

# The Brandon • Pittsford • Proctor • West Rutland • Lake Dunmore • Leicester • Whiting • Sudbury • Goshen REPORTER

A community supported newspaper

Vol. 28, No. 8

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

\$1



## BRANDON IDOL

Brandon Idol went Country on Saturday night. From classics to contemporary, the contestants gave it their Nashville best.

PG. 2

## BARN OPERA

Brandon's BARN OPERA is having a banner year and it's only February. Read about the company's performance in Montpelier and some big new developments they have in store.

PG. 9

## ENERGY COMMITTEE

Brandon Energy Committee shares responses from candidates for Brandon Selectboard regarding energy policy. See where the candidates fall on these issues.

PG. 7



PG. 10

## OUTSTANDING WOMEN

Patty Moore and Crystal Eastman-Ketcham were recognized as Outstanding Women in Vermont by Hannaford Supermarkets and WOKO 98.9 FM. Both have devoted enormous amounts of time and energy to making Brandon a better place for everyone.

PG. 14

## CAR ACCIDENT

Brandon Fire Department extinguished a flaming car on Route 7. No injuries reported.

PG. 23



## OVUU school board addresses gender and privacy at crowded meeting

BY GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON- A crowd of about 40 parents, students and citizens swamped the Otter Valley Library for the February 15th meeting of the OVUU school board to discuss gender identity and privacy issues in the school bathrooms and locker rooms.

OV principal, Michael Ruppel, gave The Reporter the following statement about the events leading up to the board meeting:

"It is our understanding of state guidance and administrative policy that students have the right to use gender-specific facilities like locker rooms and bathrooms consistent with their gender identity. At least one transgender student approached us and indicated that they wanted to assert this right and use the changing

(See OVUU, Page 3)

## Brandon Library gets by with a little help from its Friends

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—When you walk in the doors of the Brandon Free Public Library (BFPL), you see the spectacle of the place. You see the librarians and the books and the resources—the complex public theater that lets you know you're in a library. What

(See Brandon Library, Page 15)



**BRANDON LIBRARY PRESIDENT David Roberts receives a check for \$10,000 from Friends President Sue Wetmore. The Friends of Brandon Library have pledged \$50,000 toward the library's planned renovation. This is the second \$10,000 installment.**

Photo by Steven Jupiter



**THREE "GENERATIONS" OF ownership in front of Wood's Market in Brandon. From L to R: Clara Wulfkuhle, Dan Wulfkuhle, Elyse Wulfkuhle, Theo Wulfkuhle, Sally Wood, Ezra Satz, Courtney Satz, and Emmet Satz. The Wulfkuhles are the newest owners of the beloved Brandon institution. They will open the market on May 6.**

Photo by Steven Jupiter

## A NEW CROP GROWS AT WOOD'S MARKET

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Few local businesses have generated the devout loyalty that Wood's Market has enjoyed over the 100+ years of its various incarnations. From its earliest days as a lakeside retreat with cabins and a small vegetable stand to its more recent iteration as a large-scale farm operation specializing in flowers and organic vegetables, Wood's Market has been a beloved fixture in the Brandon community.

The Wood family had owned the surrounding land for generations when Bob and Sally Wood opened the first roadside vegetable stand there in the 1970s. Bob Wood had a long career rep-

resenting Brandon in Montpelier and by the late 1990s, he was open to passing the farm to the next generation. None of his children wanted to take on the operation, but in 2000 he found an eager buyer in Jonathan Satz, a farmer living in Massachusetts who dreamed of running an organic farm of his own and who had become familiar with the Wood property during his rounds as an organic-farm inspector in Vermont.

"We were still working the land, but Bob was ready," said Sally Wood. "He must've really liked Jon because he let him move his equipment in even before the papers were signed."

(See Wood's Market, Page 24)





BETHANY WHITE SINGING "Crazy."



Photos by Kevin White FAN FAVORITE BAKER LaRock singing "Jersey Giant."

# Brandon Idol goes Country at the Town Hall

BY COLLEEN WRIGHT

BRANDON— Brandon Idol went Country and did not disappoint the packed house! Backed by the Idol Band—Ross Edmunds, Bryon Billado and Kenny Cifone—the singers brought to the stage heartbreak songs, revenge songs, and the always popular love songs!

Venus Diamondis from Rutland brought down the house with a wild version of "Before He Cheats." Bethany White conjured up images of Patsy Cline with "Crazy," and Peggy Sue Rozell rocked the house with "Red Neck Woman."

Fan favorite Baker LaRock

sang "Jersey Giant" by Tyler Childers. Ainsleigh Simons, making her first stage appearance at 10 months old, joined mama Kimberlee Simons of 2019 Idol to sing "Suds in the Bucket" by Sara Evans.

The full list of performers and songs:

Baker LaRock – "Jersey Giant" – Tyler Childers

Bethany White – "Crazy" – Patsy Cline

Gunnar Tinsman – "Nose on the Grindstone" – Tyler Childers

Irene Simons – "Heart like a Truck" – Lainey Wilson

Kimberlee and Ainsleigh Simons – "Suds in the Bucket" –

Sara Evans

Logan Shaddock – "Hell on Wheels" – Pistol Annies

Peggy Sue Rozell – "Redneck Woman" – Gretchen Wilson

Rachel Spellman – "Last Name" – Carrie Underwood

Shannon Wright – "He'll Have to Go" – Jim Reeves

Tonya Granger – "Mama's Broken Heart" – Miranda Lambert

Venus Diamondis – "Before He Cheats" – Carrie Underwood

Join us on March 11 for 50's-60's Music at the Brandon Town Hall! Elvis? The Beatles? Come and find out! Only \$5 for the best show in town!



SHANNON WRIGHT SINGING "He'll Have to Go."



VENUS DIAMONDIS SINGING "Before He Cheats."



PEGGY SUE ROZELL singing "Redneck Woman."



RACHEL SPELLMAN SINGING "Last Name."



## OVUU

*(Continued from Page 1)*

facilities consistent with their gender identity. To prevent any surprise or potential conflict, we gave a statement to our physical education classes this semester in which we reviewed this administrative policy and our expectations around kindness and inclusivity. The conversation with each class was cordial; we answered questions and encouraged students to chat with us privately if they had more questions. Soon after, we received a report that a male student was in the girls' bathroom, which we confirmed and addressed thoroughly. It is not clear to us whether those two incidents were related."

Barry Whitney, Jr. was first to speak in the public-comment portion of the meeting. He was upset that a biological male was in the locker room with his 14-year-old daughter. He voiced concerns that individuals of varying age and sex might share the same spaces for toileting, changing, and showering. Whitney said "I'm concerned that a senior male student could be in the bathroom with a 7th grade girl. The bathrooms and locker rooms do not afford enough privacy. All students need a safe and supportive space. We need to be proactive and not reactive. Otter Valley is in chaos."

Jennifer Cyr Tinsman spoke next, stating, "Privacy and safety need to be combined with social integration." She suggested the use of private stalls in the bath and locker rooms. Tinsman said, "there is a loss

of consent for others to see you in these spaces. Transgender students want alignment with how they see themselves."

Davina Currier voiced her concern that students could be accused of rape or sexual harassment because of mixed bathrooms. "Is it worth it?" she asked.

Heather Disorda was concerned that sexual harassment will become a big issue. She worried that a biological male student "could get aroused by seeing a girl until he has surgery."

Jed Byrum has 3 daughters who may go to OV. He said, "Harassment is the big issue. Kids see [transgender] in a pure way, not like adults. Let's stop adults from adding to it."

Student Amelia Whitney had a male come into the girls' lock-

er room and was fearful. "I got a petition with 200+ signatures to give to the administration. This is sad for students who are very uncomfortable."

Andrea Quesnel wants the school board to address basic student safety, stating "I don't want my 14-year-old daughter to witness male genitalia."

Sam Stone was concerned about inflammatory comments on Facebook about the classification of students using bathrooms consistent with their self-identified gender. She stated "My kids didn't know this was an issue."

Lisa Kenyon wanted to know how the school board would inform parents about their decision in this matter.

Jessica Ketcham asked "Can we just have private bathrooms?"

Alex Ramage wanted bathrooms "segregated by sex or just use the private bathroom."

Marianne Dillon commended the students who showed up to the board meeting and stated "There is nothing wrong with having male and female bathrooms."

Jed Byrum said "there is behavior that is not okay" that is not related to transgender issues.

Darlene Kelly related her daughter's comment "What's the big deal?" Darlene stated "We're repeating the history of

the gay changes years ago." Teenagers are "developmentally growing and wanting to be accepted by their peers."

Via Zoom, Naomi Malay

said "There is no evidence that transgender individuals are harassing others. Focus on harassment not sexuality."

Andrea Quesnel was glad to hear from parents whose children feel safe. Her daughter doesn't feel so.

Erin Doaner made an appeal for individual stalls in bathrooms.

OV Principal Michael Ruppel spoke next, stating "I hear community members asking for the safety of the students. I have been working hard at this since I started here last summer. We have harassment and assault policies in place. Students don't change their use of gender specific bathrooms on a daily basis." He wanted the parents and citizens to know that the process to work on this difficult issue is lengthy. "OV would benefit

from more private changing areas and bathrooms."

OVUU superintendent, Kristen Hubert, stated "Safety is the number one priority. Private spaces are needed, this is a long term priority."

Hubert related that OV administrators and counselors are meeting with representatives from the Vermont Principals Association, the Vermont Superintendents Association, and Outright Vermont, a 25-year-old organization supporting LGBTQ+ youth on Friday, February 17.

The majority of board members who were on the OVUU board in May of 2021 didn't recall when then-Superintendent Jeanne Collins wrote the administrative memo outlining the ability of students to use the bathroom of the gender they associate with. It was noted that the board was dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on OV. Chair Laurie Bertrand questioned whether this was a change in policy versus a new policy. Board member Natalie Steen commented that this administrative memo was fol-

lowing a best-practices directive from both the state and federal Education Departments.

Board member Kevin Thornton reviewed Title 9 of Vermont Statutes: Commerce & Trade and the Dear Colleague letter of 2015. He then said "There is no law, state or federal, pertaining to this topic... Now we should have a discussion. It's an opportunity for frank discussion, all on the table for the community."

Steen called for an expert opinion.

Hubert reiterated that the memo was based on state and federal "best practices."

Tinsman quoted Vermont statute §VSA4502: "An owner or operator of a place of public accommodation or an agent or employee of such owner or operator shall not, because of the race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity of any person, refuse, withhold from, or deny to that person any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of the place of public accommodation."

Soon after, there was a loud

outcry with shouting and booing. Bertrand, obviously upset, raised her voice saying "Talk to me. Be an example for the children we're trying to raise and educate."

Thornton noted the obvious contradiction "when one person's right infringes on another's rights or safety."

Susannah White commented via Zoom, "We can't put the safety issue on transgender students. It's really about sexual harassment." "We can't be unfair and harmful to the transgender students."

After Brent Scarborough commented that it's only the transgender students who are having issues, it was pointed out that there have been privacy and harassment issues in bathrooms and locker rooms for decades.

Bertrand, in concluding the meeting, said that the next opportunity for the board to address this issue will be the April meeting. Administrators will meet with other groups to discuss the issue.

Steen asked if the student body could be educated about the consequences of using the bathroom of choice. Principal Ruppel stated they must be careful when speaking to the student body as a whole and it may be better to do it in smaller groups with the counselors.

*"Harassment is the big issue. Kids see [transgender] in a pure way, not like adults. Let's stop adults from adding to it."*

— Jed Byrum, parent

*"Privacy and safety need to be combined with social integration."*

— Jennifer Cyr Tinsman

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## BRANDON REPORTER

## Editorial

## Transgender youth in the spotlight need understanding

Teenagers are faced with difficult questions each and every day. What do I wear? What should I do? Who do I hang out with? Should I go out for a sport? Can I act/should I join the drama club? What am I going to do with my life? College, a job or vocation? I feel terrible - who can I talk to? Do I like boys or girls better? Or both? How come I feel like I'm in the wrong body? These are all questions teenagers are asking everyday. Not everyone every day but someone every single day.

Three decades ago, being gay was just becoming understood and accepted. There was a lot of confusion about whether it was a choice or natural. Society was structured for heterosexuals, especially husband-and-wife couples. Gay teenagers at that time couldn't imagine getting married to a same-sex partner as they can today. Vermont led the country breaking down these barriers which we now understand to be rooted in white-male-dominated society. Almost all of us now have openly gay friends, family members, and coworkers. All the fears of how this would make our society crumble were unfounded. In fact, things are much better! For all of us!

Transgender questions are coming up now. Just like decades ago, we, as a society, are struggling with the changes. Is this real? How can

it be? As the uncle of a transgender nephew, I have grappled with the transition. Do I call them, he or she? Are they really going to have surgery? Reflecting on this event, it is clear that this individual was always identifying as a male but lacked any way to express it. To see him truly happy now gives me great joy. He's married, to a woman, and very successful.

Teenagers realizing their sexuality has always been a struggle. It is certainly somewhat less so now for our gay sons and daughters. Transgender youth are struggling and at great peril to themselves. Suicide rates are much higher among transgender youth than the general population. The difficulty with acceptance by society, most importantly their friends, parents and relatives is problematic. We, as a society, need to allow them the space and freedom to understand who they are and express their gender. I know this is hard for adults to come to terms with but we can; we have done so with other expressions of normal human sexuality. We must practice acceptance of the difficulties our teenagers are experiencing. Remember, it takes a village to raise a child.

George Fjeld



## Mocking-Bird-ing

"A TRICKSTER UNDER THE MOON, bristling his feathers, sounding as merry as a man whistling" (Excerpt from a poem by Judith Harris.) This beauty was spotted on Miller Hill in Sudbury.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

## Community Forums

## Primary care providers get advice hotline for supporting youth mental health care

BY KRISTEN FOUNTAIN/ Vt Digger

On any given day, Alexandra Bannach, a pediatrician in Newport, will have three or four patients scheduled to see her for a check-in about ongoing mental health treatment, most commonly for depression or anxiety. That's true of her three colleagues as well.

Meanwhile, about half of the annual visits with teens and pre-teens throughout the rest of her work day reveal symptoms that might result in a mental health diagnosis. The number of those cases and their severity has increased dramatically in the past half decade, she said. That led her practice team to decide last year to extend the amount of time they take with each adolescent patient.

"We just needed more time in those rooms," said Bannach, who has worked at North Country Pediatrics for 18 years. "It's not just doing a physical (exam) anymore and saying, 'you're cleared for sports.' You have to address mental health issues and with those, obviously, there's no blood tests. It's really sitting down and talking."

Until last summer, Bannach and her colleagues were largely on their own to try to meet the growing need — a daunting task, for which, until very recently, primary care residency programs provided

little to no preparation.

She educated herself and treated what she felt she could. In some cases, she would refer patients to a child psychiatrist. But those referrals frustrated her, as well as her patients, as waitlists for those appointments can range from six months to a year.

Now she calls VT CPAP.

Short for the Vermont Child Psychiatry Access Program, VT CPAP is the brainchild of Greta Spottswood, a child psychiatrist at Community Health Centers of Burlington and director for the grant-funded program.

The free service is a high-quality telephone hotline for primary care providers who see children and youth. It offers professional feedback on diagnosing, treating and finding resources for their patients with mild to moderate mental health challenges. A social worker answers the phone every weekday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and coordinates the support, which range from scheduling conversations with a child psychiatrist to sharing up-to-date information about mental health resources in the provider's community.

The need for the hotline became clear to Spottswood soon after she started her practice in Vermont in 2017 after a residency and fellowship in Boston. Within a matter of

months, her own waitlist to see patients grew to more than half a year. It was impossible for her to keep up.

Full-time equivalent pediatricians and general family practitioners outnumbered board-certified child psychiatrists in Vermont by 12 to 1 in 2018, the latest year a physician census was undertaken in those fields by the state Department of Health. The ratio may have improved since then due to a new residency program at the University of Vermont's Lerner College of Medicine, but the basic math has not.

"You can have a lot more psychiatrists and still not meet the need as we are providing care currently," she said. "We have to change the system rather than just trying to see more patients."

This is not a new idea. Similar kinds of support hotlines are offered across the country. But it is new for Vermont.

The additional resources are badly needed, Haley McGowan, a child psychiatrist at the medical center and the medical director of the Child, Adolescent and Family Unit at the state Department of Mental Health, told the House Committee on Health Care last month.

Nearly half of all youth in the (See Advice hotline, Page 8)

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# Letters to the Editor

## Should Brandon strive for "Sufficiently good?"

I have a great deal of respect for Tim Guiles's original thinking on the Select Board. However, I do not always agree with his conclusions.

His concept of finding a "sufficiently good" town manager rubs me the wrong way. First, it reminds me of my junior-high teacher's justification for being content with my first truly mediocre C grades.

It also stirs my recollection of my parents' philosophy as to some of the keys to success: that is, most tasks in life take something like '80% perspiration and 20% inspiration to be satisfying and fulfilling'. . . and that the '20% inspiration can have 80% of the impact on that result'.

I do not feel OK about "sufficiently good," even with respect to the 80% 'perspiration effort' needed from our new town manager. We need one with high integrity, a strong work ethic, strong people skills, and more. Beyond this, I believe Brandon deserves a town manager with a good dose of inspiration for where Brandon can develop and who can carry us through some potentially challenging future times.

Brandon has come a long way in the past ten years. It has become the most desirable town in Rutland County in my estimation. Much work and thought by folks like Tim and many others has made this so. I think Brandon is both unique and

uniquely positioned to become an exceptional town on even more fronts. I feel we need to take the time to find a town manager with the pragmatic skills, sensibilities, and vision for tackling unaddressed challenges in the town.

This is not to suggest our current candidates fail to fulfill these criteria. Rather, I just suggest that, unlike Tim, we avoid "sufficiently good" restaurants for the most part. We do not go out often, as we take the time to save up to go to the ones with the inspired chefs and healthiest offerings.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Emerson  
Brandon*

## Cecil Reniche-Smith will serve Brandon well

I'd like to join the strong chorus of voices supporting Cecil Reniche-Smith for a one-year position on the Brandon Select Board. Others have already commented on her intelligence, sense of fairness, extensive legal experience, open mindedness, and other traits that would be positives as a Select Board member. I would like to focus on her qualities as a person.

I met Cecil one day several years ago, shortly after The Bookstore opened. She walked in, introduced herself to Barbara, said she was new in town, and was available to volunteer at The Bookstore if they could use her. She indeed volunteered, and became so valuable that

she soon was hired as an employee. Cecil has consistently volunteered to meet various needs around town since then, including serving as Chair of our Planning Commission; along the way, she has gotten to know our town and its people quite well.

Last fall, the Brandon Free Public Library Board of Trustees actively recruited Cecil for a vacant position on our Board. As a fellow Board member, I was immediately impressed, right from the first meeting, with her keen intelligence, ability to quickly understand issues, and her willingness to jump in, take on responsibilities, and work hard. In just a few months, Cecil has become

an extremely valuable and active member of our Board. If we need something, she'll be there with high energy and enthusiasm, constantly exemplifying the strong volunteer spirit that supports Brandon.

Cecil Reniche-Smith has multiple skills and talents that would serve this town well in a governing capacity. She has a strong ethic to serve her town and has boundless energy to do so. She is also simply a really good, decent, fair, giving, open-minded, and kind person. Brandon would be well served if she were elected.

*Gary Meffe  
Brandon*

## The fallacy of sufficiency

I was perplexed by Mr. Tim Guiles's "written statement" included in your February 15, 2023 issue. While I greatly appreciate his demonstrated commitment to Brandon, I am disappointed by Mr. Guiles's embrace of "sufficiency" as a guiding concept for selecting a town manager, along with his understanding of the role he and Brandon residents play in town matters.

One definition of "sufficient" is "adequate." It can be seen as meeting minimum requirements, like making a C in a high-school or college class. In arguing for sufficiency, Mr. Guiles speaks of dentists and restaurants, analogies that baffle me. I hope my dentist got an A in all his classes, and is not just "sufficiently good," to quote Mr. Guiles. Similarly, while peanut butter and jelly make a sufficient lunch, I prefer the offerings of our fine local eateries. What is the harm if our elected officials take another few weeks to ensure they are getting an A (or at least B+) candidate? Does our select board want only a C for their efforts?

I was also concerned by Mr. Guiles's comment that the board was simply attempting to "placate" the "30-40 people attending the [February 13] meeting." Whether or not all of the "30-40 people" supported extending and improving the search process, Mr. Guiles apparently ignores Brandon citizens who were not in that room who also question the need for such haste in town-manager selection. Here, one feels a disturbing, perhaps haughty, undertone in Mr. Guiles's remarks that go beyond restating his responsibilities as an elected official and sound more like "father knows best." Revisiting his 2022 vote numbers of 466 against 396 for his opponent reveals no thundering mandate. (Brandon voter registration is around 2700.) A trifle more humility by Mr. Guiles relating to his constituents (avoiding the term "placate" for example) and better reasoning in arguing his points would be most welcome.

*Respectfully,  
Ken McFarland  
Brandon*

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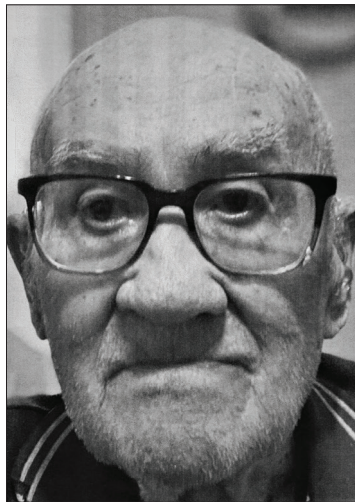


# Obituaries

## Thomas Parker, 96, Forestdale

Thomas Parker died peacefully in his sleep on February 11, 2023, while in the care of Hospice of VA. He was 96 years old, living a long and active life.

Tom was born to Henry and Laura Rita (LaFrance) Parker in their home on January 20, 1927, in Forestdale VT. He was the seventh of eight children. He had 5 brothers—Bernard, Paul, Marvin, James, and Osborn (George)—and two sisters, Madeline and Teresa. He attended school in Forestdale and graduated from Brandon High School in 1946. He played baseball, was a member of 4H and worked on a farm during his school years. Growing up during the Depression, he was a frugal man who



**THOMAS PARKER**

1950. He enlisted in the US Marine Corps in 1951 and served in the tank division during the Korean War. Upon his return from the military, he was employed by Central VT Public Service (now Green MTN Power) as a lineman. Tom and Arlene adopted two children: Janine Marie and Roderick Thomas. He was an active member of the Moose Club. He enjoyed all outdoor activities including hunting and fishing; music and dancing; and scavenging a good dump site. He loved to pitch horseshoes. He retired to his log cabin in Sudbury, VT in 1988. Upon his retirement, he and Arlene traveled in their RV, until her death on January 24, 1993. Tom traveled alone until he married Lucile Mary Chamberland on August 3, 1996. Together they traveled and finally settled in Dade City, Florida, until her death on February 20,

2014. Tom moved to Roseboro, NC in January 2016 to live with his daughter and granddaughter. Together they moved to Wake, VA in December 2019, to be closer to Sarah. He entered assisted living in November 2021 because of declining mobility.

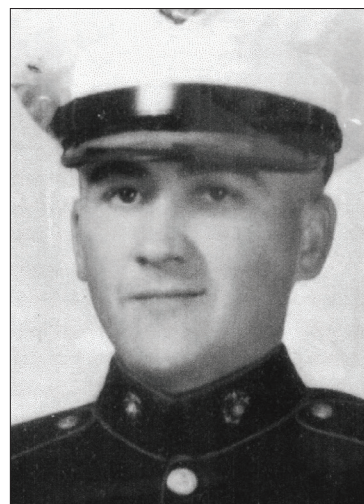
Thomas is survived by his daughter Janine Marie of Vermont; his sister Teresa Curran of Colorado; his daughter-in-law Susan Parker of Florida; 6 grandchildren: Christopher Parker, Jennifer Pabon (Rafael), Roderick Parker, Jr (Natasha), all of Florida, Joshua Parker-Moulton (Saddie) of Vermont, Sarah Parker-Moulton, and Nicole Moller, both of Virginia; great-grandchildren, great-great grandchildren, nieces, nephews and cousins also survive him.

He was predeceased by his parents, Henry and Rita Parker, 5 brothers—Bernard, Paul, Marvin, James, and Osborn Parker; a sister, Madeline Meixell; his two wives, Arlene Davis and Lucile Chamberland; and his son, Roderick Parker.

The graveside committal service and burial, with military honors, will be held at a later date, at St. Mary's Cemetery in Brandon.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made in his memory to Green Mountain Self Advocates, by check to: 2 Prospect Street #6, Montpelier, VT 05602 or online at [www.gmsavt.org](http://www.gmsavt.org).

Arrangements are under the direction of the Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon.



**THOMAS PARKER**

worked hard and saved for everything he owned. Tom married Arlene Lucille Davis on July 2,



## Legislative Report

BY STEPHANIE JEROME

### Work in the House in full swing

Work in the House is full and varied – each day I work in the Commerce Committee and receive testimony on a bill, attend the floor session to hear the bills from various committees, attend caucus meetings, discuss bills with experts, and help constituents.

This past Wednesday was Creative Economy Day, where I was pleased to sponsor a resolution to honor Vermont's Creative Sector. The creative sector is a powerful catalyst for growth and change, particularly in rural areas. Creative businesses, entrepreneurs, and organizations are essential to Vermont's cultural and economic future. In our state, creative enterprises, such as publishers, galleries, theaters, museums, creative media, specialty foods and beverages and more, provide over 9% of our jobs. In 2020, arts-and-culture industries alone contributed about \$1 billion to the state's economy. Established by the legislature in 2016, the Vermont Creative network is a statewide coalition of cultural and nonprofit organizations, artists, creative entrepreneurs, and community leaders, working together to advance the creative sector. As part of this day, I was happy to introduce opera to the Statehouse! Josh Collier performed from Les Miserables for the daily devotional, and the Barn Opera team (Josh, Nick Tocci, Helen Lyons and Claire Black) gave an outstanding performance of opera and Broadway songs for the Farmers Night concert.

#### BILLS:

Two bills were passed by the House this week and will now go on to the Senate:

H.89 – provides protections for patients and providers from prosecutions and investigations by states that banned or restricted reproductive and gender affirming care that is legal in Vermont.

H.190 – removes the requirement that a patient who is terminally ill must be a Vermont resident in order to be prescribed medication in accordance with Vermont's patient choice at end-of-life laws.

I have sponsored H.228 a bill to ensure that every Vermont high-school student has access to a financial-literacy course in their Junior or Senior Year – as

a requirement to receive a high school diploma. Students have varying levels of understanding about their current finances and need to understand how to plan for a sound financial future. I have presented the bill to the Education Committee for their consideration – there is widespread support for this course.

In my Commerce and Economic Development Committee, we have been working diligently on many different bills which affect Vermont's economy including, Captive Insurance Industry, Unemployment Insurance, Data Privacy, Vermont Employment Growth Incentives programs. In addition, we are building a Workforce Development bill to address teacher shortages, adult workforce trainings and certifications, career and technical education, health care, and more.

In the coming weeks you will continue to hear more about the major initiatives of Workforce, Housing, Childcare, Paid Financial Leave Insurance, Suicide Prevention as the bills move through the committees of jurisdiction and on to the House for votes. These bills address complex issues and require complex solutions!

#### BOARDS:

In addition to my work in the Statehouse, I serve as a Legislative Trustee to the University of Vermont Board of Trustees. I am in my second year of a six-year term. The Legislative Trustees meet weekly in the Statehouse to discuss the University and its role as an educational and economic leader for the state, and I attend four full-board meetings each year. In addition, I have recently been appointed to the Legislative Advisory Council of the New England Board of Higher Education. I am looking forward to starting this work in March.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please feel free to contact me at [sjerome@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:sjerome@leg.state.vt.us) or 802-683-8209

*Take care,  
Rep. Stephanie Jerome  
(Brandon)*

*Vermont House  
of Representatives  
Committee on Commerce and  
Economic Development, Vice  
Chair*

## There's a new food truck coming to town

The Townline Grill food truck, owned and operated by Tracy Rose, a Brandon local, will serve delicious and innovative takes on classic American comfort food. Tracy is excited to announce that she will be serving her award-winning

mac and cheese, as well as dishes that will feature locally sourced ingredients and recipes inspired by the rich culinary traditions of the Green Mountain State.

Townline Grill's menu is sure to please even the most discerning palate. From hearty bowls of mac and cheese made with Vermont cheddar, to savory sandwiches, burgers, hotdogs, and air-fried sides, there is something for everyone at Townline Grill.

In addition, Townline Grill will offer homemade baked goods and desserts, as well as a rotating selection of seasonal specials.

Townline Grill will be found parked at the local Florist Shop (just off Route 7, 256 Grove Street) in Brandon as well as various locations around town. Or it can be booked for private events and catering needs. Follow Townline Grill on social media for the latest updates on opening date, location, and menu offerings.

Contact:  
Townline Grill  
[townlinegrill@gmail.com](mailto:townlinegrill@gmail.com)  
(tel:802-779-8402)





# Brandon Energy Committee

## Energy questions for Select Board candidates



The Brandon Energy Committee asked the five Select Board candidates the same three questions about energy policy. Here are their unedited replies, in alphabetical order.

**1. What role do you see the Town of Brandon Select Board playing in supporting the attainment of the State goals for the reduction of green house gases and conversion to renewable energy sources in the coming years?**

**Marielle Blais:** Members of the select board should be informed about current best practices of reducing greenhouse gases and converting to renewable energy sources. Though they should be knowledgeable in these areas, they don't have to become experts. Being knowledgeable includes inviting local and other experts to present at select board meetings or other venues. Since select board members have a large role in how local renewable energy sources are funded and implemented, they should be fiscally responsible in using a variety of funding sources including ARPA funds, bonds, grants, and donors. Select board members have to be thorough in vetting businesses, engineers, and contractors who will be carrying out projects. At every step of the way, select board members must share information with and listen to suggestions from their constituents.

**Brian Coolidge:** I see the select board being proactive toward reaching the state goals.

**Ralph Ethier:** Should consider all options of energy efficient machinery, vehicles, solar etc.

**Seth Hopkins:** The select-board could usefully facilitate the community's consideration of Town-owned and/or community solar on a model similar to or entirely different from that of the Town's existing solar array. Financing via a municipal bond or some portion of the ARPA grant would be part of the discussion. The selectboard has adopted a green fleet policy and a board

member is providing updates to the board and community about our Town vehicles; considering suitable electric options as possibilities when equipment and vehicles need to be replaced can assist us in greening our Town fleet. We continue to install heat pumps in Town-owned buildings to lessen our reliance on propane and oil heating systems.

**Cecil Reniche-Smith:** The Board can lead by example by encouraging any new development in town to meet or exceed state guidelines, and to require any such developments paid for with town money to adhere to energy efficiency guidelines.

**2. Do you support the Town of Brandon in implementing programs to improve the livability and energy efficiency of Brandon's older housing stock and what form might that support take?**

**Marielle Blais:** Absolutely. Improving the livability and energy efficiency of older housing stock are often greener options than building new houses, especially in areas like Brandon where there are many older homes and buildings. In a style similar to Habitat for Humanity, a paid general contractor with a volunteer work crew including the homeowners is an excellent model, especially if the town could have a revolving loan fund to help keep costs low. Since the number of occupants in single family dwellings has dropped, subdividing larger homes into smaller, more energy efficient units can also be cost effective. We can also work with housing agencies such as the Rutland Housing Authority, the Housing Trust of Rutland County, and Efficiency Vermont. Educating and helping homeowners with projects is good for housing and community.

**Brian Coolidge:** Yes. Utilizing Efficiency Vermont or your Button Up program.

**Ralph Ethier:** Yes, what the energy committee is doing with the workshops and making people aware of incentive programs is a good start.

**Seth Hopkins:** The Town could helpfully publicize and encourage property owners to avail themselves of weatherizing and retrofitting by proven-track-record organizations such as HEAT Squad and Efficiency Vermont. I appreciate and have supported both with board votes and personal monetary contribution the Button Up Brandon

initiatives of the Energy Committee. The Town continues to offer property tax stabilization incentives to building owners who invest in our existing housing stock.

**Cecil Reniche-Smith:** I do support programs designed to improve both livability and efficiency of Brandon's housing stock, both old and new construction. The best use of the town's funds would be to partner

with state and federal agencies to encourage developers to finance upgrades or new construction so as to avoid too great a hit to the town's budget.

**3. What have you done to reduce your home and transportation energy consumption?**

**Marielle Blais:** In my older home I have had an energy audit, replaced and insulated the roof, spray foam insulated the basement, insulated an unfin-

ished upstairs room, installed a heat pump and a heat-pump hot-water heater, replaced galvanized water pipes with insulated Pex tubing, and installed removable interior frames with plastic sheeting (that have proved less than effective in a home with cats). Although I have an oil tank, I don't use it and instead heat with wood and a heat pump, dress in layers, and keep temper-

(See Brandon Energy, Page 8)

## Still Not Vaccinated? Need a Booster?

COVID-19 vaccine clinics available throughout Addison County through March 31st.

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**\*\* Walk-in COVID-19 vaccinations available this Saturday, February 25, 9AM - 12 noon at Mountain Community Health, 61 Pine St. Bristol.**



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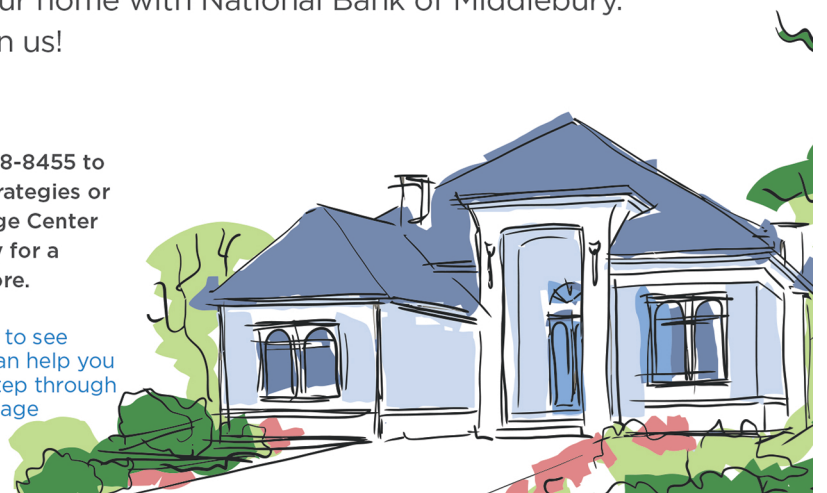
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# Brandon Energy

(Continued from Page 7)

atures to a few degrees below seventy. I own an EV and have passengers whenever possible. I compost at home and recycle as much as I can, though I'm dismayed about the inefficacy and scam of recycling plastic. Reduce, reuse, recycle.

**Brian Coolidge:** We have new windows in our house, have a person coming to talk about heat pumps, pricing and installation.

**Ralph Ethier:** Installed heat pumps in my house and a couple rental houses, new windows and new motors in my shop and lighting.

**Seth Hopkins:** Our family has made choices that appear financially prudent to us such as installing a 10kW solar array on our barn roof, heating and cooling our home with only

cold-climate heat pumps rather than a traditional boiler, and adding lots of insulation, with more to come. We are a family of five (three teen daughters) sharing two vehicles, one of which is an all-electric Hyundai Kona which we've enjoyably and emission-free driven 60,000 miles in nearly four years.

**Cecil Reniche-Smith:** Our home has a fully-insulated basement and attic to prevent heat loss; our thermostat is set at 55 in the winter, and 70 in the summer (not that it matters since we don't have AC). We only have one car and avoid driving for any errands with three miles round trip. We further lowered our carbon footprint by switching to a plant-based diet in 2007.

# Advice hotline

(Continued from Page 4)

U.S. will meet criteria for a mental health disorder, either in childhood or adolescence, McGowan said. Around a quarter will develop a mental health disorder that will result in severe impairment or distress.

On Monday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released results from its annual national survey of high school students. In 2021, almost 60% of female students reported feelings of sadness or hopelessness every day for at least two weeks that disrupted their normal activities.

"As you might guess, limited access to mental health resources here in Vermont means that primary care providers — pediatricians, family medicine doctors — end up providing that care often in ways that feel far out of the range of their expertise and training," said McGowan, praising Spottswood's new program.

Since it started in June, 79 clinics with 387 providers have enrolled in the service, McGowan said. "This really does help to save a lot of that child psychiatry workforce for those more acute cases," she added.

It also helps primary care providers feel more equipped to provide ongoing mental health care. Bannach estimates that among the four providers in her practice, one of them calls the hotline at least once a week, where every work day they can reach a dedicated social worker and board certified child psychiatrist. The interactions and the ongoing support and training provided have made a huge difference, she said.

"I don't know if I can communicate ... how much having the program has helped us in feeling comfortable and more confident that the care we provide is actually appropriate," Bannach said. "It's really been an absolute game-

changer."

She and her colleagues are not the only ones using the service. Since it started in June, the hotline received 217 calls from providers, an average of two a day. Use is growing as more practitioners become aware of what the service can provide, Spottswood said. In late January, the program had its busiest day, fielding 10 calls.

Because of the dedicated staff, "it's not just a 30-second phone conversation," said Bannach. "They can really explore that case with us." She can also call back and speak to the same psychiatrist a month later about the same patient. (Information sharing between providers both bound by federal medical privacy laws is allowed.)

In total, over the first seven months, 55 providers called at least once, with an additional 42 support staff calling, according to data being collected to evaluate the program.

The calls were most often about specific cases, though some were more general and medication-related, or seeking help for a therapist referral. The majority of the changes in care recommended after a discussion with the psychiatrist were related to medication management, but also involved diagnoses or sharing vetted screening tools.

In between taking calls, the social worker on staff spends time responding to requests for general educational resources, and compiles and updates lists of classes and support groups available in different parts of the state. A lot of the person's time is also spent checking in with therapists about their availability to take on a new patient, either in person or virtually.

"Keeping tabs on local resources and tracking down therapists is a Herculean effort," said Ellen Arrowsmith, one of three who work part time. She estimates she usually calls between 15 and 20 therapists in order to find two or three options for a family to consider for their child. But that groundwork is essential.

"The fewer barriers there are, the more likely that the family is going to actually engage in treatment," Arrowsmith said. "So many people get so discouraged by having to wade through so much of 'no' and no response."

The program currently costs just under \$500,000 annually to operate, Spottswood said. It is funded through several multi-year grants, including two through the Vermont Department of Mental Health and private matching funds through the Vermont Community Foundation. She and staff at the department are seeking a source of sustainable funding to maintain the service and keep it free.



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# 2023 is already big for Brandon's Barn Opera

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—In many ways, Brandon punches above its weight. For a small town, it has an enviably rich cultural scene. BARN OPERA, the town's resident opera company, is one of those cultural assets you'd expect to find in a much larger setting. And it's already having a great year.

day nights at the Statehouse goes back over 100 years. BARN OPERA did Brandon proud with a knockout program that included show tunes as well as classical opera.

BARN OPERA has also just announced that it will begin the Otter Creek Music Festival this July, taking over the management of the Salisbury Summer

music summer training program located on Lake Dunmore - continues to use the church for its esteemed annual faculty concerts.

With the objective to keep music in the Salisbury Congregational Meetinghouse, but also to provide a more accessible and wide-reaching programming, Andres approached Boston-based administrator, director,

ton Festival Baroque Chorus, the Mendelssohn Club and, currently, Boston's Cantata Singers and Nightingale Vocal Ensemble.

Under his direction, the Festival, with a mix of donation and set-admission events, will continue to offer a range of performances in a mix of genres featuring familiar, local performers, and also musicians from farther regions to the Green Mountains.

In its inaugural year as Otter Creek Music Festival, the festival is actively working to build a \$15,000 endowment to assure that the chamber musical offerings of quality will continue to be offered at the Salisbury Meetinghouse, and the BARN OPERA House, to serve audiences from near and far, for many future seasons.

Tickets will be available beginning this spring via BARN

OPERA's ticketing platform. While concert tickets aren't available just yet, Otter Creek Music Festival is actively seeking sponsors and donations for the operations of the festival, as well as housing hosts who would be willing to host artists for the festival. Please email director of Otter Creek Music Festival, Joshua Glassman at [ottercreek@barnopera.com](mailto:ottercreek@barnopera.com) to see how you can get involved in furthering the tradition of summer chamber music in the Brandon/Salisbury areas."

Though tickets aren't yet available for the Otter Creek Festival, you can still get seats for this weekend's productions of *The Letters of Charlotte*, an adaptation by Josh Collier of Jules Massenet's opera *Werther*. Tickets can be purchased at [www.barnopera.com](http://www.barnopera.com).



**BRANDON'S BARN OPERA performed at the Statehouse in Montpelier on February 15. Artistic Director Josh Collier sang at the devotional to open the day's legislative session and several other company members joined him for Farmers Night that evening. They pose here with several members of the Legislature. From L to R: Claire Black (piano), Nicholas Tocci (baritone), Senator Alison Clarkson, Joshua Collier (tenor and Artistic Director), Rep. Sara Coffey, Rep. Stephanie Jerome, Helen Lyons (soprano).**

On Wednesday the 15th, the company's artistic director and renowned tenor, Josh Collier, performed the devotional at the Statehouse in Montpelier to open the day's House session, at the invitation of Brandon's State Representative, Stephanie Jerome. Collier sang "Bring Him Home" from the Broadway show *Les Misérables*.

"I was so honored to be asked to give the devotional," Collier wrote on Facebook. "I was stopped afterwards by quite a few members who made a point to say how moved they were, which was wonderful and I was grateful for, but also, that they realize how important the arts and the creative/cultural sector is to the economy in the state - especially since today was arts advocacy day at the state house, it could not have been better planning!"

That evening, Collier, Nick Tocci, Claire Black, and Helen Lyons performed for the Legislature at Farmers Night. The tradition of having performers entertain lawmakers on Wednes-

day nights at the Statehouse goes back over 100 years. BARN OPERA did Brandon proud with a knockout program that included show tunes as well as classical opera.

Performance Series. In a press release announcing this development, Collier stated, "After 42 years under the leadership of Glenn Andres, the Salisbury Summer Performance Series annually brought concerts of all varieties to the Salisbury Congregational Meetinghouse.

Supported by donations from the attending public and from grants from Vermont arts and humanities organization, The Salisbury Summer Series was at a crossroads, with a devoted audience, but dwindling organizational infrastructure. It was imperative that the series continue, even if not in its original method.

BARN OPERA, a 501(c)3 in Vermont has an annual connection to the Salisbury Congregational Meetinghouse as the location for its annual holiday production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and knows well the beauty of the space, and the intimacy of the acoustics, perfect for opera and chamber music alike. It is no wonder that Point Counterpoint - the chamber mu-

and tenor, Joshua Glassman to become the new director of the series.

After substantive meetings with Joshua Collier (BARN OPERA's Artistic Director) and relevant parties, it was decided that the Salisbury Summer Performance Series would become Otter Creek Music Festival, and would be under the fiscal sponsorship of BARN OPERA, as a chamber music festival furthers BARN OPERA's mission, and fills a need within the community and facilitates this wonderful program to continue under the capable leadership of Joshua Glassman, with the support of BARN OPERA and Artistic Director, Joshua Collier.

Joshua Glassman is a multi-talented administrator, with experience as both a director and tenor, with degrees from the University of Michigan and the Peabody Institute. Mr. Glassman has served on the voice faculty and directed the Glee Club at the University of Pennsylvania and is a former member of the Opera Philadelphia Chorus, the Prince-

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This charming landscape was painted by Brandon resident Zaidyn McGraw, a second-grader at the Sheldon Academy in Rutland. Zaidyn captured the colors of a Vermont fall beautifully! Well done, Zaidyn!



# Breanna Elaine blooms at the Brandon Town Hall

BY SUSAN JOHNSON

BRANDON—Breanna Elaine celebrated the release of Seedlings, her aptly named new album, at Brandon Town Hall on Friday, February 10th. The audience was soothed and moved by her performance and seemed to come away convinced that this prolific local songwriter is, indeed, a blossoming artist destined for a flourishing career.

Brandon was an important stop on her album release tour and Breanna was excited for the show, noting that she organized and largely paid for this hometown show out-of-pocket. Her determination, though, did secure several sponsors in the community, as Café Provence, Sister Wicked, Greg Colm Masonry, and Red Clover Ale Company backed her effort.

Breanna's celebrity is the definition of true grit. She quit her day job just over a year ago to focus on music full time.

ica for a few songs, it was fitting that Montgomery opened for Breanna, as his music—four albums' worth so far—also elevated him out of some hard times.

Introducing Breanna, Montgomery recalled when he first heard her play at a music festival. "It takes a lot to impress me, and she really turned some heads." At only 25 years old, Breanna has certainly distinguished herself already.

Backing her was Jared Johnson, an expressive bass player



BREANNA ELAINE WITH Jared Johnson on bass.

Photo by Susan Johnson

rior to the originals), Alanis Morissette, and Janis Ian. Tack on an early Fiona Apple song and it's easy to understand just how diversely her talent runs.

Her musical edginess began to show itself when she switched her acoustic for a bright-red electric Les Paul and sang the provocative "Earthquake." "Dirty Water," which had a groove like floating down a lazy river, was followed by "I Don't Care," a song that sums up her path as a small-town musician not making a living wage, but refrains "I believe in my magic so I wish upon myself, cause I'm a shooting star" capturing her hopeful passion.

"All You Ever Did" was sharp and raw with a 4 non-Blondes vibe and the haunting "Where the Snakes Live" told of a friend who died from a drug overdose. Concluding with "It's a Wrap," Breanna sang of the future in the palm of her hand.

Magnum Pro Audio out of Rutland provided lights and a great sound. The venue was made complete with Dallas Ladd serving up her awesome food (by the way, she should patent the pecan bars) and Red Clover supplying our favorite beers.

Breanna's show did not disappoint. She was pleased as well, "I have never in my entire life felt so much love and support from a community." Montgomery summed it up best: "I see great things in her future."

from Rutland who toured nationally with The Samples, and drummer Aaron Martin, also with national touring experience with The Garcia Project.

Performing all original songs, Breanna showcased her vocal dexterity and wide range of styles. Generally classified on music sites as folk/rock, as the evening went on, it was clear she transcends definition. She's been compared to Jewel (though Breanna's covers of Jewel are in many ways supe-



THE OPENING ACT, Kristian Montgomery with Brian Hobbs on harmonica.

Photo by Susan Johnson

Having faced numerous challenges, including being homeless with her young son for a time, she has worked tirelessly to realize her dream. Starkly personal lyrics and music describing her traumas and triumphs captivated the audience.

Kristian Montgomery opened the show with energetic country(ish) rock, reminiscent of Gregg Allman's heartfelt deliveries and John Hiatt's infectious energy. Accompanied by Brian Hobbs' soulful harmon-

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See page 17



# Calendar of events

## February 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 Rossigg 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.)

### Yoga Prana Shakti Zoom & Studio Chair Yoga, Gentle, Wednesdays

From 10:30-11:30 a.m. at 155 Woodstock Avenue in Rutland Lina Cloffe Hanson (Parvati) offers an Earth Conscientious, Spiritual, Gentle Physical Yoga Practice. We meet on Mondays via zoom. Contact for Zoom link. (There is also a Monday Zoom only class)

Not everyone can get up and down off of the floor easily making traditional yoga classes difficult. If you have physical limitation or a health issue this might be the ideal class for you. With the help of a chair most people can practice yoga and reaping the benefits of increased circulation, balance, flexibility, mobility,

on Facebook and get on email list. \$15/class

## Fridays

### Maclure Library Knitting Circle

Come join us weekly to share projects from noon – 2:00 p.m.

### Chaffee Arts Center All About the Arts Free Class for kids 3-5

From 11am-Noon...FREE! Students will have fun creating and doing activities with art, music, literature, and more!

One free book per student will be given weekly (while supplies last) thanks to our partners at Rutland Free Library. Adult must accompany children under age 4. Must pre-register by Wednesday each week Instructor: Lori Sullivan; Minimum 3

## Sundays

### Brandon Town Hall Painting with Crystal

Crystal Ketcham leads an all ages painting event!

Yes, you CAN paint! More info, contact Crystal at [ceastman88@gmail.com](mailto:ceastman88@gmail.com)

"The study of art is the most important study a garden designer can pursue."

\$5 donation suggested.

## Friday 17th Saturday 25th:

### Rutland Welcomes the Return of Winterfest

After a two-year hiatus, Winterfest returns in full February 17-25 with events for all ages and abilities. Winterfest has been a Rutland staple for 20 years, but what began as a 4-hour event one day in February has blossomed into a 7-day festival during winter break. This year, Winterfest is bringing back crowd favorites like sledding down Center Street, Human Foosball, and the Real Rutland Feud while adding some future favorites to the roster.

"Winterfest has been a long-standing tradition in Rutland and after a year off, we are excited to bring it back! Over the years the events have evolved and so many great memories have been created," says Winterfest event co-chair April Cioffi. "Spark some joy and come play at Winter Fest!"

Coming together as a community in this challenging time of year is incredibly important for mental and physical health and is the reason

## The Brandon Museum invites you to a night of "Vermont in the Movies!" Friday, February 24th, 6:00 p.m. Brandon Town Hall

Vermont has been a featured location in Hollywood movies for nearly a century. It has represented many different ideals during that time, and its portrayal reflects both

Vermont's own history as well as American history. Examining those films provides

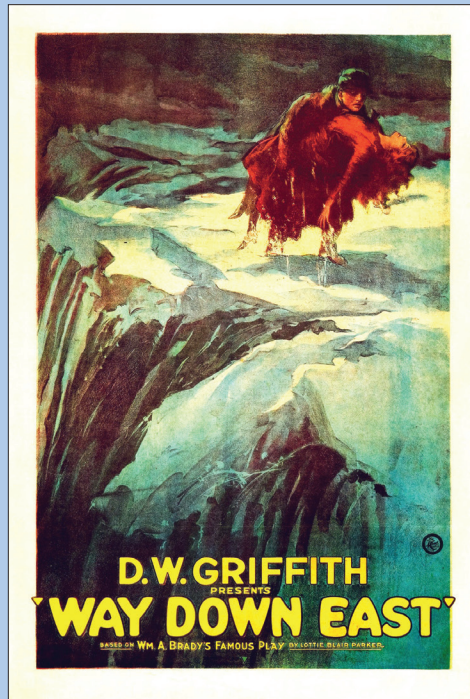
interesting and fun insights into the hold Vermont has had on America's imagination in the media age.

Amanda Kay Gustin of the Vermont Historical Society will lead the discussion and share clips

ranging chronologically from 1919's Way Down East to 2005's Thank you for Smoking.

This talk is free, open to the public, and accessible to those with disabilities. There will be a concession stand with movie style snacks for purchase. For more information, contact

[info@brandonmuseum.org](mailto:info@brandonmuseum.org)



strength and more.

We spend a fair amount of the time exercising in a seated position in the chairs but if possible, we also do exercises standing, using the chairs for support. The exercises can be adjusted for individual needs and we move at a comfortable pace. I think will soon notice a difference once you start. Looking forward to seeing you in class!

Lina (Parvati) has 20 plus years of experience teaching and a lifelong personal practice.

To stay tuned if there are any cancelations, follow

*Goings on around town*



"FIRE STORM" by Hallie Mor...

## LARGE at the B Artists opening

A new, all member of "LARGE" artwork at the Brandon Art reception is Friday 5pm-7pm at the gallery featuring magnificent mediums that vary from painting, fiber and art bringing the ordinary extraordinary. The show March 3 through April 10 at the Brandon Art Guild, a non-profit organization located 7 Center Street. Hours, closed Monday 10am-5pm, 802.247.4956, [brandonartguild.org](http://brandonartguild.org)



for throwing a big winter festival. Most events are free, and some paid events are open to spectators for free.

"Hopefully, people are as excited and engaged as they were in the past," says Winterfest event co-chair Russ Marsan. "With new people and new sponsors, Winterfest is undergoing a renaissance of sorts. There's something for everyone to do: stuff for kids, adults and families. This year, there are 24 different groups including businesses, nonprofits, Rutland City, and the Town of Brandon: a good group of people."

Things kick off Friday, February 17th with a snowy story walk at Pine Hill Park. On Saturday, Giorgetti

Arena opens its doors for free ice skating from 5-7pm. On Tuesday, Feb. 21st, folks can sled down Center Street and play or participate in a game of Human Foosball. Teams of 6 compete for the glory. Registration is \$50 per team and funds go to support Come Alive Outside. Spectators are welcome to watch the action for free. Wednesday morning at 10am, kids and adults can wear their P.J.s at the Paramount to watch a flick, then join in the Great Bigfoot Chase at the Rutland Free Library at 1pm. Thursday evening at 6, cornholers of all abilities will compete in a mini tournament at the Rutland Recreation Center. Friday night at 6:30, bring the kids or a date to Skate with Bigfoot. The Loved Ones and Little Ones Dance wraps up Winterfest on Saturday, February 25 along with the ever-popular Real Rutland Feud at 7pm at The Paramount Theatre. Tickets to the Loved Ones and Little Ones Dance are \$15 per couple while tickets to the Real Rutland Feud are \$30 per person.

For more information, visit <https://www.rutlandrec.com/winterfest-events>, call 802-773-1853 or email [aprilc@rutlandrec.com](mailto:aprilc@rutlandrec.com).

## Tuesday 28th

**What's in a Name: Origins of Bird Names**

Join us for a fascinating look into bird names: what they mean, where they come from, how they came about – and why significant changes might be coming soon. Lots of wonderful photos! Suitable for long-term birders as well as beginners, including interested kids. A Zoom presentation by Maeve Kim at 7 pm. To register for participation in this event contact: [birding@rutlandcounty-audubon.org](mailto:birding@rutlandcounty-audubon.org); sponsored by Rutland County Audubon.

# March

## Fridays March 3rd,

## March 17th, March 31st

St. Ambrose Annual Lenten Fish Fry Join us for "ALL YOU CAN EAT" FISH FRYs

Meal includes Fried or Baked Haddock, French Fries, Coleslaw, Fresh Baked Dinner Roll, Beverage & Dessert.

Serving Times & Dates:

5 p.m. to 7p.m. on Fridays March 3rd, March 17th,

March 31st \$\$: Adults - \$15.00, Children 9 & under - \$7.00, Immediate Family of 5 - \$40.00.

For more info, call St. Ambrose Church in Bristol VT @ 453-2488

## Saturday 4th

### An Elephant in the Room & A Skeleton in the Closet

Who are the skeletons in your closet? , Learn how to acknowledge and address the subject of "family shame" in genealogy research.

How does a genealogist acknowledge and address the subject of "Family Shame" that has led family members to hide certain events? Jack Crahan will lead this discussion using real life examples, subject matter abstracts, questions, and quotes from professionals in an attempt to guide and assist the genealogist and family historian in tackling one of genealogy's most difficult subjects. This class for the Vermont Genealogy Library will be a Zoom webinar from 10:30 to noon. Cost is \$10.00. Please visit our website, [www.vtgenlib.org](http://www.vtgenlib.org) for additional details and for registration

### Coffeehouse Concert with Grammy-winning cellist Eugene Friesen, singer/songwriter Elizabeth Rogers

Join us at 7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Rutland for Grammy Award-winning cellist Eugene Friesen and singer/songwriter Elizabeth Rogers present a special concert "The Beauty We Love"

Eugene Friesen is a trailblazer on cello and long-time teacher at Berklee College of Music, Boston. Elizabeth Rogers sings with a voice of delicacy, clarity and purity that underscores her insightful lyrics.

\$15.00

### Comedy Night at Okemo Mountain Resort

Come to Okemo Mountain to see Kelly Macfarland and Orlando Baxter preform stand-up comedy!

Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 7:30 p.m. - Purchase tickets now for \$40 and at the door \$45 if any available.

## Friday 10th

### Acclaimed Dover Quartet and Pianist Haochen Zhang Perform at the Mahaney Arts Center

Concert Program Includes Brahms and a Newly-Commissioned Premiere by Marc Neikrug. The celebrated Dover String Quartet joins forces with award-winning Chinese pianist Haochen Zhang at the Mahaney Arts Center on Friday, March 10 to perform the Vermont premiere of a new work by contemporary American composer Marc Neikrug, as well as Johannes Brahms' Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34.

The Middlebury College Performing Arts Series is committed to supporting the future of chamber music, in part by commissioning new works. Marc Neikrug's Piano Quintet No. 2, subtitled "In Six Parts," is designed to highlight the virtuosity of each individual musician. This work is a co-commission with Music Accord, a consortium of major presenting organizations throughout the United States. Performing Arts Series Director Allison Coyne Carroll feels that this new work is especially compelling for students to hear, because it stresses the principles of harmony just as they enter a complex world where they'll

soon contribute their individual skills. Composer Marc Neikrug noted, "It demands engaged emotional understanding and great ensemble. Because of the independence of the parts, everyone needs to be aware of what everyone else is playing at all times."

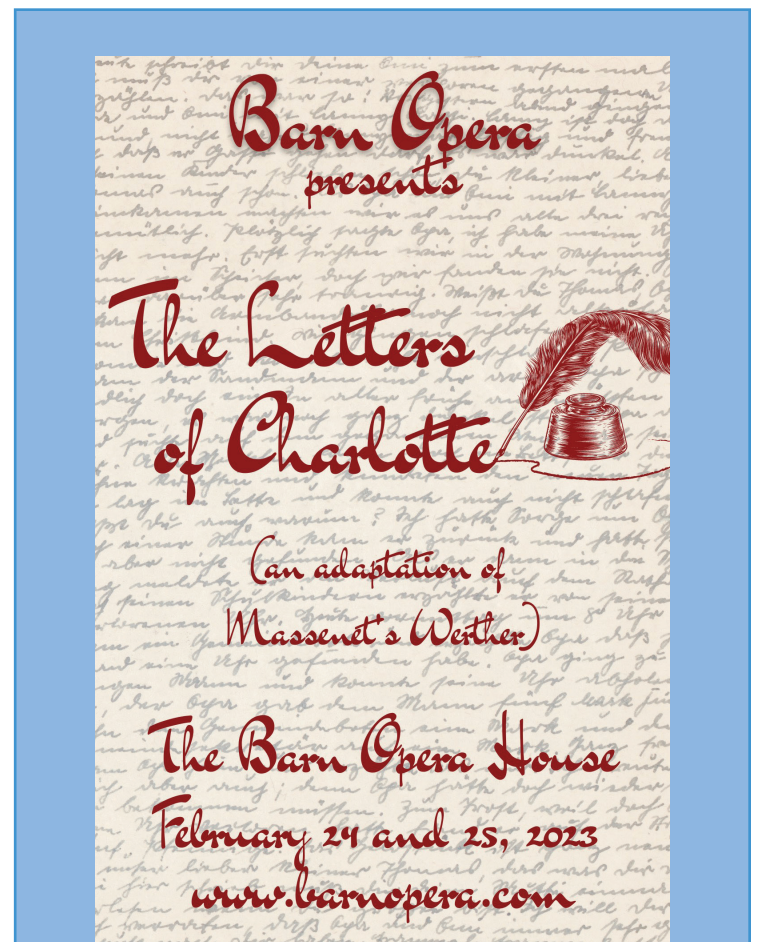
The concert by the Dover Quartet and Haochen Zhang will take place at the Mahaney Arts Center's Olin C. Robison Concert Hall on Friday, March 10, 2023 at 7:30 PM ET. Tickets are \$25 for the general public, \$20 for Middlebury faculty/staff and alumni, \$10 for youth, and \$5 for Middlebury College students. Vaccinations and boosters (or valid medical or religious exemptions) are required; masks are optional, except under certain circumstances, but welcome. The Mahaney Arts Center is located on the campus of Middlebury College, at 72 Porter Field Road, just off Route 30 south/S. Main Street. Free parking is available curbside on Rt. 30 or in the MAC parking lot, in rows marked faculty/staff/visitors. The concert will also be streamed, with a 48-hour window for playback. Streaming tickets are \$15, or \$5 for students. For tickets, health and safety protocols, or information, call (802) 443-MIDD (6433) or go to <http://www.middlebury.edu/arts>.



STAINED glass window

## WORKS Brandon s Guild March 3

ber pop-up exhibit  
orks will be on view  
rtists Guild. Open-  
day, March 3, from  
allery. Members are  
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ow will run from  
pril 30th. The Bran-  
is an all volunteer,  
tion. The gallery is  
treet, Brand n, VT.  
days, Tuesday - Sat-  
Sunday 10am-4pm.  
<https://brandonartists->



## Brandon's Barn Opera presents *The Letters of Charlotte* on Friday and Saturday, February 24th and 25th at 7:30 p.m.

Barn Opera Artistic Director Josh Collier adapted this work from Werther by Jules Massenet, a classic 19th-century opera about ardent young love that was, in turn, adapted from a classic 18th-century novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* by Wolfgang Goethe.

The cast includes JoAnna Pope, David Rivera Bozon, Brian Murray, Hannah M. Goodman, and Brenda Scott, with Liya Nigmati on piano.

Seats are still available for both performances! Reserve tickets online at [www.barnopera.com](http://www.barnopera.com).



# Patty Moore and Crystal Eastman-Ketcham recognized as Outstanding Women by Hannaford and 98.9 WOKO

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Brandon's own Patty Moore and Crystal Eastman-Ketcham are both among the recipients of 2023's Outstanding Women in Vermont Award from Hannaford Supermarkets and 98.9 WOKO-FM radio. The award celebrates women in Vermont "who go above and beyond to make their communities a better place to live."

Anyone who knows Moore and Eastman-Ketcham knows they absolutely fit the bill.

Moore was recognized primarily for her work with the Brandon Area Toy Project (BATP), an organization that collects and distributes donated Christmas gifts to children whose parents need a helping hand.

Eastman-Ketcham was recognized primarily for her work with Silver Bells, an organization that provides books, birthday bags, Christmas gifts,

food, clothing, and necessities to children, homeless veterans, and the elderly.

Moore grew up in Goshen and bought a house in Brandon with her husband, Bill, in 2005. They have two daughters, Bonnie and Sophie. Bonnie is a student at Towson State University in Maryland and Sophie is a sophomore at Otter Valley.

—Crystal Eastman-Ketcham.

She began working on BATP seven or eight years ago, when Colleen Wright was managing it. Moore has been the principal organizer for the last four or five years. She said there's been a huge increase in participation over the years she's been involved, not only in the number of families asking for assistance with holiday gifts, but also in the number of people who volunteer to help process, wrap, and distribute the gifts.

"I love the intergenerational side of it," said Moore. "Whole families come to volunteer.

You'll have grandparents, parents, and the kids all helping to sort and wrap."

"I couldn't do it without the volunteers and all the people who contribute, like Sheila Gearwar at Brandon House of Pizza and Blue Seal. They let us use their space for our Angel Trees (trees festooned with cards that anonymous donors can take that have the ages, genders, and interests of children in the program.) The American Legion has also been truly amazing. We take over their entire space."

Eastman-Ketcham moved with her husband, Robert, from New Hampshire in 2003. After a spell in West Rutland, they moved to Brandon in 2007. They have two daughters, Ashlynn, age 9, and Autumn, age 6.

Silver Bells was begun in memory of her mother, who passed away from complications of multiple sclerosis in 2020 at the age of 56. And Eastman-Ketcham has grown the organization even while working toward her undergraduate degree in psychology at Northern Vermont University, the first in her family to attend college. She plans to become a

counselor in Brandon when she graduates. "People have been suffering since COVID," she said. "Mental health is such an important issue." She wants to work with folks who would not normally be able to afford such services.

Moore had no idea that she'd been nominated and was taken by surprise when she received the e-mail from WOKO telling her that she'd won.

"My first reaction was 'oh no, I hate attention' but then I was honored and appreciative," said Moore, who was nominated by Colleen Wright.

"She brought dignity to a very large project run by very few volunteers," said Wright in a written statement to The Reporter. "An amazing combination of strength and compassion!"

"Patty is an amazing human being," added Eastman-Ketcham. "I saw firsthand

what she goes through to make Christmas happen [at BATP]."

Eastman-Ketcham, however, had a sense that she'd been nominated. "A few people hinted," she said. But she was still surprised to get the notification. "It's a huge honor. I couldn't do it, though, without family and community."

"I'm always amazed by her," said Moore of Eastman-Ketcham. "She's passionate, kind, and full of joy. A bundle of energy."

Both Moore and Eastman-Ketcham give to the community because of the love they feel for it.

"Brandon's like a family," said Eastman-Ketcham. "Our community is something I've never seen in my life."

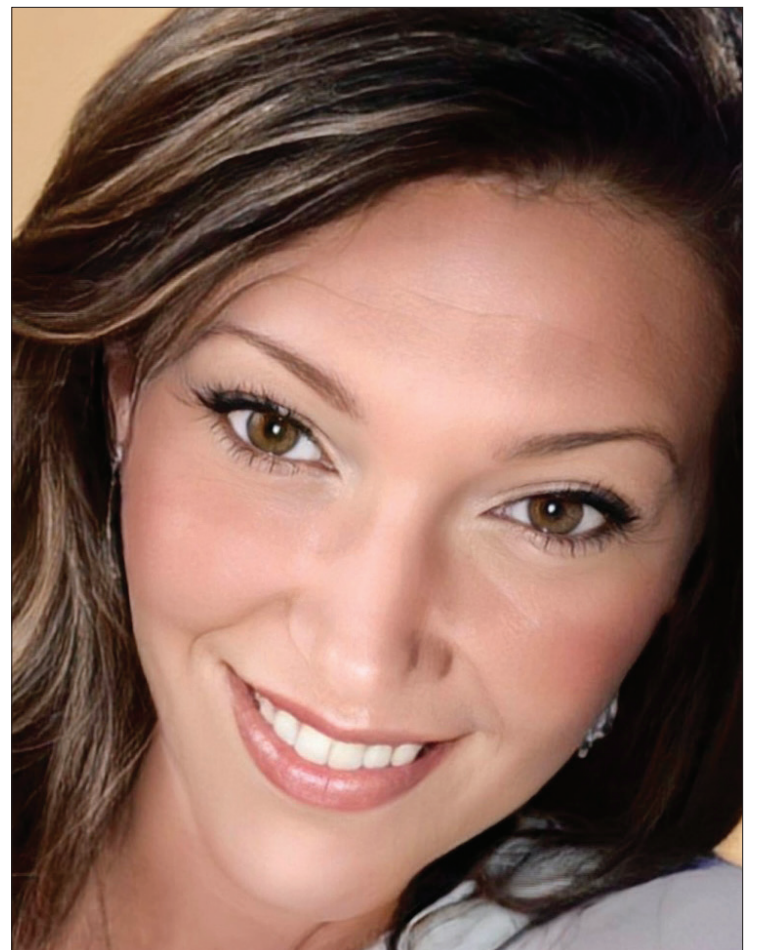
"I like to give hope and positivity," said Moore. "I love this town. I grew up here. I want the best for it."

*"I couldn't do it without the volunteers and all the people who contribute, like Sheila Gearwar at Brandon House of Pizza and Blue Seal."*

—Patty Moore



PATTY MOORE WAS recognized for her years of tireless work on behalf of the Brandon Area Toy Project, an organization that distributes donated Christmas gifts to area children whose families need a helping hand at the holidays.



CRYSTAL EASTMAN-KETCHAM WAS recognized for her ceaseless efforts with Silver Bells, an organization she founded in 2020 in memory of her mother, who had recently passed. Silver Bells distributes Christmas gifts, birthday gifts, books, clothing, food, and toiletries to children, homeless veterans, and the elderly.



# Brandon Library

(Continued from Page 1)

you don't get to see is all the people who make the entire production possible behind the scenes. While the librarians may be the glamorous stars everyone knows, the Friends of the Brandon Library are the determined producers making sure the show can go on.

For much of the last 70-odd years, it's been the Friends who have ensured the financial survival of BFPL, raising in excess of \$200,000 for everything from books to furniture to children's programs to computers. Whatever the library needed but couldn't afford, the Friends found a way to pay for. "The library wouldn't be here if not for the Friends," says Bobbie Torstenson, vice-president of the group.

That fundraising has involved direct solicitations, the basement book sale, and the annual holiday auction. Every year, the Friends pledge a certain amount of money to supplement what BFPL gets from the town and from grants—last year the Friends' pledged amount rose from \$9,000 to \$10,000 in anticipation of BFPL's upcoming renovation.



**THE FRIENDS OF the Brandon Library have worked hard for decades to help finance the library's operations with book sales and auctions. The Executive Committee are assembled here at the library (l to r): Susan Stone (Treasurer), Stephanie Choma (retired Library Director), Sue Wetmore (President), Bobbie Torstenson (Vice-President), and Carol Fjeld (Secretary). Not pictured is Lynn Wilson, a former Librarian and Treasurer for the Friends.**

"BFPL gets only half of its annual budget from our town appropriation," said David Roberts, president of the library's board. "The other half has to come from grants and fundraising. And every year the Friends come through in a major way. They make this place possible."

The ladies who make up the Friends are indeed all friends, not just of the library but of one another. For most of them, their involvement with the library began as something social years ago, when they had young children and took

advantage of the programs that the library offered. Their children are now grown, with children of their own, but the community that these ladies built at the library has endured.

I sat down recently with the Executive Committee of the Friends for a conversation about their mission.

Sue Wetmore (President), Bobbie Torstenson (VP), Sue Stone (Treasurer), Stephanie Choma (member and former Head Librarian), and Carol Fjeld (Secretary) have known each other for decades. In any small town, the connections among people are myriad but the work these women have done for the library has forged a bond among them that's downright familial. They tease each other like siblings and laugh at shared memories like pals who've known each other a very long time. They hope that the broader community will become familiar with their work, too.

"It doesn't sink in," said Carol Fjeld, referring to the public's general unfamiliarity with the group. Carol just ended a six-year tenure on BFPL's board of directors this

week and was appointed secretary of the Friends literally as we chatted.

"That's how formal we are," laughed Sue Stone.

Much of the conversation involved fond reminiscences about the folks who ran the Friends in days gone by. Bobbie, seemingly the group's unofficial historian, came with documents and photos she'd found during the recent clean-out of the library basement, where the Friends have long held their book sale—the longest-running of its kind in Vermont (the sale

brought in \$5,000 in 2022). Bobbie displays a leatherbound guest book she found in a desk drawer downstairs. Its first page has the names of three visitors from Jersey City, New Jersey who stopped by in 1926.

The basement book sale was famously labyrinthine, a veritable underground city of volumes and tomes. Some of the books, like 1980s exercise guides, were unlikely ever to find a new home, but some, like lushly illustrated books on art, were a bibliophile's delight. You never knew what you'd find down there. Patience—and a lack of claustrophobia—often paid off.

These rooms are empty now; all the books have been removed. Renovation is slated to begin in April. The book sale will still occupy space in the new basement, but it will be smaller: two rooms instead of five. The rest of the space will be used by the library for public activities and meetings. Walking through the pink-walled spaces with Bobbie, who has run the sale since 2007, there's a palpable sense of bittersweet change in the air.

"It has to be done," said Bobbie. "We have to evolve."

"We need younger people," added Sue Wetmore.

The need to draw a younger generation to the group is generally acknowledged as a priority. Though their experience and social network make them effective fundraisers, they recognize that someone else will eventually need to take up the cause just as they took it up from the generation before them.

Stephanie Choma, who was Director of BFPL until her retirement just a few years ago, said she watched with pride as Molly Kennedy metamorphosed from a bookish child who volunteered at BFPL into a professional librarian who now holds the position Choma once did.

"I can't extend enough thanks to our lively group of Friends for all the work they put in to make our library the most vibrant library it can be," said Kennedy in a written statement.

To appeal to a younger crowd, they try to help the library with programming designed to nurture a love of learning and a sense of wonder in children, hoping they'll grow up to be the kinds of adults who, like Kennedy, view the library as a treasured resource. Wetmore, for example, is a renowned birder and offers popular workshops on owl pellets. Dissecting these agglutinations of undigested bones initially repulses the kids, Wetmore jokes, but once they dive in, they're fascinated. "They get so excited," Wetmore said. "Look what I found!" It's neat to see the kids learn something."

The planned renovation of the library is forcing the Friends to look toward the future. The physical space they've known for years



**THESE SHELVES WERE** once home to thousands of books that the Friends sold to raise money for the Library. Last year, the book sale brought in \$5,000. The basement has been cleared out in anticipation of the library's planned renovation, which will begin in April. Photos by Steven Jupiter

is about to undergo major changes.

Wetmore grew up coming to the library and remembers how it was configured before the last major renovation in the 1960s. "There used to be a big staircase right in the middle, where the circulation desk now is," she said.

"Accessibility is a big thing," said Torstenson, referring to the structural accommodations that will be made for patrons with disabilities. In fact, the principal motivation for the renovation is to bring the entire building into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. An elevator will be installed that can fit a wheelchair, for example.

Later that day, Sue Wetmore presented a check for \$10,000 to David Roberts as the second installment of the Friends' 5-year \$50,000 pledge toward the \$2 million-plus cost of the top-to-bottom renovation of the historic building.

"The library will stay cozy. We'll still keep our people," said Fjeld. "It will continue to be a home."

"We'll keep the same historic exterior," said Stone.

When asked for favorite memories of their years with the library, the ladies had a hard time choosing.

The holiday auctions, full of laughter and wine, were mentioned by more than one. These events



**IN ITS HEYDAY,** the Library's basement was chockablock with books for the Friends' book sale.

began with handmade wreaths and have blossomed into hours-long marathons with dozens of donated items, including art, clothing, woodwork, and food. They usually net the library between \$5,000 and \$7,000.

Carol Fjeld mentioned "Miss Debbie's" tea parties for kids. Deb Lendway was a teacher at Neshobe. The mere mention of these parties set off sighs of nostalgia from the group.

"I loved being part of this," said Stephanie Choma.

It was clear that Ms. Choma was not alone in that sentiment. These ladies worked hard for years to support something they cherished. And when the renovation is complete, there will be a public acknowledgment of their dedication and service built into the structure, a gesture completely fitting for a group who has given their hearts and souls to the place.

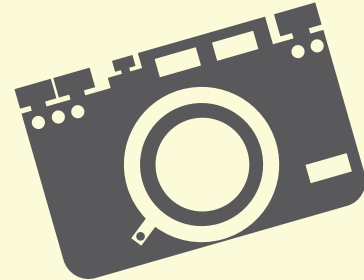




# Mim's Photos

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

## Recognized



Dottie Wheeler called in to recognize kids in this photo as Mark Griffin, his brother Greg Griffin and Amy (Wheeler) Hayden.

Amy Hayden nee. Wheeler, called in to recognize herself, along with Mark and Greg Griffin. She says this was a debate tournament photo, and she thought it was fun to take a trip down Memory Lane.



Terry Ferson also was able to recognize (with 95% certainty) Thad Poremski of Black Bear Tree Service; his Mom and Dad were Shelley and Sunny Poremski of Florence.

Barbara Champine confirmed that this is in fact Thad Poremski, her nephew.



Terry Ferson of Brandon called to recognize some people in this photo. The girl in the back row on the far left is Stephanie Bird, the tall guy in the back is Lonnie Smith and the girl in the front row, far right is Katrina Wetmore. He believes the photo is from the early nineties.

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



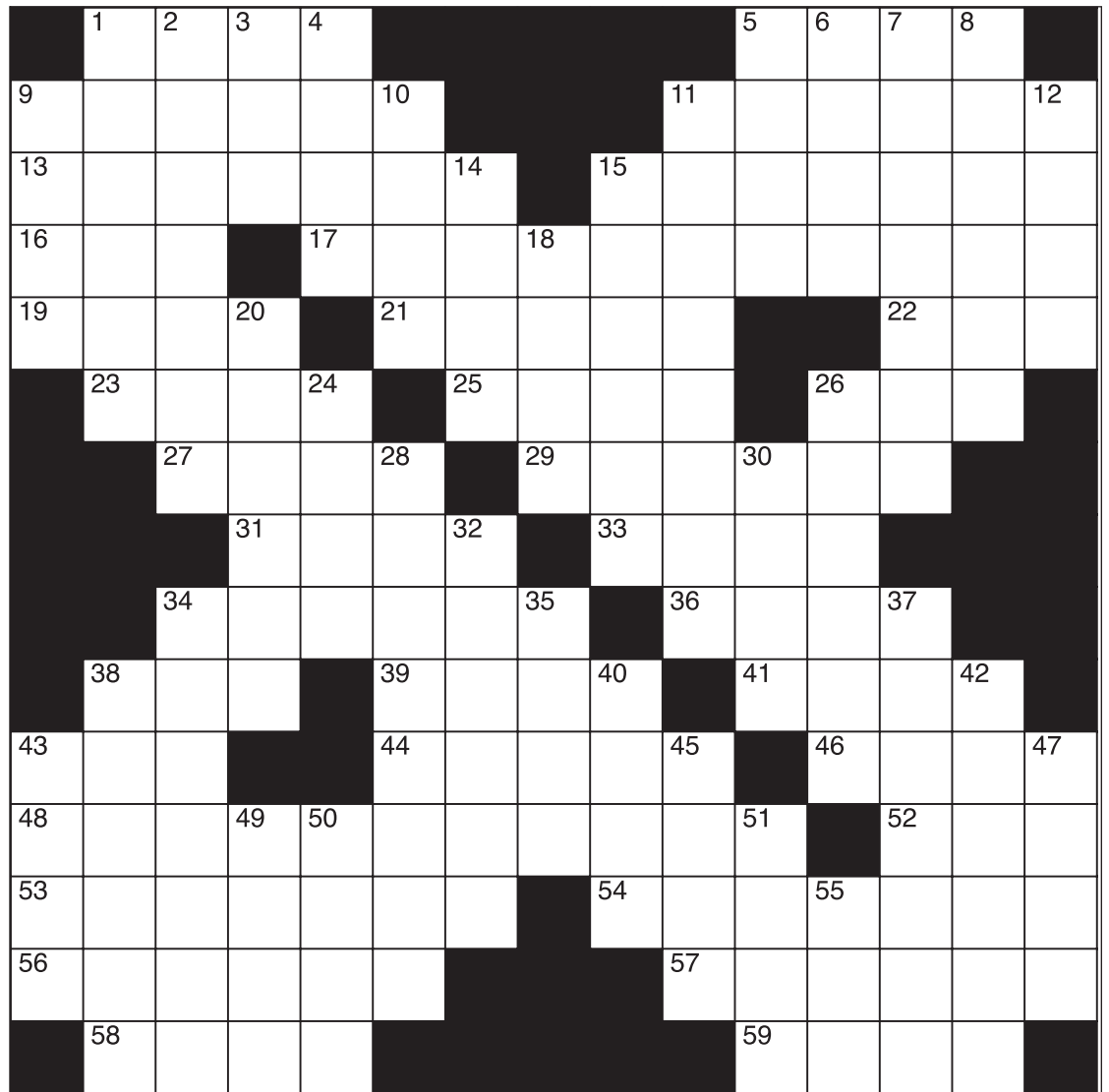
# Crossword

## CLUES ACROSS

1. Sea grape
5. European public health group (abbr.)
9. A way to delight
11. Appetizers
13. Ancient heralds' wands
15. Make a booking
16. '\_\_\_ death do us part
17. Pearl Jam frontman
19. Spider genus
21. Fill with high spirits
22. A major division of geological time
23. Catch
25. An independent ruler or chieftain
26. Electronic music style (abbr.)
27. Influential Spanish cubist painter
29. Illegally persuades
31. A way to derive
33. British School
34. Appear alongside
36. Surely (archaic)
38. Harsh cry of a crow
39. A day in the middle
41. Kansas hoops coach Bill
43. The longest division of geological time
44. The first sign of the zodiac
46. Appetizer
48. Link together in a chain
52. A bacterium
53. In a way, forces apart
54. Cheese dish
56. Combines
57. In an inferior way
58. Colors clothes
59. Dried-up

## CLUES DOWN

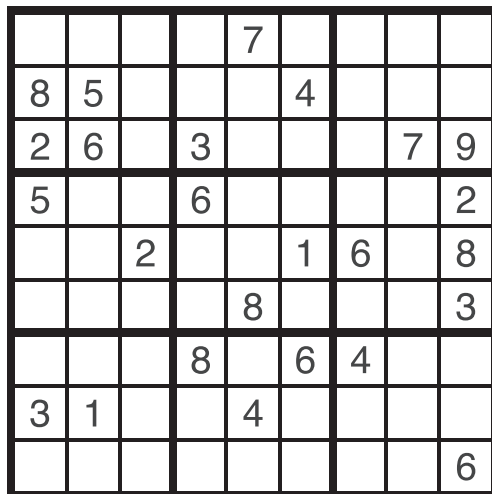
1. Gastropods
2. Confusing
3. Romanian monetary unit
4. The rate at which something proceeds
5. A prosperous state of well-being
6. Asked for forgiveness
7. Makes less soft
8. Part of speech
9. Outside
10. Advice or counsel
11. Badness
12. Protein-rich liquids
14. Not moving
15. Call it a career
18. Poetry term
20. Not wide
24. Pastries
26. Turns away
28. Satisfies
30. Gift adornments
32. San Diego ballplayers
34. Manufacturing plant
35. Check or guide
37. Dogs do it
38. Chilled
40. Scorch
42. Unproductive of success
43. Electronic counter-countermeasures
45. Attack with a knife
47. Feel bad for
49. Enclosure
50. Assert
51. Geological times
55. Midway between east and southeast



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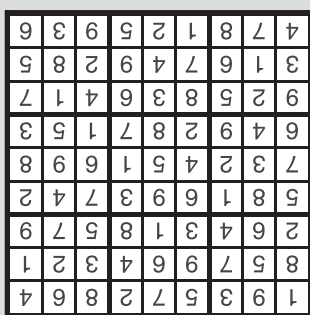
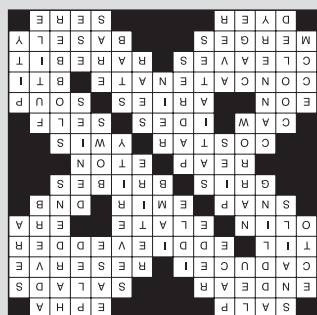
# Sudoku

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



## Rutland County Humane Society's Working Cat Program

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

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



### MEET NITRO - 1-YEAR-OLD. MALE. LAB/PIT MIX. BLACK.

Nitro is a sweet and goofy boy who loves to learn. He knows "sit", "wait", "and down" and can "shake" with both of his paws. What a smart boy! Nitro was adopted from here in December and then returned within a month due to him becoming reactive to other dogs and people inside and outside the home. He did become protective of the members of the household. Since he was brought back, we have been working on his impulse control with "leave it." He has been picking up on it quickly. He has made significant progress meeting new people with a happy tail wag and loose body language. He has done well with children and would do best with children over the age of 8 as he does have lots of energy. He loves walks and playtime, so an active and structured lifestyle would be best for him.

### MEET JASPER - \*\*FELV + 1.5-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE.

Domestic Short Hair Grey Tiger. This boy is very social and affectionate. Jasper is a special boy who needs a special home. He is FELV positive. He needs to be the only cat in the home or be in a home with cats who are also FELV positive. He is a sweet boy who likes to lounge around and meow when he wants a good head scratch. If your family can meet Jasper's needs, please call the Adoption Center at 802.483.6700 to schedule a time to meet him.



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# OFF THE SHELF



## NEW BOOKS AND NEWS



### The Spite House by Johnny Compton

On the run from his mysterious past, Eric Ross and his two daughters find refuge in the Masson House in Degener, Texas, said to be the most haunted house in Texas. Eric takes a job as a caretaker of the property. The owner wants proof of paranormal activity. All they need to do is stay in the house and keep a detailed record of everything that happens there, provided the house's horrors don't drive them all mad like the caretakers before them.

### Up With the Sun by Thomas Mallon

A fictional look back at the life of a little-known, C-list celebrity who met an untimely end in New York City in the 1980s. Dick Kallman was an up-and-coming actor—until he wasn't. From co-starring in Broadway shows, to becoming part of Lucille Ball's historic Desilu workshop, and then finally landing his own short-lived primetime TV series, Dick's star was clearly on the rise. But his roles began to dry up and he faded from the spotlight—until his sensational murder in 1980. Told from the perspective of a longtime acquaintance, we see

the full story of Dick's life and death.

### Abyss by Pilar Quintana

Eight-year-old Claudia is trying to understand the world through the eyes of the adults around her. But her father hardly speaks a word, while her unhappy mother spends her days reading celebrity lifestyle magazines, tending to her enormous collection of plants, and filling Claudia's head with stories about women who end their lives in tragic ways. Then an interloper arrives, disturbing the delicate balance of family life, and Claudia's world starts falling apart.

### A Half-Baked Murder: Cannabis Cafe Mystery Series #1 by Emily George

After a scathing review and a humiliating break-up, classically trained chef Chloe Barnes moves back home and opens up an edibles bakery with her aunt. But when an old acquaintance turns up and begins harassing and threatening Chloe, her aunt becomes murder suspect #1 after he winds up dead the next day. Emily goes on the hunt for the real killer, all while managing her new bakery and helping her sick grandmother.

## NEWS & HOURS

Did you know: We have gun locks available at the library courtesy of GunSafeVt. FREE! Take as many as you need.

Tuesday	10 a.m.–7 P.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m.–7 P.m.
Thursday	10 a.m.–6 P.m.
Friday	10 a.m.–6 P.m.
Saturday	10 a.m.–4 P.m.
Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed



Storytime, Thursdays at 11 a.m.

# A week plagued with accidents and deaths

## Brandon Police Report

BRANDON — It was a busy week for Brandon Police. Along with numerous motor vehicle incidents, officers were called to a medical emergency, received a lewd and lascivious complaint, and encountered a death during a welfare check.

On the afternoon of Feb. 13, police were notified of a hit-and-run accident on Conant Square. A witness had observed a woman back into a parked truck in front of the residence and then saw the individual run into the Brandon Town Hall. The complainant indicated that his vehicle did not sustain any known damage and at this time, did not want to pursue the matter further.

In the early afternoon of Feb. 14, Police were asked to check the welfare of a Mulcahy Drive resident who had not contacted a family member in some time. When responding officers checked the apartment, they discovered the male in question was deceased. A death investigation was then conducted by Brandon Police and the Vermont Medical Examiners' Office. Later in the day, police dispatch received a report of a motor vehicle operating erratically on Union Street. Since Brandon officers were occupied with the untimely death investigation at the time, they were unable to respond to check the area, but issued a Be on the Lookout to neighboring agencies for the vehicle of interest in case they should happen to come across it while on patrol.

Police also assisted a Pearl Street resident, whose tablet had been delivered to an address in Georgia rather than her home. The complainant requested a lost property report be placed on-file so that she could get a replacement tablet through the company she purchased it from.

February 15 turned out to be a quieter day. Police served without incident a restraining order to both remove an individual from a home on Valley View Drive and to secure that person's firearms.

The lull in activity was short-lived. On Feb. 16 police received a report of a suspicious vehicle in the Heritage Family Credit union parking lot just before 10 a.m. The complainant thought that someone might be sleeping inside the vehicle. The investigating officer found that the individual was a private investigator and was on an assignment in the area.

Closer to noon, while police were investigating a man for sending lewd and illicit material to a vulnerable adult on Mulcahy Drive, the investigating officer discovered that the suspect had been found deceased in Fair Haven. The investigation into the abuse of a vulnerable adult was subsequently closed following this revelation. At around the same time an officer on routine patrol witnessed a tractor-trailer unit back into a light post at the intersection of Union Street and Maple Street, causing damage. The operator was stopped and identified. The owner of the light post was not concerned with the damage and did not request an exchange of information.

Later in the afternoon an officer responded to a report of a runaway juvenile at Otter Valley Union High School. The youth in question had taken off into the woods during a fire incident at the school. Teachers, as well as the officer, searched the immediate grounds. Soon after the student was located inside the school.

That evening police received report of a car fire on Grove Street near Lovers Lane. The fire was apparently a result of mechanical issue. The vehicle was totally engulfed in flames upon the arrival of the responding officer and was quickly extinguished by Brandon Fire, which had also responded to the location. The vehicle was ultimately towed away from the scene. The operator of the vehicle was uninjured and was given a courtesy ride to her destination.

The following day, Feb. 17, police received report of a single car crash in a parking lot on Court Drive in which a car struck the base of a light post due to the icy weather conditions. The front tire and rim on the vehicle were damaged, making the vehicle undrivable. No damage was sustained to the cement pole. Thunder Towing later responded to the scene and towed the car.

In the afternoon a suspicious male entered Union Street Grocery and tried to return some plastic bottles with needles in—  
*(See Police report, Page 19)*

## THE GREAT LIBRARY RENOVATION IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!

The library is moving to the Town Hall! This is a temporary move (lasting about a year) that will allow the library to continue serving the community while construction is taking place. Library services and most other programming will continue as normal. Watch for updates!

**MARCH 22ND**

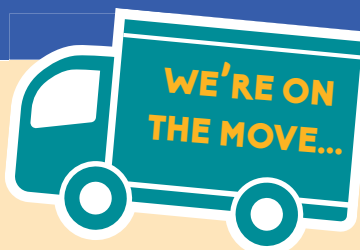
**LAST DAY ON FRANKLIN ST.**

**APRIL 11TH**

**REOPENING AT THE TOWN HALL**

This past week marked the beginning of our move out of Franklin St. and down the road!

A wonderful group of volunteers met Thursday morning to move the historical documents into the Episcopal Church! What an organized group! **Big thanks go out to -** Joe Flynn, Phil Worn, Nancy Spaulding-Ness, Bruce Ness, Cecil Reniche-Smith, Greg Smith, George Fjeld, Diana Williams and Gary Meffe. If you would like to take part, check out our website and sign up as a volunteer: [brandonpubliclibrary.org/renovation/](http://brandonpubliclibrary.org/renovation/)



## RENOVATION PLANS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND MORE ONLINE AT:

[brandonpubliclibrary.org/renovation/](http://brandonpubliclibrary.org/renovation/)

THIS AD IS GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY GARY & NANCY MEFFE



# Police report

(Continued from Page 18)  
side of them. Police are investigating the incident.

Just over an hour later police responded to a request for a welfare check by a female caller that resided on Franklin Street who had not heard from her elderly neighbors in a few weeks. The police department was able to contact the neighbors, who were doing fine. The neighbors were advised to contact the complainant to assure her that they were okay.

On February 18 police assisted Vermont State Police - New Haven with a DUI in Leicester on Route 7. The suspect was arrested on suspicion of DUI and the Brandon officer stood by on-scene for the tow truck to arrive due to the hazardous location. A domestic disturbance on River Street drew police attention later in the day. The verbal dispute did not involve physical violence, but neither party would leave the residence. With police encouragement, both agreed to "stay away" from one another for the rest of the night.

That night police were once again called to River Street, where a male had been reported as unconscious and choking. The responding officer rendered first aid until Brandon Area Rescue arrived.

In other activity, Brandon

Police:

### On Feb. 13

- Took fingerprints for nursing licenses.
- Patrolled Center Street area and reported no activity
- Responded to a hit and run on Conant Square.
- Stopped a car driving on Park Street without headlights on and issued driver a warning

### On Feb. 14

- Began investigation into a death on Mulcahy Drive.
- Assisted a Pearl Street resident with package delivery issue.
- Received a complaint of an erratic driver on Union Street.

### On Feb. 15

- Took fingerprints for nursing license, foster care and school employment.
- Served a restraining order to a resident on Valley View Drive. served in-hand without incident.
- Verified a VIN number for a Brandon resident.
- Patrolled Center Street on foot.

### On Feb. 16

- Investigated a suspicious vehicle on Franklin Street.
- Investigated lewd and illicit material being sent to a vulnerable adult.

11:33:39 Traffic Stop Marble St Motor vehicle stop on Marble Street for speeding. Warning issued to the operator.

• Addressed a minor tractor-trailer accident on Franklin Street.

• Responded to a juvenile problem at Otter Valley Union High School.

• Took fingerprints for school volunteering, school employment, nursing license and student teacher/observer

• Posted a property watch notice at a Mount Pleasant Drive residence.

• Began an investigation of Disorderly Conduct on Franklin Street.

• Enforced speed on Franklin Street, stopping two vehicles. No tickets issued.

• Made traffic stops on Marble Street and Franklin Street for speeding, issuing three warnings.

• Assisted with a car fire on Grove Street

• Responded to an alarm on Franklin Street.

### On Feb. 17

• Responded to a single-car crash on Court Drive.

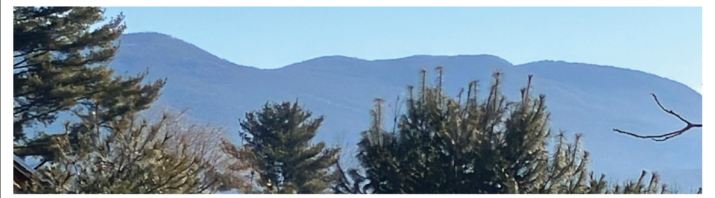
• Investigated a suspicious event at Union Street Grocery.

• Made a welfare check on a resident on Franklin Street.

• responded to a crash on (See Police report, Page 22)

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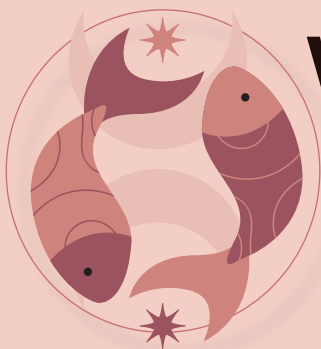
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## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



### ARIES March 21-April 20

Take a few deep breaths before forging ahead with a plan that you have in mind, Aries. You might need to think things through a little more in the days to come.

### TAURUS April 21-May 21

Taurus, when a new opportunity arises, you may feel like a fish out of water until you get into a routine. After that learning period, things will come more easily.

### GEMINI May 22-June 21

Gemini, do not wait around for change to come. Sometimes you have to get the ball rolling yourself. Put plans in motion and figure out who will join you.

### CANCER June 22-July 22

Cancer, right now is a big waiting game, and that could have you feeling a bit frustrated. If you are ready for action, take on a hobby or something else to stay busy.

### LEO July 23-Aug. 23

Leo, you may get wind that others are talking about you when you are not around. Remember that all publicity is good publicity. You're on their minds and that's important.

### VIRGO Aug. 24-Sept. 22

Virgo, after a few tumultuous months, you finally get into a groove and forge a new path for yourself. You may be surprised by what comes your way.

### LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23

You may joke about something that someone else takes very seriously, Libra. Be careful with your words to avoid offending someone you care about.

### SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22

You may have a lot of ideas, Scorpio, but it is essential to figure out funding if those plans are to be put in motion. This includes home improvements.

### SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21

Sagittarius, it's time to embrace your love of culture, as you need to start pushing the creative side rather than the analytical one. Visit a museum when time permits.

### CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20

Opportunity awaits if you know where to

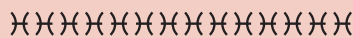
look, Capricorn. A new business venture could be right around the corner. Start thinking of ways to get involved.

### AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18

Aquarius, a big project is finished and you could not be happier. That pressure may have been weighing you down and now you have more free time.

### PISCES Feb. 19-March 20

Pisces, your own mind could be your only obstacle this week. Clear this mental hurdle and enjoy the challenges ahead.



### FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- Feb. 23 George Frideric Handel, composer (d)
- Feb. 24 Edward James Olmos, actor, director, producer, activist (76)
- Feb. 25 George Harrison, musician (d)
- Feb. 26 Johnny Cash (d)
- Feb. 27 Constantine the Great, Roman emperor (d)
- Feb. 28 Linus Pauling, scientist, Nobel Laureate (d)
- Mar. 1 Frédéric Chopin, composer (d)



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J. Powers, J. Hitchcock, I. Chatterton. Price, \$15 10s. No. 6.	Eben, Hopkins & Co. Price, \$10. No. 7.	Minister's Pew. No. 8.	PULPIT.		Caleb Hooper & Co. Price, \$10. No. 9.	Esq. Drury and Price, \$10. No. 10.	D. Lee, Hitchcock, Lobb and Lyman. Price, \$10. No. 11.
Wm. Cox Abel Wright. Price, \$10. No. 5.	Bent, Cooley. Price, \$10. No. 6.	A. Kellogg, P. Ripley and Wm. Cox & Co. Price, \$15 10s. No. 1.	Adams, Samuel and Thos. and Coopers. Price, \$10. No. 1.	Parnoley, Weed and Bil's Woodruff. Price, \$10. No. 6.	Daniel Stevens. Price, \$10 10s. No. 4.		
West Door.	Thos. Hammond and F. Powers. Price, \$10. No. 5.	C. Drury, Ady Drury and Ady's Ladys. Price, \$10. No. 2.	Sam'l Cephey & Co. Price, \$10. No. 2.	A. Leach and M. Pack. Price, \$10. No. 5.	C. Hendon, Jr., and B. Christie. Price, \$10 10s. No. 3.		
M. Potter, S. Harwood, and Nath'l Kingsley. Price, \$15 10s. No. 4.	Neusecomb and R. Ward. Price, \$10 10s. No. 4.	Samuel Hopkins and Rosen. Price, \$10. No. 3.	Bil'd Orent and Ma'w. Price, \$10. No. 3.	Sin'a Tupper, Jr., and John Woodruff. Price, \$10. No. 4.	East Door.		
David Starks. Price, \$10. No. 5.	Thos. Hammond and Wm. Spencer. Price, \$10. No. 2.		John Barnes, Stephen Hend, Ma'w, Mend and Nath'l Hopkins. Price, \$10 10s. No. 1.	James Fering, Rev- and John Standish. Price, \$10. No. 2.	C. Conley. Price, \$10 10s. No. 4.		
Men's Stairs.	Thos. Hammond and Wm. Spencer. Price, \$10. No. 2.		John Barnes, Stephen Hend, Ma'w, Mend and Nath'l Hopkins. Price, \$10 10s. No. 1.	James Fering, Rev- and John Standish. Price, \$10. No. 2.	Thos. Avery & Co. Price, \$10 10s. No. 3.		
FRONT DOOR.							
The above is a true Draught of Pittsford Meeting House.							
Attost,				SAMP'L COPEY, PH'L RIPLEY, BENJ. COOLEY, CALEB COOLEY.		Committee.	

THE ORIGINAL FLOORPLAN of the Pittsford Meetinghouse. Names of parishioners and the cost to rent the seats are noted.

# Pittsford history found in Brandon Library attic

BY MICHAEL DWYER

PITTSFORD—As part of the Brandon Library clean-out and renovation, volunteer Carol Fjeld discovered a 78-page pamphlet on the centennial observance of the Pittsford Congregational Church from June of 1884. She kindly dropped off the copy to me at the church last week. It was also a wonderful opportunity for Carol to update me on news of the Fjeld adult children, all of whom were a pleasure for me to have taught at OVUHS.

This slender volume provides a time capsule not only of the church's history but also of ways that a church community interacted with a series of exercises and addresses to mark a milestone anniversary.

The congregation sat through several hours-long orations that took two days to deliver. It was a

social as well as religious event. Today, in our world of screens and sound bites, we cannot fully appreciate how folks from a century ago certainly had longer attention spans! As a lover of books and historical ephemera, I gratefully received this paper copy for our church archives.

The folder chart inside the front cover details the floor plan of the first meeting house erected around 1795. [Our existing building dates from 1837. The meeting house was moved and later lost in a fire].

We learn at least four compelling facts about Congregational history from this sheet of paper:

1. Prominence of the pulpit
2. Separate entrances for men and for women
3. Box pews
4. Social hierarchy as reflected in rental prices

of the pews, still valued in pounds and shillings

Genealogists among us recognize that Kingleys, Hendees, and Hitchcocks still reside in the area today.

Other families migrated west in the 19th century, Cooleys among them, whose descendants I know in Utah.

It took a small investment of time to give this booklet a new home. What would have been lost if it ended up in a dumpster? Thank you, Carol.



CAROL FJELD PRESENTS Rev. Michael Dwyer of the Pittsford Congregational Church a program from the church's centennial celebrations in 1884. The pamphlet was discovered in the attic of the Brandon Library.



## Pink haze

THE GREEN MOUNTAINS were bathed in a pink light that was reflecting off the snow capped peaks. Photo by Dale Christie

# Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District prepares for summer

BY GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON—The regular meeting of the Otter Creek Watershed (OWB) Board on February 16 was attended by invited guests from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture: Steve Dwinell, Director of Public Health and Agricultural Resource Management Division, and Patti Casey, Environmental Surveillance Program Manager. Dwinell, in his first year in Vermont, ran mosquito control in Florida most of his career. He's now responsible for the regulatory framework, tech support, and oversight of insect control in Vermont. Casey, who is also a talented singer/songwriter, is charged with helping with mosquito surveillance and administering grants to the insect-control districts. There are only two such districts in Vermont: OCW and Lemon Fair.

Dwinell described the district's task as control of the mosquito population to keep it at a tolerable level. Surveillance is the key issue and

control measures are only employed when the population is at or will be above the tolerance limit. The OCW has a permit for larvicide application that will continue until 2025. The adulticide permit will need to be renewed this year. He's looking to work with the district to develop the permit application and conditions of adulticide use.

Dwinell went on to say that mosquitoes' primary blood-meal necessary for survival comes from birds. High levels of mosquito population can greatly impact bird populations. Humans are only innocent bystanders/victims in the mosquitoes' survival. Routine treatment to control mosquitoes is not necessary; larvicides and adulticides are only used when the population gets to a high enough level to impact human comfort. Some areas cannot use larvicide and therefore need to use adulticide. Forested areas are the most common examples in our area.

Approval of the publishing of an updated trifold brochure

was passed. An annual budget of \$236,329 was also approved.

The meeting began with public comment from Wayne Rausenberger, who stated that the watershed has 16,000 acres of wetland and receives \$4.38/acre of grant for larvicide. No aerial spraying has occurred for 3 years. Only about 30% of the wetlands are accessible from land. This was acknowledged by the board. The board refused to hear questions from Rausenberger after the presentation by Mr. Dwinell.

NOTE—No Spray Zone requests must be made/renewed annually before April 15th. Requests received after April 15th will be honored, but there could be a delay between receipt of the request and marking the property, which could result in the property being sprayed. For further information about adulticiding activities or No Spray Zone requests please contact the OCW at [www.ocwicd.com/adulticide-program](http://www.ocwicd.com/adulticide-program) or call 802-247-6779.



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## Police report

(Continued from Page 19)

and issuing a ticket and a warning.

- Conducted property watches at Hawk Hill Guns and Ammo on Franklin Street, Union Street Grocery on Union Street, and Jiffy Mart on Grove Street.
- Responded to an alarm in Conant Square, later determined to be faulty.

### On Feb. 19

- Enforced speed limit on Franklin Street.
- Made two traffic stops on Grove for speeding. Issued warnings for speeding and defective equipment and tickets for speeding and for not having liability insurance.
- Assisted VSP-New Haven with a DUI in Leicester on Route 7.
- Responded to a domestic disturbance River Street.
- Assisted Brandon Area rescue with a medical emergency on River Street.

Like all things vintage?

Mim's Photos



are on page 16!

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Notices        | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Wanted       | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Card of Thanks | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings** | <input type="checkbox"/> Att. Farmers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personals      | <input type="checkbox"/> For Sale          | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Services       | <input type="checkbox"/> Help Wanted       | <input type="checkbox"/> Cars         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free**         | <input type="checkbox"/> For Rent          | <input type="checkbox"/> Trucks       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lost & Found** | <input type="checkbox"/> Want to Rent      | <input type="checkbox"/> SUVs         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Sales   | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate       | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiles  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn & Garden  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wanted            | <input type="checkbox"/> Boats        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities  | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Rentals  |                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Heat         |                                       |

\*\* No charge for these ads

PLEASE PRINT YOUR AD HERE

The Reporter assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun the ad in which the error occurred at no charge. No refunds will be made. Advertisers will please notify us of any errors noted.

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Number of words: \_\_\_\_\_

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**BRANDON FIRE DEPARTMENT** respond to a car fire on Route 7 in Brandon. The driver, Emily Abair, was not hurt. A passing motorist stopped and called 911. Abair was driven home to Rutland by Brandon Police. Photos by David Roberts

# Brandon Fire Department extinguishes flaming car on Rt. 7

**BY STEVEN JUPITER**

BRANDON—The call came into 911 a little before 9:00 p.m. on Thursday: a car was on fire on Route 7 just north of Cattails restaurant in Brandon. Emily Abair of Rutland had been traveling home to Rutland from dinner with her mother in Burlington when her Toyota

Camry stalled. Smoke began to escape from under the hood. She tried to get the hood open but couldn't before the wisps of smoke became billows.

A passing motorist, David Roberts of Brandon, was on his own way home from dinner in Randolph when he saw Abair on the side of the road

trying to flag someone down. He pulled over, warned Abair to step away from the car, and called 911.

"I wish I'd had a fire extinguisher in my truck," said Roberts. When he pulled over, the fire was small and limited to the undercarriage. But within minutes, it had spread to the body. By the time the fire trucks arrived, the Camry was engulfed in flames.

"[Abair's] phone had died, so she couldn't call anyone," said Roberts. "She asked me to send her mother a text to let her know what had happened and that she was safe."

Brandon Fire Department was able to recover Abair's belongings from the trunk of the car. Brandon Police Department gave her a ride home to Rutland.



**THE FLAMES SEEN** from further up Route 7. The car had stalled before bursting into flames.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### TOWN OF PITTSFORD, VERMONT

[www.pittsfordvermont.com](http://www.pittsfordvermont.com)

#### Adoption of Town of Pittsford Ordinance Regulating All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

This ordinance includes the Town of Pittsford authority, purpose, definitions, town highways, speed limits and traffic control devices, time of operation, single file, racing, operation on public roads and cemeteries, penalties, enforcement, other laws, severability, and effective date. A full copy of the ordinance is posted on the town website. Please reach out to the Town Manager with questions at PO Box 10 Pittsford, VT 05763 or by telephone at (802) 483-6500 ext. 20. Citizens have a right to petition pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 1973 for a vote on the Ordinance.

### TOWN OF PITTSFORD, VERMONT

[WWW.PITTSFORDVERMONT.COM](http://WWW.PITTSFORDVERMONT.COM)

#### ADOPTION OF TOWN OF PITTSFORD SPEED LIMIT ORDINANCE

This ordinance includes the Town of Pittsford enactment, definition, prohibition, 15 MPH limits, 25 MPH limits, 30 MPH limits, 35 MPH limits, Specifications for Kendall Hill Road, West Creek Road, and Whipple Hollow Road, incorporation of US Route 7 into Speed Limit Ordinance, bridge speed limits, signs, police and fire vehicle speed limitations, enforcement, effective date, and the repeal process. A full copy of the ordinance is posted on the town website. Please reach out to the Town Manager with questions at PO Box 10 Pittsford, VT 05763 or by telephone at (802) 483-6500 ext. 20. Citizens have a right to petition pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 1973 for a vote on the Ordinance.



# Wood's Market

(Continued from Page 1)

With Bob's advice and support, Satz got the farm going in his own direction and developed a fierce local following for his flowers and organic produce. Every spring, local gardeners descended upon the farm to snap up the high-quality vegetable starts, hoping to get them into the ground at just the right time to exploit the relatively short growing season here in Vermont. If you didn't hustle down to Wood's on Memorial Day weekend, the traditional start of the growing season, there was a good chance they'd be sold out of what you wanted by the time you made it over there.

In 2006, Jon met Courtney Poremski, a graphic designer who'd grown up in Brandon but had moved away—they were introduced by Courtney's mother. By 2008, Jon and Courtney were married. They ran the farm together for 15 years, had two sons—Ezra, now 12, and Emmet, now 9—cementing themselves and the farm at the center of Brandon's summer season.

"Jon was constantly thinking about how to change things for the better," said Courtney. "He ran the farm with integrity."

Everything changed in 2021 when Jon passed away unexpectedly from cancer at the age of 56,

leaving a devastated Courtney to figure out what to do with the farm that Jon had poured his heart and soul into for 22 years.

"Jon ran the ship," Courtney said. "He was the brains of the operation. I learned a lot about farming over the years, but I was definitely not the farmer. It wouldn't have been the same without Jon. And I didn't want to have a floundering business."

People offered to step in and help keep the place going. Many people expressed interest in buying the farm but turned out to be less than serious.

"Tire kickers, that's what you'd call them," said Sally Wood. "They just wanted to come in and nose around."

Then came Dan and Elyse Wulfkühle (pronounced "wolf-cool").

In spring of 2022, one of Jon's best friends told Courtney about a young couple originally from Massachusetts who were living out in Washington state and dreaming of running their own organic farm. Would she be willing to talk with them?

Their first Zoom call was in April of last year. Now Dan and Elyse are living in the house where Bob & Sally and Jon & Courtney had lived and raised kids before them. And

they're ready to give the farm their all.

"This is definitely Dan's dream," said Elyse, who worked in resource management—specifically water quality—for the Quineault tribe in Washington.

"We wanted to be in a position to be givers in the community,"

said Dan, who has degrees in Plant, Soil, and Insect Science, precisely the sort of background you might expect from someone determined to farm organically.

Dan and Elyse have two young children: Clara, age 3, and Theo, age 1. They're outdoorsy folk, love to hike, swim, and camp. In other words, they seem ready-made for life in Vermont. In fact, Brandon's proximity to nature was one of the selling points for Elyse.

"Vermont seemed like a wholesome place to raise our children," she said.

When (jokingly) asked if they understand the big shoes they have to fill, they both laugh.



**AN AERIAL VIEW of what is now Wood's Market when it was still run mostly as a resort on Jones Pond along Route 7. Bob & Sally Wood opened the roadside vegetable stand in the 1970s.**

"We plan to emulate what the farm has been in the past," Dan says. "We know what the market has meant to people here. We'll have the same plants and vegetables. Strawberries are a 2-year crop, so this year we won't have them ready for the June harvest, but we should have some in August."

Dan and Elyse plan on continuing to offer customers CSA ("Community Supported Agriculture") options, which is essentially a pre-buy program. For a fixed amount of money up front, you're guaranteed a certain allotment of produce throughout the season. For the summer season, the CSA will be a gift card that will allow customers to purchase a set amount of what-

ever they choose from the farm stand. In the fall, when the harvest is more limited, the Wulfkühles will pre-package a selection of fall produce for CSA members. Anyone interested in the program can join on their website: woodsmarketgarden.com.

As we draw closer to spring, Dan and Elyse will have their capable hands full getting the farm ready for their planned opening on Saturday, May 6.

"I'm super excited to see the farm change and how Dan and Elyse make it their own," said Courtney. "In all of the decisions that had to be made for the sale, I was consumed with making Jon proud. I think I have."

## Addison County's Hometown Dealer



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802-388-6718  
gstonemotors.com

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