

# The REPORTER

Brandon • Pittsford • Proctor • West Rutland  
Lake Dunmore, Leicester, Whiting, Sudbury, Gosben

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\$1



## POLICE ACADEMY

Trooper Peter Romeo, Officer Nicholas Kandra, Officer Robert Fournier, and Officer Akeem Brown, members of the 114th Basic Class at the Vermont Police Academy in Pittsford, lower the flag for the last time to signify the completion of their training.

PG. 2

## CALEB KENNA READING

Caleb Kenna discussed his celebrated drone photographs of Vermont and signed copies of his new book at the Brandon Town Hall Theater on Sunday.

PG. 3

## PITTSFORD FOOD SHELF

Sarah Harrington has taken over the reins of the Pittsford Food Shelf, which is celebrating its 38th year.

PG. 19



## CHRISTMAS DECOR WINNERS

The Brandon Chamber of Commerce announces the winners of the 2022 Christmas decorating contest. Find out who filled the judges with holiday cheer...

PG. 10

## WEST RUTLAND SB

The selectboard approves fire department budget, works to finalize more budget.

PG. 19

## RNESU SCHOOL BOARD

School approves support staff budgets.

PG. 2



## Brandon celebrates 3rd annual Reverse Parade

THE DENIZENS OF Brandon came out in full force to celebrate the Reverse Parade. There was dancing, there was singing, there was dancing, there was merriment abounding. See more photos on page 9.

Photos by Alois Pattis, George Fjeld, and Steven Jupiter

## Nifty Thrifty thrills Brandon Library with \$15K donation

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Every time someone in Brandon moves or settles the estate of a deceased relative, inevitably boxes and bags of clothing and housewares show up on the porch of Nifty Thrifty thrift shop. While most items end up priced under \$5, it all adds up to serious money over time, money which the non-profit distributes to programs, organizations, and causes in the Brandon community.

In fact, Nifty Thrifty recently

announced one of its largest distributions ever: \$15,000 to the Brandon Free Public Library (BFPL), to support the Library's

planned renovation. The money will be used specifically to underwrite the cost of the BFPL's



new circulation desk. To put the size of the gift in perspective, Nifty Thrifty pulls in about \$20,000 in a typical year.

"We love the Library," said Laura Peterson, president of Nifty Thrifty's board. Though Nifty Thrifty al-

ready donates \$500 every month to a chosen cause in the area, Peterson noted that they "like to be very generous once in a while."

"This gift is an example of how our community comes together to support each other," said David Roberts, president of the BFPL board. "Nifty Thrifty is truly dedicated to this town."

Other causes that have recently received gifts from Nifty Thrifty include the Brandon Food Pantry, the Brandon Se-

(See Nifty Thrifty, Page 24)

## Leahy readies to retire

BY JOHN FLOWERS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — You won't find a lot of framed press clippings in the office of Patrick Leahy, the longest-serving member of the U.S. Senate. But there are two that stand out.

One features a Vermont newspaper report that came out five days before the Nov. 5, 1974, General Election.

The banner headline reads, "Poll Dooms Leahy."

The Chittenden County state's attorney understood his long odds

at that time. Vermont was as red then as it is blue today. After all, he was a 34-year-old Democrat in a state that had never elected a Democrat to a top federal post, hadn't been keen on electing Catholics and preferred its candidates to be conservatives older than 50.

"Everyone assumed I shouldn't be in there," Leahy told the *Independent* during a recent interview.

Well, certainly not everyone.

His second "keeper" newspaper (See Leahy retires, Page 14)



U.S. SEN PATRICK Leahy, supported by his wife Marcelle, pauses while announcing on Nov. 15, 2021, that he would step down at the end of this term, his eighth in the Senate.

VTDigger photo/Glenn Russell



# 'Own it, Fix it, Recover': Vermont Police Academy graduates its 114<sup>th</sup> class

BY STEVEN JUPITER

PITTSFORD—In the middle of the first true blizzard of the season on Saturday, friends and family braved the snow to watch two dozen proud recruits receive their certificates after a demanding four-month training program at the Vermont Police Academy (VPA) in Pittsford.

At a time when public sentiment toward law enforcement can often be described as “complicated,” the day offered Vermont’s law enforcement community an opportunity to openly celebrate its people and to remind itself of its commitment to public service.

The ceremony took place in the Academy’s gymnasium and began with the National Anthem, followed by remarks by Chris Brickell, VPA’s Deputy Director and former police chief in neighboring Brandon.

“I ask that you serve your communities with dignity, respect, and honor,” said Brickell, addressing the graduating class.

Ken Hawkins, director of training at VPA, then called the recruits one by one to the front of the hall where they received their certificates from Training Coordinator Jacob Hansell and Lindsay Thirviierge, director of administration.

After the graduates received their certificates, they each stood and waited for

a spouse, family member, or close friend to come touch their badges. According to Hawkins, the tradition “comes from a time when family or loved ones would help pin the badges.” Today, Hawkins added, the gesture is a symbol to “help protect the wearer from harm.”

Awards were presented to outstanding members of the

*“I ask that you serve your communities with dignity, respect, and honor.”*

—VPA Deputy Director  
Chris Brickell



**OFFICER ROBERT FOURNIER, Trooper Taylor Demick, Officer Armin Harambasic, Deputy Matthew Thomas, and Officer Akeem Brown take their oath.**

Photos by Steven Jupiter

114<sup>th</sup> Basic Class: Nicholas Kandra (South Burlington P.D.), Kegan Philbrick (Burlington P.D.), Robert Fournier (Essex P.D.), and Shawn Hammond (Wilmington P.D.). Lt. Christopher Bataille (South Burlington P.D.) received an

Instructors Award as well.

Keegan Philbrick, President of the 114<sup>th</sup> Basic Class, took the podium and offered praise to his classmates for their fortitude and commitment to community service. He explained that the class motto — “Own it, Fix it, Recover” — had started as a joke, but was quickly adopted as a serious lesson in overcoming mistakes, conflicts and adversity. Philbrick also noted that while law enforcement may be experiencing public criticism now, “the pendulum will swing back in our favor.”

The ceremony concluded with the recruits filing out of the gymnasium to the strains of a bagpipe played by Officer Aiden Alnwick of the Brandon Police. Once outside, in the falling snow, the recruits lowered and folded the Academy’s flags. These flags are lowered and folded by the recruits every evening, but on graduation they are presented back to the Academy to signify that the class has completed its training.



**SAMANTHA HARAMBASIC TOUCHES** the badge of her husband, Officer Armin Harambasic of the Shelburne P.D. The symbolic gesture is meant to protect the new officer from harm.



**OFFICER CATHLEEN PIGEON** of the Shelburne P.D. greets her father, Jack Grimmer, and son, Liam, after receiving her graduation certificate.

## RNESU approves three-year contract with support staff and bus drivers

BY ANGELO LYNN

BRANDON — The boards of RNESU and Otter Valley Unified Union Districts ratified a three-year contract with the Educational Support Staff and Bus Drivers, according to RNESU Superintendent Kristin Hubert, at a meeting on Dec. 7 and continued to hone the school

district’s proposed 2023-24 fiscal year budget at a meeting on Dec. 14. Its next meeting is Wednesday, Dec. 21 at 6 p.m. in the school’s library.

The contract is the first multi-year contract ratified by the Board and the Association for many years. Having a multi-year contract brings stability and con-

sistency for the districts, Hubert said, adding that it “provides the districts with the ability to better budget for expenditures.”

In the first year of the contract (FY2023) there is a wage increase of 8.20%, she said, “along with a one-time payment adjustment to correct the bus driver’s salary schedule recognizing

years of service and experience and providing a consistent salary scale.”

In the remaining two years of the agreement the parties have agreed to 4% per year increases, she said.

The board is expected to finalize various aspects of the upcoming school year’s budget at

its next meeting. Earlier reports had put the proposed budget increase at about 10.7%, though that could be trimmed as state aid and other budgeting factors come into view in January. District residents will vote on the budget at Town Meeting this coming March



# Caleb Kenna flies high at book signing in Brandon

BY GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON — Sunday evening at the historic Brandon Town Hall, Brandon native Caleb Kenna presented a

slide show of his extraordinary drone images from around Vermont. His slide show and talk was personal and interspersed with quotes from many who

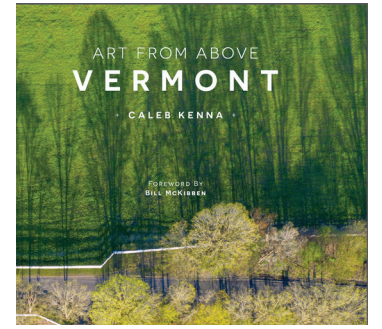
influenced him, including, he said, Buddha, Ansel Adams and Abraham Lincoln.

Kenna entertained his audience with vivid descriptions of

his process, using flying camera photography from ground level to 400 feet in the air. His drone contains a camera which he controls remotely. Not being

a video gamer, Caleb admitted that learning to fly the drone with a joystick was difficult. Describing the learning curve of running a drone while paddling a canoe, he admitted the learning curve had its challenges and didn't always go as planned: one drone ended up in Otter Creek while another crashed into a tree.

Kenna's favorite time to fly his drone is at dawn, when the air is still and the light is soft. During the middle of



**ART FROM ABOVE: Vermont** for sale at The Bookstore.

the day, he prefers to photograph straight down on his subjects. His second favorite time is dusk when the light again becomes softer and the winds calmer.

Kenna discussed the development of his art from picking up his father's Nikon in high school to dreaming of being an international traveler taking pictures in the four corners of the world. Well attended by an enthusiastic group about 50 people, many stayed to have Kenna inscribe their newly purchased books. He was welcomed by Barbara Ebling of The Bookstore and warmly introduced by Stephanie Jerome, local state representative.



CALAB KENNA PRESENTED and signed copies of his new book for a crowd at Brandon's Town Hall Theater.

Photos by Cecil Reniche-Smith

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BRANDON REPORTER

Editorial

Sen. Leahy: For 48 years, he gave it his all

It's hard to overstate the impact Sen. Patrick Leahy has had on Vermont, and the nation, during his 48-year tenure at the U.S. Senate. Reading a complete list of his many accomplishments would be mind-numbing, so his staff consolidated them into broader categories for media so readers could grasp the big picture, as *Addison Independent* Senior Reporter John Flowers reports in today's issue.

But we encourage readers to peel back the covers on each of those broader brushstrokes to contemplate just what his 48 years represent:

- In casting over 17,000 votes on the Senate floor, for example, imagine the hours of discussion, research and study that goes into many of those decisions; the late-night reading of both sides of the issue, the staff conversations to determine the best way forward.

- And when introducing legislation himself, he would always run it through one tried-and-true litmus test: Would it measure up to Vermonters' expectations and the principles imparted to him by his family?

- Sen. Leahy makes the remarkable observation that he has served with 20% of all U.S. senators in the country's 246-year history. That time span runs from the end of the Vietnam War to the end of the Cold War, America's dominance as a superpower, the emergence of the digital age and the rising power of technology firms, the auspices of climate change and campaigns like Vice President

Al Gore's to fight it (with Leahy as an early believer), 9-11, the War in Iraq, the 2008 Recession that was sparked by the home mortgage scandal during George W. Bush's second term, the war in Afghanistan, surviving Trump's autocratic impulses and his partisan politics of division, President Biden's important but narrow victory, the Jan. 6 assault on the nation's Capitol, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine — to name just a few of the immediate high-points that come to mind during those five decades.

That crush of history, the rapid advance of constant change, is just part of the challenge facing senators who must anticipate the legislation required to thoughtfully meet the needs of their constituents. That's the work real senators do; not the grandstanding in front of TV cameras, nor the partisan hooliganism too many of today's Republicans practice; but the honest work it takes to consider and adopt policies to solve tomorrow's problems.

- Leahy did that with several key initiatives: the Leahy Law and the War Victims Fund were two of his favorites. On the ag committee he championed legislation that helped legitimize organic farming en-route to creating what is now a \$55-\$65 billion industry. He's pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into efforts to clean up Lake Champlain and other public waterways, advocated for the addition of more than 140,000 acres in the Green Mountain Forest, *(See Sen. Leahy, Page 5)*



Fred the Snowman

THE BRANDON AREA received about six inches of wet snow Friday night and Saturday, just right for building snowmen. Barbara and Tom White, who live on Country Club Road in Brandon, sent in this photo of a snowman they named Fred. Perfect snow they said, and lots of fun!

Community Forum  
Traditional Medicare is under attack

BY DR. JACK MAYER, MD., MPH

I've spent my professional life as a primary care pediatrician, mostly in Vermont. Now I'm retired and the beneficiary of Medicare.

I see alarming signs that Medicare, a public good, is being privatized and abused by for-profit insurance companies. Their greed threatens the integrity and sustainability of Medicare.

Medicare Advantage plans are actively hawked on TV by aggressive private insurers who stand to gain handsomely by enrolling healthier younger seniors. Since they are paid based on each patient's medical record, these private companies routinely "up-code" or exaggerate diagnoses to make their patients appear sicker and thus receive enhanced compensation. One can only use doctors "in network" and care is often delayed or denied by requirements of prior authorization for treatments, medications, tests and consultations.

According to an independent analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation, in 2019 Medicare Advantage plans cost the government \$7 billion more compared to spending for similar beneficiaries under traditional Medicare.

So much of what troubles our current health care system is attributable to the dysfunction of private, for-profit companies seeking ways to milk Medicare for their investors' benefit and to the detriment of seniors.

This is the same "managed care" that was unsuccessful as the HMO model of our recent past. Private companies and accountable care organizations are paid a fixed monthly fee to provide care rather than billing for the care rendered, as is customary with traditional Medicare.

Traditional Medicare is chosen by 52% of seniors. It is now the target of a program initiated by the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid

Services during the Trump administration called Medicare Direct Contracting. This program has been given the go-ahead to enroll up to 30 million of the 36 million current recipients of traditional Medicare without their consent in a new arrangement with a direct contracting entity, now called REACH.

These direct contracting entities would be permitted to spend as little of 60 to 75% of their payments on patient care and could keep the rest for profit and expenses. In comparison, traditional Medicare pays 98% of its expenditures on patient care, with only 2% spent for administrative costs. Direct contracting entities have attracted lots of interest from Wall Street investors because they are profitable.

We are still tinkering about the edges of the failed model of health care as a marketplace. It is not, and our health care as a nation suffers from inequality, poor access, and personal expense.

*(See Medicare, Page 5)*

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# Sen. Leahy

*(Continued from Page 4)*

and, more locally, he helped establish the 16,000-acre Moosalamoo National Recreation Area (on Addison County's southeastern flank) and helped fund almost \$5 million in trail and other improvements in the past few years. All are transformative accomplishments.

• And there is so much more: His work leading the world to oppose land mines is legendary; he authored the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the Innocence Protection Act; he fought against Trump's undermining of America's NATO allies and pointed out the ex-president's efforts to alienate our allies while bolstering dictators like Russia's Vladimir Putin; and that just scratches the surface of the thousands of initiatives he did every session to serve the interests of Vermonters.

\*\*\*\*\*

Throughout it all, Leahy has also served with dignity, grace, humility and a good sense of gamesmanship and fun. An avid Batman fan, he's played bit roles in several of those

epic movies; as an avid photographer, he has photographed many historic events as only a top leader of the Senate could — partly as an historian, and partly to capture the everyday heroics of life in the nation's capital.

Moreover, in an era of extreme political strife, Sen. Leahy has been one of the nation's most esteemed political statesmen; an honest broker whose word could be trusted and whose motives to serve the public good were always transparent. He never strayed from his Vermont roots and like U.S. Senators Robert Stafford and George Aiken before him, he was always a man of integrity whose moral compass never wavered.

In a political world of highly competitive egos and social media platforms built to exaggerate outlandish statements, it is no small complement to simply say that for 48 years Sen. Leahy gave Vermont his all with diligence, honesty, grace and dignity — to the state's everlasting gratitude.

*Angelo Lynn*



## More versatile than a sleigh

AN ILLUMINATED CEMENT truck provided by S.D. Ireland of Williston, VT added some dazzle to the Brandon Reverse Parade on Sunday.

Photo by Alois Pattis

# Medicare

*(Continued from Page 4)*

Every other industrialized nation provides nationalized care and gets better outcomes for their public investment in care for all. There are many models, but they are based on the premise of equal access to health care for all. That was the promise of

Medicare too, but it is being undermined by greedy insurance companies and investors.

I am reminded of what Winston Churchill said of America: "You can always count on the Americans to do the right thing after they have tried everything else."

*Note: Jack Mayer, M.D., MPH, of Middlebury, is a retired pediatrician and writer who founded Rainbow Pediatrics in Middlebury in 1991. He has been a persistent critic of the private health care system in the United States.*

# Happy Holidays from the Reporter!

Our office will be closed  
on Monday, December 26th  
and Monday, January 2nd.

There will not be a December 28th edition.

The **REPORTER**



# Obituary

## David Arthur Forrest, 65, Ripton

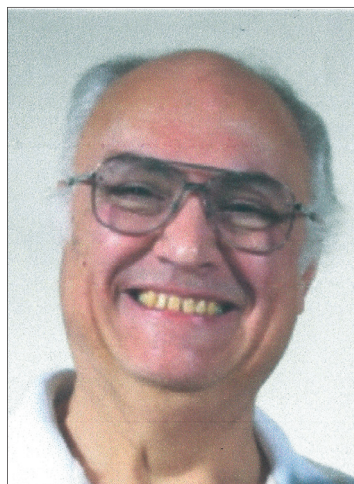
WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — David Arthur Forrest, age 65, passed away Friday, Dec. 9, 2022, at Sentara Hospital in Williamsburg, Va.

David was born at Loring AFB, in Limestone, Maine, on May 1, 1957. He was the son of Harry and Virginia (Stone) Forrest. He grew up in Limestone, where he received his early education. He graduated from Limestone high school, class of 1976. David settled down in Vermont for the majority of his adult life after some time in the Philippines with his family.

David was an accomplished self-taught cook. He catered and DJ'd for many functions at

the Neshobe Sportsman's Club, private weddings, outdoor parties, Christmas parties, etc. David and his wife Rhoda often sang their favorite duet, Love Can Build a Bridge, while providing Karaoke. David was also an accomplished salesman, manager, entrepreneur, and family man. Every job he worked was to support his family above all else, followed by being involved with things he enjoyed like carpentry, DIY, and mentoring others.

He is survived by his wife, Rhoda Lee (Pfenning) Forrest of Williamsburg, Va.; his first wife, Shari Lee Stoddard Forrest Stone of Houston, Texas;



DAVID ARTHUR FORREST

his mother, Virginia Cornell

of Victory Mills, N.Y.; one son, Michael David Forrest of Canaan, N.H.; and a daughter; Heidi Lee Forrest and her loving boyfriend Daniel Fife of Laconia, N.H.; two brothers, Scott Forrest of Rochester, Vt., and Michael Forrest (Debbie) of Santa Clarita, Calif.; sisters-in-law Nancy Steele (Joe) of Fair Haven, Vt.; Mary Kay Newton (Doug) of Brandon, Vt.; Ann Pfenning of Forest Dale, Vt.; and brother-in-law Mike Pfenning (Sally) of Old Alexandria, Va. Many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and cousins also survive him. He was predeceased by his father, Harry and a brother Jeffrey Forrest,

and his step-father; Bruce Cornell. He also leaves behind his two fur babies, Little Miss and Kimsu, who loved him and are missing his presence.

A celebration of life will take place on Saturday, June 17, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at One Church, formerly known as Lifebridge Christian Church (aka the former Neshobe Sportsman's Club).

A private graveside committal service and burial will take place in the family lot at Pine Hill cemetery in Brandon.

Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon is assisting the family.

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are on page 12!

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# Vermont amends its Constitution to prohibit slavery and enshrine reproductive rights

MONTPELIER — Vermont Gov. Phil Scott issued two proclamations announcing the ratification and adoption of 2022’s Proposition 2 and Proposition 5, amending the Vermont Constitution. In a ceremony required by state law, Secretary of State Jim Condos certified to the governor the articles of amendment had been adopted by the voters of the state. The amendments were enrolled on the parchment and deposited with the Secretary of State, making official the ratification and adoption by Vermont voters in the 2022 General Election.

The Governor, Secretary of State, Senate President Pro Tem and Speaker of the House addressed the attendees gathered in the House Chamber.

“Today, the Vermont Constitution takes on new meaning as a source of inspiration and law, clearly showing the world we believe that everyone has the right to personal autonomy,” said Governor Scott. “I want to thank Vermonters for participating in our democracy, and making these historic changes, and all those who took part in the effort to move these proposals through this important process.”

“This is a special and significant day. The Vermont Constitution is the governing document of our brave little state. Amendments to the Constitution are rare and important occurrences,” said Secretary Condos. “This year, Vermonters made clear that our Constitution should reflect our values as a state. That our state is a place where slavery of all forms is prohibited, and where the government has no place restricting any individual’s right to make their own reproductive health decisions.”

Vermont’s constitutional amendment process is long and deliberate. First, an amendment must be introduced in the state Senate in a non-election year of a biennium. Then, the amendment must pass both chambers of the Legislature that session, and the following, before being presented to Vermont voters for a vote on ratification. Today’s ceremony marks the conclusion of a long process representing years of hard work by Legisla-

tive leaders.

House Speaker Jill Krowinski addressed the gathering in the House Chamber. “It has been over four years in the making to get to this historic moment today. The strong vote by Vermonters to approve these constitutional amendments made it resoundingly clear there is no place for harmful language rooted in the history of slavery in our constitution and reproductive liberty will be guaranteed for Vermonters for generations to come. We must continue to do the work to protect our civil liberties and show the rest of the country that we can work together to create a better tomorrow.”



## Rural beauty

WITH THE TACONIC range in the background, cows graze on a meadow’s bare grass while they can before deeper winter snows bury it until springtime. Photo by Dale Christie



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# Calendar of events

## December

### Tuesdays

#### Maclure Library Story Time Playgroup

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

### Wednesdays

#### Ping Pong

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

The club has begun play on Wednesday evenings starting at 7 p.m. It will meet nearly every Wednesday year-round in the gym at the Rutland Area Christian School in Rutland, located at the corner of Melrose Ave. and Lincoln Ave. in Rutland, a block from the intersection of Route 7 and Melrose Ave. (110 Lincoln Ave., Rutland, VT 05701).

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

If you are interested in table tennis as a recreational or athletic activity, we're interested in you! There is a modest membership fee of only \$30, although you can come twice free as our guest. Bring your sneakers and paddle (or use ours) and have some fun playing a great game of "Pong!"

For further information about the Green Mountain Table

Tennis Club, call club representative Ronald Lewis at 802-247-5913, or visit our club's website at [www.gmttc.com](http://www.gmttc.com).

#### Trouble with math? Free tutoring is offered!

Free math tutoring is available in downtown Brandon on Wednesday afternoons from 2:45-4 p.m. at Fellowship Hall — the smaller brick building next to the Brandon Congregational Church.

Larry Rowe is offering help to any Otter Valley students who have questions or difficulties with mathematics or would like help with their math homework. Rev. Sara Rossig will be in her office — 20 feet away from the worktable — during these sessions to ensure everyone feels comfortable and is safe.

Call 802-236-9130 for more information.

(Please note that Wednesday, Nov. 23 and Wednesday, Dec. 7 are days Larry has other commitments and will not be available.)

## Goings on around town

### Wednesday 21st:

#### Book Group at The Chaffee Art Center

Dec. 21 Book Group will discuss "Atomic Habits" by James Clear

We are excited to be partnering with Phoenix Books on Center St., Rutland! Book Group members get 20% off the purchase of our monthly book.

3rd Wednesday of each month

4–5 p.m.

RSVP Required  
[info@chaffeeartcenter.org](mailto:info@chaffeeartcenter.org)  
802-775-0356



### Thursday 22nd:

#### Climate Change meet-up

The latest report from UN Climate Change shows that countries around the world are failing to meet their emissions reduction goals and locking the world into an increasingly certain chaotic climate future. Join 350VT, a statewide grassroots network, to explore how Vermont is doing and how we can do our part to build collective power for climate justice (check out CEAC's recently released report on Addison County's emissions).

In 2023, there are two significant areas where Vermont can make significant progress toward a just transition off carbon-based fuels: where our electricity comes from and how we heat our homes. For this to happen, we'll need to build public support and provide the backing our elected officials need to take bold action.

Join us at The Bookstore 5:30–7:00 p.m.) to learn more about what a just and low-emissions Vermont climate future could look like, what stands in our way, and what we can do to make it happen! Light snacks will be provided, as well as masks.

### Saturday 24th:

#### Christmas Eve service at the Goshen Community Church

Service begins at 5 p.m.

### Friday 30th:

Dancing the Divine Within: An Evening of Healing &

#### Vitality to Honor 2022 at the Block in Wallingford

From 6–7 p.m., this offering will utilize elements of poetry, music / song, Reiki, meditation, and traditional southern Italian shamanic dance practices (which can be as simple as moving your body) in whatever way feels appropriate to you for self care. (No prior dance experience or training is necessary.) Humans have always expressed themselves through dance whether gathering around a sacred fire or doing the boogie-woogie. Movement allows our bodies to release stress and anxiety filling us with energy and joy as endorphins flood our entire being. The body's innate wisdom takes over as we unwind and release whatever no longer serves us. This offering will be blessed by the medicine of Kava Kava as she works with us in a ceremonial way.

This work is based on "the women who pray" from the village of Becca's ancestors. To honor the rigors of our daily realities; let's shake out all that 2022 became and asked of us, wrapping it up to ring in the New Year!

\* Dress for movement. Bring an open mind, yoga mat & water. Universal precautions honored. Event will fly with 10 minimum, 25 maximum.

RSVP is appreciated by December 29th to: The Thrive Center of the Green Mountains: 802.446.2499 or [uthrive@vermontel.net](mailto:uthrive@vermontel.net).

Drop off payment or send check to: Lisa Donohue, Thrive Center of the Green Mountains, P.O. Box 539, Wallingford, VT 05773. Refunds are at the discretion of the instructors. Checks are payable to Thrive Center. Thank you!

## January

### Sunday 1st

#### Rutland Christmas Bird Count

Rutland County Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count will take place this year on January 1. Birds spotted within a 7.5 mile radius of Meads Falls in Center Rutland will be counted by teams of field birders and feeder-watchers in this count circle. Results will be tallied and posted on e-Bird.

Interested persons can contact [birding@rutlandcounty-audubon.org](mailto:birding@rutlandcounty-audubon.org) for information or to sign up.

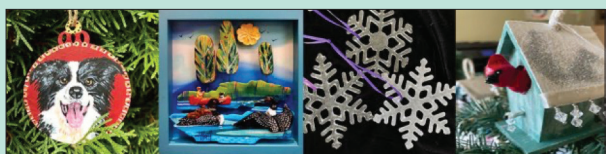
### Tuesday 3rd and Thursday 5th:

#### Swedish Sancta Lucia Festival

The legend of Saint Lucia tells the story of her bringing food to the Christians hiding in the catacombs and wearing a crown of candles on her head to help light her way; freeing her to carry food with both hands. Lucia Day is traditionally celebrated on December 13th, which in the old Julian calendar was the darkest day of the year and the light of Lucia pointed the way up out of the way of darkness. Due to Covid, it has been rescheduled to January, but within the 12 days of Christmas prior to the Epiphany.

The pageant is directed by Mr. Rustan Swenson, a native of Sweden, and now living in Middlebury. He has directed this pageant in Middlebury and Orwell in previous years, with George Matthew Jr. on the piano and the church's historic pipe organ. The daughters of Jenny & Rev. Mark Orten, chaplain of Middlebury College, along with Ainsleigh Linnea and Nellie Pierce, will be singing in Swedish in the pageant, with Rebecca Orten as Saint Lucia.

Middlebury United Methodist Church, 7 p.m.  
Info: [gmatthew@middlebury.edu](mailto:gmatthew@middlebury.edu)



### Shop the Guild this holiday season through January 29, 2023

Share the spirit of the season with affordable, giftable, one-of-a-kind art and craft pieces from our annual holiday shop in the Gallery. You'll find handcrafted wonders for everyone on your list: practical pottery, glowing stained glass, distinctive jewelry, glorious photography, precious ornaments and eccentric dolls plus a delightful selection of fine artwork by more than 30 Vermont artists. The fabulous Ornament Tree will be loaded with keepsake treasures, too.

The holiday shop in the Gallery is open from November 11, 2022 – January 29 2023. Join us for a festive opening reception, free and open to all, to meet the artists and celebrate the season on Friday November 11 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Gallery is open Mon – Sat 10-4pm and Sunday from 11-4pm in the heart of downtown Brandon.

L-R: Joan Drew, Border Collie ornament; Ashley Wolff, Family Picnic on the Lake; Hallie Monroe glittery glass snowflake ornaments; Catherine Palmer Birdhouse ornament.



# Brandon Reverse Parade



**THE 3RD ANNUAL** Reverse Parade lit up Park Street in Brandon with a blazing array of Christmas decorations and costumed entertainers. Mickey & Minnie Mouse, Goofy, Trolls, Santas, and elves were all out dancing and greeting the long line of cars that snaked by. If the raucous honks of the cars were any indication, the parade was enjoyed by all. Park Street residents now have a year to up their game for 2023's parade!





# CHRISTMAS 2022 HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTEST

The Brandon Chamber of Commerce announced the winners of this year's holiday decorating contest. "There were lots of pretty lights around town, so we hope you had a chance to slow down a moment dur-

ing the busy season and take a moonlit drive and enjoy the beauty, time, and effort that all our neighbors put into their displays," said Bernie Carr Executive Director of the Brandon Chamber of Commerce.



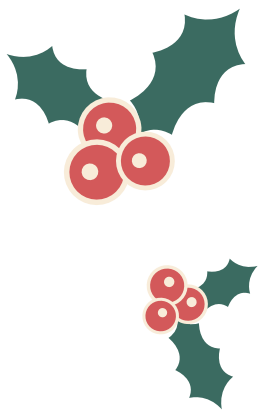
ROGER AND CHERYL Gordon of Town Farm Rd. tied for The Clark W. Griswold award.



THE BRANDON TOWN Hall won for best civic building.



THE BRANDON INN won for best commercial building.



DENNIS MARDEN OF Pearl St. is the other winner of the the Clark W. Griswold award.



THE DECKERS OF Town Farm Rd. won the Currier & Ives award.

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While we will hire a reporter to cover hard news, we'll need "community correspondents" to also cover clubs and organizations (Lions, 4-H, Rotary, American Legion and others), as well as town news for each community and elementary school news (PTA meetings, social outings, and the like).

## PROVIDE SPORTS COVERAGE:



We'll need interested parents and others to cover some of the school's sports teams. So if you're a parent who attends most of a team's games, we're eager to train you to write brief game summations and take a few pictures. We'll still strive to cover home varsity sports, when we can, but extra hands will provide that much better news coverage.

## TAKE PHOTOS:



If you're a good photographer with a single-reflex lens camera, perhaps with a telephoto lens, we're always looking for good scenics, sports and other special event coverage.

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# Leahy retires

(Continued from Page 1)

features a report of the 1974 election result: “Leahy Unexpectedly Wins.” He had defeated Republican Richard W. Mallary, 70,629 to 66,223, in the contest to succeed retiring incumbent U.S. Sen. George Aiken, a Republican.

His election-night joy was quickly tempered by the real possibility his stay in Washington, D.C., could be a brief one; had his win simply been an anomaly in GOP-dominated Vermont?

“I got here and said, ‘Look, this might be one term. Let’s make the most of it, not just do things for soundbites,’” Leahy said.

He went on to make the most of it — for the ensuing 48 years. The unexpected became the usual; Leahy, for the most part, has been as sure a bet on election day as the sun rising in the East.

The state’s senior senator can’t help but marvel at his own staying power.

“I’ve cast over 17,000 votes,” Leahy said. “I’ve served with 20% of all the U.S. senators in the history of this country. I will

tion, he subjects it to a consistent litmus test: Would it measure up to Vermonters’ expectations and the principles imparted to him by his family?

“I felt I owed them something,” he said of his constituents.

His accomplishments, according to his office, have included:

- Four legislative achievements that bear his name — the Leahy Law (the foremost tool used in promoting human rights abroad), the Leahy War Victims Fund, the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act and the Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program.

- On the Appropriations Committee, which he now leads, he’s steered billions of dollars in federal investments to Vermont — most recently, in the drafting of COVID relief bills. He also helped secure more than \$500 million to help Vermont rebuild following Tropical Storm Irene.

- Directing seed funding and capital for the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies incubator to help entrepreneurs build their

*“Vermonters could have tossed me out at any time. I’m glad they didn’t.”*

— Sen. Patrick Leahy



**NEWLY ELECTED U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy, who overcame long odds to succeed incumbent Sen. George Aiken, is sworn in by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller on Jan. 3, 1975 — the first day of his 48 years in office.**

Courtesy of Sen. Patrick Leahy’s office

have served longer than any senator who walked out of (the Capitol Building). A couple served longer, but they died in office.”

But longevity by itself doesn’t matter if you can’t get things done while in office. And as Leahy serves out the final few months of his senatorial career, he has quite a list of accomplishments to take with him when he retires to his home state. He told a reporter that before introducing legisla-

companies and employ Vermonters, and organized the annual Vermont Women’s Economic Opportunity Conference, where more than 3,000 Vermont women have gathered to learn and hone skills for business success.

- Securing annual funding for Lake Champlain cleanup and for a wide range of other Vermont priorities, including to address the opioid epidemic, restorative justice initiatives and the Vermont



**SEN. PATRICK LEAHY, shown with his wife Marcelle at a Red Cross dinner in June 1997, recruits Princess Diana as an ally in his effort to ban land mines.**

Courtesy of Sen. Patrick Leahy’s office

dairy industry.

- Advocating for the addition of more than 140,000 acres to the Green Mountain National Forest.

- Authoring the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, and the Innocence Protection Act — death penalty reform legislation that has widened the use of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent and convict the guilty.

- Participating in the confirmation hearing of every justice currently serving on the U.S. Supreme Court.

- Working with Democratic and Republican administrations to change the Cold War policies toward Cuba as well as restore diplomatic relations and support post-war legacy programs in Vietnam.

## THE LEAHY LAW

Leahy singled out some of his favorite legislative legacies, including passage of The Leahy Law, which bars U.S. foreign aid to units of foreign militaries that violate the rights of their citizens.

“A number of times, these countries have applied for more aid, and it’s been said, ‘We have to ‘Leahy’ that first,’” he said proudly.

He’s very proud of what’s now known as “The Leahy War Victims Fund,” used by USAID throughout the world to help civilians maimed by landmines and other weapons of war. Its genesis dates to 1989 and a trip Leahy made to southeast Asia.

“It was after something I observed while landing at a field hospital in a helicopter in the middle of a jungle during a civil war,” re-

counted. “Seeing a 12-year-old child with one leg; he had stepped on a landmine.”

Leahy said he asked the boy if he knew which country was responsible for laying the landmine.

“I don’t think he knew which country was which, he just knew his life was basically ruined as a farmer in the jungle,” he said.

In addition to imparting much-needed help to civilians who have suffered debilitating injuries from landmines, the Leahy War Victims Fund helped thaw U.S. relations with Vietnam, the senior senator noted.

He recalled a subsequent trip to Vietnam during which wheelchairs were given out to people with war-related disabilities. Leahy remembers encountering, at one of their appearances, a Vietnamese national — whose legs had been taken by a landmine — who stared vindictively at the senator, initially seeing him as a leader of the country responsible for his injuries.

Leahy said he went over to the man, took him in his arms, and placed him in one of the wheelchairs.

“I started to stand up, and he grabbed my shirt, pulled me down, and kissed me,” Leahy recalled, still touched by the incident.

Leahy has long been part of a worldwide effort to ban the production, use and proliferation of landmines. In 1992, he sponsored an amendment to stop U.S. exports of anti-personnel landmines. In 1993, an amendment to extend the ban passed the Senate 100-0, and President Bill Clinton adopted it as a permanent U.S. policy in 1997.

“There are no good endings with landmines,” he said.

Patrick and Marcelle Leahy have made several more trips to Vietnam during the past three decades, visiting hospital patients who continue to be maimed by unexploded ordinance and rendered deathly ill by Agent Orange, a chemical herbicide and defoliant that U.S. forces spread liberally across the jungles of that Asian nation during the 10-year war.

## HELPING FARMERS

Leahy is also pleased to have been part of bipartisan congressional coalitions that have passed meaningful agricultural legislation, including the Organic Foods Production Act that was made part of the 1990 Farm Bill. This bill, which finally produced credible federal standards for organic farming, occurred while Leahy chaired the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Organic farming is now an annual \$55 billion-\$65 billion industry, Leahy noted.

“Those (proposed standards) had always been opposed until I was chair, because they said (organic farming) was a nothing, worthless industry,” he said.

Leahy isn’t spending his final weeks in office taking farewell bows. He’s Senate President pro tem and is vice chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, so he continues to keep a busy legisla-



# Leahy retires

(Continued from Page 14)  
 tive schedule until he leaves office on Jan. 3, 2023. He'd like to see Congress pass meaningful legislation on climate change, voting rights and a number of other issues before he retires, but doesn't believe the parties will be able to reach bipartisan agreement.

"We're dealing with the most divided House and Senate that I've seen in 48 years," he lamented.

## BACKING UKRAINE

Leahy said support for Ukraine in its resistance to invading Russian forces is one area where there appears to be widespread support. He praised President Joe Biden for his leadership on that issue.

"I think he's done a superb job putting the NATO allies together," he said. "I've had so many of our allies around the world tell me Trump had done everything possible to alienate the members of the NATO coalition... I have these inter-parliamentary meetings all the time, and they go out

of their way to say that Joe Biden has been perfect, because he has credibility. He talks to them all the time. You don't read about it in the papers, but he keeps up their confidence, and vice versa."

He noted former President Donald Trump has announced his bid to regain the presidency in 2024 and believes his election would be a setback for the U.S. and its relations with other nations — including Ukraine. He recalled Trump's praise of Vladimir Putin, who initiated the Ukraine invasion.

"I know Donald Trump said he thought Putin was a 'genius,' but most of us — Republicans and Democrats alike — think he's a war criminal," Leahy said.

He's impressed by what has become an international resolve to punish Russia for its incursion.

"Vladimir Putin never thought the NATO alliance could have come together like this," Leahy said. "It was one of the big mistakes Putin made; the other was

that the Ukrainians wouldn't fight."

## MORE TIME IN VERMONT

Leahy said he and his family decided three years ago this would be his final term. It was time to spend more time in Vermont, with friends and family, and let someone else take his place.

He drew a lot of kind words and testimonials after delivering his retirement speech on Nov. 15, 2021.

Among those saluting Leahy was Republican Vermont Gov. Phil Scott.

"The Senator has been an incredible champion for Vermonters, and his leadership and experience has ensured our state is well represented in Congress," he said. "It is thanks to him, and the funding he's secured for our state, that Vermont is in a position to come out of this pandemic stronger than before and tackle big challenges from broadband and infrastructure to the opioid crisis. We are indebted to him."

Leahy's Vermont colleague, Independent U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, also offered praise.

"He has been a towering figure as chairman of the Agriculture Committee, the Judiciary Committee, and the Appropriations Committee," he said. "He leaves a unique legacy that will be impossible to match."

And this, from the man who will take Leahy's place — Vermont Congressman Peter Welch:

"Patrick's life as our longest-serving senator has been dedicated to serving Vermont, always putting Vermonters and their values and aspirations first," the Democrat said. "Patrick loves Vermont, and Vermonters love Patrick. While Patrick has been a



**U.S. SEN. PATRICK LEAHY** speaks in October 2021 at the ceremonial groundbreaking of a 5-Megawatt solar farm off South Street Extension in Middlebury that will deliver renewable energy to Middlebury College. Reporter photo/John S. McCright

giant in the U.S. Senate, consulted by presidents and world leaders, he is always happiest on his farm in Middlesex and being with his fellow Vermonters. He never left his roots in Montpelier or the values of his parents, who instilled decency, honesty, and service."

Leahy will soon be cleaning out

his D.C. office. The two framed newspaper stories that misjudged his appeal and staying power will of course come with him.

"I never expected to be here for eight terms. Vermonters could have tossed me out at any time," he said.

"I'm glad they didn't."



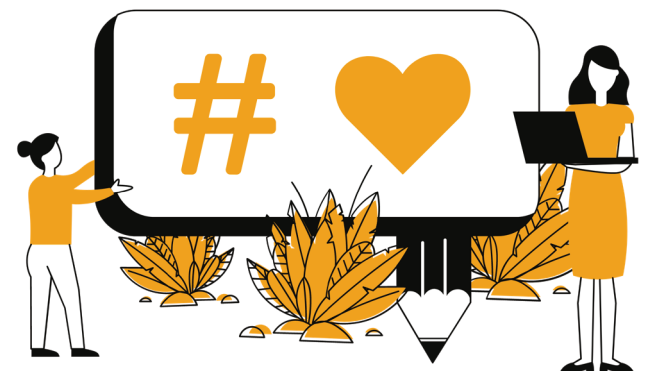
**PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN** and Sen. Patrick Leahy, both Irish-American politicians, shake hands on St. Patrick's Day in 1988. Sen. Edward Kennedy, who also had deep Irish roots, looks on in the background. Courtesy of Sen. Patrick Leahy's office



**VERMONT DEMOCRAT PATRICK Leahy** has forged alliances on both sides of the aisle during a 48-year career in the U.S. Senate. Here he's seen chatting with Senate icons, from left, Republicans Alan Simpson and Bob Dole, Leahy, Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Charles Mathias in 1975.

Courtesy of Sen. Patrick Leahy's office

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# Mim's Photos

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



E-mail  
[ads@brandonreporter.com](mailto:ads@brandonreporter.com)  
if you can identify someone in  
these photos.  
Or call us at 247-8080

## Recognized



Sue Wetmore recognized this woman as Kim, though she couldn't remember her last name. She was a jeweler and had a shop on Center St.

Luanne Merkert also recognized Kym Hoerr who owned Kym-Je jewelers which was located where the Neshobe Cafe is in the Brandon Inn back in the 80s. She and her partner Jean lived in Florence.



Madine Reed wrote in to identify her parents, Dorothy and Raymond Brown of Goshen. The picture was taken in Goshen on the occasion of their 40th Anniversary. Dot and Ray were married by Rev. Bowen Shattuck at the 'original' Congregational Parsonage on Park St. in Brandon January 30, 1930. They went on to have nine children.



# Crossword

**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Product or \_\_\_ (abbr.)
4. Zodiac sign
9. S. China seaport
14. Former OSS
15. Early English printer
16. Aphid genus
17. General's assistant (abbr.)
18. Aussies
20. Dissuades
22. Make law
23. Drench
24. Soak in a liquid
28. Male child
29. It cools your home
30. Small constellation
31. To call (archaic)
33. Explores beneath the Earth
37. Commercial
38. W. hemisphere organization
39. You can find it in a can
41. "Land of the free"
42. 36 inches
43. Footwear
44. Challenges
46. They hold things together
49. Of I
50. Partner to flow
51. Not connected by kinship
55. Worries
58. Garlic mayonnaise
59. A way to take by force
60. Legendary English rockers
64. Your consciousness of your own identity
65. Fencing swords
66. Silly
67. Actor DiCaprio
68. Encircles with a belt
69. Mails a message
70. Longing

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Horse mackerels
2. It can be viral
3. Prickly plants
4. Consciousness
5. Type of sarcoma
6. Tax collector
7. Sun up in New York
8. One who scorches
9. Influential psychotherapist
10. Situated at an apex
11. Communicative
12. Forearm nerve
13. Former CIA
19. Folk singer DiFranco
21. Employee stock ownership plan
24. Large-scale
25. School environment
26. Remove
27. Male parents
31. Large rodent
32. Weighed down
34. Held tightly
35. \_\_\_ route: going there
36. Explains again
40. Exclamation of surprise
41. Courteously
45. Lying down
47. Judge
48. Forcefully took
52. Loosely compacted sediment
53. High mountain
54. Portable conical tents
56. Cereal grass
57. Dining utensil
59. Thoughtful
60. Helps you walk
61. Indicates near
62. Midway between northeast and east
63. Local area network

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	
14				15						16					
17				18						19					
20			21					22							
23						24	25						26	27	
			28					29				30			
31	32							33		34	35	36		37	
38				39	40								41		
42				43						44	45				
46		47	48				49			50					
51					52	53	54				55			56	57
			58							59					
60	61							62	63					64	
65							66							67	
68							69							70	

# 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.

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

Level: Intermediate

**PUZZLE SOLUTIONS**

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

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

## Help RCHS Exceed Our \$35,000 Year End Matching Challenge

Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS) has a fabulous opportunity to end 2022 with an amazing challenge! A few very generous supporters have offered to donate \$35,000 to RCHS if the community will match it by December 31st, 2022. We are half way through the month and are only a quarter of the way to our goal. Help us gain some momentum, ride the wave, and make this goal! We have 1 week left and we know, with your help, we can reach it! Your donation will go twice as far and help twice as many animals. If you would like to donate, check out our website at [rchsvt.org](http://rchsvt.org), or, you can send a check to RCHS at 765 Stevens Road, Pittsford, VT 05763 and note "Year End Matching Challenge" in the memo line. For any questions, please contact Jane at [Jane@RCHSVT.org](mailto:Jane@RCHSVT.org) or 802.483.9171 ext. 208. Thank you for being part of this wonderful opportunity to help the animals!

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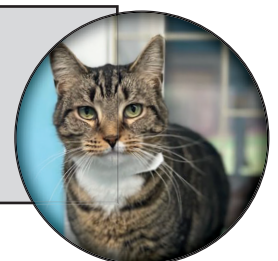


**MEET RADCLIFF - 2.5-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE. ARABIAN VILLAGE DOG. TAN.**

He thrives on consistency and strong leadership and would do best with someone who can work with him often and keep his brain engaged. Radcliff is currently being fostered by a local trainer and is doing incredibly well in a home environment and lots of socialization. He is an intelligent boy who loves to learn, He is very affectionate, and loves pets and chest scratches. He also loves toys and chasing tennis balls. He has been gaining confidence in meeting and interacting with different people. He is pretty food-motivated making training much easier. He is very gentle with taking treats and reading other dogs' body language. Radcliff loves other dogs, but prefers dogs his size over smaller ones, and would do best in a home without cats. He loves to go for hikes, but he isn't as high-energy as we first thought. He tucks out and will nap for a while after. So, he won't need a super active home, but one with regular exercise. Radcliff bonds really well with his people, and is patiently waiting for his family to come to meet him.

**MEET PIPER - 1.5-YEAR-OLD. SPAYED FEMALE. DOMESTIC SHORT HAIR. BROWN TABBY WITH WHITE.**

Piper is a quiet lady, but very affectionate. She was brought to RCHS on September 28 as a stray. She is currently in our Community Cat Room and is getting along great with all her feline friends. She loves ear scratches and has a very laid-back personality. If you are interested in meeting Piper, please call the Adoption Center at 802-483-6700.



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# Off the Shelf

New books at the Brandon Free Public Library

## Adult Fiction

### "Factory Girls" by Michelle Gallen

It's the summer of 1994. Maeve Murray is seeking a way out of her small Irish town, so she can get away from the Troubles, away from her crowded home, the silence and sadness surrounding her sister's death, and most of all, away from the simmering violence of her divided community. Maeve takes a summer job in a local shirt factory working alongside Protestants with her best friends, kind, innocent Caroline Jackson and privileged and clever Aoife O'Neill. But getting the right exam results is only part of Maeve's problem and what seems to be a great opportunity to earn money before starting university turns out to be a crucible in which Maeve is tested in ways she may not be equipped to handle.

## Non-Fiction

### "Eat & Flourish : How Food Supports Emotional Well-Being" by Mary Beth Albright

### Did you know?

The library will be closed Friday the 23rd and Saturday the 24th, as well as the 30th and 31st for the holidays.

In this groundbreaking book, journalist Mary Beth Albright draws on new research to explain the food/mood connection. She redefines "emotional eating" based on the science, revealing how eating triggers biological responses that affect humans' emotional states both immediately and long-term. Readers will come away knowing how certain foods help reduce the inflammation that can harm mental health, the critical relationship between the microbiome and the brain, which vitamins help restore the body during intensely emotional times, and how to develop a healthful eating pattern for life—with 30-day kickoff plan included.

### "A Dog's Devotion : True Adventures Of A K9 Search And Rescue Team"

by Suzanne Elshul

Beginning with the landslide tragedy in Oso, Washington in 2014, "A Dog's Devotion" tells the story of Labrador Retriever, Keb, who was 4 at the time, Suzanne, her trainer, and teammate Guy. In this book, readers immediately find themselves on the ground in the cold mud of the Oso Landslide Disaster on the desperate search for the remains of over forty lost souls. In subsequent chapters, readers will accompany the k9 and her humans as they are brought in by helicopter to search high snowfields on Mount Rainier, or as they traverse steep, forested slopes searching for the clandestine grave of murder victims.

## DVDs:

### Bros

Billy Eichner stars in this rom-com between two New York City commitment phobes and their up and down relationship.

### Amsterdam

Christian Bale and Margo Robbie star in this murder mystery loosely based around the 1933 plot to overthrow President Roosevelt.

# Snowy roads and utility poles make for a bad combo

## Brandon Police Report

BRANDON — The week began for Brandon Police with an early morning domestic assault at a home on Union Street on Dec. 12. A juvenile had threatened family members with a knife and attempted to strangle a family member by placing his hand around their neck.

The juvenile, whose name is not being released due to his age, was released on a citation for multiple offenses, including Domestic Assault, and is scheduled to appear at a later date in the Rutland County Superior Court-Family Division.

The following day Otter Valley Union High School contacted Brandon Police to request a welfare check on two students residing on Wyman Road who had not been attending school for an extended period of time. Upon talking with their parent, police were told that her children would not be returning to the school due to ongoing issues they've had there, and that she would be making other arrangements for her children going forward.

In the evening on Dec. 14, police were called by Vermont State Police to help with locating a youth who had run away from home. The juvenile later returned home and was safe.

After a relatively quiet Dec. 15, police received a complaint on Dec. 16 of a theft of snow tires from a vehicle, as well as a hunting blind that was located behind one of the apartment buildings on Mulcahy Drive. It is not known at this time as if the same suspects took both items or if the incidents are related.

At around 4 p.m. the same day a motorist crashed into a utility pole on North Street thanks to a snowy road and excessive speed, according to police. Residents in the vicinity lost power temporarily due to the damaged utility pole. Officers stayed on scene to provide traffic control as Green Mountain Power restored power. There were no injuries.

Soon after 7 p.m. the same day police assisted Pittsford Police with a male standing in the middle of Route 7 in Pittsford blocking emergency vehicles and traffic and threatening to do self-mutilation.

Two separate reports of a domestic disturbance came into the station on Dec. 17. In the first, an argument between a husband and wife, which, upon police investigation, did not merit a police response at that time. The second came from a residence on River Street where previous disturbances have occurred. The disturbance was only verbal in-nature, so police cleared the scene after determining that no law enforcement involvement was

necessary

During Brandon's Reverse Parade on the evening of Dec. 18, an officer witnessed a traffic flagger struck by a vehicle traveling at a low speed at the intersection of Franklin Street and High Street. The traffic flagger declined rescue evaluation and did not wish to pursue any charges against the operator of the vehicle. The vehicle driver was stopped and issued multiple tickets.

In other activity, Brandon Police:

### ON DEC. 12

- Responded to a domestic assault on Union Street.
- Enforced speed on Grove Street, stopping three operators and issuing two tickets.
- Made multiple traffic stops on Grove Street for speeding, excessive lights, and expired registration. Multiple tickets were issued for speeding, driving without a license, and possessing an open container of alcohol.

### ON DEC. 13

- Checked on the welfare of two students at a Wyman Road residence.
- Received a report of a handgun stolen from a vehicle sometime over the past three weeks.
- Took fingerprints for employment.
- Received a call from Otter Valley Union High School regarding two incidents involving students.
- Investigated a report of a suspicious vehicle in front of the Jiffy Mart on Grove St.

### ON DEC. 14

- Conducted a property watch on Fox Road at the request of a homeowner.
- Took fingerprints for a teaching license, respiratory therapist and a substitute teacher.
- Enforced traffic rules on Center Street.
- Assisted the Vermont State Police in locating a runaway.

### ON DEC. 15

- Assisted Middlebury Police in locating a subject on Wood Lane concerning an investigation.
- Investigated a report of a landlord/tenant dispute on North Street.
- Investigated a possible violation of a Restraining Order.

### ON DEC. 16

(See Police report, Page 19)

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## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

### LEO July 23 - Aug. 23

Leo, practicality is your middle name. The next few days you may be focused on whimsy and imagination. It could be all the feelings the holidays are bringing up.

### CAPRICORN Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

Have you been plotting a move, Capricorn? Make sure your real estate research is up-to-date and you're ready to take the plunge. This move may be a big one.

### VIRGO Aug. 24 - Sept. 22

Planetary energies could be affecting those around you and their reception to your ideas, Virgo. Remain patient that things will tip in your favor after some time has passed.

### AQUARIUS Jan. 21 - Feb. 18

Aquarius, perhaps you have made a few big purchases lately and feel like your budget has taken a hit? Add up receipts and you may find it's not as bad as you had thought.

### ARIES March 21 - April 20

Cleaning and organizing can wait for another week, Aries. This week you should focus on having fun with your family and friends. Enjoy the respite from work.

### PISCES Feb. 19 - March 20

This is a good time for a change of perspective, Pisces. Maybe you have been looking at things all the wrong way. Switch things up.

### TAURUS April 21 - May 21

Taurus, work is on your brain, but it could be because you're wired to focus on getting things done. Work is important, but remember to make time for other things as well.

### LIBRA Sept. 23 - Oct. 23

Your thoughts this week are about setting goals for the future, Libra. Not that you haven't already been doing your share of planning, but now you're firming up those plans.

### SCORPIO Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

Scorpio, issues with your professional life may be on your mind. It could be time to make a major change in the days to come. Are you ready to move in a new direction?

### GEMINI May 22 - June 21

Your bank account may not be as healthy as it could be, Gemini. Tuck those credit cards away and cut back on purchases for the time being to set things straight.

### SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

New responsibilities have left little time to spend with your significant other, Sagittarius. Carve out moments to snuggle if you cannot get out to a romantic meal or movie.

### CANCER June 22 - July 22

You have been feeling less motivated of late, Cancer. That is likely due to the breakneck speed that you have been going for some time. Slow down and enjoy the break.



# Police report

(Continued from Page 18)

- Received a complaint of thefts on Mulcahy Drive.
- Assisted at the scene of a car versus telephone pole accident with traffic control on North Street.
- Responded to a single-car accident on North St.
- Assisted the Pittsford Police Department with a male standing in the middle of the roadway on Route 7.

## ON DEC. 17

- Responded to a report of a domestic disturbance on Grove Street.
- Enforced traffic in the area of Conant Square and stopped one ve-

hicle for a moving violation.

- Stopped a vehicle for speeding in Conant Square and issued a warning.
- Assisted Brandon Area Rescue Squad on Union Street with transporting an individual.
- Patrolled Center Street on foot patrol.
- Enforced the speed limit on Franklin Street by Miller and Ketcham Funeral Home.
- Responded to a domestic disturbance at a re-occurring location at a residence on River Street.

## ON DEC. 18

- Made routine business checks at Hawk Hill Guns and Ammo on

Franklin Street, Brandon Discount Liquor in Conant Square, Union Street Grocery on Union Street and Heritage Family Credit Union on Franklin Street.

- Assisted with a child custody exchange at the Brandon Police Department.
- Directed traffic for the Brandon Reverse Parade on Park Street.
- Addressed an accident on Franklin Street/High Street.
- Responded to a report of a larceny from a building on New Road. Case is under investigation.



**VOLUNTEERS HELPING NEIGHBORS** at the Pittsford Food Shelf this last week were Kathy Parker, Nancy Boynton, Sarah Harrington, Maureen Dobart, Dave Rosato, John Gray, Kathy Short-sleeves. Not pictured were Jackie Calvert, Bonnie Rollins, Betsy Morgan and Kris Cady.

## Pittsford Food Shelf: Neighbors helping neighbors

**BY CAROLYN VAN VLECK**  
PITTSFORD — After years of orchestrating details at the Pittsford Food Shelf, Pastor Joel Tate has turned the reins of over to Sarah Harrington. As the director's position is part-time, Harrington, whose children are now all in school, is excited to get to work, she said.

The food shelf currently sees about 50–60 recipients per month made up of seniors, singles and families. The PFS has noted a drop-off in people receiving the food since the pandemic and is hoping that anyone in need reach out for assistance.

The way this food shelf works is that a recipient is handed a sheet to fill out which tells them what foods they can choose from the shelves. A volunteer will help them shop, if needed. Anyone can come in to shop for the food. All that is needed is a proof of

residence (a utility bill, perhaps) and the amount of food is dependent on how many one has in their household. The process is not income-based, so there are no worries about providing information on one's wages.

There are items like pet food, dish soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, and personal bathroom items that are always needed. Boxes located around Pittsford are available where people can drop off food and other items as donations.

The food comes from a variety of places, including local farmers who donate produce and eggs, when available; local food manufacturers like Westminster Crackers, Olivia Croutons often donate boxes of food; and the federal government sends commodities like frozen and canned foods from their center in Barre. Meats are purchased by

the food shelf itself. The federal food drop-offs happen the first Wednesday of every month.

The Pittsford Food Shelf was started in the town's Congregational Church by Dick and Betty Pocock in 1984. It was moved to its current location as an Eagle Scout Project. A newly elected Board of Directors consisting of Chair Melanie Parker, Treasurer Dan Shea, and board members Nancy Eddy, Elizabeth Gray and Stacey Elliott.

The Pittsford Food Shelf is open to the townspeople of Pittsford, Florence, Proctor and Chittenden.

The PFS always accepts food. If you bring food and the food shelf isn't open, you can walk through Keith's and leave it next to the gate inside the building.

For more information, contact: Director@pittsfordfoodshelf.org; or call 802-725-0220.

# Westside board OKs fire dept. budget hike

**BY ANGELO LYNN**

WEST RUTLAND — In discussions about the town's upcoming 2023–24 fiscal year budget, the West Rutland selectboard has been working its way through departmental budgets, including the line item for the town's fire department and the town's contract with the Rutland County sheriff David Fox.

In its Dec. 12 meeting, Fire Chief Michael Skaza and Assistant Fire Chief Tom Lacz were there to present a budget that was 5.8% higher than the previous year's spending. That increase came from an extra \$9,000 in personal protective equipment, and increasing truck savings by \$5,000. The chiefs said that the department's existing protective gear was 20 years old and at \$3,000 per each set, the department hoped to add three sets annually over the next few years until the crew's equipment was fully updated.

The overall fire department budget was up \$12,355, with most line items level-funded.

Under longer-term capital equipment needs, the department is asking for the replacement of vehicle extrication tools, at about \$70,000, as their equipment is 25 years old and is, they said, "unreliable and unserviceable." Also under capital equipment, the department requested \$29,000 to replace their base radio and a radio repeater, at \$15,000, to "ensure reliable communications during at emergency." Both systems are over 20 years old.

After discussion, the selectboard unanimously approved a motion by selectman Chet Brown to pur-

chase the radio gear as soon as possible "as it will probably take eight months to deliver." The selectboard will also being to demo extrication tools to purchase at a later date.

Under the sheriff's budget, Sheriff Fox asked for a 4% increase, which would bring the total request to \$104,416, for 40 hours of coverage per week. Because of a current staffing shortage, however, the sheriff will be billing the town only for the hours provided (which may be below 40) until he can resolve staffing issues. The sheriff and selectboard also discussed the heavy truck traffic on Whipple Hollow Road and how to address it, and noted that OMYA is no longer funding any patrol in West Rutland, though it continues to do so in Pittsford.

In other business the selectboard:

- Approved participating in a tri-town recreational path grant application with Proctor and Pittsford that would create a bike loop between the communities for town recreation as well as creating a tourism asset for the area. The town's match would be 1/3 of the \$10,000 application.

- Heard from the town manager on several issues, including that the town has corrected safety issues recommended by VOSHA, which reduced fines to \$5,700; hired Jacob Crockett for the highway crew to begin in January; learned the town was writing grants for a culvert replacement on Whipple Hollow and a mural on Marble Street, and that the town was purchasing chairs and tables from Sweet Caroline's for the auditorium.

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## BRANDON REPORTER

## Sports

## Snowbowl gets new logo, improvements

BY VICTORIA GAITHER

It's out with the old and in with the new this ski season at Middlebury Snowbowl, located on Route 125 in Hancock.

The Snow Bowl has a new logo, new snowmakers, and new behind-the-scenes improvements that will make the ski experience more enjoyable. Plus, a target opening date of Dec. 14, if weather permits.

The new logo is one of the first things skiers and riders might notice at the Snowbowl.

No longer will they see the original SB initial design but rather a fresher-looking snowflake design that connects the Snowbowl and Rikert Outdoor Center — both owned by Middlebury College (see new logo, right).

“The new design offers a fresh

look that also reflects the reputation of both locations as excellent centers for skiing and winter recreation,” said Sarah Ray, the director of media relations at Middlebury College.

Even before the first snow falls, much goes on behind the scenes to get things ready for skiers and riders.

“We replaced some snowmaking pipe, added new rental equipment, and, probably most significantly, re-branded the ski area with a new logo and refreshed messaging,” said Mike Hussey, the manager of the Snowbowl.

Hussey also discussed snowmakers' importance: “As with all ski areas in the east, and in reality, the country, snowmaking is what keeps the industry going. Without

it, we would only be able to operate a fraction of the days that we do,” he said.

Before taking the job as the Snow Bowl manager five years ago, Hussey was the manager of the Rikert Outdoor Center, a sister area two miles down the road also owned by Middlebury College.

Hussey has been around snow for a while and clearly understands besides snow, the power of having a great crew is the ultimate ingredient in the success of the Snowbowl.

Hussey said, “We have a great crew that is a mix of longtime employees and new folks. They are good-natured, dedicated, hard-working people that value the small ski area family feel of the work environment.”

To listen to Hussey, you can tell

he isn't just paying lip service to how he feels about his crew, and new snowmaker Brian Hughes agreed: “Mike is our cheerleader! He always says you can do this or that. The thing about this mountain is it's like winning the lottery.”

Hughes has over 30 years of snowmaking experience in Vermont (most recently working at Killington Resort) and has a popular snow report show on Instagram. He is new to the Snowbowl crew this year.

“It feels like family here. When I first got out of my car and stepped foot on this mountain. I said, ‘I'm in.’”

Now, Hughes is the right-hand man of his immediate boss, Ryan McNulty, who oversees a crew of 12 snowmakers on the mountain.

“Brian brings positive energy to the crew explained,” McNulty said of Hughes.

Brayden Rabideau, is also a new snowmaker at the Snowbowl. With a combination of seasoned snowmakers and two new faces, McNulty is stoked about the season.

But for the veteran, it's about putting smiles on the faces of skiers and riders.

The work of the snowmaking team doesn't go unnoticed by Holmes Jacobs, the President of the Middlebury Ski Club and an active member in the Middlebury community.

“They work all night and all day in frigid temperatures, carpeting the mountain with snow so that the rest of us can ski and ride the winter away with smiles on our faces. Were it not for the snowmakers and snow groomers, there would be no Snowbowl,” said Jacobs.

If the snowmakers are the rock stars of the mountain, the Middlebury ski community adds the goodness.

Jacobs explained, “The people here are amazing! Everyone here,



## Neshobe Golf Course is a winter wonderland

BY GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON—During the summer months, people come from all over to play the 18-hole course at the Neshobe Golf Club in Brandon. It's a great place to enjoy a sunny day on the links. But the fun doesn't stop once the temperature drops and the leaves are off the trees. There's still plenty to do there when there's snow on the

ground.

For those who crave a round of golf in the off season, Neshobe offers two indoor simulators that provide a close approximation of the outdoor game. Golfers use real clubs to hit real balls into a screen onto which an image of a famous golf course has been projected. Computer technology is able to gauge the speed and trajectory of

the ball to show its flight and landing on screen. Birdies and bogies are plentiful and the golfers' skills are on full display. An 18-hole round can be played in an hour or two. Reservations are needed for tee times.

Outside, the club allows the public to use its extensive grounds for winter recreation. There are hills for sledding, miles of groomed trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, and plenty of space to let your dog frolic off-leash (please pick up after your dog). The sledding hill is great for all ages, it has no obstacles and has a long runout. Bring the kids out for some fun. All this outdoor recreation is at no charge.

General Manager Matt Wilson is excited to flood the parking lot again to create an ice rink. This has been done the past few years in conjunction with the Brandon Recreation department. Anyone who'd like to volunteer to help create and maintain a rink should give Wilson or the Brandon Rec a call. Someone interested in creating a homemade Zamboni maybe?

If the long Vermont winter makes you stir crazy, remember you can always head over to the Neshobe Golf Club for a few hours of indoor and outdoor fun all winter long. The clubhouse is open for indoor golf, food, and beverage at scheduled times during the winter months. They even have hot chocolate! Check their website for more information.



SERENITY AND CHRISTOPHER Smith enjoy a sled ride on the grounds of the Neshobe Golf Club. Photo by George Fjeld

from the ski school to the ski patrol, lift operators to snowmakers, groomers, and senior staff — all of them are on a first-name basis with most of the clientele. The richness of culture and community is beyond compare.”

Jacobs can list things that make the Snowbowl experience different from other ski resorts in Vermont. Still, Middlebury has a secret that only people who ski and ride the trails understand.

Hughes said before he became a snowmaker at the Snowbowl, “I would hear people tell stories about skiing the woods at the Snowbowl. I have walked these woods and understand now. Middlebury Snowbowl is real New England skiing.”

Hughes, now a part of a community who feels the magic at the Snowbowl, is sure hoping mother nature cooperates on Dec. 14 so everyone can mix it up in the Snowbowl.

With terrain for all levels, an extensive trail system with a 1,000-foot vertical, and short lift lines, skiers and riders can expect another memorable 2022-2023 ski season.

When asked Mike Hussey if he still gets excited about ski season, he answered, “Absolutely! This is an exciting time of the season — lots of anticipation spurred on by some early snow storms to ramp up the energy and interest.”



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## Moonlight Madness marks another successful year

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE came to Brandon for the annual Moonlight Madness promotion organized by the Chamber of Commerce. People picked up holiday gifts and visited with friends and neighbors as they went shop-hopping downtown. Jennifer Smith of Leicester was the lucky winner in the drawing for \$100 in "Brandon Green" currency.

Photo by Bernie Carr

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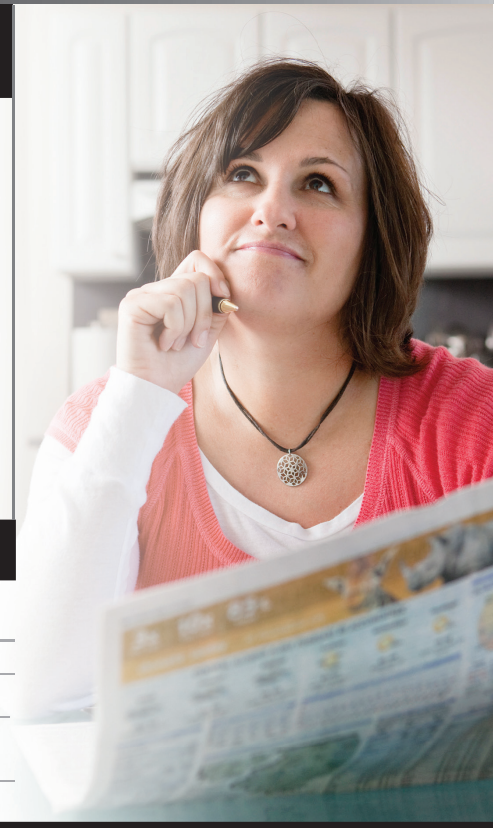
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# The Silver Bells pageant draws a crowd

BY COLLEEN WRIGHT

BRANDON — Silver Bells, a program of the Brandon Area Toy Project, held a Christmas Pageant at the Brandon Town Hall on Sunday, Dec 11. Twenty-two contestants and over 100 loyal fans filled the hall with merriment and fun. Many beautiful outfits and many truly hysterical “Ugly Christmas Sweaters” traipsed across the stage — prompting big smiles from all!

The Silver Bells pageants, coordinated by Crystal Ketcham, are geared toward joy, confidence and public service. The contestants are more like a big family, laughing backstage and encouraging each other.

There were many crowns, decorated trees, and inspiring scrapbooks filled with projects they had

completed. These pageants also support a program, Silver Bells, which delivered 284 necessity bags to elderly folks living in assisted situations this season.

One aspect of the Christmas pageant was to raise money for Operation Christmas for Troops through the Charity Ambassador award. Contestants were encouraged to raise money for OCFT to support its overseas missions.

Operation Christmas for Troops, run by Ally Brown of Brandon, mailed 175 boxes to soldiers from Vermont deployed overseas. Ainsley Gelsleighter raised \$355 for this project and won the title of Charity Ambassador.

Donna Towler of Rutland was chosen as the Overall Queen, with her inspiring speech about taking control of your life, and also wear-

ing a spectacular sequined outfit! The following crowns were awarded:

- Best Portfolio- Deb Hough
- Most Photogenic- Autumn Ketcham
- Best Attire- Gabrielle Loso
- Best Smile- Maggie Hooker
- Best Personality- Donna Towler
- Prettiest Hair- Tristyn Laughlin
- Prettiest Eyes- Korbin Laughlin
- Charity Ambassador- Ainsley Gelsleighter
- Christmas Queen- Gabrielle Loso
- Christmas King- Korbin Laughlin

Of those named “Princesses in Category” were: Adaleigh Wade, Ainsley Gelsleighter, Aubree



**SOPHIA QUENNEVILLE WON** in the "Princess Category." With her are her cousin Stella Markowski and mother Emily Ohlinger.

Photos by Erica Bovey



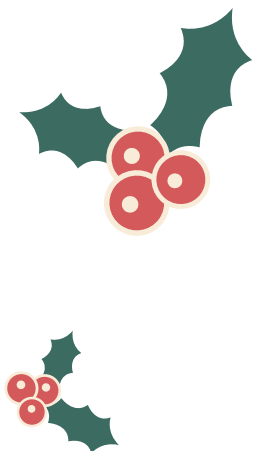
**KORBIN LAUGHLIN RECEIVES** his crown for being King of his age group from Miss Vermont Collegiate Jamisyn Baker.



**MAGGIE HOOKER RECEIVES** her crown for "Best Smile," from from Miss Vermont High School Breanna Bovey.



**TRISTYN LAUGHLIN HOLDING** her award for "Prettiest Hair."



**LUCAS LANCOUR RECEIVES** his crown for being King of his age group from Miss Vermont Collegiate Jamisyn Baker.



**AINSLEY GELSLEIGHTER RECEIVES** her Charity Ambassador crown from Miss Vermont High School Breanna Bovey and Miss Vermont Collegiate Jamisyn Baker, while Mom Mercedes Shackett assists.

Foley, Autumn Ketcham, Tristyn Laughlin, Cameron Berenhardt, Debbie Hough; Queens in Category were Sophia Quenneville, Ivy Renaud, Junyper Kimball, Stella Markowski, Ashlynn Ketcham, Maggie Hooker, Gabrielle Loso and Donna Towler. Those named Kings in Category were: Lucas Lancour and Korbin Laughlin.

Presidential Service Awards were given toP Ashlynn Ketcham, Autumn Ketcham, Cameron Berenhardt and Gabrielle Loso.

Colleen Wright expressed many thanks to judges Miss Vermont High School 2023 Breanna Bovey, and Miss Collegiate Vermont 2023 Jamisyn Baker.



# Nifty Thrifty

(Continued from Page 1)

nior Center, Brandon Area Rescue Squad, OVUHS's new Tech Ed program, and the Friends of the Town Hall. Nifty Thrifty also gave \$6,000 toward the construction of the new gazebo in Central Park across from the Brandon Inn.

Nifty Thrifty is a volunteer-run organization that has had nine different locations around Brandon since its founding in 1975. Its current space is in the Rectory of St. Thomas Episcopal Church on Conant Square, near the Brandon Post Office. The shop moved there shortly before the pandemic, having lost its lease in the brick building that currently houses the National Bank of Middlebury and dental offices.

"We were given three months' notice and weren't sure where we were going to go," said Peterson. "I had a conversation with someone who happened to be involved with St. Thomas and she thought their rectory might be a good fit. They didn't want to rent the space to a regular business. We dovetail with their mission of helping the needy. It was a win-win."

On a recent Saturday morning, Ms. Peterson and Mary Ann Hodges, a volunteer since 2016, greeted customers in the tidy, organized space. Despite the sleet outside, several people came by to check out the offerings.

"We have a lot of regulars," said Hodges. "They know they can get a good bargain."

"The joy is in the hunt," added Peterson. "You have to show up often to get the good deals."

Someone came in to drop off a large bag of clothing and jewelry. Hodges opened it up and pulled out two stylish wool sweaters and a zippered jacket from Columbia outerwear. Both she and Peterson remarked on the high quality and good condition of the items.

"We really hope for people's best stuff," Peterson said. "We want it to sell."

"Sometimes people give us literal junk and we have to pay to dispose of it ourselves," said Hodges.

Both Peterson and Hodges made the point that just because someone might not have the money for something new doesn't mean they don't deserve something nice. If you donate,



**LAURA PETERSON (L) and Mary Ann Hodges (r) stand among the Christmas items on offer at Nifty Thrifty. Peterson is the president of the board and Hodges is one of the organization's 17 unpaid volunteers.**  
Photos by Steven Jupiter

clothing should be clean and in wearable condition. Housewares should be intact and usable. Items that stay too long on the shop's shelves often end up on the "free" bench on the porch.

Hodges joked that both the shop and its customers can be so eager for good material that jackets taken off by volunteers

have sometimes ended up accidentally tagged and sold when that volunteer went to complete a task in one of the rooms upstairs.

The shop recently received a donation of several silver brooches purchased from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. "We're offering

them at a fraction of their original price. It was a very generous donation from a local resident," said Peterson.

Peterson noted, though, that as important as they may be, donations are only half the equation: "We love people to donate, but we always need people to buy things too!"

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