transportation*

*Clerk-Joint Legislative Oversight
Committee*

*Member-Joint Committee on Ju-
dicial Retention*

*Member-Joint Legislative Advi-
sory Committee on the State House*

*Member-Joint Canvassing Com-
mittee*

*Chair- Rutland County Legisla-
tive Delegation*



Playful art

AN EXHIBIT FEATURING works by area high school students is being shown at Brandon's Artist Guild, but hurry in before all the snow melts and the message is off-theme.

Reporter photo/Angelo Lynn

Brandon museum

(Continued from Page 5)

- We also want to focus on more modern life here as well.

During the pandemic we began an oral history project, recording interviews with people who've lived in Brandon for a long time and whose memories of the town need to be preserved. The project is still in its early stages, but we hope to be able to present these recordings online sometime soon.

- We are also working to build an interactive website that will offer the community many re-

sources, including a searchable database of our collection of historical artifacts (we have some pretty interesting stuff!). We now have an Instagram account (@brandonmuseumVT) to help connect with people near and far.

- We also operate the town's Visitor Center, which provides information about local attractions, an accessible public restroom, and a free conference room available to the Brandon community.

- We're located in a very old house that requires upkeep and the pandemic and downtown construction cut the number of visitors to almost zero, resulting in the loss of small cash donations at the door (we don't charge admission).

- We run mostly on a volunteer basis, with members of the community pitching in to keep the place going, and we plan to offer even more opportunities for people to get involved as we move forward.

We are a small museum with limited revenue. Our goal to become a real community resource for Brandon will demand financial resources we don't currently

have. In order to expand our educational events for our community, we'll need to find financial support wherever we can. We've been fortunate to receive some funding from the Brandon Trustees of Public Funds (aka the Shirley Farr fund) this year and will be applying for other grants at the local, state, and federal levels.

By voting YES on your March ballot at Town Meeting this year to increase the Brandon Museum appropriation from \$2,500 to \$5,000, you will help the museum expand its programming to benefit all citizens of Brandon. We hope you see that voting YES for this increase will be an investment in a community resource that plans to offer something for everyone in town.

Brandon Museum Board of Directors

Dan Celik

Steven Jupiter, president

Jennie Masterson

Ken McFarland

Michael Senecal

Harmony VanEaton

Visit our website Hours
Thu - Sat 10-5

Vermont Camera Works




www.vermontcamera.com

**If you love classic film cameras you need to pay us a visit.
Leica, Zeiss, Rolleiflex, Nikon, Voigtlander
and many others.**

3200 US RT 7, Pittsford
(802)483-9357 vcw@vermontcamera.com Jim & Liz McRae

BARNARD FUNERAL HOME INC.

3186 U.S. Route 7 Pittsford • www.barnardfuneralhome.com

(802) 483-2811  Christopher Book/Director

For five generations the Barnard family has assisted families in Pittsford, Proctor, Chittenden and the surrounding area getting through one of life's most difficult times.

Also operating the Birch Grove Crematory

2022 Rebates for Your Home



If you're planning on improving the efficiency of your home or apartment this year, take a look at Efficiency Vermont's residential offers, including:



Air Sealing and Insulation

- 50% off weatherization project costs, up to \$3,000 (completed by an Efficiency Excellence Network contractor)
- DIY weatherization: \$100 back on select do-it-yourself projects



Heating, Cooling, and Water Heating

- Air-source heat pumps: discounts starting at \$350 + income bonus
- Ground source heat pump: up to \$2,100/ton + \$500 income bonus
- Smart thermostats: \$100 rebate for select ENERGY STAR models
- Water heaters: \$300-\$600 for select heat pump water heaters + \$200 income bonus
- Window air conditioners: \$100 rebate for select ENERGY STAR models
- Wood pellet furnaces & boilers: \$6,000 rebate
- Wood and pellet stoves: \$200 discount at select retailers



Electric Vehicles

- Up to \$6,500 in local incentives and up to a \$7,500 federal tax credit



ENERGY STAR Appliances

- \$200-\$400 rebates on heat pump clothes dryers, \$25-\$40 for dehumidifiers



Lighting

- \$100 rebate for qualifying LED fixtures for indoor growing, plus discounts on select ENERGY STAR LED fixtures at participating retailers



Income-based Assistance

- Free lighting, appliances, energy consultations, and more — visit [efficiencyvermont.com/free-products](https://www.encyvermont.com/free-products) to see if you are eligible.

Additional rebates may also be available from your electric or gas utility.



Not sure where to start?

Sign up for a **FREE** Virtual Home Energy Visit!
Call **888-921-5990** to learn more

All rebates are subject to availability and eligibility.
Visit www.encyvermont.com/rebates for the most up-to-date information.

Efficiency
Vermont



‘Meaning of Life’

BY VICTOR NUOVO

Death and Immortality

Plato’s dialogues *Crito* and *Phaedo* are sequels to the *Apology*. The scene of both is Socrates’ prison cell, where he was confined following his trial before the Athenian Council, which found him guilty of impiety and sentenced him to death.

Socrates received the sentence philosophically. He would make no appeal. He was old and would soon die in any case. He did not fear death.

He imagined that death is one of two things: either it is extinction, or the release of the soul from the body and its migration to another place. He compared the former to dreamless sleep, which is the most restful sleep of all; the latter would be like joining the community of the dead, there would be opportunity for conversation and much to talk about. There was nothing to fear.

Crito was a wealthy Athenian, an old friend, of the same age as Socrates. In *Crito*, he proposes that Socrates escape from prison and go into exile. He scolded Socrates; he had a responsibility to his wife and two sons. Also, he worried that Athenian public opinion would blame him and Socrates’ other friends for not helping him escape. Escape would not be difficult. *Crito* had already bribed the jailor, who allowed Socrates’ friends to visit him in prison.

Socrates refused. He would not leave Athens, indeed he must not. If he were to escape from prison he would become an outlaw. He loved Athens and respected its constitution and laws. He could never act against them.

Besides, escape would be an act of retaliation against those who condemned him, returning evil for evil, and retaliation is wrong, as wrong as the act that provoked it.

Finally, his conscience forbid it, and he could not betray his conscience.

Crito is the shortest of the Socratic dialogues; it is a paean to the rule of law, the dictates of conscience, and the moral self: such things from which Socrates derived the meaning of his existence.

The *Phaedo* comes last in this trinity of dialogues. Socrates’ friends have gathered

in his cell on the day of execution. The narrator is *Phaedo*, a follower of Socrates and himself a philosopher. He describes the mood of the friends; some of them are so overcome by emotion that they cannot restrain their sobbing.

In contrast to his friends, Socrates is composed, serene, even cheerful. To comfort his

philosopher has no reason to fear death, for, if death is the separation of the soul from the body, then philosophy is a preparation for death. This is not to suggest that Socrates had a death wish; rather he was persuaded that the life of the mind does not end with the death of the body, for the mind is seated in the soul, and there is reason to believe that the soul is immortal.

Socrates proceeds to make the case for immortality. To begin with, there is evidence that body and soul are separate entities, for although it is evident that after death the body decomposes, there is reason to believe that the soul lives on. Consider human knowledge. It consists of ideas, which only the mind perceives. Likewise, rational thought, which involves putting ideas together, is an activity that proceeds independent of the body. Indeed, more often than not, the body, and its cognitive power, sensation, is often a hindrance to cognition. We clarify our ideas by abstracting them from their sensible qualities, which is to say, we think abstractly, and abstract thinking is a pure activity of the mind. Which leads Socrates to conclude that philosophical thinking, whose goal is truth, whose possession is knowledge, is just that: the separation of the soul from the body. So the philosophers should not fear death. And if death is not to be feared, that is because it promises something more, the liberation of the mind to be free to think pure thoughts, which are by nature timeless.

Socrates offers other evidence to support this conclusion, for example, that the com-

ing to be of things are from their opposite state: for example, sound from silence, presence from absence, existence from nonexistence, so why not life from death?

Yet on examination, the evidence seems inconclusive. Socrates’ friends are doubtful, and Socrates admits that their doubts are creditable. And this

He imagined that death is one of two things: either it is extinction, or the release of the soul from the body and its migration to another place.

may have been Plato’s intention, when he wrote the dialogue. Philosophy, after all consists of searches after truth, not the dogmatic assertion of facsimiles of truth. The love

of truth and the desire to possess it may not be not proof of immortality. Still gives reason to hope for it, for the life of the mind us leads into a timeless realm whose scope is infinite. This, I believe, is the best that we can hope for after reading Plato’s *Phaedo* and pondering its message.

And there is Socrates’ example to us: he teaches us how to die, serenely, for if death is not the door to immortality, then it is like dreamless sleep. There is nothing to fear if one’s conscience is clear.

Phaedo concludes: the jailor brings him a goblet with the deadly potion, he drinks it down and dies. The death scene evokes deep emotion.

Postscript: Plato provides the best introduction to Socrates in his dialogues. The three I’ve written about, *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo* are available in English translation in *The Last Days of Socrates*, published by Penguin in an inexpensive paperback. The volume also includes Plato’s *Euthyphro*, which is a prelude to Socrates’ trial, and which provides an easy to follow example of Socrates’ method of philosophizing. Study of these works will prove the relevance of the life and teaching of Socrates to our current crises: a pandemic, and the moral and political crisis this nation faces. Death, gross immorality, and the denial of truth threaten our life, and our civilization. Becoming Socratic may be our remedy.



Public weighs in on controversial hunting and wildlife bills

BY EMMA COTTON, VtDigger
MONTPELIER —Three bills in the state’s Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee are proving controversial among hunters and animal welfare advocates.

At a relatively rare public hearing conducted by the committee last week, Vermonters expressed support and opposition to the bills, which would ban two hunting practices and limit the power of the Department of Fish and Wildlife board.

“Quite bluntly, hunting and fishing bills always have a broad interest, and there’s also some controversy around them,” said Sen. Chris Bray, D-Addison, who chairs the committee. “Rather than just do the regular committee process, we thought it was worth creating a public forum that anyone could participate in.”

Many opposed to the proposed policies expressed concern that the bills seek to limit hunting in general and said hunters use best practices to avoid inflicting unnecessary pain on animals. Those in favor of the bills say the practices at their center are cruel and should have been prohibited long ago.

The commissioner of the Fish and Wildlife Department, Chris Herrick, opposes parts of all three bills.

Brenna Galdenzi, president of Protect Our Wildlife, a statewide organization that has been advocating for more hunting regulation in the state, says the bills are not anti-hunting.

“There are still some practices in Vermont that are legal that, if we were doing the same things to domestic animals, they would likely fall under Vermont’s cruelty to animals statute, which means you’re inflicting prolonged pain, suffer-

ing, fear upon an animal,” she said.

THE BILLS

One of the bills, S.281, would ban hunters from using hounds to track and kill coyotes, a practice animal welfare activists likened to dogfighting. Other than obtaining a standard hunting license, hunters and their hounds face few restrictions when hunting coyotes, which are often severely injured or killed by the dogs that chase them.

In addition to the public hearing, lawmakers in the Senate Natural Resources Committee took testimony earlier this month on each of the bills. There, Diana Hansen, a Craftsbury resident, said she grew up in a family of hunters and does not take issue with many types of hunting, but an incident on her property in February 2018 caused her to object to hunting coyotes with hounds.

Her 10-year-old alerted her to multiple dogs entering her property in pursuit of a coyote, she told lawmakers. The dogs mauled the coyote, which was bloodied and “clearly exhausted,” Hansen said, until the creature ascended her greenhouse, with the dogs following. The incident, all of which her children witnessed, caused \$500 worth of damage. Her property wasn’t posted, so no officials could help her, she said.

Rather than banning the practice outright, Fish and Wildlife officials are advocating for increased regulations around hound hunting coyotes.

“By regulating it, it would allow us to have a better understanding of what’s going on there with actual data and not just anecdotal information,” Herrick said.

A second bill, S.201, pro-

(See *Hunting bill*, Page 10)

Calendar of events

February

Mondays Thursdays:

Brandon Public Library Second Story

This is a program started to keep the library a quiet place to work even throughout the after-school rush. The Second Story is open from 3:30–5:00 pm Monday - Thursday throughout the school year. It's a fun place to chill after school with board games and computers.

Tuesday:

Chess Club

Join us every Tuesday evening for a fun night of chess from 4:00–6:00 pm at the Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland.

Thursdays:

Open Mic Nights

The Clear River Inn & Tavern in Pittsfield hosts weekly open mic nights. Sign-up starts at 8:00 pm, the show is from 9:00 pm–10:00 pm. 2614 Route 100 Pittsfield, VT 05762

17:

"The Robinsons of Rokeby and Kauffman's Station: A story of two Underground Railroad sites" virtual presentation. Starting at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom, join Tucker Folz, Rokeby's Education Programs Manager, and Matthew March, Education Curator at Cumberland County Historical Society in Pennsylvania, for a discussion on two very different sites that operated as part of the Underground Railroad. This event is part of Rokeby's Black History Month Lecture Series. It is free to the public however pre-registration is required. Go to rokeby.org/visit/programsevents.

18:

Nobuntu on Stage in Middlebury

Showtime at 7:30 p.m. in the Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Nobuntu, the dazzling female a cappella quintet from Zimbabwe, will kick off the Middlebury Performing Arts Series' spring 2022 season. Vaccinations and boosters (or valid medical or religious exemptions) and masks are required. Tickets \$25 general public/\$20 Middlebury faculty/staff and alumni/\$10 youth/\$5 Middlebury College students. More info at 802-443-MIDD (6433) or go tmiddlebury.edu/arts.

Town meetings:

Brandon Town Meeting

Monday, February 28th @ 7:00 P.M. via ZOOM. Joining instructions can be found on the town's website: townofbrandon.org. VOTING by Australian Ballot Tuesday, March 1st from 10:00 A.M. until 7:00 P.M. at the American Legion (550 Franklin Street, Brandon)

Pittsford Town Meeting

Monday, February 28, 2022 at 6:30 p.m via ZOOM. Joining instructions can be found on the town's website: pittsfordvermont.com/meetings/town-meeting/VOTING by Australian ballot Tuesday, March 1, 2022 between 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. to vote at the Fire Station (located at 150 Pleasant Street, Pittsford)

Proctor Town Meeting

Monday, February 28th @ 7:00 P.M. via ZOOM. Joining instructions can be found on the town's website: <https://proctorvermont.com>. VOTING by Australian ballot Tuesday, March 1, 2022 from 10:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. at the proctor Junior/Senior High School Gymnasium, (4 Park Street, Proctor)

Town meeting information can be found on your town's website.

MNFF announces revival of family adventure Duma, Sunday, February 20 at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury

Middlebury, VT—MNFF Selects, the monthly screening series presented by the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival, is pleased to announce the revival of the stirring family adventure drama *Duma* on Sunday, February 20 at 2pm at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. In keeping with the theme of this year's Selects series, *Humans and Animals: Shared Experiences, Intersecting Worlds*, this exquisite and colorful film, directed by Carroll Ballard, is the story of an orphaned cheetah that becomes the best friend and pet of a young boy living in South Africa. Winner of the Humane Society's 2006 Genesis Award for Family Feature Film, *Duma* offers audiences a blend of excitement, adventure and compassion at storytelling with a beautiful and grand landscape as its backdrop. Starring Campbell Scott and Hope Davis, and Alexander Michaletos as the young boy Xan, and based on the book "How It Was with Dooms," by Carol Cawthra Hopcraft, *Duma* embodies a style of filmmaking that is warm in tone and generous in spirit. The film is rated PG.

Riding a streak of critical and commercial successes, including *The Black Stallion*, *Never Cry Wolf* and *Fly Away Home*, Carroll Ballard had earned a well-earned

reputation as one of the premiere directors in the realm of compelling family-friendly adventure films. At the time of *Duma's* release in 2005, several prominent film critics pointed out in their favorable reviews that Warner Brothers, its distributor, did precious little to market and promote the film. As a result, *Duma* languished at the box office and was never widely seen.

Individual Adult tickets to each film are \$16. Youth 12-17 tickets are \$11. Children Under 12 tickets are \$7. Tickets can be purchased through the MNFF web site, <https://midffilmfest.org/portfolio/duma/> or the Town Hall Theater website, townhalltheater.org, or by phone at 802-382-9222 or in person at the THT box office, Monday-Friday, 12n-5pm. The film's trailer can also be seen at <https://midffilmfest.org/portfolio/duma/>

The MNFF Selects Series will be adhering to the following revised COVID-19 protocol implemented by Town Hall Theater as of January 15: All patrons (5 and older) will be required to bring valid proof of full COVID vaccination in printed or digital form along with photo ID (age 18 & up). Alternately, they may provide a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours of attendance.



COME SHOP WITH US!

DONATIONS ACCEPTED.

We request that all donations are clean, dry, seasonal and saleable. Please only deliver during store



NIFTY THRIFTY

19 Conant Square, Brandon, VT
Monday - Saturday 10AM - 2PM
All recycled and locally harvested, since 1975.
All profits go back to the community.



Cabin Fever Sale

Mention this ad and all outerwear (coats, jackets, hats and boots) will be 50% off or half price.



Brandon Energy Committee

Brandon, the birthplace of electric power



BY KEVIN THORNTON

In February 1837, Thomas Davenport of Brandon, Vermont was awarded the world's first patent for an electric motor. The time has come for us to celebrate his achievement as a landmark in technological history because it was. The Town of Brandon and the Brandon Museum are working in concert to make that celebration happen.

An electric motor is any device that uses electric power to create mechanical motion. The electric motor is one of the most important inventions of all time, ranking with the internal combustion engine and the transistor as devices that improve all of our lives, every day. We rarely think about electric motors because they are so common and so reliable that we take them for granted.

In your kitchen, your refrigerator uses an electric motor. So does your dishwasher. So does your microwave. Got a coffee grinder, food processor or mixer? They use electric motors. Got a heat pump, air conditioner or a few fans in the house? They use electric motors, too. Upstairs your hair dryer uses an electric motor. Perhaps your toothbrush does as well. Every electric tool in your basement or shop is powered by an electric motor. Your washing machine and clothes dryers run on electric motors. Your car has as many as 40 electric motors in it, in the windows, door locks, climate control system, windshield wipers, and seats. Every computer in your house has one. How about that phone in your pocket? It vibrates because of an electric motor.

Every day of your life you benefit from Davenport's invention forty or fifty times a day. (That's a conservative estimate.) Multiply that by billions of people and you get a sense of the magnitude of his invention's impact on the world.

Davenport first got the idea that changed history when he witnessed an electromagnet at work in 1833. Electromagnets themselves were very recent inventions (the first one had been invented in England only in 1821). By 1834, with the help

of his wife Emily and her cousin, Orange Smalley of Forest Dale, he had successfully built a functioning motor. By the end of 1835 he had demonstrated the invention to a series of the leading men of American science. By 1836, he had perfected a vastly improved motor and become the second person in the world to apply electricity to transportation, building a model railroad that proved electric-powered travel was possible.

In February 1837, he was awarded his U.S. patent. In August 1837, he was awarded a British patent. The British patent is significant because Britain was by far the most industrialized country in the world at the time. Davenport's patent there is proof of his belief in the industrial potential of the motor.

Davenport demonstrated his motor in New York in 1837. The New York Herald proclaimed his invention "The Dawn of a New Civilization," while the New York Evening-Star called it "the application of an entire new and immeasurable agent of mechanical power."

The electric age had begun. Over the next few years, mostly divided between New York and Brandon, Davenport built probably over 100 motors, continually innovating and improving prior designs. Among them was a motor powered entirely by electromagnets, an innovation which greatly increased the device's rotational speed and power. In 1840, he built a reciprocating motor that powered the world's first electric printing press, on which he printed his short-lived journal, *The Electro-Magnet and Mechanics Intelligencer*.

Given all that, why isn't Davenport's name as well known as Henry Ford's or Thomas Edison's? The short answer is a combination of bad luck and bad timing.

Davenport was ahead of his time in more ways than one. The year he received his patents, in 1847, there was also a terrible economic depression starting in America. The modern banking system had yet to be developed. As a result, he found it almost impossible to raise money. During the 1830s, he appears to have mortgaged everything he owned in Brandon. He was not a wealthy man to begin with. Instead of making him rich, his invention wound up impoverishing him.

The other problem was technological. Davenport invented his motor before anyone developed reliable electric power, or the ability to transmit it. His motors ran on expensive, somewhat unstable batteries. It was not until the 1840s that inventors in Britain began to solve

the problem of generating power, using dynamos that were essentially Davenport motors in reverse.

It would be decades before reliable electric power would become widely available. Unfortunately, by the mid-1840s Davenport appears to have become bankrupt, exhausted and ill.

But Davenport never stopped believing in an electric future. In his unpublished memoir he repeatedly makes that clear, arguing that electricity was a safer, quieter and cleaner source of energy than anything that came before. He envisioned a time in which electric power would benefit everyone. He would be thrilled and gratified by the myriad ways in which electric power has improved human existence. He'd be overjoyed to see an electric car.

He foresaw it all, but none of it would happen in his lifetime. In 1848 his father-in-law, a prosperous farmer, gave Davenport's wife Emily land in Salisbury "for the consideration of my love and affection and... one dollar." Tellingly, Thomas's name does not appear on the deed. Davenport lived his last few years as a Vermont small farmer. He died on July 6, 1851, three days before his 49th birthday. Despite his poverty and his many frustrations, he never gave up. Shortly before his death he had been working on an electric piano.

On July 9 (Davenport's birthday), the Town of Brandon will be holding the first Davenport Electric Fest, celebrating both the achievements of Davenport and the incredibly promising future of electric vehicles and electric motor applications of all kinds. State Representatives Stephanie Jerome and Butch Shaw are sponsoring a resolution in the Vermont House in honor of the occasion.

In the meanwhile, David Hammond of the University of Vermont physics department, an expert in early scientific equipment, is building a working replica of Davenport's motor for the Brandon Museum, to be installed as the centerpiece of a forthcoming major exhibit on Davenport.

The museum has also begun outreach to the schools. An Otter Valley High School course on "The Electric Motor and Its History" is running this semester, and the Neshobe School is also planning to teach this great Brandon story to local kids.

Together, the town and museum want to honor Brandon's great inventor, make his name known as widely as it deserves and claim Brandon's place as "The Birthplace of Electric Power." In the process we just may position ourselves to have a role to play in the electric future that Davenport so clearly foresaw.

Hunting bill

(Continued from Page 8)

poses a ban on leghold traps, which also are called foothold traps. Animal welfare groups say the devices are painful and trap animals indiscriminately, including endangered species and household pets.

In response to the bill, hunters and state officials at Fish and Wildlife said the traps are humane and effective if checked often, and are sometimes used to protect certain species by keeping predators away.

The conversation around trapping has been volatile, Mike Covey, executive director of Vermont Traditions Coalition, told lawmakers during testimony earlier this month.

"None of that conversation takes into consideration all the work that has been

done to bring trapping into the 21st century," he said, adding that the advances allow hunters to target certain animals and avoid capturing others.

Kim Royer, a biologist with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, testified this month that scientists often use foothold traps to capture and collar animals. There's been no evidence of harm to those animals, she said.

Galdenzi said she's concerned about recreational trapping, where standards could be less strict than state-sanctioned wildlife projects.

"Traps can't even distinguish between the intended victim, a bobcat for example, and a protected species, like a bald eagle," Galdenzi said during last week's hearing. "Non-targeted animals, like hawks and ravens, are killed every year in local traps."

A third bill, S.129, would change the authority of the Fish and Wildlife board, which determines many of Vermont's hunting policies, so it serves in an advisory capacity to the Fish and Wildlife Department. The department would craft rules related to hunting, advised by the board.

Herrick pointed to the amount of power the Legislature would hold under the proposed setup. Eight out of 12 board members would be appointed by lawmakers, he said. They are currently appointed by the governor. As it stands, lawmakers already need to approve new policies created by the board.

"The folks that work here at the department are based in science and peer-reviewed study and accepted best practices," Herrick said. "And I think it's fair to say that the board relies on their expertise and recommendation."

Many opposed to the proposed policies expressed concern that the bills seek to limit hunting in general and said hunters use best practices to avoid inflicting unnecessary pain on animals. Those in favor of the bills say the practices at their center are cruel and should have been prohibited long ago.

Board members often hold hunting or fishing licenses, making it easier for them to understand the nuts and bolts of the policies they are creating, Herrick said, adding that members

represent a diverse set of viewpoints.

Covey told lawmakers the bill seems to be crafted to "reduce hunting and trapping opportunities in Vermont." He said it makes sense for board members to hold hunting licenses.

"If you don't understand the dynamic conditions that can occur in the field, it's very difficult to regulate a topic that you're not familiar with," he said.

Animal advocates such as Galdenzi have pushed for board members to represent Vermonters who do not hunt.

"Wildlife is a public trust resource, and these policies they're making impact all of us. Whether it's extending the otter trapping season, or whatever other petition might fall on their desks, that impacts all of us," Galdenzi said. "We all should have a say, and we should all have a seat."

After listening to members of the public at the testimony and public hearing, Bray said the committee will need to discuss next steps in the coming weeks.

Health & Wellness

A Special publication of the Brandon Reporter



Serving the community

UVMHN'S PORTER HOSPITAL, above, and Rutland Medical Center provide area acute care for Rutland and Addison counties, while many other providers — including spas, yoga, fitness, wellness centers and mental health facilities — provide essential medical care for the greater Brandon communities.

Reporter photo/Angelo Lynn

Report on long medical wait times delayed

BY LIORA ENGEL-SMITH

MONTPELIER — Officials at the Vermont Agency of Human Services have yet to complete a long-awaited report on the reasons behind long medical wait times, even as Omicron-related staffing shortages continue to affect Vermonters' access to elective surgeries, mental health care and routine screenings.

Ena Backus, director of health care reform, said she expects to wrap up the investigation later this month. The target date was Jan. 6.

"We had an abundance of responses and information for this report, so it's just taking a little longer to synthesize the report," said Backus, the leader of the multi-agency inquiry in which the Green Mountain Care Board and the Department of Financial Regulation are also participating.

The state probe began in September after a Seven Days report that patients were waiting weeks, and even months, to see specialists at University of Vermont Medical Center, the largest hospital in Vermont.

Mike Smith, then-secretary of (See *Medical report*, Page 12)

Pandemic prompts need to protect youth mental health

In December the Office of U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy released an advisory called "Protecting Youth Mental Health."

"The good news is that, throughout the pandemic, many people have recognized the unprecedented need to support youth mental health and well-being and have taken action to do so," the advisory said. "But there is much more to be done, and each of us has a role to play."

Here is what we as a society can do, according to the report.

- Recognize that mental health is an essential part of overall health.

- Empower youth and their families to recognize, manage and learn from difficult emotions — and to know that asking for help is a sign of strength.

- Make sure every child has access to high-quality, affordable and culturally competent mental health care.

- Support children's mental health in educational, community and childcare settings.

- Address economic and social barriers contributing to poor mental health.

- Improve data collection and research to identify and respond to youth mental health needs more

rapidly.

"Since many of the challenges young people face are outside of their control, we need a whole-of-society effort to support children's mental health and well-being from birth to adulthood," the report says.

That being said, there are also some things that youth can do.

- Remember that mental health challenges are real, common and treatable. Struggling with your mental health does not mean you are broken or that you did something wrong.

- Ask for help.
- Invest in healthy relation-

ships. Social connection is a powerful source of well-being and an antidote to stress.

- Learn and practice techniques to manage stress and other difficult emotions.

- Take care of your body and mind. Stick to a schedule, eat well, stay physically active, get quality sleep, stay hydrated, spend time outside.

- Be intentional about your use of social media, video games and other technologies.

- Be a source of support for others.

Young people often learn behaviors and habits from what they

see around them, so the best thing family members and caregivers

(See *Protecting youth*, Page 12)



GEN. VIVEK H MURTHY

Medical reports

(Continued from Page 11)

the Agency of Human Services, said the investigation would wrap up before the legislative session began Jan. 6, in time for legislation that would address the issues identified in the report. He did not mention the issues at UVM Medical Center by name but said the inquiry would examine the wait time issue statewide.

As part of the investigation, state officials set up a hotline for wait time complaints and collected testimony from patients and health care workers in a couple of virtual sessions. Smith said at the time his agency intended to complete the investigation “as expeditiously as possible.”

But the parameters of the final product

appear to fall short of Smith’s original intentions. Backus said she would collate the findings in a slide deck and discuss the findings with lawmakers only if she is invited to do so.

Lawmakers are not waiting for the state’s report to act on Vermont’s deepening workforce problems and access-to-care crisis, Rep. Bill Lippert, D-Hinesburg, said this week. Lippert chairs the House Committee on Health Care.

“If there’s something compelling in the report, we will absolutely respond to it,” Lippert said.

In recent weeks, hospitals and long-term care facilities have had a rush of Covid-19 infections among staff members,

forcing the postponement of routine surgeries and other services for lack of staff.

The UVM Medical Center, for example, had to activate emergency staffing procedures in January after coronavirus exposure sidelined hundreds of employees. A recent outbreak at the Brattleboro Retreat has caused widespread delays in access to inpatient psychiatric care for children and adults.

Lippert said lawmakers are fast-tracking a bill that would extend Covid flexibilities that make it easier for travel health care workers from other states to fill vacancies in Vermont. Lawmakers also have earmarked additional money for mental health workers in this year’s budget adjustment, which deals with expenses between now and June 30, when the fiscal year ends.

Sen. Ginny Lyons, D-Chittenden, chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, said the state’s findings may already be in line with lawmakers’ understanding of the crisis and what’s driving it.

“It may not be that we need to put together a whole new bill,” Lyons said. “It could be that it just informs some of the work we’re doing.”

Protecting youth

(Continued from Page 11)

can do is to be good role models by taking care of their own mental and physical health.

Here are some other things they can do.

- Help children and youth develop strong, safe and stable relationships with you and other supportive adults. Research shows that the most important thing a child needs to be resilient is a stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult.
- Encourage children and youth to build healthy social relationships with peers.
- Do your best to provide children and youth with a supportive, stable and predictable home and neighborhood environment.
- Try to minimize negative influences and behaviors in young people’s lives. Talk to children early about the risks of alcohol and other drugs.
- Ensure children and youth have regular health care check-ups.
- Look out for warning signs of distress and seek help when needed.
- If you notice concerning changes in your child, let them know you’re there and ready to support them in any way they need.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help.
- Minimize children’s access to means of self-harm, such as firearms and prescription medications.
- Be attentive to how children and youth spend time online.
- Be a voice for mental health in your community.

The full advisory can be found online at <https://tinyurl.com/yckufpnx>.

Beating the Blue Monday blues

The third Monday in January is dubbed “Blue Monday” also known as the saddest day of the year. Feeling down on this day could be a sign of the winter blues. But for others, “Blue Monday” lasts all season. If short and gloomy days are draining your energy levels and affecting your mental health, then you’ve got classic symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

This form of depression is triggered by changes in weather and daylight that occur in winter. The good news is, there are many effective treatments and preventive measures for SAD.

MedStar Health shares some advice on how to ease Seasonal Affective Disorder that would be applicable on Blue Monday, or any time you are feeling blue:

- Consider Light Therapy

SAD is triggered by changes in our exposure to sunlight. Sitting in

The third Monday in January is dubbed “Blue Monday” also known as the saddest day of the year. Feeling down on this day could be a sign of the winter blues.

front of a special type of light box for about 30 to 45 minutes every morning can reduce your symptoms of SAD. Make sure you talk to your doctor about whether this treatment option is the right one for you.

- Maintain A Balanced Diet

People affected by SAD tend to crave more sugary foods, which allows your body to feel greater fatigue. Try balancing your diet by including more fruits, vegetables, lean proteins and healthy fats. When you eat better, you feel better!

- Make A Plan

Are you oversleeping or spending more time in bed? Develop a “fun menu” of activities, daily exercise, and outings that can help you when you’re looking for an uplifting diversion.

- Check Your Vitamin D Levels

Lack of sunshine means lower levels of Vitamin D, which is a nutrient your body needs. Try spending time outdoors when the sun is at its highest, your doctor might also recommend Vitamin D supplements if your body needs an extra boost.

Charlotte Bishop MASSAGE THERAPY

Destress your body and rejuvenate with the gift of touch.

Therapeutic ♦ Soft Tissue
Swedish/Esian ♦ Cupping

Certified and registered.

28+ years of experience.

(802) 247-8106

Village Spa

A WELLNESS STUDIO

Your Personal Retreat For Self-Care

- Nationally Board Certified Massage Therapist
 - VT Licensed Esthetician
 - VT Licensed Nail Technician
- 19 years experience • Accepting new clients
brandonvillagespa@gmail.com
www.brandonvillagespa.com

802-465-8255

32 Marble Steet, Brandon



HEATHER NORTON

Acupuncture & Herbal Medicine

Beth Bloomfield, Lic.Ac
Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine



Licensed Acupuncturist (VT)
Certified Herbalist (NCCAOM)

beth@acuvt.com

www.acuVT.com

802-342-5512

32 Marble St., Brandon

Five common falsehoods about Alzheimer's disease demystified

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) is providing information to dispel common falsehoods about Alzheimer's disease to help individuals know the warning signs, understand the importance of early detection, and learn how to be proactive about reducing their risk.

"Dispelling the misconceptions about Alzheimer's disease is critically important, because they may cause people to ignore symptoms and delay taking action which impacts their health and quality of life," said Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr., AFA's president & CEO.

Here are five common myths about Alzheimer's disease:

Falsehood #1: Alzheimer's is just part of getting older. Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging — it is a progressive, degenerative brain

disorder that impacts memory, thinking and language skills, and the ability to carry out simple tasks. It differs from regular age-related memory loss, such as occasional forgetfulness. Persistent, progressively worsening memory issues that interfere with everyday functions, such as routinely becoming disoriented in familiar places or forgetting familiar names and faces, are not "just part of old age" — they're warning signs of a health problem.

Falsehood #2: Alzheimer's disease only affects senior citizens. While the majority of people who develop Alzheimer's disease are over the age of 65, young-onset Alzheimer's disease can affect people as young their 30s or 40s. Memory problems at any age should be

checked out.

Falsehood #3: Nothing can be done for Alzheimer's disease. Although there is currently no cure or treatment for Alzheimer's disease, people diagnosed with the disease can, and often do, have meaningful, active lives. They can participate in activities they enjoyed prior to the onset of Alzheimer's (making some adaptations), and therapeutic interventions can help improve one's quality of life. Some medications can help manage the symptoms. The earlier Alzheimer's is detected, the more significant the impact these interventions can have.

Falsehood #4: You cannot reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer's. While there is no guaranteed way to prevent Alzheimer's, lifestyle choices can help you reduce

your risk for developing Alzheimer's disease. Good diet, exercise, social interaction, learning new skills, proper sleep, limiting alcohol, and quitting smoking are all things you can, and should, do to promote good brain health.

Falsehood #5: All memory impairments are the result of Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's is a cause of memory loss, but not the only one — vitamin deficiencies, thyroid problems, depression, sleep apnea, stress, and urinary tract infections can all cause memory impairments. Detecting the underlying cause is essential in order to take action. Memory screenings are an important first step in uncovering potential memory issues — they are quick, noninvasive, and consist of a series of questions to gauge

memory, language, thinking skills and other intellectual functions. Results are not a diagnosis, but a memory screening can suggest if someone should see a physician for a full evaluation. AFA offers free, confidential memory screenings virtually — visit www.alzfdn.org to learn more.

Anyone who has questions about Alzheimer's disease, memory concerns, or support resources available to help can contact the AFA Helpline seven days a week by phone (866-232-8484), webchat (www.alzfdn.org), or text message (646-586-5283). Information about Alzheimer's, memory screening, caregiving, and healthy aging is also available on AFA's website, www.alzfdn.org.

Tips on how to discuss your mental health with others

BY STAN POPOVICH

Do you struggle with your mental health and have a difficult time in getting the people you know to be more understanding? In some cases, your colleagues might give you a hard time regarding your anxieties and depression.

Here are seven suggestions on how to deal with the people you know regarding your mental health

issues.

1. Listen to the professionals and not your friends: Your peers may mean well, but when it comes down to it, the professionals are aware of your circumstances more than anyone. A counselor knows what you are going through and can help you deal with your problems. When you have serious questions about your mental health, consult with a therapist.

2. Don't argue with others: It is important that you do not get into arguments with those who are giving you a rough time. Your number one priority is to get relief from your anxieties. It is not your job to worry about how others may view your circumstances. Your health is more important than what other people may think.

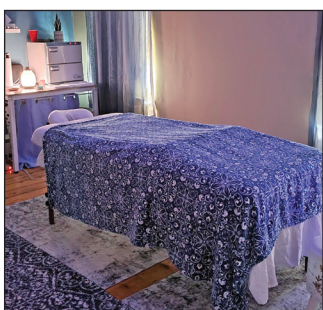
3. Your goal is to get better: Concentrate on how you can face your fears and anxieties. Don't waste your time arguing with your colleagues who are giving you a difficult time. This isn't a public relations event where you need to get approval from everyone. This is your life and you are the one suffering. Your main focus is to get better.

4. Tell your friends to learn about your situation: Explain to your peers that the best way for them to help you is to learn about your mental health issues. They could talk to a counselor, read some good books, or join a support group to better understand your situation. If your friends won't make an effort, then stay away from them because they will only make things worse.

(See *Mental health*, Page 14)



Self Care is Important!
So schedule a ...



Me Time Massage

Your total relaxation experience.

\$1 per minute.

Warm towels and aromatherapy included

Stacey Mohan

39 Center St., Unit D, Brandon (upstairs, next to Gourmet Provence)

(802) 349-8885 | Find me on Facebook- [massagebrandonvt](https://www.facebook.com/massagebrandonvt)

or book online at vagaro.com/massagebrandonvt

EXPERIENCE THE

DIFFERENCE

VERMONT-GROWN ORGANIC CANNABIS PRODUCTS



LOTIONS



OILS



GUMMIES



PRE-ROLLS



PET PRODUCTS

(802) 483-6503 • 4270 VERMONT ROUTE 7, PITTSFORD

WWW.VTTERPS.COM

Mental health

7 ways to promote good prostate health

BY MARC S. COHEN, MD

(Continued from Page 13)

5. Distance yourself from those who give you a difficult time: Distance yourself from those who won't make an effort to help understand what you are going through. You need to surround yourself with positive and supportive people. If you have problems or issues with a particular person, you can always ask a counselor for advice.

6. You are not alone: It can be very frustrating to manage your fear-related issues when the people you know are on your case. Remember, you are not alone. There are millions of people around the world who struggle with their fears, anxieties and depression. The key is to find those people who can relate to you through various organizations in your area.

7. Join a local mental health support group: There are many mental health awareness support groups in your area. Many hospitals, churches and counselors in your area will be able to provide you with a list of these organizations. These groups will be aware of your situation and can give you additional advice regarding your problems.

Editor's note: Stan Popovich is the author of the book "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear."

A unique aspect of caring for a man's health is paying proper attention to the prostate gland.

The prostate, located just below the bladder in men, produces the fluid that nourishes and transports sperm.

Here are seven tips to support the health of this gland.

Watch your meal portion sizes. Growing up I was always told to "clean my plate." It wasn't known at the time, but that was bad health advice. The golden rule is to eat slowly and deliberately so that you know when you're full and don't overeat. This is a chance to do something good for your prostate and your health in general, as overeating can lead to weight gain and increase your risk of prostate cancer.

Eat the right fats. Everyone needs some fat, but too much bad fat can increase weight, which is associated with an increased risk of prostate cancer. Replacing animal fats with vegetable oils may help men with prostate cancer to live longer, while eating lots of saturated fats may be linked with an increased risk of prostate cancer recurrence. Much less is

known about the impact of fats in prostate cancer prevention. Good fats consist of things like avocados, which are rich in oleic acid, a monounsaturated fatty acid, which helps lower cardiovascular inflammation; nuts, such as pecans, almonds, and walnuts; and olive oil, which is also rich in monounsaturated fat. Avoid hydrogenated fats and limit fats from dairy and processed foods.

Limit red meats. The literature on the effect of red meat on prostate cancer is unclear, but some research suggests that eating too much fat may raise your risk of aggressive and advanced prostate cancer. Some studies suggest that a diet that is low in meat but high in fruit and vegetables may help slow the growth of prostate cancer. Large amounts of meat that have been cooked at very high temperatures or are very well done (barbecued, grilled, fried) may increase your risk of prostate cancer due to the heterocyclic amines, or HCAs, found in cooked meat. Common examples include beef, pork, hot dogs, sausage and luncheon meats.

Eat prostate-healthy foods.

Laboratory studies have demonstrated a positive effect

of certain ingredients in foods such as lycopenes in tomatoes on the prostate. What remains largely undetermined is supplementation mostly effective in individuals that are deficient in a particular substance and how much is enough. This means we can't say for sure that any of these foods unquestionably benefit the prostate. That being said, the following foods are thought to have possible benefit: Soybeans and legumes (kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils), green tea, tomatoes (cooked over raw), watermelon, guava, papaya and pomegranate.

Avoid sugar. It is said that prostate cancer has a sweet tooth because sugar (glucose) appears to be associated with many cancers in that it increases the risk of obesity, insulin resistance, and inflammation, all considered to be substantial risk factors for cancer development. Things to avoid include: sugary sweets, sweetened beverages such as soda, and fruit juice. Exercise portion control, avoiding additional sugars added to products. Rely on natural sugar sources (such as fruit) for your sugar fix.

Cut down on salt. Salt is known to increase urinary tract symptoms associated with benign prostatic hyperplasia, a

type of prostate enlargement, so it is best to follow a low-sodium diet. By limiting the use of frozen foods, processed and canned foods, and not adding salt to meals wherever possible, you can cut down on your salt intake.

Lifestyle Changes. Simple lifestyle changes can do wonders for your health including good prostate health. If you're a smoker, cut back or better yet stop immediately. Modest alcohol intake is fine but never in excess. Any exercise is better than no exercise. Start slow and progress as your body permits. The recommendation is at least three hours per week for a really healthy lifestyle. Don't give up. It can take months before a habit becomes ingrained.

Do just one thing every day to make you feel good about yourself and you may find that the positive change is empowering.

Many of these tips are just plain good for you, and promote good health in general. If you have other medical conditions such as heart disease, you will recognize most of these suggestions as heart healthy as well. When talking to patients I often say, "heart healthy is prostate healthy."

Vermont's Covid hospitalizations drop below 70, but death toll remains high

BY ERIN PETENKO, VTDIGGER

MONTPELIER — The Vermont Department of Health reported that 66 people were hospitalized for Covid-19 as of Monday — the lowest number of patients since Jan. 2, when the Omicron variant began to cause a surge in hospital stays.

But the state also reported eight more deaths related to Covid, putting February on track to rival January in Vermont's pandemic death toll.

Although the number of people hospitalized varies from day to day, seven-day trends also indicate that hospitalizations have fallen from their peak of over 100 in mid-January.

The number of patients in intensive care also fell, to 15 ICU patients as of Monday. There were 28 ICU patients at the height of the Omicron surge.

The Department of Health reported 120 new Covid cases Monday, but case counts tend to be lower earlier in the week, since fewer tests are generally

recorded over the weekend. The department also reported 283 new infections on Saturday and 247 on Sunday.

The seven-day test positivity rate dropped to 6.4%, which suggests that the lower number of cases is not solely due to lower testing demand. However, that accounts only for PCR tests and does not include at-home antigen tests.

The state is now reporting an average of 308 cases per day, according to department data. That's the lowest seven-day average since Nov. 7, although Thanksgiving weekend came close with 311 cases per day.

There have been 29 Covid-related deaths in February thus far, compared to 65 during the entire month of January. Officials have warned that deaths would remain elevated even as cases declined, as the delayed effects of infections and hospitalizations take their toll on Vermont.

In total, 574 people have died in Vermont since the pandemic began.



Delilah's Hair Studio, LLC

Offering quality salon services in a clean, friendly, and professional atmosphere.

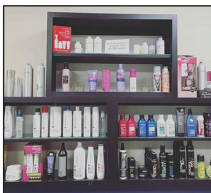
Jessica Saceric - owner - licensed cosmetologist for 30 years

Full-service hair care for men, women & kids.

Cuts, color & highlighting • Manicures & artificial nails • Tanning
Lash perms, extensions, tinting & brow lamination

Skin treatments with Kim from Brunswick
Medical Aesthetics:

Chemical peels • Injectables • Fillers
Microneedling • Full Retail Line of Products



Delilah's Hair Studio, LLC

802-247-3345

25 Center St., Brandon, VT 05733



For weekly sports updates check out our website

BRANDONREPORTER.COM.



Need Care? Know where to go.

A Guide to Finding the Right Care in the Moment

As the pandemic presses on and the national shortage of health care workers intensifies, it's more important than ever to understand your health care options to ensure you receive the right level of care in the most appropriate setting.




Health care options for Addison County residents often include primary care, urgent care and emergency care so it's not always obvious where to go for care — or when. In the heat of the moment, this guide can help you answer, *where do I go?*

If you're still not sure what to do, call your primary care provider. Even when the office is closed, there is always someone on call who can direct you to the care you need.

In case of a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1.

Think you may have COVID-19?

Unless you are having a medical emergency, there is no need to go to the Emergency Room. If you're feeling ill and believe you should be seen, please call your primary care provider or visit an express care location. [Visit uvmhealth.org/coronavirus to find a testing site near you.](https://uvmhealth.org/coronavirus)

Where	Primary Care 	Porter Express Care 	Emergency Room 
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have a new problem or an old problem flares up You need a prescription refilled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the condition doesn't appear life threatening, but you can't wait until the next day or to see your primary care provider. You're not in extreme pain Open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have a serious or life-threatening condition Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your provider knows you and your medical history You're seen by appointment so there is generally less waiting You'll pay the lowest co-pay Same- and next-day appointments are available for injuries or illnesses that don't require urgent or emergency care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorter wait times than the ER, as you're seen in the order you arrive Access to advanced diagnostic imaging like X-ray machines and lab capabilities to assess your illness or injury onsite. Urgent care providers can prescribe medications No appointment Necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipped with life-saving equipment and providers trained to treat life-threatening illnesses or injuries It is always open You are seen based on how sick or injured you are. The most serious cases jump to the front of the line, even if they arrive later than everyone else. This will increase wait times for others.
Symptoms & Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cough, cold, flu Ear infections and sore throat Minor injuries like sprains, bumps and bruises Rashes Urinary tract infections Chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, COPD, asthma and allergies Immunizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cold or mild flu symptoms Sore throat Fever without a rash Non-life threatening allergic reactions Ear pain Painful urination Sprains and strains Small cuts that may require stitches Mild asthma attacks Tick bites Eye Irritation Rashes without fever Minor Burns Evaluation for Rabies prophylaxis Simple foreign body removal Ingrown toenails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abdominal Pain Chest pain Difficulty breathing Weakness/numbness on one side Slurred speech Fainting/change in mental state/confusion Serious burns Head or eye injury Broken bones, dislocated joints Fever with a rash Seizures Severe cuts that may require stitches Severe cold or flu symptoms Vaginal bleeding with pregnancy Uncontrollable bleeding Severe asthma attack Severe allergic reaction Poisoning Animal bites Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea Dehydration Headache Bloody bowel movements
Important to Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended to have a primary care provider to monitor your health, schedule regular check-ups and preventative screenings to keep you as healthy as possible. Porter Primary Care offices are accepting new pediatric and primary care patients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Porter Express Care is equipped to handle medical problems that need same-day attention but are not life-threatening. If your urgent care provider determines that you need a higher level of care, you will be transferred to the Emergency Department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always follow-up with your primary care provider after a visit to the Emergency Room to continue to monitor your health / condition.

Sports

Otter Valley wins on Senior Night

BY GENE DELORENZO

BRANDON—The Otter women welcomed the Wasps of Woodstock to Senior Night at the “House of Noise” on Friday, February 11 before a raucous crowd.

Four Otter Valley Union seniors started the game, along with junior Alice Lee. All contributed significantly to the eventual 55-37 win. Lee, the lone non-senior among the starters, had perhaps her finest shooting night of the season (12 points) in a preview for next year.

Overall, the Otters had nine players score points and had five different players hit three-pointers. It was a well-balanced team effort on both ends of the court. The outside three-pointers came on perimeter reversals as the Wasps sagged into the paint to protect against the inside prowess of Emily Peduto and the driving ability of Alice Keith. It was a good strategy – until the shots started falling for the Otters. Thanks to Lee and company for that.

The four seniors: Brittney Jackson, JoAnna Ray, Marissa Connors, and Alice Keith received loud cheers on every touch. Ray led the game off on the first possession with a three-pointer and the team balance theme was set for the night. Another big three from Emily Politano closed out the quarter with OV holding a 16-9 lead.

A key steal and layup by Keith gave Otter Valley a 24-11 lead with just over two minutes remaining in the half as OV went into the intermission with a 26-16 lead.

After Woodstock cut the lead to five late in the third quarter, another Politano hoop gave them a 34-27 lead after three. In the fourth quarter, despite 8 points by Woodstock senior standout Ellie Tarleton (23 points total) OV continued to build the lead.

Five three-pointers by OV highlighted the quarter as Mateline LaPorte, Raleigh LaPorte (two of them), Brittney Jackson, and Anna Lee all hit from deep. The 55-37 win was a total team effort in the OV style they so enjoy.

Keith led the team with 15 points, Lee chimed in with 12, Ryleigh LaPorte with six, Jackson and Politano added five each, JoAnna Ray, Mateline LaPorte each scored three, and Alivia Shedrick added one hoop. Tarleton scored 23 for Woodstock in an impressive effort. Otter Valley’s win gave them a 10-7 record, while Woodstock fell to 5-12.

The halftime show, featuring area sixth grade girls from the greater Brandon area, was a big hit for the 10-minute scrimmage, following on the heels of the sixth-grade boys’ performance the night before.



Upcoming stars

AREA SIXTH GRADE basketball players scrimmaged at a recent OV girls half-time game to the delight of the audience.

Reporter photo/ Gene DeLorenzo



SHELBURNE AERIAL SKIER Megan Nick is pictured on NBC just moments before she won a bronze medal at the 2022 Beijing Winter Games.

Shelburne aerial skier Megan Nick wins bronze in Olympic debut

BY KEVIN O’CONNOR

SHELBURNE — Shelburne aerial skier Megan Nick won a bronze medal in her Olympic debut at the 2022 Beijing Winter Games. The 25-year-old Champlain Valley Union High School graduate spun, somersaulted and scored Monday amid minus-10 degree temperatures to become the first American to place on the women’s freestyle podium in a quarter-century.

“I was just trying to be extremely present and grateful that I was even there,” Nick told reporters after her win. “No expectations — only wanting to compete the way that I’ve been training.”

Nick was a competitive gymnast at Champlain Valley Union High School until age 17, when a coach

told her about a one-week aerial ski training camp at the site of the 1932 and 1980 Olympics in Lake Placid, N.Y.

“When I started the sport, I was really unfamiliar with this high level of competing,” Nick told reporters. “I was so focused on results, and it didn’t work. I realized that as long as I was having fun, and I was focusing on the jumps that I was doing, it was working out better for me. So I tried to shift my perspective in the last three years, and it’s really helped me a lot.”

Nick finished the last two World Cup seasons ranked in the top six overall, which helped her medal Monday alongside Xu Mengtao of China and Hanna Huskova of Belarus.

“I thought I was going to throw up, but I was able to calm my nerves enough to land some jumps, thank goodness,” Nick said. “Everyone’s jumping at such a high level that I knew I had to put down a good jump. I’m just relieved that I was able to do that.”

Nick also benefited when U.S. teammate Ashley Caldwell, a four-time Olympian and gold medalist, stumbled on the landing of her last run.

“Knowing that I was in third and she got knocked to fourth,” Nick said, “was a bittersweet moment.”

But Caldwell only had good words when she hugged her teammate after.

“I’m so proud of Megan Nick,” Caldwell said.

OV girls fall to Slaters, 47-40

BY ANGELO LYNN

Brandon — The Division III OV girls basketball team fell to the Division II Fair Haven Slaters in a tight 47-40 game Monday night in the House of Noise.

The teams played evenly throughout the first three quarters, though OV was playing catch-up most of the way. Excitement grew in the House of Noise grew in the third quarter when the Otters cut the lead to 28-

26 on an athletic pass from OV’s Anna Lee to Alice Keith, who put in the easy basket. Then OV’s Emily Peduto was fouled and hit both free throws to tie the game, 28-28.

The Slaters expanded their lead as the fourth quarter progressed, but Keith made a couple of free throws (she hit 12 of 15 in the game), Peduto scored on a nice baseline move and Keith nailed another free throw to cut the Slater’s lead to 35-33 with

3:48 remaining. But that was as close as the Otters got as Fair Haven’s Brittany Love sank eight straight free throws in the fourth quarter to put away the game. Love would end the night with 23 points.

OV’s Alice Keith finished with 16 points and teammate Elena Politano had 13 points off the bench, to keep the Otters in the game late.

The Slaters’ record goes to 14-5 and the Otters fall to 10-8.



A NESTING PAIR of bald eagles in Barnet, Vermont

VTF&W Photo by John Hall

Bald Eagle removed from endangered list; but bumblebee, and others, are added

MONTPELIER — Seven species and three critical habitats received updated conservation designations on Vermont's Endangered and Threatened Species List, including the highly anticipated de-listing of the bald eagle after over a decade of restoration efforts.

"The bald eagle's de-listing is a milestone for Vermont," said Wildlife Division Director Mark Scott. "This reflects more than a decade of dedicated work by Vermont Fish & Wildlife and partners. It shows that Vermonters have the capacity to restore and protect the species and habitats that we cherish."

That conservation capacity will be essential moving forward.

Along with de-listings for the bald eagle and short-styled snakeroot, a flowering plant of

dry woodland habitats, Thursday's update to the State Endangered and Threatened Species List included a range of new listings.

Two invertebrate species, the American bumblebee and a species of freshwater mussel known as the brook floater, and two plant species, Houghton's sedge and rue anemone, have been listed as endangered. State endangered species are considered at immediate risk of becoming locally extinct in Vermont.

One bird species, the Eastern meadowlark, received a new designation as threatened. State threatened species are considered at risk of becoming endangered without timely conservation action.

Three important landscapes also received new designations as critical habitats that

are essential for the survival of threatened or endangered species in Vermont. The newly listed sites support species including the common tern and Eastern spiny softshell turtle, as well as little brown, Northern long-eared, and tricolored bats.

"These new listings reflect the stressors affecting Vermont's plant, fish, and wildlife species," said Wildlife Diversity Program Manager Dr. Rosalind Renfrew. "In the face of climate change and habitat loss, our mission is to conserve these species and others to the very best of our ability on behalf of all Vermonters, who demonstrate time and again that they care about the survival of wildlife populations."

The new listings are a vital step towards enabling the department to carry out that mis-

sion. They trigger additions to existing species and habitat management plans, development of recovery metrics, initiation of population monitoring, and strengthening or establishing critical partnerships.

"We dedicate incredible resources through population monitoring, habitat conservation and improvement, and education and outreach to preventing species from reaching these thresholds in the first place," says Scott. "But, when necessary, we also draw on our successful track record leading endangered species recovery efforts including restoring Vermont's populations of common loon, osprey, peregrine falcon, and now the bald eagle. We will bring that same dedication to each of these new listings."

READER COMMENTS

A subscriber from Whiting writes:

"It is a wonderful paper dedicated to the Brandon area."

Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.

Annual subscription for just \$45.
brandonreporter.com

The REPORTER

Prepare for power outages with a Generac home standby generator

REQUEST A FREE QUOTE!

855-516-3651

FREE

7-Year Extended Warranty*
A \$695 Value!

Limited Time Offer - Call for Details

Special Financing Available
Subject to Credit Approval

*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.

Gov. Scott says at Tuesday presser

Schools with 80% vaccination rate can remove masks Feb. 28

BY POLLY LYNN MIKULA

MONTPELIER — Masking in schools — among the last remaining Covid mitigation measures in place for students — will soon be optional for schools with a student vaccination rate of over 80%, Governor Phil Scott announced at his regular press conference Tuesday, Feb. 15.

“Before the school year began our guidance was for schools was to require masking until 80% of students were vaccinated,” Scott said. “Unfortunately, that recommendation was delayed several times with a decision point scheduled for Feb. 28. Our team has decided not to delay it again.”

“I want to be clear: the 80% guidance will be the first phase in a process... In the very near future, if all goes to plan, we intend to recommend lifting the mask requirement recommendation altogether,” Scott added.

When asked how many schools currently have hit the 80% threshold for student vaccinations, Scott said the state was still compiling that data but said he believed it to be well under 50% of Vermont’s schools. “I believe it’s a smaller number,” he said. “It’s not as high as we hoped.”

He said that data should be available by next week.

“This is an important first step, albeit it does affect a very, very small group of schools,” said Secretary Dan French with the Agency of Education.

Over the last few weeks, several other states in New England have moved in this direction, Scott and French pointed out.

“Massachusetts and Connecticut announced that they’re not going to be requiring masks in schools as of Feb. 28 and then most recently, Rhode Island announced an effective date of March 4,” French said. “These states started with omicron earlier than Vermont and they’re exiting the omicron surge earlier than we are as well. Although we remain optimistic about the trends we’re seeing in Vermont, we’re not ready to jump to a recommendation for the removal of masks altogether,” he said.

“You might remember when we wrote the guidance back in September, students at age 5-11 were at that point not eligible for vaccination,” French added. “Now that we have achieved one of the highest student vaccination rates in the country, we are increasingly confident masks can be removed altogether. But we prefer to make incremental

steps towards that goal as we have done throughout the entire pandemic.

“A phased approach, in our opinion, works best for a couple of reasons: We’re still exiting from the omicron surge, and this approach gives us a few more weeks to see those positive trends continue to play out after the winter vacation. And we also think the schools and families need more time to prepare for this change,” French explained.

“We’re in a new phase with this virus,” Scott proclaimed. “We have more protections and tools to use, and we understand more about the impacts of mitigation measures. All this means it’s time to adapt... The time for shift is now. The risk of kids not being able to see the faces of friends, the anxiety that comes with a constant reminder of this virus and the ongoing strain on our kids’ mental health is far outweighing the risk from Covid amongst this age group — and that guided our decision,” Scott stated. “We should begin the transition as soon as possible,” he added.

LOCAL CONTROL

Scott and French also emphasized that the new guidance is simply recommendations for schools, without a state of emergency in place.

“Local school districts will be able to choose to implement it or not, although we encourage them to follow the state recommendations, which are crafted in collaboration with our public health experts at the Dept. of Health to help make this eventual transition as easy as possible,” French said, adding: “Schools should be reviewing their local mitigation practices and seeking to eliminate the unnecessary ones now. By unnecessary, I mean local measures that go above and beyond the state recommendations and contribute little to virus mitigation. For example, I’ve heard about schools not letting students talk during lunch, or schools that require students to wear masks during outdoor recess or to play in small groups or pods on the playground. None of these types of measures are necessary, and they send the wrong message to students that our schools are not safe from the virus. Eliminating these types of measures now will help students and staff with a transition to the eventual removal of masks,” he said.

“While we know we’ll continue to see cases in schools, our schools are very safe. They are

perhaps some of the safest in the country, if not the world. Due to our high vaccination rates and robust access to testing,” French continued. “We do need to get our students in our schools back to normal as soon as possible. This means we need to allow our students to do normal things in schools like talking at lunch and playing on the playground with all their friends, not just those that are in their immediate class or grade. This also means they need to be able to see the faces of their classmates by not being required to wear masks.”

Wary of change

Scott acknowledged that the change would make many students, teachers, staff and parents in the school community wary.

“I know for some moving away from masking won’t be comfortable. They may want to continue wearing them. And that’s okay,” he said. “We need to be respectful and kind because, as we move forward, it’s individual circumstance that will drive these decisions. And everyone has the right to make those [risk] calculations for themselves.”

Health Commissioner Mark Levine echoed those sentiments: “There will be people who want or need to move at a different pace. And that’s okay,” he said. “As we have these past two years plus, we will all need to weigh our personal risks and decide which protections make sense for our own situation. I encourage you, each of us, to make these decisions using medical and science-based information, then we all need to accept these individual choices with empathy and without judgment.”

French added: “I think individually, we have to work on our own comfort level with risk, but then collectively (to the governor’s point about being respectful) you know, just be kind to our neighbors, everyone’s going to have a different approach to the risk.”

French added: “I think individually, we have to work on our own comfort level with risk, but then collectively (to the governor’s point about being respectful) you know, just be kind to our neighbors, everyone’s going to have a different approach to the risk.”

SUPPLY AND UPCOMING VACATION DEMAND

Secretary French also announced two new testing programs at the press conference Tuesday, a result of “the supply for antigen test kits for our tested

home program in schools [that] remains strong,” he said.

The first is an expansion to providing antigen tests to independent schools.

The second is a school staff assurance testing program where each school staff member will be provided two antigen tests each week to use on a voluntary basis. “The Dept. of Health recommends that staff who wish to participate in this program use the two tests three days apart. For example, staff might test on Sunday before the school week begins and then again on Wednesday,” French explained.

Additionally, the state has provided two rapid antigen tests per student to use when they return from winter break. “Students

“In the very near future, if all goes to plan, we intend to recommend lifting the mass requirement recommendation altogether.”

—Gov. Scott.

are encouraged to test twice at least 24 hours apart in the days before returning to school after the winter vacation,” he said, adding: “Testing is voluntary and it’s not required for students to come back to school after vacation.”

OMICRON: WHAT WE’VE LEARNED, PREDICTIONS

Scott was confident that the downward trends in case and hospitalization numbers would mean fewer fatalities would soon follow — and he expects all metrics to continue falling steeply.

“You’ve heard us talk all this talk about listening to the health experts, watching the data, listening to the science. And when you look at the omicron variant in its predictability, it’s been incredibly consistent, both in its structure, but its trajectory, increasing and also decreasing. So that gives us great comfort when you look at other countries who have experienced omicron before us and have seen that decrease, as well as other states who started decreasing before us and they’re still decreasing. So we benefit from that — listening to the science, watching the data, and making decisions that we think are appropriate.”

Levine elaborated: “Unfortunately the world has had to accept this virus is not going away. And new variants may emerge. But public health experts and scientists believe we will soon be able to coexist with the virus more safely for several reasons: First, we’ll have a lot more im-

munity, both from Vermont’s high vaccination rates and now for more of the population having been infected. Second, omicron has proven to be milder for most people, especially those who are vaccinated. And third, we have experience with this virus even though it has changed. So we know who is at most risk. This means that rather than broad recommendations for all Vermonters, we will be more focused in our public health efforts on reaching higher risk populations, working to get them up to date on vaccines, and making sure they have access to timely testing and treatment.”

Scott added: “I mean, when you think back, it wasn’t just three or four weeks ago that the Legislature was still contemplating a statewide mask mandate. I’m not sure that they feel the same way today, but they were prepared to vote on a statewide mass mandate at that point in time. That just shows you how quickly things have changed.

“We saw this in South Africa. It peaked and then dropped like a rock afterwards... I believe, based on everything, all the data we’ve collected, it’ll continue another week or two from now or three. It [the decline] could be much more dramatic. So I think our guidance, again, is incremental, it’s measured,” Scott concluded.

But Levine cautioned Vermonters not to stray too far in the “Covid’s over” direction: “I would not advise people throw their masks away forever and burn them in a big bonfire saying the pandemic is over, but at the same time we don’t see anything coming right now. And as these things do improve, the masks won’t be necessary and could be reserved for time that they would be in the future,” he said.

In a final word of caution, Levine reminded Vermonters of the prevalence of long Covid among those who have tested positive — and he got in one last plug for full vaccination, including boosters: “We still believe, for adults, at least there’s a 10%-30% chance of having long Covid symptoms if you’ve contracted Covid — hopefully a little less so with omicron — but we don’t know that for a fact yet,” he said. “So if you have not taken the opportunity to either get vaccinated or to become up to date and fully protected on your vaccine [including a booster] keep those statistics in mind.”



Mim's Photos

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



Recognized



Maridon Gibson of Brandon called to recognize a couple of people from the issue of February 2. The photo of the lady in the top right photo is Sally Bennett (now Sutherland) of Brandon. She still lives in the nearby area and is married to Phil Sutherland.



In the group photo at the bottom left photo; the young lady on the far left is Connie Trimmer. Her father, John and his wife ran the Brandon Motel.

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

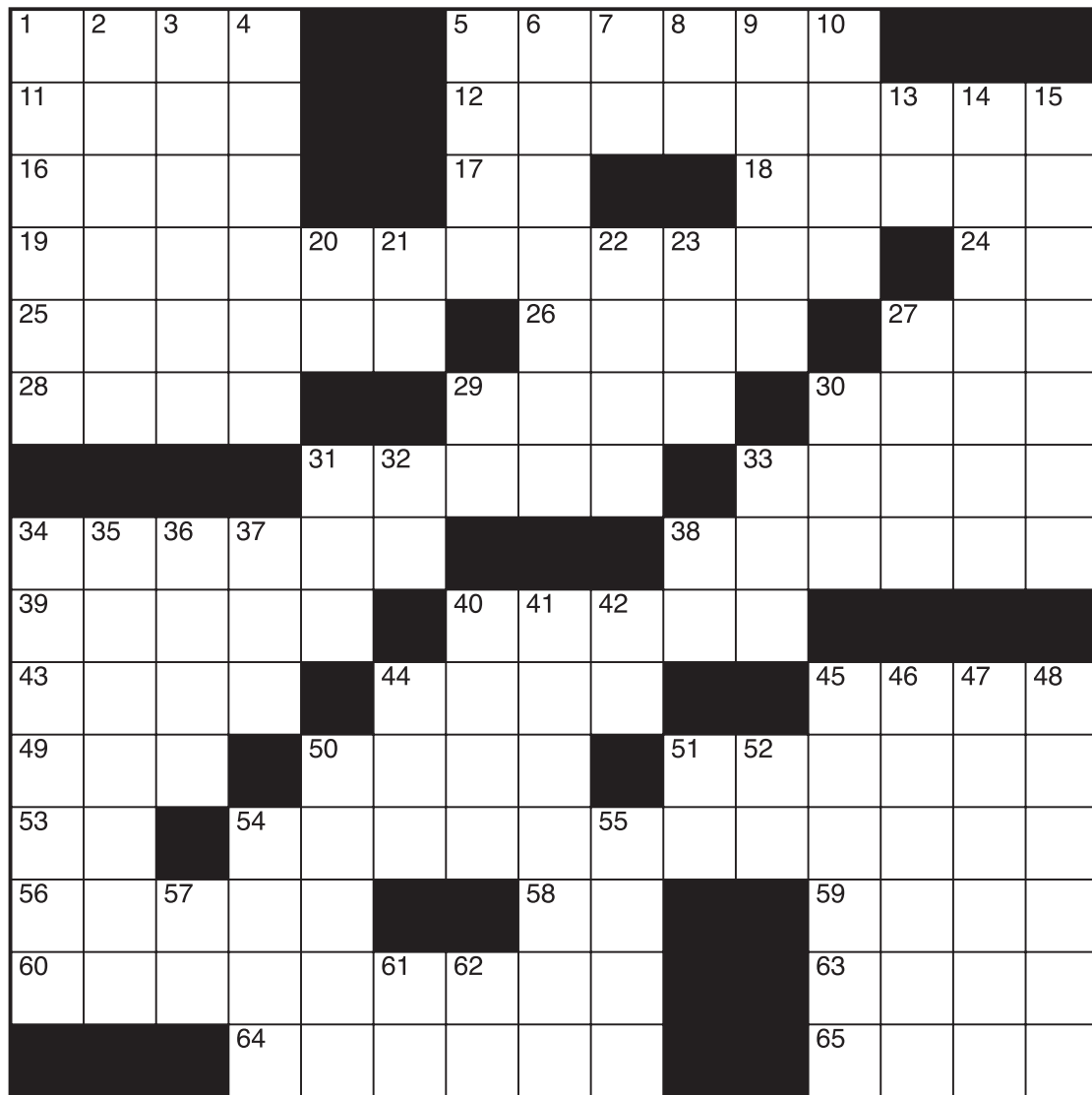
Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Remain as is
5. Functional
11. News magazine
12. Popular treat
16. Area units
17. Artificial intelligence
18. Marten valued for its fur
19. Forms of matter
24. Home of the Dodgers
25. Bordering
26. Part of the eye
27. It might be nervous
28. Visualizes
29. Crest of a hill
30. Measures engine speed (abbr.)
31. Tears in a garment (Br. Eng.)
33. Not easily explained
34. Song in short stanzas
38. Detonations
39. Intestinal
40. EU cofounder Paul-Henri ___
43. Balmy
44. New Mexico mountain town
45. Gobblers
49. Insecticide
50. Golf scores
51. Has its own altar
53. "Pollock" actor Harris
54. Being livable
56. NHL play-by-play man
58. "The Great Lakes State" (abbr.)
59. Unpainted
60. Swam underwater
63. Native American people
64. Containing salt
65. Exam

CLUES DOWN

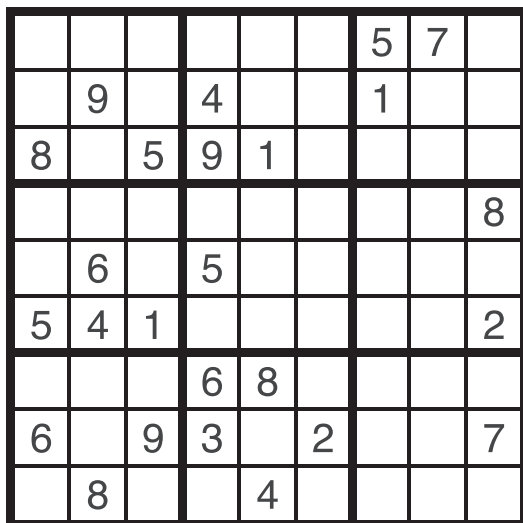
1. Small bone in middle ear
2. Long, angry speech
3. Move out of
4. Male organ
5. Two-toed sloth
6. Making dirty
7. Article
8. Oil company
9. Emits coherent radiation
10. Amounts of time
13. Unit equal to one quintillion bytes (abbr.)
14. Forbidden by law
15. Drains away
20. Not out
21. Sea patrol (abbr.)
22. Bird genus
23. Gratuity
27. ___ and feathers
29. Spiritual part of an individual (ancient Egypt)
30. Hot beverage
31. Pouch
32. It followed the cassette
33. Large northern deer
34. Ones who offer formally
35. Famed genie
36. Bequeathed
37. Skeletal muscle
38. Atomic #56
40. Silk garment
41. They deliver the mail
42. Equally
44. Check
45. Light-colored breed of hound
46. Drug that soothes
47. Railroads
48. Most slick
50. Jacket
51. A radio band
52. Hello
54. His and ___
55. Supporter
57. Popular software suite (abbr.)
61. Railway
62. NY coastal region (abbr.)



Sudoku

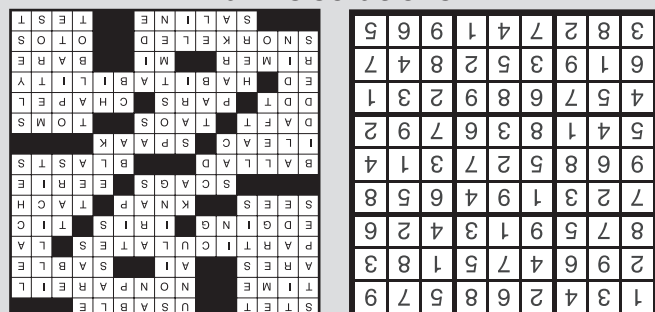
Here's how a sudoku puzzle works:

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



Level: Intermediate

Puzzle solutions



Help Keep the Animals Warm with the RCHS Winter Warmth Fundraiser

Will you help us keep the building warm and the animals fed and comfortable during these cold days? Nothing feels more welcoming than coming into a warm house after being out in the cold. Imagine how a stray animal feels when they come into the shelter at the Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS) after being cold, lost and hungry, sometimes for days or weeks. You can help provide that welcomed warmth by participating in the RCHS Winter Warmth Fundraiser. It's easy to enter too! By donating any amount, you will receive three entries into the raffle to win cash prizes! You can enter online, over the phone, or by stopping into the shelter to pick up a raffle form. To learn more about how you can help the animals and win cash prizes, please visit our website at www.rchsvt.org or call the RCHS Business Office at 802.483.9171.

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

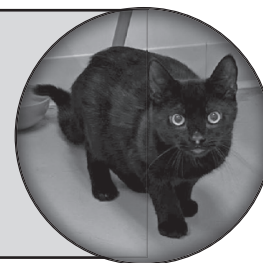


FOXY - 8-MONTH-OLD. SPAYED FEMALE. PIT MIX. BLACK & WHITE.

Hi! My name is Foxy, and oh boy am I one happy and on-the-go girl! I definitely need to work on manners and will need dog obedience classes to work on leash manners and not jump. I will need someone to give me exercise and lots of playtime. I have lived with other dogs and did fine, and am very playful! If you think that I will be a good fit for your active family, please call the Adoption Center to schedule an appointment to meet me!

PIE - 1-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE. DOMESTIC SHORT HAIR. BLACK

I am a very shy guy when I first meet you but I warm up very quickly. Before you know it, I will jump on your lap for much-loved attention. You could say I'm always on the prowl for new things to investigate. I haven't shown much interest in toys so far, but I am sure with how curious I am, I will learn to love them. I arrived at the shelter on January 5, 2022 because my previous owner could no longer care for me. I have lived in a house with lots of cats, dogs, and humans of all ages so I think I would be the purrfect fit for any home.



RUTLAND COUNTY

HUMANE SOCIETY

802-483-6700 • WWW.RCHSVT.ORG

765 STEVENS RD. • PITTSFORD



**ADOPTION CENTER OPEN
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.**

Off the Shelf

New books at the Brandon Free Public Library

Adult Fiction

The Accomplice by Lisa Lutz

Everyone has the same questions about best friends Owen and Luna: What binds them together so tightly? Why weren't they ever a couple? And why do people around them keep turning up dead? The *Accomplice* examines the bonds of shared history, what it costs to break them, and what happens when you start wondering if you ever truly knew the only person who truly knows you.

Good Rich People by Eliza Jane Brazier

Wealthy couple Lyla and Graham invite self-made success stories to live in their guesthouse and then conspire to ruin their lives. Demi is at the end of her rope when she seizes a risky opportunity and unwittingly becomes the subject of the upstairs couple's wicked entertainment. But Demi's not about to go down without a fight. In a twist that neither woman sees coming, the game quickly devolves into chaos. Because every good rich person knows it's winner take all. . . even if you have to leave a few bodies behind.

Adult Non-Fiction

The Urge: Our History of

Did you know?

Our first ever Craft Supply Swap is Saturday February 19 from 12 p.m. - 3 p.m.! Those who donated and have a blue ticket can come at 11 a.m. We've received a lot of fun craft supplies! Everything is Free and is first come, first serve.

Addiction by Carl Erik Fisher

Even after a decades-long opioid overdose crisis, intense controversy still rages over the fundamental nature of addiction and the best way to treat it. With uncommon empathy and erudition, Carl Erik Fisher draws on his own experience as a clinician, researcher, and alcoholic in recovery as he traces the history of a phenomenon that, centuries on, we hardly appear closer to understanding—let alone addressing effectively.

Juvenile Fiction

Across the Desert by Dusti Bowling

Twelve-year-old Jolene spends every day she can at the library watching her

favorite livestream: The Desert Aviator, where twelve-year-old "Addie Earhart" shares her adventures flying an ultralight plane over the desert. While watching this daring girl fly through the sky, Jolene can dream of what it would be like to fly with her, far away from her own troubled home life where her mother struggles with a narcotic addiction. And Addie, who is grieving the loss of her father, finds solace in her online conversations with Jolene, her biggest—and only—fan.

Young Adult Fiction

Ain't Burned All the Bright by Jason Reynolds, illustrated by Jason Griffin

Prepare yourself for something unlike anything: A smash-up of art and text for teens that viscerally captures what it is to be Black. In *America. Right Now.* Incorporating about ten sentences, and 300 pages of art, this project is about oxygen. And all of the symbolism attached to that word, especially NOW. And so, for anyone who didn't really know what it means to not be able to breathe, REALLY breathe, for generations, now you know. And those who already do, you'll be nodding yep yep, that is exactly how it is.

REAL ESTATE

Plan Your Spring Build



Village Building Lots: Brandon

Plan for tomorrow by securing your future home site now. 19 lots ready for your new 'energy efficient' home. 3/4 to 1 A± with all utilities & enjoying gorgeous mountain & pastoral views. Located in the quaint village of Brandon with art galleries, shops, shopping & professional services. Convenient to Middlebury & Rutland & 45 min. +/- to Killington, Pico & Middlebury Snow Bowl. Ski, hike, bike & enjoy nearby lakes. Owner/Broker/Developer. Prices starting at \$49,000.



WhittakerRealEstate.com 802-247-6633
(802)236-9076(T) (802)236-9075(C)
Tom@WhittakerRealEstate.com
Top of the Hill, Brandon, VT

We've Moved to

14 Mt. Pleasant Dr. Brandon
Same phone: 802-247-6633
Same People - Same Expertise
802-236-9075 (C); 802-236-9076(T)

CHECK OUT OUR LISTINGS ONLINE

Land for Sale - It's Time to Build!

1 acre on a quiet country road with 198 feet of frontage. Perc tests done in the past indicated good soils. Just have design work done for a wonderful Vermont country home.
\$32,000

16 acre lot on a quintessential country road. Well off the beaten track; you'll drive past panoramic mountain views every day. Lots of options for a homesite or seasonal getaway.
\$75,000



Celebrating 34 Years as a Family Business!
1 Marble St., Brandon, VT 05733
Marty@RoweRealEstate.com

Rowe Real Estate.com • 802-247-3449

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



ARIES: March 21-April 20

Aries, you keep looking inward to realize your goals and you're making very good progress in that regard. Communication is a key to success, so keep dialogues open.

TAURUS: April 21-May 21

Lately you seem to radiate success in all you do, Taurus. Others naturally want to flock to where you are and spend more time with you. Enjoy the spotlight while it lasts.

GEMINI: May 22-June 21

If communication with family members has been difficult lately, you may find that things change in the next few days, Gemini. This is a welcome change.

CANCER: June 22-July 22

Disagreements are not necessarily a bad thing, Cancer. They can open people up to discussions that can be enlightening. Disagree, but don't let it get heated.

LEO: July 23-Aug. 23

Romance may be on your mind a lot more than usual, Leo. This can be a good thing. Use your free time to foster nuances in your relationship.

VIRGO: Aug. 24-Sept. 22

Virgo, you may have to take a different route than you initially expected in order to reach a destination. The journey could be very eye-opening and inspirational.

LIBRA: Sept. 23-Oct. 23

In order to be the brightest and the best you can be, you may find that you rub certain people the wrong way, Libra. Find ways to make amends.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24-Nov. 22

Scorpio, a challenging week ahead will require some focus and a willingness to accept support. Surround yourself with people who have your back.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23-Dec. 21

An especially busy social schedule may leave you feeling a little tired for some time. Schedule some time for rest and relaxation to recharge your batteries.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22-Jan. 20

A great deal of unexpected information is coming your way, Capricorn. You may have to sort through it to figure out what is useful and what is not essential.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21-Feb. 18

Don't neglect the help that people are willing to offer you, Aquarius. Teamwork makes the dream work, and working with others is beneficial to all involved.

PISCES: Feb. 19-March 20

Use creativity in any way you can to solve issues that come your way, Pisces. You may be surprised at what you come up with.

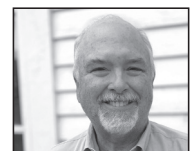
FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- Feb. 17 Michael Jordan, basketball great (58)
- Feb. 18 Audre Lorde, writer (d)
- Feb. 19 Constantin Brancusi, sculptor (d)
- Feb. 20 Louis Kahn, Architect (d)
- Feb. 21 Nina Simone, musician (d)
- Feb. 22 Edward Gorey, illustrator (d)
- Feb. 23 W. E. B. Dubois, Civil Rights activist (d)

ADVERTISE



Christy Lynn



Tom Van Sant



Angelo Lynn

WITH US

CONTACT US TODAY!

sales@brandonreporter.com

Brandon selectboard

(Continued from Page 1)

community integration and impact” that the project was a “unique opportunity to partner with SolarFest to provide a stable, long-term home for them, which will lead to economic and community development opportunities for Brandon year round.” Last year, SolarFest had listed Brandon as a leading candidate in which to build a permanent, year-around home for the popular solar festival.

As an added benefit to Brandon, the solar project will bring in \$3,000 per year of additional land taxes and \$13,000 per year of personal property taxes on the solar array.

MHG has also engaged a third-party partner, Agrivoltaic Solutions, to manage the vegetation within the fenced-in array using sheep.

“This dual use — solar energy and sheep grazing — creates additional benefits to farmers and

the local community,” the company said.

If approved by the PUC, construction would begin in the spring of 2024 with expected completion in the fall or early winter of 2024. During PUC deliberations on the permit, the town of Brandon will ask to have party status.

Brandon Fire District #2

After several weeks of discussion, the selectboard also approved spending up to \$120,000 to consolidate Brandon Fire District #2 with Brandon Fire District #1. This would be accomplished by installing a new 8-inch water main from BFD#1’s water main on North Street along Deer Run Road and connecting to BFD#2’s water main. After that was accomplished, BFD#2’s well would be disconnected and the reservoir and pump house would be demolished. This would benefit the 58 homes in the Forest Brook

residential development in Forest Dale. The money used to finance this project would be from ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) money passed by Congress and signed by President Joe Biden in the first few months of his presidency.

NEWTON ROAD PUMP STATION

The board wasn’t done with allocation of ARPA funds. Following approval of the fire districts consolidation, Selectman Tracy Wyman made a motion the selectboard use \$730,700 of ARPA money to finance replacement of the pump station on Newton Road. The selectboard has been discussing how and when to replace this pump station for several months and had agreed that it was a suitable project for ARPA funding, which totals around \$1 million. Wyman’s motion, however, drew considerable discussion about whether it was prudent to spend such a

large chunk of the federal funds on that one project or whether it was better to spread it around to projects not normally funded in routine town business.

Selectman Tim Guiles emphasized that the one-time ARPA funding was provided to towns in the hopes that large projects that might not have been realistic under normal circumstances could be financed, but that projects like replacing a sewage pump station were routine and could be funded as the town has always done them — through bonds, state grants and regular operational spending.

“The \$730,700 is such a big chunk of ARPA funding,” Guiles noted. “It takes away from what else we could fund.”

Board Chairman Seth Hopkins said he also was not in a hurry to obligate so much into a single project

“I’m concerned about who gets the benefit from the sewer

system versus who gets the benefit from spending the ARPA funds that could be more widespread throughout the community,” he said.

As for replacing the Newton Road Pump Station, Hopkins said he thought the town “should consider funding it the same way we have done in the past.”

There was a back-and-forth discussion on the issue for about 15 minutes, including Town Manager Dave Atherton noting the dire condition of the pump station and noting it had to be fixed in the very near future. Ratepayers of the town’s sewage system routinely pay for such repairs and upgrades.

All of the selectboard members agreed the pump station needed to be upgraded immediately, and in the end compromised on an amendment by Guiles that allocated spending half of the \$730,7000 through (See Brandon selectboard Page 23)

Business & Service Directory

Get your business noticed!
ONLY \$10/week!
 Ad design included in price.
 Call The Reporter today at
 802-247-8080 or
 email ads@brandonreporter.com

Accounting

Laurie L. Bertrand
 Certified Public Accountant

Bookkeeping & Payroll Services
 Individual & Corporate Tax Preparation
Experience You Can Count On
 4 Carver Street, Brandon • By Appt. Only
 465-8362 • fax 465-8438



Accounting

Sharon L. Stearns, CPA, PLLC
 Accounting, Tax & Consulting Services

Individuals, Small Business & Non Profits | Bookkeeping Payroll & Quickbooks | Tax Planning & Tax Return Preparation

P. O. Box 22, 900 Pearl Street, Brandon, VT 05733
 sharon@stearnscca.com • www.stearnscca.com
 (802) 247-8300 • By Appt. Only

Excavating

1963 — Celebrating Over 50 Years — 2020

Markowski
 Excavating, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL
 Dozers. Excavators. Heavy Hauling.
 Top Soil. Gravel. Sand.
 P.O. Box 69 Florence, VT 05744
 Phone: (802) 483-6469 Fax: (802) 483-6978

Home Care

Wintergreen

Residential Care Home
 Level III • ERC Care • State Licensed

Keep Your Loved Ones Close to Home

Please call for info 802-247-5987
 3 Union Street
 and 360 New Road
 Brandon, VT

Owners, Mary and Mike Jensen

- 24 Hour Personal Care
- Home Cooked Meals
- Private Rooms
- RN Overviewed
- Exceptional Staff
- Medication Management
- Daily Activities
- Transportation & Hospice Care Provided

Water/Radon Testing

Lalancette Testing Services LLC

Water Quality
 Radon - Air & Water
 Independent & Professional
 Testing Services from Certified Laboratories
Over 30 Years Experience and Service

802-855-3834

Barb Lalancette
 116 Elm St., Florence, VT 05744
 tests@lalancettetesting.com



Storage Containers

STORAGE CONTAINERS
 Rentals & Sales

Delivered To Your Location
 Safe & Secure • Water Tight
 Great for Seasonal Storage,
 Renovation Projects
 or Job Sites



483-9900 • Pittsford, VT



Restoration

Disaster Recovery, Inc.

24/7 Emergency Services Covering Vermont
 www.DisasterRecoveryInc.com



- Water Damage Drying/Clean Up
- Mold Remediation
- Carpet Cleaning & Deodorization
- Smoke and Sewage Cleaning

Service **877-765-6340**
 Fully insured & certified

Brandon selectboard

(Continued from Page 22)

ARPA funds and the remaining half funded in the traditional manner. That would leave about \$500,000 in ARPA funding for other town projects.

On that amendment and the final vote, the board split in two 3-2 decisions, with Tracy Wyman and Brian Coolidge voting to spend all \$730,700 in ARPA funding on the pump station, and Guiles, Hopkins and Mike Markowski voting to split the funding and finance half of the project through ARPA money.

OTHER BUSINESS

In other business, the selectboard:

- Heard a presentation from the Otter Creek Watershed Insect

Control District and noted that Brandon is looking for an alternate delegate to serve on that board. Brandon has two representatives, but in case one cannot make a meeting, the alternate has full voting privileges and attends all board meetings. Hopkins put out a call for any interested person to give any selectboard member or Town Manager David Atherton a call.

- Heard an appeal from Jim Emerson of Brandon's Energy Committee to launch a town-wide survey on current energy use so they had a comparative point to track the reduction of carbon use in the future. The town responded that they had allocated sufficient funding for such a survey in the current

budget (\$2,500) but that would not be available until early summer, if the budget passes at town meeting. The energy committee was encouraged to push forward with the survey and save those parts that required significant spending until the money was available.

- Reviewed Annual Town Meeting preparations, noting that the information hearing would be held via Zoom on Monday, Feb. 28, and voting was by mail or in person at the American Legion on Tuesday, March 1. Further details will be provided in the Feb. 23 issue of *The Reporter*.

- An executive session was held to discuss personnel issues with no action taken.

Area students earn college honors

Amanda Gates of Proctor

WEST HARTFORD, CT (02/14/2022)-- The University of Hartford is pleased to announce Amanda Gates of Proctor has been named to the President's Honors List and the Dean's List for Fall 2021.

Livia Bernhardt of Salisbury

LEWISTON, ME (02/15/2022)-- Livia Bernhardt of Salisbury, Vt., was named to the dean's

list at Bates College for the fall semester ending in December 2021. This is a distinction earned by students whose grade point average is 3.92 or higher.

Bernhardt, the daughter of Gregory D. Bernhardt and Hannah D. Sessions, is a 2020 graduate of Otter Valley Union High School. She is majoring in mathematics and biological chemistry at Bates.

Editor's note: The police report will run next week.



We are proud of our reputation for quality, reliability, and service that we have earned over the years, and are confident in our continued commitment to provide the best quality concrete products, delivered and erected on time, and to meet the most demanding construction schedules.

Laborer - Precast Concrete Location: Middlebury, VT

ESSENTIAL DUTIES:

- Performing manual work in preparing surfaces.
- Placing cables, steel, and then concrete into precast forms.
- Leveling the top of the concrete using a flat tool and straightedge.
- Maintain a clean job site each day in order to eliminate potential hazards.
- Material handling and storage, including cutting pieces.
- Load and unload trucks and haul and hoist materials using various hand and powered lifting machines.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Some knowledge of proper use of equipment, materials and supplies used in construction work.
- Ability to work independently and complete daily activities according to work schedule.
- Ability to lift heavy objects, walk and stand for long periods of time and perform strenuous physical labor.
- Ability to meet attendance schedule with dependability and consistency.

Our benefit package includes: Health Insurance/Dental/Vision/Paid Vacation/401(k) and Profit Sharing Retirement Plan/STD/Life Insurance.

Please submit resume: Lynn/ HR Manager at lynn@jpcarrara.com or download an application from our website at www.jpcarrara.com and fax to (802) 775-1048.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Classifieds

FOR RENT

BRANDON: - Senior woman who enjoys country music & Antique Road Show, seeking housemate to do occas. cooking, errands & light snow removal. \$300 + internet. A pet would be considered! Shared BA. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, refs, background checks req. EHO

FOR FREE

RYOBI 16" WIDE - Drum Sander. Needs a little TLC. Price - Free. Please contact Jeff at 717-697-1047, or by e-mail: jeffeyn166@comcast.net.

FOR SALE

GENERAC STANDBY GENERATORS - provide backup power during utility power outages, so your home and family stay safe and comfortable. Prepare now. Free 7-year extended warranty (\$695 value!). Request a free quote today! Call for additional terms and conditions. 1-855-516-3651

We do Trees!

Planting • Pruning • Removing • Repairing
Stump Removal • Timber Harvesting • Land Clearing • Firewood
Educated, Experienced and Fully Insured Professionals



Black Bear
Tree, Land & Forest

Thad Poremski
(802)
345-2815

Gagnon Lumber



Native Vermont Lumber

Bark Mulch - Delivery Available

Hemlock Framing Stock • Pine Shiplap Siding
Pine Tongue & Groove • Custom Cut Timbers

89 Stevens Road Pittsford, VT | 802-483-6550
Mon-Fri: 7AM-4PM & Sat: 8AM-12PM | www.gagnonlumber.com

DENTON & SON WASTE SERVICES

DENTON & SON IS HIRING!

We are looking to fill 2 positions immediately:

- CDL truck driver- Full-time position
- Non CDL driver- Part-time position
Must be able to lift 50lbs consistently
And have a clean driving record.
Competitive pay offered.

Call our office to set up an interview: (802) 247-8340

Proctor

(Continued from Page 1)

Michael Ramsey said, it seems more like a “probability.”

“Things are moving along pretty consistently,” Ramsey said in an interview after Monday’s meeting. “They seem eager to make things happen with that building,” he said, adding that they are working with the state, county and town authorities to tap into the appropriate aid and figure out the best way to move the project forward.

“At this point,” Ramsey said, “we have begun exploring what type of support the town can provide to Zion, and any other businesses interested in purchasing and/or operating inside of 52 Main. It helps that Zion Growers will not only provide jobs to the area, but that many of these jobs

will be available to the Low to Middle income (LMI) community.”

The end game, Ramsey recalled, would be for Zion Growers to purchase the property from the Preservation Trust of Vermont and to lease out, or sell, the parts of the enormous building they won’t use for themselves. The Marble Museum would remain in the building. Zion Growers would use the space to convert hemp into a wood-like material similar to woodchips, which would be used to create luxury animal bedding and various types of construction materials.

While Ramsey said things are moving forward quickly, big projects like this take time, which means it could still be a

year or two down the road before a production facility is up and running, if the sale is completed. If the sale does go forward, Ramsey said his conversations with the company indicate they could initially hire about 30 people. While that number is speculative at this point, it gives the town some idea of the positive impact Zion Growers could have on the community.

OTHER BUSINESS

The selectboard also:

• Reviewed plans to hold the informational meeting before Town Meeting Day on Monday, Feb. 28 remotely via Zoom. Mail-in ballots are available to citizens or people can cast their ballots as usual at the high school on Town Meeting Day, March 1. The Town Report was mailed to

citizens last week.

• Reviewed details of the Fishing Derby at Beaver Pond, which is set for Feb. 26.

• Noted that applicants for the Mortimer Proctor fund will be making presentations to that board of trustees in the near future. The town has a couple requests including funding for building a playground and park near the ice hockey rink.

• Reported that they are applying for a Class II highway grant to pave a mile of West Street. The grant maximum is \$200,000, which the town will apply for, with the town’s match at 20%. The town has applied for this grant in the past and has not been chosen, as it’s a very competitive grant with a finite amount of state money.

• Learned that the use of ARPA funding for small towns has been expanded so that “Proctor can allocate ARPA funds with a little more discretion. We will rely on the RRPC to guide us along as we work through the process,” Ramsey said.

• Okayed a facility use agreement for the skating rink to allow Otter Valley High School and Proctor High School to use the rink for a P.E. field trip.

• Supported a waste management grant to help the RCSWD purchase a new loader.

• And under, “good stuff,” received many positive comments on how well the town crews moved snow off the roads following last week’s 14-inch snowstorm.

Addison Press is actively hiring a dynamic individual to join our advertising and marketing team.

CONTACT CHRISTY AT CHRISTY@ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM TO LEARN MORE.



CATCH UP ON LOCAL NEWS WHEREVER YOU ARE

VISIT OUR
- new -
WEBSITE



WWW.BRANDONREPORTER.COM