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A community supported newspaper

Vol. 28, No. 27

Wednesday, July 5, 2023

\$1



CHAMPIONS AMONG US

Swiss Roll Madness! Read about the winners of this year's contest and marvel at their astonishing ability to inhale food.

PG. 30

NAME LOST IN VERMONT

Learn about the Eugairs of Vermont. Their name has undergone several transformations since they left France hundreds of years ago.

PG. 2

BETTER BRANDON

The Downtown Brandon Alliance has done an enormous amount to keep downtown Brandon vibrant. Read about its history and mission.

PG. 14



GARDENING CORNER

Visit the wonderful garden section of Blue Seal with Lyn Desmarais.

PG. 7

DUCK RACE

Un-ducking-believable comeback! Read about Winky's triumphant return to Brandon after last year's humiliating defeat in the Rubber Duck Race.

PG. 26



Celebrating Independence!

BRANDON CELEBRATED INDEPENDENCE Day on Saturday, July 1 with its annual parade, festivities behind the Brandon Inn, a rockin' street dance, and, of course, a terrific fireworks show over downtown. See all the photos starting on Page 16.

Photo by Steven Jupiter

George Valley to be Pastor at United Church of W. Rutland

BY STEVEN JUPITER

WEST RUTLAND—The United Church of West Rutland (UCWR) is a small congregation with an outsize history. Originally known as West Parish, it's the oldest Congregational church in Rutland County; services were held in a log cabin from 1773 to 1788. Moreover, from 1788 to 1818, the congregation was led by Lemuel Haynes, the first black man to be ordained as a minister in the United States.

However, with only 20-25 people at Sunday services each week, it's often overshadowed by other congregations in the area. And the church building itself, for all its mid-Victorian beauty, is easy to miss, tucked away on a residential side street just steps from downtown West Rutland.

"It's time for people to recognize this little community of faith here," said George Valley, UCWR's new pastor. Valley was voted in by the Board at (See *George Valley*, Page 31)



THE UNITED CHURCH of West Rutland was founded in 1773. Its current building was erected in the 1860s.



A LINE OF Sheehan ski lift chairs awaits their new owners, determined by raffle, at the Middlebury Snowbowl. Photo by George Fjeld

Middlebury Snowbowl raffles off Sheehan chairs

BY GEORGE FJELD

RIPTON—On Friday, June 30th, a hopeful crowd of over 200 gathered as Middlebury Snowbowl raffled off 44 chairs from the decommissioned Sheehan chairlift. Before any chairs were raffled, Snowbowl and Rikert general manager

Mike Hussey presented chair #1 to Jack Sheehan, son of legendary Middlebury College ski coach Bobo Sheehan, for whom the chairlift was named. Sheehan reciprocated by buying the chair for the person whose ticket would be the 20th (See *Sheehan chairs*, Page 8)

Names lost in Vermont, part 3: Dillor Eugair

BY MICHAEL DWYER

In 1923, when Dillor Eugair, his wife, Stella, and their six children moved from Burlington to Pittsford, Vermont, he brought with him an unusual first name and a one-of-a-kind last name. Dillor, also known as Frank, left a confusing genealogy trail for his many descendants. His death certificate, dated 24 July 1957, stated that he was born in North Adams, Massachusetts. Earlier records pointed to Canada as his birthplace. Dillor's marriage record in Burlington, 28 October 1907, settled the question that he was born in St. Jean, Quebec. Rev. Jerome Cloarec, a French-speaking priest, wrote his name differently in the marriage register of St. Joseph's Church: Adelard and then surname (Jewett). "Dillor," therefore, evolved as a nickname deriving from the French pronunciation of Adelard (Ah DAY-Lar). Baptisms of Dillor and Stella's children at St. Joseph's spelled their surname six different ways: Julère, Eugeais, Eugear, Eugair, Eugère, and Eugier! Since the surname Eugair is not found in any Québec church records, what was Dillor Eugair's authentic last name?

Two entries in Burlington's 1910 City Directory left tantalizing clues: Dillor Eugair, laborer, lived on 243

Elmwood Avenue. Cross-referencing that same directory by street address revealed that Dillor Brignol, weaver, boarded at the same address. Were they the same person? My sister-in-law, Susan L. Valley, a retired French teacher, eventually cracked the name puzzle and its "dit name" variant: Juair dit Brignol. Thus, Juair morphed into Eugair. Even with this revelation, it was still a labyrinthine path tracing this family's migration from Canada to the United States.

In 1900, we find "Delor" Bregnot, age 16 (but really 14), living in North Adams, Massachusetts, with his parents, Wilfred and Mathilda Bregnot, and several siblings. Many French-Canadians of this time took Wilfred as an English-sounding nickname in honor of Sir Wilfred Laurier, the first French-Canadian prime minister. Wilfred Bregnot, also known as Zen or Teb, was born as Eusebe Juair. Earning his living as a shoemaker, Eusebe and his wife Matilde Loisselle had ten children, all of whom immigrated to the United States. Not one among them was named Adelard! Instead, we discover Ulric Juair, baptized on 12 October 1886, at St.-Alexandre, Iberville, Québec, near the city of St. Jean—the same man known in Vermont as Dillor Eugair.



THE CHURCH OF St. Trophime in Arles. The Eugair family of Vermont can trace its lineage back to this town, via Quebec.
Photo by Michael Dwyer

Dillor was only four generations removed from his ancestor, Jean Baptiste Juher, from Aix-en-Provence, France, who came to Canada in the 1760s. Juher's de-

scendants vacillated in the spelling of their last name and whether they added the dit name Brignol. Imagine my delight in discovering, by chance, the surname Brignol in

the crypt of the medieval church of St. Trophime in Arles, France, as a soldier who accompanied St. King Louis IX on the 12th Crusade in 1248!

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With Phil Scott's signature, motel residents can stay until April

BY LOLA DUFFORT/
VTDIGGER

MONTPELIER—Gov. Phil Scott on Thursday signed legislation that should allow about 2,000 people to keep receiving state vouchers to live in motels until April, unless the state can find alternate shelter or housing for them.

H.171, which became law only two days before July 1 — when those roughly 2,000 individuals were initially told they would be evicted — represents a partial but nevertheless startling reversal for Democratic legislative leaders and the Republican governor. With federal money that once underwrote the pandemic-era program now gone, both had insisted for months that the program was too expensive and needed to end.

The bill that Scott signed, which lawmakers passed during a special veto session last week, does technically end the program. But, it also effectively extends it for current participants, who will be able to remain where they are until the spring if they contribute 30% of their income toward their stay. (However, an unhoused individual or family who seeks shelter from the state after June 30, when pandemic-era rules expire, will be excluded

from the deal but able to apply for a motel voucher according to pre-pandemic rules, which much more tightly restrict who can get them and for how long.)

“For the first and only time this session, legislative leaders were willing to negotiate with us and pass a bill that gave us tools to ease this transition and address the issue of permanent housing at the same time,” Scott told reporters at his weekly press conference Thursday, after announcing he’d signed the legislation.

The 11th-hour deal appeared to be a concession to a bloc of Democrats and Progressives in the House who had banded together to demand that the program be at least partially extended. That group wielded powerful leverage: the votes legislative leaders needed to override Scott’s veto of the state budget.

But it’s also not that simple. That group of dissidents was told by House leadership in no uncertain terms, after the Legislature first adjourned in May, that their demand was impossible, lawmakers told VTDigger. They were even warned that leaders might work with Republicans, not them, to get a budget deal across the finish line.

The dam appeared to break, according to Rep. Caleb Elder,

D-Starksboro, one member of the group, when the Senate — whose leaders were widely viewed as the most resistant to extend the program — changed its mind.

“I think as soon as they gave any daylight to House leadership, House leadership was like ‘Well, getting our people back on board and not having the override go down is way better,’” he said.

To explain their change of heart, legislative leaders in the House and Senate alike have pointed the finger back at the administration, arguing that recent actions made clear that they weren’t prepared for a July 1 exit date.

Reached by phone this week, Sen. Jane Kitchel, the influential chair of the chamber’s budget-writing Appropriations Committee, reiterated these arguments. After the Legislature initially adjourned, the administration began regularly briefing a small group of law-

makers. In the Caledonia Democrat’s telling, that’s when they learned that state officials had released a request for proposals for emergency shelter just days before June 1, when a first round of 800 people were set to lose motel benefits. That struck her as “kind of late in the process.”

And the other late-breaking announcement by administration officials that some would get an extension anyway “was kind of a signal that the administration was recognizing the need for more time,” she said.

The motel deal signed Thursday only applies to those who meet certain eligibility criteria — including families with children, the elderly, domestic abuse survivors, and those on federal disability. (Those who didn’t meet that criteria, according to state officials’ assessment, lost their motel housing in June.) And advocates had spent the session flooding lawmakers’ inbox-

es with tales of motel residents on oxygen, in wheelchairs, and recovering from surgery.

Even so, Kitchel said that while she knew that there were people who were elderly and disabled in the motels, she hadn’t known until recently just how acute some of their needs were.

“I would never have thought we had nursing home-level people being housed in motel rooms,” she said, adding that it wasn’t clear the state knew either.

The motel program deal written by lawmakers is also notable for the reporting requirements it imposes on the Agency of Human Services as it transitions participants out of the program. State officials will have to update lawmakers monthly — including in the off-session — on their progress finding new placements for those who still live in motels.

“One of the things I think we acknowledged was that our level and degree and depth of oversight and data collection and accountability was not at the level it needed to be,” Kitchel said.

Scott’s director of communications, Rebecca Kelley, said the governor’s office disagreed with the notion that its recent actions suggested it hadn’t adequately

(See Motel residents, Page 6)

“It looks very bad, morally and politically, if you are actually going to take disabled people and push them out of their current shelter, out into the streets with no other options.”


—Mike Maughan, a former motel resident now living in his car



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BRANDON REPORTER

Editorial

The parade is us

BY STEVEN JUPITER

Even in a small town like Brandon it's easy to retreat into a bubble of likeminded friends and family and ignore the segments of the community that don't mesh with our own personal politics and preferences. And so it was heartening to see the entire community on display during the Brandon Independence Day Parade and its related events on Saturday.

Nearly every diverse aspect of our community was represented in some form on a day that celebrates the one thing that binds us all together: our Americanness. We saw cultural organizations like the Library and the Museum. We saw our first responders. We saw the American Legion and the Boy Scouts. We saw Democrats, Republicans, Progressives, and Libertarians. We saw drag queens, beauty queens, and Civil War reenactors. We saw climate activists on pedaled vehicles and farmers on gas-powered tractors. We saw bagpipes and baseball teams. And our Grand Marshals, tasked with leading this most American of endeavors, were two long-time, committed Brandon residents who were not born in this country but instead chose it for themselves and their children many years ago.

All along Park and Center Streets, those who weren't in the parade gathered to watch it, waving flags

and cheering on the various contingents as they passed. I didn't march in this year's parade—I was busy covering it—but last year I marched with the Brandon Museum and can say firsthand what a wonderful feeling it was to be applauded by people who'd probably never even visited our building. And the fact that they hadn't visited didn't matter a bit. There was a sense of camaraderie, of we're-in-it-togetherness, that transcended our personal predilections. And it was a moment to take pride in all that Brandon and our neighboring towns have to offer.

It can often be depressing to watch the news these days, with a constant drumbeat of division pounding in our ears. We're constantly being told to focus on our differences rather than on our commonalities. That's no way for a society to survive and certainly no way for a community as small as ours to function. If we can't see each other as neighbors even when we disagree, how can we expect to keep this enterprise going? The parade wasn't simply an exercise in patriotism, as important as that is; it was also a reminder of who we are and what we mean to one another. It was a reminder that despite all our current challenges, we've built something special and precious here and we all have a stake in it.



Why yes, I was hatched with this necklace!

THIS CANADA WARBLER was seen recently along the new Whipple Hollow Trail boardwalk that Rutland County Audubon along with the town of W. Rutland has created.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

Letters to the editor

Letters Policy: The Reporter will only print letters to the editor that are signed with the author's full name, address and a phone number so the author may be reached for verification or questions. Only name and town will be printed.

Letters will only be accepted from residents of the eight towns we cover (Brandon, Pittsford, Proctor, West Rutland, Goshen, Sudbury, Leicester and Whiting) or letters that pertain to issues or people in our coverage area. We will also consider letters from former residents if the subject matter is pertinent.

The editor reserves the right to approve or reject any letter to the editor. Any letter considered slanderous or libelous will not be printed. Letters written locally endorsing candidates for office will be accepted without charge.

Send your Letters to the Editor by Fridays before 5 p.m.
Brandon Reporter, 58 Maple St., Middlebury, VT 05753.
Or email to news@brandonreporter.com

The REPORTER

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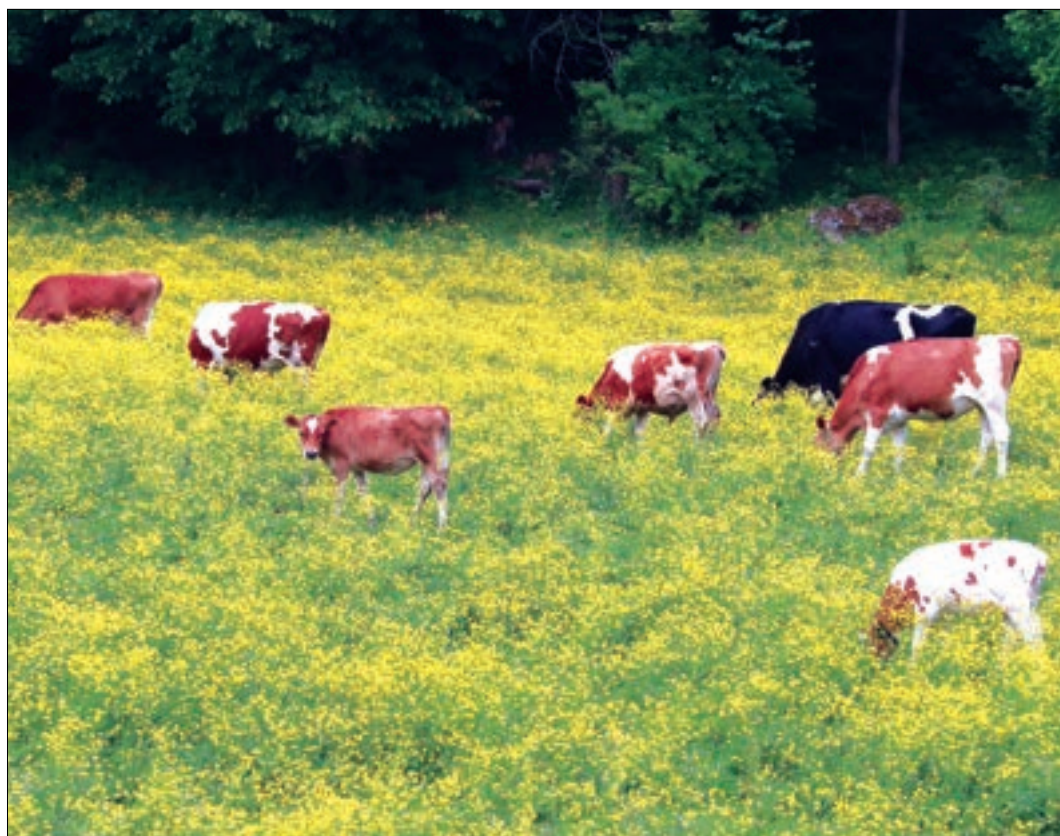
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The Reporter assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertisements but will reprint that part of an advertisement in which the typographical error occurred. Advertisers please notify the management immediately of any errors which may occur. SJ



Yooou looking for me?

THESE BOVINES WERE spotted frolicking among the flowers on West Creek Road in Pittsford.

Photo by Dale Christie

Letters to the Editor

Brandon Inn has all the Brandon Spirit

Many thanks to the incredible Brandon Inn, for all of their community spirit this week! From hosting swim lessons this week to letting Brandon Rec and the Brandon Area Toy Project

take over their back lawn with the Train, Mechanical Bull, Spider Ride, Boneita, Splat the Rat, and more—the Inn stepped up to make things happen.

Brandon is a great town, and

our local businesses make it happen!

Thanks!
Colleen Wright

The town of Brandon showed up for the 4th

You know the phrase: “It takes a village....” When you put all the pieces together to create the Brandon Independence Day Celebration, you realize just how true that statement is. Literally from sun up to sun down, Brandon’s residents and visitors had a plethora of safe and entertaining activities to please a crowd. And the crowd was pleased!

The committee members that put it all together have literally been working since the day after the 2022 celebration (and have already started working on 2024!). And the committee cannot do it without the community. From cold hard cash sponsorships and donations to time and effort. This list is definitely not all-inclusive, so if we’ve omitted anyone, our apologies

A huge thanks to our Super Sponsor Phoenix Feeds & Nutrition and the following Sponsors (over \$200): Bar Harbor Bank and Trust, The Brandon Artists Guild, Markowski Excavating, Inc, The McKernon Group, National Bank of Middlebury, Nifty Thrifty Thrift Shop, The Brandon Inn, Neshobe Golf Course,

Brandon Fire Department and Dunmore Hose Company, Brandon Area Toy Project, the Leary Family.

Also thanks to Supporters: Laurie Bertrand, CPA, Bruce and Sandy Bove, Louis Faivre, Fostering Wellness, High Pond Woodwork, Inc., Mary Hodges, Olia & Seth Hopkins, Dennis Marden, Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home, Otterside Animal Hospital, Mitchell & Maureen Pearl, Rowe Real Estate, Tom & Carolyn Whittaker Real Estate and Wimett Trading Company

Special call-out thanks to the Brandon volunteer firefighters, who not only caught all of the ducks after the race, they also swam into the river to keep some of the ducks from getting stuck! The Party Behind the Inn was a sea of people having a blast. Thanks to the Brandon Inn, Heritage Family Credit Union, and Bar Harbor Bank for their support in making that happen. We appreciate the support of Brandon Lumber /Ace Hardware for opening their yard to parade participant parking and a safe place for people to dis-

embark from their floats, staffed by Dan Boyce, Richard Preseau, and Colton Jensen. We thank our many volunteers who worked day-of-the-event.

There were scores of donations to the Silent Auction – too numerous to mention but every one of them appreciated. And thanks to the voters of Brandon for the town appropriation approved at Town Meeting Day

In addition, thanks to our community partners: Brandon Rec Department, Brandon PD, Brandon Area Chamber of Commerce, Red Clover Ale, Uncle Sam (Warren Kimble), Jam Man Entertainment. And of course, all the families, organizations, businesses, politicians, and entertainers who made the parade so much fun!

Got any good photos of the day’s activities – parade, street dance, fireworks, or party behind the Inn? Post them to <https://www.facebook.com/BIDCC> or email them to: vermonteyecandy@gmail.com.

The Brandon Independence Day Celebration Committee

Community Forum Eat ice cream, and have fun at the Shoreham Congregational Church!

The Shoreham Congregational Church will host an Ice Cream Social on Sunday, July 16, 2023 from 12 to 3 PM in the Church Fellowship Hall on 28 School Road in Shoreham.

Come get your Take-out Ice Cream and celebrate the Shoreham Community in conjunction with the Car Show on the Town Green.

Enjoy a dish of Vanilla and/or Chocolate Ice Cream for only \$4 or make it a Sundae for

only \$7.

Toppings include Chocolate, Caramel, Maple, Strawberries, and Homemade Whipped Cream, adorned with Nuts and Sprinkles.

Tickets for the Quilt Raffle to be held later this fall will also be on sale. Ticket prices are \$3 for one ticket, \$5 for 2 tickets, or \$10 for 5 tickets. The drawing for the quilt will be held during Apple Fest in September.



**NO CONCERT THIS TUESDAY
JULY 4th
Enjoy your Holiday!
Next concert features
Gypsy Reel
Tuesday, July 11, 6 - 8 P.M.**

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Local scholars graduate from Castleton University

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS WHO RECENTLY GRADUATED FROM CASTLETON UNIVERSITY:

Justin Aker of North Chittenden graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science

Sarah Crossmon of Pittsford graduated with a Master of Arts in Education

Stacey Farrington of Proctor graduated with a Master of Arts in Education

Molly Fisher of Brandon graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Nurs-

ing
Timothy Kittler of Brandon graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Biology

Katherine Kloss of Pittsford graduated with a Master of Arts in Education

Julia Lee of Brandon graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Brandi Leno of Whiting graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Jocelyn Noble of Whiting graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Music in

Music Education
Amanda Reynolds of Proctor graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Management

Miranda Stoutes of Brandon graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Sarah Wallis of Pittsford graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Psychological Science

Christa Wood of Florence graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing



Concerts are outside on the Village Farm grounds, weather permitting. In the event of rain, concert is canceled. Check PittsfordVillageFarm.org. This event is free and open to the public. Donations appreciated.

July 11 — Gypsy Reel

Gypsy Reel — this talented quartet plays stirring music rooted in the Celtic tradition, infused with a synthesis of rhythms and influences from three continents.

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Motel residents

(Continued from Page 3)
prepared.

“We’ve been working towards managing the transition while it’s in flux and a little bit uncertain. — that can be challenging. And sometimes particular needs arise when they arise. And the RFP, I would say the (Agency of Human Services) might be able to better speak to the timing, but that’s something where we identified a need and we acted,” she said.

And she argued that the extension announced in late May was not actually a reversal, but something the governor had planned to offer all along — although she did not dispute that lawmakers had once been told just the opposite.

“If there was miscommunication or misunderstanding with the Legislature, then we’ll take the blame for that,” Kelley said,

adding that maybe administration officials had “gotten wires crossed along the way.”

By coming to Scott after the regular session to hammer out a new plan for the motel program, Kelley noted, lawmakers also gave the governor one last chance to push for his top housing priorities.

“Tools that we have been asking for during the session specific to expediting permanent housing, in the areas that specifically target rehousing homeless families, was something we were able to get in this negotiation,” she said.

Tucked inside the deal is a key change to the ‘HOME’ bill that was enacted into law earlier this month, significantly moving up when certain changes will take effect. The legislation made a suite of state and local regulatory reforms aimed at increasing the supply of housing, but most

municipal reforms, including one that legalizes duplexes statewide, didn’t take effect until December 2024. That’s now been changed to July 1 of this year.

The bill also makes changes to how \$40 million in one-time money directed to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for affordable housing construction will be divvied up. Now, 30% — instead of 15% — of its projects will need to target those exiting homelessness. And \$5 million has been redirected to the Vermont Housing Improvement Program, which offers landlords grants of up to \$50,000 to get derelict units back online or create new units in an existing building. (This comes in addition to \$10 million set aside for VHIP in the state budget.)

Anne Sosin, a policy fellow at the Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth College, who advocated for the program’s continuation, argues there’s a simple reason why the powers that be altered their course.

“Very early in the session, we identified what was going to happen if we didn’t fund this program. So the facts had been there all along,” she said. “What changed was that there was a campaign of sustained public pressure.”

But if Democratic leaders reversed themselves so too did the bloc of left-wing Democrats and Progressives that ultimately pushed them to do so. Members of that group initially backed a state budget proposal, which passed out of the House in late March, that would have entirely ended the pandemic-era motel program.

Rep. Jubilee McGill, D-Bridport, a member of the bloc, said she and some of her colleagues didn’t fully understand the implications of what they were signing off on. “I was kind of trusting the process and I didn’t really know the questions to ask,” she said.

Cooped up in Montpelier during the legislative session, lawmakers are somewhat insulated from the rest of the world — and very few have first-hand experience of poverty or homelessness.

But when they went back to their districts, they heard directly from their neighbors and constituents.

“I think it really was hard to conceptualize what this kind of mass un-sheltering would actually look like,” McGill said. “I think going back to our communities, it really kind of hit home.”

“I think it really was hard to conceptualize what this kind of mass un-sheltering would actually look like,” McGill said. “I think going back to our communities, it really kind of hit home.”

— Rep. Jubilee McGill, D-Bridport,

back to our communities, it really kind of hit home.”

One advocate also played an outsized role in driving the public narrative: Brenda Siegel. The activist and two-time candidate for governor offered blistering critiques of legislative leaders, visited the hotels to film testimonials from the people who lived there, and even brought motel residents to the Statehouse to confront lawmakers face-to-face.

“I think without Brenda’s advocacy, Mari and our group probably don’t do it,” Elder said, referring to Rep. Mari Cordes, D-Lincoln, who organized the bloc of renegade Democrats. But Elder also speculated that Siegel’s brand of relentless, confrontational activism might have both enabled and delayed the final outcome.

“There were certain people that didn’t want to do this because they were pissed off people

like Brenda were calling them all sorts of things they didn’t think they earned,” he said.

Elder said Siegel’s role also stood out for another reason: She wasn’t a professional advocate, employed by an institution — nonprofit or otherwise — that regularly lobbies lawmakers for funding. Because that cadre of advocates has so much at stake, their approach with the Legislature is far more “polite,” he said. And he suggested that each group’s anxiety about their individual appropriation sometimes muted their support for a program whose funding they worried might imperil their own.

“There’s sort of behind-the-scenes support, but there’s also the knowledge that like, ‘Hey, if we advocate for this, is it going to come out of our end?’” he said.

Mike Maughan, a former motel resident now living in his car — who will not be sheltered as part of the deal — came to the Statehouse last week as lawmakers were voting on the motel legislation and expressed “mixed feelings” to a reporter at the time. He was glad for the new oversight of the Agency of Human Services, which he called “god f-cking awful” at administering programs, but he also expressed frustration at the partial extension’s very late arrival.

Maughan speculated that Vermont’s political leaders were simply doing “damage control and saving face.”

“It looks very bad, morally and politically, if you are actually going to take disabled people and push them out of their current shelter, out into the streets with no other options,” he said.

He also argued that all the political uncertainty had taken a toll on those staying in motels.

“I just don’t understand why they had to let our most vulnerable population wait until, like, a nail-biting veto vote to just find out if they had housing or not,” he said. “It’s not appropriate.”

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GARDENING CORNER



'Get your hands dirty, dig, and try, try, try'...a visit to Blue Seal

BY LYN DESMARAIS

BRANDON—Blue Seal, just south of Brandon village on Route 7, caters to our local farming community. In spring, you'll see baby chicks and seed potatoes. They sell bird, cat, dog, chicken, goat, sheep, exotics, and horse feeds and shavings. They sell Carhartt farm clothing and boots. They have an array of equipment for all types of gardening.

Audrey LaFountain has been working at Blue Seal for 8 years and is in charge of the plants. She grew up on a dairy farm in Bristol.

"We always had huge vegetable gardens," says Audrey. "We never bought vegetables. My parents even grew enough potatoes for us to eat and for seed the next year. I've always taken care of plants, flowers and vegetables."

"When I first got here, Blue Seal had a really small plant section on the north side of our building. We've grown and grown this area of our business. We moved across the parking lot last year. It takes us 7 hours per day to water all of these plants. We buy our plants from Vermont and other New England sources for the best success rate."



AUDREY LAFOUNTAIN

"We are adding more and more native plants to our selection because they are part of the food web that supports insects, birds, bats, other mammals—our wildlife. These plants will be the least stressed when they're planted, as we know that they grow well here. I am trying to build our native plant collection because I think it's a sustainable and responsible thing to do and we have a lot of interest from our customers, so I'm meeting customer need. But I'm also guiding customers to add these wonderful plants to their gardens. Native plants even help minimize flooding and filter out pollutants. Aren't they amazing?"

"We get our first plant shipments in mid-April. We order perennials and trees based on best sellers, the August before. We order tons of fuchsia and hanging baskets to make sure that we have a lot in stock for Mother's Day. May and June are our busiest months for plant sales. That has shifted. It used to be autumn. We caution everyone that until the threat of a killing frost passes in spring you must cover even the perennials that you buy here. We all experienced the killing frost we had in May. We covered and double covered our plants here

and we were lucky; we lost only a few plants."

"I do enjoy the flowers but I'm partial to gardens and we've added a lot to our vegetable starts this year, peppers, carrots, deep purple kale and radishes. I don't have a garden of my own right now. I have all this to take care of. I would encourage all customers to ask for help if they don't see something they came for. I can interpret descriptions, at least I try to," Audrey said with a laugh. "We have put up signs everywhere that say, 'need help? please ask,' and we mean it."

When asked about an easy garden to grow of annual flowers, Audrey suggested snapdragons, marigolds and marguerite daisies. For shady areas, she suggests a sea of begonias. They have so many colors. "We had an incredible blue begonia, but we sold out of it. We used to have more shrubs but now people want color in their garden, so we have expanded the annuals and perennials sections." They also have expanded their hanging-basket selection to include many other colors and interesting plants. They still have a good selection left.

"My favorite perennials change from year to year, but I do love lilies," continued Audrey. "This year we've got great dianthus, roses, and creeping phlox. We have large coleus with very different, beautiful leaves. My favorite annuals are the pink salvia and scaevola. They're tough and pretty."

Audrey says that the garden section is the "social event of the season."

"People stop and talk and visit.



ROW AFTER ROW of beautiful baskets, flowers, and vegetable starts await eager gardeners at Blue Seal on Route 7 in Brandon. Audrey LaFountain manages the plant section and has worked at Blue Seal for 8 years.

Photos provided

Often, they haven't seen each other in ages. It's marvelous. Another thing I absolutely love about work is that I love seeing families picking out plants together. I love it when customers share their stories with me and pictures of their

garden. They get so enthusiastic. I just love working here. The staff is terrific, everyone chips in to help, and we're always talking about new things we want to try. We are incredibly lucky to have such an amazing staff."

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\$8,995



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THE CROWD ENJOYS the outdoor space at the Starr Shelter at Middlebury Snowbowl before the raffle.

Sheehan chairs

(Continued from Page 1)
drawn. By raffling off the opportunity to buy a chair for a \$20 entry fee, the event was accessible to many faithful Snowbowl enthusiasts. The cost of a chair, for those lucky enough to win the chance to buy one, was \$250.

Howard Kelton, general manager from 1978 to 1995, supervised the installation of the Sheehan chairs, along with snowmaking, in the summer of 1983. He described it as a huge improvement at the time. Now, over the past few winters, he said “I said a little prayer every time I got on the lift that it would not break down, leaving me dangling in the air in the middle of winter.” Kelton, who can be seen skiing many mornings in the winter, loves the Snowbowl atmosphere. “It’s about skiing. It’s a place where you can let your kids go out on their own.” He remembered one year, before snowmaking was a regular occurrence, when they opened in mid-February and closed in early March! “Now it’s time for a new phase,” Kelton quipped.

Hussey is excited about this new phase at the Snowbowl. Although he is sad to retire the 40-year-old Sheehan chair, replacing the fixed-grip double chair with a new detachable

quad is a major upgrade and will make it easier for beginners and children to ride the lift. The “Bowl” is also installing lights for night skiing next winter. The lights will allow skiing Wednesday, Thursday,



HUSSEY CONGRATULATES JACK Sheehan as his family looks on.

and Friday nights all winter. They have cut a new beginner ski trail off the magic carpet lift that features an 8% grade, perfect for “never-ever new skiers,” according to Hussey.

There’s plenty of evidence of the new construction with excavators and rebar staged in the parking lot. The lift towers from the Sheehan chair have come down and the stanchions for the new lights are up. With the Act 250 permit in hand, it’s full speed ahead on installing the new chairlift to have it ready for the 2023-2024 ski season.

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Buster Keaton's 'The General' with live music at Brandon Town Hall on July 15

BRANDON— He never smiled on camera, earning him the nickname of "the Great Stone Face." But Buster Keaton's comedies rocked Hollywood's silent era with laughter throughout the 1920s.

See for yourself with a screening of 'The General' (1926), one of Keaton's landmark feature films, on Saturday, July 15 at 7 p.m. at the Brandon Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7, in Brandon, Vt.

All are welcome to this family-friendly event. Admission is free, with free will donations accepted in support of ongoing Town Hall renovations.

'The General,' set during the U.S. Civil War, tells the story of a southern locomotive engineer (Keaton) whose engine (named 'The General') is hijacked by Northern spies with his girlfriend on board.

Keaton, commandeering another train, races north in pursuit behind enemy lines. Can he rescue his girl? And can he recapture his locomotive and make it back to warn of a coming Northern attack?

Critics call 'The General' Keaton's masterpiece, praising its authentic period detail, ambitious action and battle sequences, and its overall integration of story, drama, and comedy.

It's also regarded as one of Hollywood's great railroad films, with

much of the action occurring on or around moving steam locomotives.

Accompanist Jeff Rapsis will improvise an original musical score for 'The General' live as the movie is shown, as was typically done during the silent film era.

"When the score gets made up on the spot, it creates a special energy that's an important part of the silent film experience," said Rapsis, who uses a digital synthesizer to recreate the texture of a full orchestra for the accompaniment.

With the Brandon Town Hall's screening of 'The General,' audiences will get a chance to experience silent film as it was meant to be seen—in a high quality print, on a large screen, with live music, and with an audience.

"All those elements are important parts of the silent film experience," Rapsis said. "Recreate those conditions, and the classics of early Hollywood leap back to life in ways that can still move audiences today."

Keaton, along with Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd, stands today as one of the silent screen's three great clowns. Some critics regard Keaton as the best of all; Roger Ebert wrote in 2002 that "in an extraordinary period from 1920 to 1929, (Keaton) worked without interruption on a series of films that make him, arguably, the greatest



BUSTER KEATON'S SILENT classic "The General" (1926) will be shown at Brandon Town Hall on Saturday, July 15 at 7 p.m. Jeff Rapsis will accompany the movie with improvised piano music as was the custom in the silent era.

actor-director in the history of the movies."

The screening of 'The General'

is sponsored by Gary and Nancy Meffe; Ben and Claudette Lawton;

Bertram D. Coolidge; Frank and Et-

tie Spezzano; Ronald, Carolyn and Rickly Hayes; and Hayes Pallets.

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SCHOOL: Otter Valley Junior High School

TITLE: Value painting of Among Us

TEACHER: Dasha Kaliszi



Our Creative Kids Poetry Corner

Burr Pond

By Odin

Boating docks
Underwater life
Really good sun fishing
Really good bluegill fishing

Pond full with weeds
Odin fishes there
Never without life
Do not step in goose poop

Submitted from Ms.Mol's
4th grade class at
Otter Creek Academy



Maple the Cow by Matt Querin



Restaurant guide



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for more information

Calendar of events

July Mondays

Brandon Rec offers Aikido classes

Come to Brandon Town Hall for Youth classes at 5 p.m., and adult classes at 6 p.m. Beginners and spectators welcome. Visit www.aikidovermont.org for more information, including fees.

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 with your child's name, age, and contact information for your family.

Friends Zone

The Friends Zone will be initially open 3 hours per week at the Brandon United Methodist Church on Tuesdays from 12–3 p.m. at 1 Franklin Street, Brandon. Socialize with old friends, make new ones. Sip some soup while you sip a drink. Be puzzled for a bit, sorting out a puzzle, or hold an Ace in the hole until the right moment to play it. If so inclined, you can bring to the table a struggle of your own to work on or your thoughts on developing the Friends Zone or improving our lives.

The door is open. Our minds are open. Our hearts are open. All are welcome in.

For more information contact pastors Reverend John Hardman-Zimmerman (hazfm@hotmail.com or (802) 282-7532) or Vicki Disorda (vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com or (802) 345-4125).

Pins & Needles Craft Club at the Brandon Free Public Library

Drop in from 5:30–7:00 p.m., and bring your projects to work on.

Wednesdays

Drop-In Tech Help at the Brandon Free Public Library

Drop in from 11:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. with your tech

issues—not sure how to set up email on your phone or how to rent an audiobook? We can help.

Ping Pong

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

The club has begun playing 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, visit our club's website at www.gmttc.com.

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 Conscious, 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, 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 cancellations, follow on

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

Meditation Group at the Brandon Free Public Library

From 12:30–1:30 p.m. join neighbors for quiet meditation led by Kerrie Quinn.

Thursdays

Storytime at the Brandon Free Public Library

Join Ariana at 11:00 a.m. for a story and a craft. Age 7 and under recommended. Stay for a cup of coffee!

Ukulele Group

Free at the Chaffee Arts Center from 12–1 p.m., for adults & 12+. This is not a class but a group enjoying playing the ukulele together. Must pre-register. There are a limited amount of in-house instruments to reserve.

Attendees will be led through specific sheet music by musician Steven Wilson. All levels are welcome.

Open Mic at Red Clover in Brandon

Join us starting at 6 p.m. for a rousing good time!

Fridays

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.

Maclure Library Knitting Circle

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

Corn Hole at the Godnick Adult Center

By request, we will have drop-in cornhole in the Rec Hall on Fridays from 2–4 p.m.

Play with whoever shows up each time or just practice your cornhole skills!

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

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

Thursday 6th

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown

Happiness is... singing together, learning to whistle, and coming home again! With charm, wit, and heart, You're a Good Man Charlie Brown follows the life of America's most lovable loser. From 4:00– 6:00 pm at the Putney Central School.

Along with Snoopy and other friends from the Peanuts gang, Charlie Brown navigates the ups and downs of growing up, playing football, flying a kite,

Rutland County Audubon Annual Meeting – July 19



Join us for our annual meeting at the Proctor Library at 6 p.m. The annual meeting and installation of officers will fol-

low a potluck supper. Dessert, beverages and utensils provided. All are welcome!

and being friends with just about the best dog there is. Full of memorable songs and iconic moments from the classic Peanuts comic strip, this charming show is sure to delight audiences of all ages.

This is a Weston Young Company production performed OUTDOORS. Please bring your own low-profile seating.

The performance is free, however, ticket reservations are required.

Based on The Comic Strip "Peanuts" by Charles M. Schulz

Books, Lyrics, and Music by Clark Gesner
Additional Dialogue by Michael Mayer
Additional Music and Lyrics by Andrew Lipka
Directed by Frances Limoncelli

Guest Master Class with Joseph Lin

Join us from 4:00– 6:00 pm at the McCarthy Arts Center Recital Hall at Saint Michael's College as Violinist Joseph Lin gives a chamber music master class to student chamber groups. **This class is free and open to the public;** advanced reservation is not required.

Joseph Lin is sought after as a performer and teacher, Joseph Lin (Pre-College '96) appears regularly throughout the U.S., Asia, and Europe. He teaches violin and chamber music and was first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet from 2011 to 2018 before stepping down to devote more time to his four young children. Lin's recent projects include a collaboration with Robert Levin featuring Beethoven and Schubert on period instruments, performances of Bartók's Second Violin Concerto, Beethoven's late string quartets, and the complete Beethoven violin sonatas with Helen Huang at Juilliard. Marking the 300th year of Bach's violin sonatas and partitas, in 2020, Lin presented complete cycles in Boston and Philadelphia. This season, he returns to the Mozart masterpiece the Divertimento K. 563, which he takes on tour with Musicians from Marlboro.

From 2007 to 2011, Lin taught at Cornell University, where his projects included the inaugural Chinese Musicians Residency as well as a collaboration with Cornell composers to study Bach's violin sonatas and partitas and create new works inspired by Bach.

Lin was a founding member of the Formosa Quartet, which won the 2006 London International String Quartet Competition. In 1996, he won first prize at the Concert Artists Guild International Competition and was named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. In 1999, he was selected for the Pro Musicis International Award and, in 2001, he won first prize at the inaugural Michael Hill International Violin Competition in New Zealand. His recordings include the music of Korngold and Busoni with pianist Benjamin Loeb; an album of Debussy, Franck, and Milhaud with pianist Orion Weiss; and the complete unaccompanied works of Bach and Ysaÿe. His recording of Mozart's A Major Violin Concerto with original cadenzas was released in 2017. With the Juilliard Quartet, he recorded Schubert's Death and the Maiden and Elliot Carter's Fifth Quartet as well as the quartet's recent album of Beethoven, Davidovsky, and

Bartók. During the summer, he is a regular artist at the Tanglewood, Ravinia, and Marlboro festivals.

Lin, whose violin teachers have included Mary Canberg (Diploma '45), Shirley Givens (Diploma '53), and Lynn Chang (Pre-College '69), graduated magna cum laude from Harvard in 2000, and in 2002 began an extended exploration of China including studying Chinese music in Beijing as a Fulbright scholar.

Friday 7th

Artificial Intelligence and Your Business

Virtual conversation from 8:30–10:00 am

This will be an opportunity for open dialogue, brainstorming, and critical thinking about present and future uses of AI in your business and beyond.

This will be a group discussion facilitated by Chapter Coordinators Mary Claire Carroll and Melanie Giangreco and WBON member Deb Chisholm.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is making headlines each day and is already impacting many aspects of business. Rather than our typical format with an expert presenter, this will be a facilitated discussion in which womenpreneurs can explore both the potential benefits and drawbacks of implementing AI technology in their businesses.

For example, AI can streamline and automate various business processes, saving time and money, and could have wide-ranging benefits by using the power of big data to create innovative solutions to complex problems. It also has the potential to disrupt certain industries through job displacement, there are concerns over bias and discrimination in algorithm creation, and accessibility and affordability must be considered. This will be an opportunity for open dialogue, brainstorming, and critical thinking about present and future uses of AI in your business and beyond. By the way, this description was written with assistance from ChatGPT, and we will show you how during the meeting.

Friday 7th Saturday 8th

The 20th Annual Westminster Garden Tour in Putney

The Westminster Garden Tour celebrates its 20th anniversary this year on July 8 and 9. The centerpiece of the tour is Gordon and Mary Hayward's garden in Westminster West.

The Westminster Cares Garden Tour celebrates its 20th anniversary this year on July 8 and 9. The centerpiece of the tour is Gordon and Mary Hayward's garden in Westminster West. In addition to the Haywards', the Westminster Center School garden, Hope Roots Flower Farm and a very special private garden in Putney will be on the tour. The tour will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Tickets are \$16, or \$30 for two, and are good for both days of the tour. Several special programs are planned. Eric and Ines Bass, founders of Sandglass Theater, will present two short puppetry pieces on Saturday at the Haywards' garden. At the Westminster Institute, landscape designer Julie Moir-Messervy will give a garden design talk and workshop on Saturday, and on Sunday there will be a bee-keeping workshop by Nancy Frye. Entry to these special events is included with your ticket.

10:00 am – Sun at 3:00 pm
3534 US-5, Putney, VT 05346

BRANDON 2023 LIVE AT KENNEDY PARK

July 8

Will Reed folk alternative

July 15 (Rain date)

Kevin Kareckas singer/songwriter

July 22

Ellie & Co. Fiddle-infused folk

August 12

Tom Van Sant folk rock

August 26

Melissa Moorehouse singer/songwriter

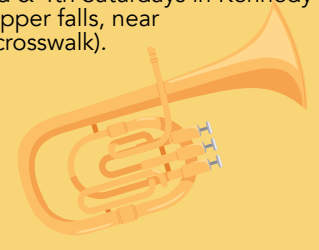
September 9

Doug Ross w/ Wade Davis rock covers & originals

September 23

Silas McPrior acoustic rock

All shows will be 11a.m.–1p.m. on the 2nd & 4th Saturdays in Kennedy Park (upper falls, near the crosswalk).



Goings on around town

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BRANDON, SUMMER 2023!!!

July 27-30 Brandon Carnival!

July 27 Gate Opens at 5,

PAC Wrestling 7pm July 28 Gate Opens at 5, Rock and Roll Art Show 5pm, Brandon Idol Singers 7pm

July 29 Gate Opens at noon, Afternoon of Crowns, Aaron Audet at 7pm

July 30 Gate Opens at noon, Beyond the Barn Petting Zoo, Circus Camp Demo

Aug 5th Townwide Yard Sale!

Aug 19th Brandon Car Show!

Aug 20th Slide Out of Summer! More to come! Follow us on FB!

Friday 7th Sunday 9th

Outerbike Killington

Join us 9:30 am–Sunday 5:30 pm at the Killington Resort. Admission is \$295.00 What's Included? For starters, EVERY pass includes original Outerbike swag, three tasty lunches and happy hours both Friday & Saturday afternoons. Both BYOB and Full Demo passes include 3 full days of lift tickets (Killington, Crested Butte & Duluth/Spirit Mountain) - a huge bonus in and of itself! If there's no lifts (Moab and Bentonville) we sub in daily shuttles and more XC riding. And finally, if you want to demo bikes, the Full Demo pass is what gets you access to all those dream machines. We always offer free parking, discounted lodging, and a guaranteed fun weekend. But most of all Outerbike is an opportunity to hang out with like minded fun folks, ride trails in amazing locations and experience the very best way to pick your next ride.

How does it work?

Choose your Outerbike location. For 2023 there's no less than FIVE locations! Killington, VT, Duluth, MN, Crested Butte, CO, Moab, UT and wrapping up the season again with Bentonville, AR. We know. It's a hard decision!

Pick your pass. Choose between the Full Demo, BYOB (Bring Your Own Bike), or get the Social Pass to just hang out and still be part of the fun.

Decide what the best bike is. With the Full Demo pass, you get a card to check out the demo bikes. Repeat as needed. Whether it's a demo bike or your own beloved bike, put it to the test on the world-class trails. Take it for a spin on the trails close to the venue, hop on a shuttle to a classic Moab trail or make laps on the bike parks of Crested Butte, Killington or Spirit Mountain in Duluth.

Have fun! Bring your friends & family, hang out at the event, and have fun! Browse the latest bike innovations and stick around for happy hour (included in all passes)! Lunches are also included with your pass, which are fresh, healthy & incredibly delicious.

Stay tuned. Once you sign up, you'll get emails with Outerbike updates and happenings, such as bike clinics and guided rides with industry ambassadors.

Friday 16th

Rutland County Pride Worship

Rutland County Pride Festival kicks off on Friday, June 16 with a community worship service at Trinity Church in Rutland beginning at 5:00pm.

Come celebrate Pride Month at Trinity Church, 85 West Street, Rutland on Friday, June 16 beginning at 5:00pm. The Rutland County Pride Festival will kick off its weekend of events with an interfaith worship service at 6:00pm. But come early--5:00pm--for games, snacks and fellowship! This is a family friendly interactive event, and it's free!

The birth of the Downtown Brandon Alliance

BY DEVON FULLER

The building at 24 Center Street had seen better days. In the past it had housed the town printing press but now it just housed memories of times gone by. Virginia Russell, along with Lorraine and Warren Kimble, devised a plan to purchase and remove the rundown old building and replace it with a park for the people of Brandon to enjoy. The building was taken down, with the bricks and anything else of value sold to help with the cost of building what we now know as Green Park. Much of the building was repurposed as part of the park, like the benches and half-circle wall made from pieces of the foundation and window lintels. The number of volunteers that worked to make this happen was amazing.

“There are so many that it’s hard to recall them all” according to Warren Kimble.

They came from all walks of

life: designers, gardeners, stone workers, commercial builders, lawyers, doctors, local shop owners, and just anyone that wanted to help. They got involved in such a project for the greater good of the community they live in and “for the fun.” Mr. Kimble notes that “it’s all about having fun.”

As the plans for the park grew, so did the need for funding. Thus, another great idea was hatched: the selling of engraved bricks to help with the cost. It really is quite fun and interesting to take a moment to read the bricks in Green Park and see the diversity of people, families, and business involved in making this dream come to life.

That was the beginning of Green Park, located across from the Brandon town offices, and the beginning of the Downtown Brandon Alliance (DBA). 24 Center Street was the address of the old building that had once

housed the Brandon print shop, as shown on the Sanborn Fire Insurance map of 1921. Prior to that, the land and building were part of John Conant’s iron works. How does the Downtown Brandon Alliance have anything to do with the history of John Conant and the old Printing Press of Brandon? It goes back to the idea hatched by the Kimble’s and Ms. Russell to remove the eyesore of a derelict building and create something beautiful in its place.

As the park idea grew, the folks at the center of the project came across a new program being rolled out by the state of Vermont. This was the Designated Downtown program that modeled itself after the national Main Street America program established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Main Street America began its mission of working with a nationwide network of coordinating programs and local communities to bring economic vitality to historic downtowns in 1980. Brandon tapped into this great organization in the year 2001 thanks to the Green Park project and the foresight of the Russell/Kimble collaboration. Vermont’s Designated Downtown program provides towns that are accepted into the program with professional consulting, preferred grant status, tax incentives, and the opportunity to collaborate with other towns in the program, helping historic towns in Vermont to build economic vitality.

Over the years, downtowns in many parts of the country had begun to slowly fall into decline as the big box stores took the lion’s share of retail business. When internet sales began to take off, the small towns of America took another punch in the economic gut (as did some of the big boys that had started the decline of historic downtowns.) So, to have programs like Main Street America and the Designated Downtown help small towns hold their own as the world of retail began to change has been a huge benefit. Economic vitality, design, promotion, fund raising, and organization are the five pillars that the programs rely on to help create strategies that improve the economic outcome of historic

downtowns.

Through these two programs, the DBA has been able to collaborate with various local, state, and federal groups to improve the Brandon downtown. When the Green Park group applied for and received the honor of being part of the Vermont Designated Downtown program (there have been only 23 towns accepted), they used the address of the old iron works building—24 Center Street—as the name of their organization. Years later, the board of directors decided to change the name to Downtown Brandon Alliance. With this change, they were hoping to foster relationships with as many organizations as possible to work toward the improvement of Brandon’s downtown economic vitality.

After the 2011 flood from tropical storm Irene caused severe damage in Brandon, it began to

Brandon volunteered their time to walk the Neshobe streambed below the park to find as many bricks as possible to be returned to the Green Park.

The DBA continues to work in the downtown core to keep it beautiful and festive. The summers in downtown Brandon are brighter and more cheerful because of the hard work that volunteers, working with the DBA, put into the creation, distribution, and maintenance of all the flowerpots up and down the sidewalks. The DBA also sponsors “Live at Kennedy Park” music twice each month during the summers. During the Christmas holiday season, the DBA has taken on the task, again with its great volunteers, of decorating the downtown with garlands and lights, plus gazebo decorations. The DBA worked with the Brandon Chamber of Commerce to do all we could to

make the Route 7 Segment 6 project go as smoothly as possible. Does anyone remember the man in the orange tuxedo handing out cold bottles of water, or the road-construction creatures welcoming folks to Brandon? It’s an interesting fact that the Brandon not only didn’t lose any business during that massive project but added busi-

nesses during the two years of downtown reconstruction.

These are just a handful of the events and projects the DBA has taken on over the years in an effort to keep historic downtown Brandon as economically vibrant as possible. This all has been possible because four people had the dream of turn an old building into a beautiful park and a load of volunteers willing to work for a better Brandon.

DBA will continue to work with all to make Brandon the most inviting and business-friendly town in Vermont. To do this, we are always looking for people that are interested in becoming part of our fun-loving, dedicated group, as either board members or volunteers. So, if you find yourself interested in helping keep Brandon buzzing, we would love to hear from you. Our email is brandondba@yahoo.com or contact us through the Brandon Town Office.

Devon Fuller is the President of the Downtown Brandon Alliance



THE DOWNTOWN BRANDON Alliance has done a lot over the last several years to reinvigorate and beautify Brandon’s downtown business district.

look like our Town Offices would never return to the corner of Center Street and West Seminary. The power of the Designated Downtown grant program helped provide the money needed to renovate the town offices and create an overflow structure to prevent future flooding of our downtown.

The money needed for the renovation of the Brandon Town Office was provided “as long as” the town pursued the building of an overflow structure that would help protect the offices from being damaged by future flooding. The overflow was built and has protected the Town Offices and the downtown core several times since its completion. Irene also managed to take a huge bite out of Green Park as the water flowed in its most natural direction. The small crabapple trees that once lined the fence were washed away along with the fence, the stone foundation benches, half-circle wall (yet to be repaired), and the bricks. Again, the good folks of

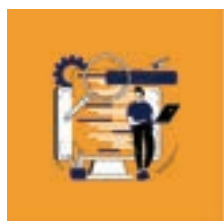
INDEPENDENT DIGITAL marketing

DIGITAL DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HARD

Here at the *Addy Indy* we have always seen it as our job to help connect your business with its clients.

As times change and technology evolves, pairing digital services with your print advertising campaigns is the best way to quickly & efficiently connect with the community.

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Mason keeps it down for the win!

MASON DENIS OF Whiting emerged victorious in the Swiss Roll Eating Contest, Kids' Division. He managed to scarf down an ungodly number of Swiss Rolls in an unbelievably short amount of time without puking, barfing, retching, upchucking, spitting up, or ralphing.

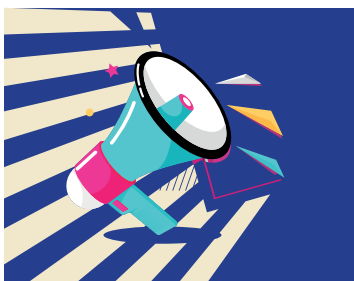
WELL DONE, MASON! The world is your Swiss Roll!



Like all things vintage?

Mim's Photos

are on page 24!



READ ALL ABOUT IT
SUBMIT YOUR BIRTH,
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OR WEDDING
ANNOUNCEMENTS

news@brandonreporter.com



Golf Course

Join us for our annual
Member-Member
Tournament July 8th & 9th!
Men's, Women's & Junior divisions will
be flighted by handicap!

\$120 per team (carts not included)

Entry fee includes lunch on Saturday
and hors d'oeuvres Sunday

\$10 skins all weekend!

Closest to Pin all par 3's

Saturday

2-person Best Ball
2-Person Scramble

Sunday

2-person Scramble
2-person Mod Alternate Shot

Sign up online today or by
calling the pro shop!
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Open daily
Monday-Sunday

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outdoor seating options, with stunning
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mountains. The indoor seating area
features large windows that allow guests
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they dine.

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Log on to neshobe.com or call 802-247-3611 to
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35th

GREAT BRANDON AUCTION

Friday, June 30th ~ Saturday, July 8th

In the Brandon Town Hall in
Brandon's beautiful new downtown!

OPEN HOURS

Fri June 30: 2-7 pm; | Sat July 1: 8 am-9 pm
(this is Brandon's 4th of July Festivities Day!);
Sun July 2: 11 am-5 pm; | Mon July 3: 11 am-7 pm;
Tues July 4: 11 am-5 pm;
Wed thru Fri July 5-7: 11 am-7 pm;
Sat July 8: 8 am-2pm (Auction Closes)
Sun July 10: 10 am-2 pm for item pickup only.

**IF YOU WANT TO ATTEND A GREAT AUCTION THIS
SUMMER, MAKE IT THIS ONE.
Come to Brandon for the Annual Great
Brandon Auction INSIDE, INSTEAD!**

Our indoor location will be staffed by volunteers for 8 days, and items will
be set up for silent auction bidding and eBay Buy It Now format so you can
walk out the door with your treasure!

The Auction offers antiques, collectibles, new merchandise, surprises,
and treasures from attics and barns. Also lots of gift certificates to dozens
of local businesses including restaurants, brew pubs, massages, services,
and much more!

Other donations include new New England Woodcraft dressers, 100
gallons of fuel oil, tools, art, dining room sets, dressers, beds, chairs,
trunks, beautiful dishes, and eclectic items galore! Original art by some of
Brandon's most famous artists: Warren Kimble, Medana Gabbard, Robin
Kent, Dolores Furnari, Liza Myers, Judith Reilly, Edward Loedding, and
many more. And our usual selection of great donations!

802-247-6401 info@brandon.org
Go to www.brandon.org for more info and pictures.

BRANDON PARADE



OF JULY

1

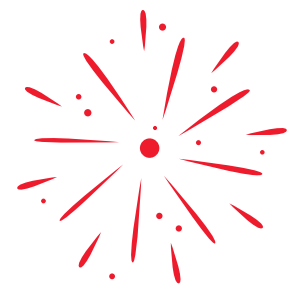
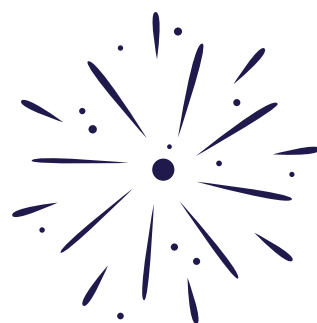






BRANDON INN BACKYARD PARTY





DOWNTOWN DANCE PARTY





FIREWORKS OVER BRANDON





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!



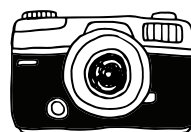
Recognized



Terry Ferson recognized this gentleman as Leonard Dunbar. He lived on Paint Works Road in Forestdale. He was a local carpenter, and his wife Bessy was a long time teacher.

Bud Coolige also recognized Leonard Dunbar.

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



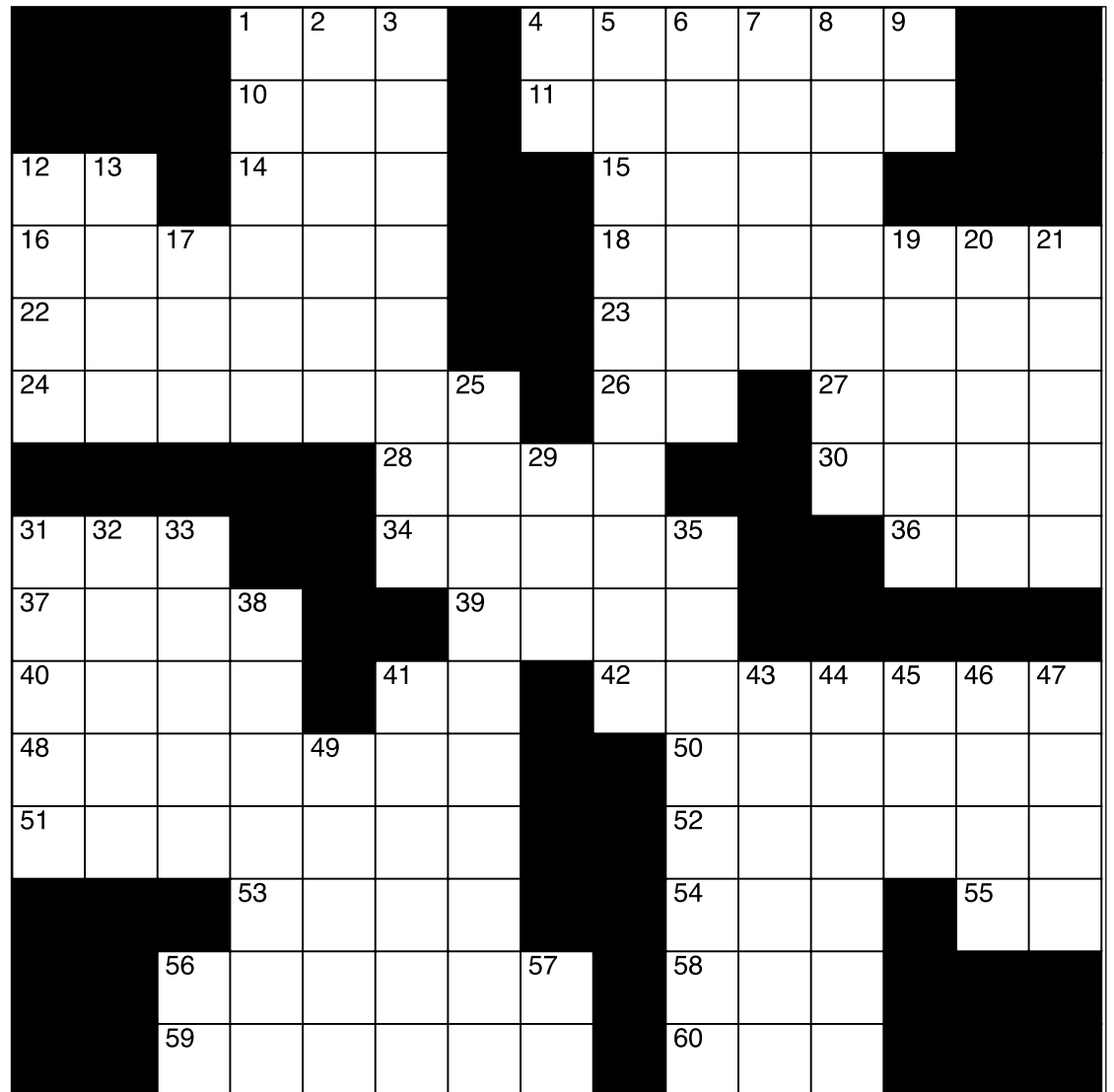
Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Small Eurasian deer
4. Irish county
10. A major division of geological time
11. Broadway actor Lane
12. Canadian province
14. It causes fainting (abbr.)
15. Two
16. A notable one is blue
18. Utter repeatedly
22. Rings
23. Sullies
24. Occurs
26. Publicity
27. Near
28. Tools of a trade
30. Offer in good faith
31. "American Idol" network
34. Garments
36. Soviet Socialist Republic
37. Retired NFL DC Dean
39. Hot meal
40. A type of gin
41. Percussion instrument
42. A \$10 bill
48. About ground
50. Medicine man
51. Seedless raisin
52. National capital of Albania
53. Appendage
54. OJ trial judge
55. By the way
56. Bicycle parts
58. Barbie's friend
59. In a way, stretched
60. Commercials

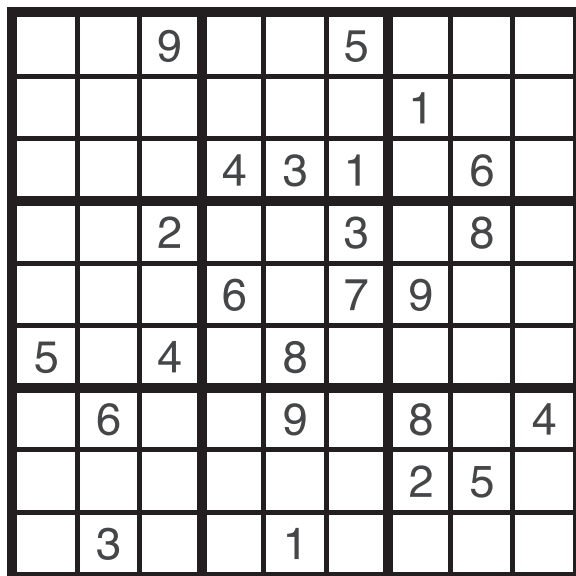
CLUES DOWN

1. Make up for
2. American songbird
3. Pay
4. International organization
5. Engravers
6. Declared as fact
7. Criminal
8. Jewelry
9. Hospital worker (abbr.)
12. Nonsense (slang)
13. Town in Galilee
17. Value
19. Another name
20. Sheep in second year before shearing
21. Town in Surrey, England
25. Appropriate during a time of year
29. Creative output
31. Recesses
32. District in N. Germany
33. Rider of Rohan
35. The official emblem of the German Third Reich
38. One who puts down roots
41. Scribe
43. Painted a bright color
44. Tycoons
45. Actress Thurman
46. Walking accessory
47. Crest of a hill
49. Member of a North American people
56. Type of computer
57. U.S. State (abbr.)



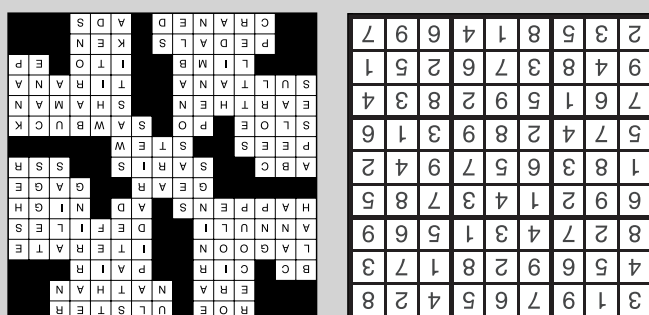
Sudoku

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



Level: Intermediate

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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Dog Days Of Summer

The Rutland County Humane Society wants to know, are you ready to find your canine soulmate? Beginning June 21st, and until they're adopted, our adoption fee for our long-stay dogs is dropping from \$250 to \$60! With temperatures rising and long days ahead, start your vacation time celebration by adopting a dog during the Dog Days of Summer. It's a great time of the year to adopt a dog when it stays lighter later for extra walks, helping with house training, giving more time to play in the yard, and getting to know your new pooch. Visit our adoption center Tuesday through Saturday between 11am-4pm to meet Koda, Red (call ahead in foster), Bo, Sox, and Bandit to see if one of them could be your new best friend! For more information on these animals, please call at the adoption center at 802.483.6700 or visit our website at www.RCHSVT.org.

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



MEET CRINKLE - 1-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE. MIXED BREED.

Are you looking for a fun and family-friendly pup? Crinkle may be the dog for you! He arrived at RCHS in early June from a busy shelter in Texas. He spent some time in foster where we were able to learn more about him. He is good with both dogs and he adores kids. He doesn't enjoy cats but is a busy boy who would love an active family. Once he goes for a fun walk, he will happily snuggle on the couch with you. He did great with house training and picked up on the routine quickly. Crinkle is also very good about not bothering anything when he is left alone. Crinkle is a happy-go-lucky boy who loves everyone he meets.

MEET DAISY - 1-YEAR-OLD. SPAYED FEMALE. DOMESTIC SHORT HAIR. BROWN TABBY W/

WHITE. Daisy is such a sweet cat. She came to us at the end of May from a busy shelter in the South. Once she gets to know you, her silly personality comes out and you will fall in love! She just joined the other cats in our Community Cat Room and is enjoying her new friends. She loves playing with cat toys and is always up for cuddles.



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HUMANE SOCIETY**

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**OUR ADOPTION CENTER IS OPEN
TUESDAY-SATURDAY FROM
11AM-4PM.
NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED.**



New in large print, donated by Brenda Whittaker

The Five-Star Weekend by Elin Hilderbrand, donated in memory of Marion C. Sawyer

Hollis Shaw's life seems picture perfect. She's the creator of the popular food blog "Hungry with Hollis" and is married to Matthew, a heart surgeon. But after she and Matthew get into a heated argument one snowy morning, he leaves for the airport and is killed in a car accident. The cracks in Hollis's perfect life—her strained marriage and her complicated relationship with her daughter grow deeper. When Hollis hears about something called a "Five-Star Weekend"—where one woman organizes a trip for friends from each phase of her life: her teenage years, her twenties, her thirties, and midlife—Hollis decides to host her own Five-Star Weekend on Nantucket. But the weekend doesn't turn out to be a joyful Hallmark movie as her friends gather together and instead becomes an exploration of friendship, love, secrets, and self-discovery.

The Cafe at Beach End by RaeAnne Thayne, donated in memory of Doris S. Whittaker

DID YOU KNOW?

Our summer reading program starts July 5th! Join our email list for all of the details at <https://brandonpubliclibrary.org/signup>.

Welcome to Beach Town by Susan Wiggs, donated in memory of Hilda S. Crosby

In idyllic Alara Cove, a California beach town known for its charm and surfer vibe, it's graduation day at the elite Thornton Academy. At Thornton, the students are the overindulged children who live in beautiful, gated communities. But when class valedictorian Nikki Graziola, a surfer's daughter who is there on scholarship, veers off script while giving her commencement address, she reveals a secret that breaks open the whole community. Nikki's accusation shakes the foundation of Alara Cove, pitting her against the wealthy family whose money runs the town. Her new notoriety sends Nikki into exile for years, where she finds fame—but not fortune—overseas as a competition surfer...until a personal tragedy compels her to return to Alara Cove. As Nikki struggles to rebuild her future, she finds that the people of the town have not forgotten her. But time has changed Alara Cove, and old friendships, rivalries, and an unexpected romance draw her back into the life of the beach town she's never quite forgotten.

When Meredith Collins was a child, the little beach town of Cape Sanctuary lived up to its name. Spending summers there with her grandmother, Meredith finally felt safe and loved. Now she's returning in disgrace. Her late ex-husband swindled investors out of millions and made Meredith a figure of scorn—though she knew nothing about his scheme. But she still has the beach cottage she inherited from her grandmother and half ownership of the local café. It's a place to work if her cousin, Tori, will let her through the door. Once, Tori and Meredith were as close as sisters—until Meredith chose her neglectful parents' expectations over their bond. Now widowed with a teenage daughter, Tori isn't setting out a welcome mat for the woman who let her down so badly. While Meredith tries to make a fresh start, she is drawn to a mysterious writer renting the cottage next door who has his own secret and a mission that will help Meredith confront her past—and maybe, claim a surprising future.

RUBBER DUCK RACE

PHOENIX RISING: WINKY COMES BACK TO NAB 2ND IN DUCK RACE RIGATONI COMES IN 1ST; NUGGET TAKES 3RD CANYON DISQUALIFIED FOR CHEATING

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—In a stupendous display of grit and skill, Winky returned to Brandon on July 1 and erased last year's annihilating humiliation from memory with a 2nd-place finish in the annual Duck Race.

"I knew I could do it," said Winky as he recovered with a grub smoothie after the race. "I mean, I had my moments of doubt over this past year, not gonna lie, but in my heart, I knew I had it in me. It feels so good to know I made someone a winner this year."

Fans of the sport will recall that last year, Winky took what looked like an insurmountable lead early on, only to see his entire life dashed against the rocks at the base of the falls, where he was drawn by the currents into the irresistible maelstrom of misery.

"I didn't get cocky this year. I kept telling myself, 'Be humble. Be humble. Just keep your beak down and do what you practiced.' And it worked," said Winky.

"I didn't get the start I wanted, but I didn't panic," he added. "I just paddled slow and steady toward the front of the pack. I knew I didn't want to be the first one over the falls, because that was the trap last year. I needed someone else to go first, so I could see where the currents were."

It was a strategy that proved wise.

"As soon as I felt that net scooping me up and saw there was only one other duck in there, I knew I'd made it..." Winky began to sob. "I'm sorry...I'll be ok. I'm just a little emotional. It's been a rough year. It's been a rough year."

The 1st-place winner was a blue ducky named Rigatoni who competed in Brandon for the first time this year. Originally from Springfield, MA, Rigatoni ("My friends call me Rig") has lived in Sudbury for the last 3 years.

"I moved up here to be with my girlfriend," said Rig. "We mate for life, you know, so when she said she wanted to be closer to her family, I really had no choice. But I really love it and look forward to raising 60 or 70 ducklings here over the years."

"My victory was really just a fluke," Rig continued. "I wish I could say I trained for it or even had some kind of plan. I kind of decided to sign up at the last minute just because it was such a hot day and I just wanted to get in the water. I don't really like crowds, so when there were all these strange duckies touching and rubbing up on me in the water, I was like 'This is so gross' and just started swimming out of the pack. The next thing I knew, I was tumbling over the falls and some dude scoops me up in a net. It's all good, though. I'm getting my picture in the paper, right?"

The 3rd-place finisher was a ducky from Brattleboro called Nugget. This was her tenth ducky race overall and her second time competing in Brandon.

"Brandon is definitely one of the biggest races on the circuit right now," she said. "I wouldn't have missed it for the world. All the elite duckies showed up and I'm honored to be on the podium. The competition was super stiff this year, but my training got me through it."

"I came down to the Neshobe the day before, just to scope it out, which helped a lot. I totally saw how the currents were running and where I needed to aim myself for the big drop over the falls. I did think I had a really good chance of winning the whole thing but am pretty stoked just to have medaled. People don't realize how disoriented you are when you land at the bottom of the falls. You really don't know which end is up at that point and just have to hope you're in a good position. When I got scooped up and saw Winky and Rig in the net, I knew I'd come in third. There was, like, a brief moment of disappointment but then I reminded myself that 3rd place is better than no place and there's always next year."

The only stain on this year's event was the disqualification of Canyon for cheating.

"I don't know why everyone is freaking out," he said. "I told y'all I was going to do it like last week. My only regret is getting caught."

Until next year, Brandon!

THE GREAT LIBRARY RENOVATION

Get tickets for summer events!



PIZZA BY THE POND

Sunday, July 9th 5:30 - 8:00pm
At Blueberry Hill Inn, Goshen (Rain date July 10th)

Join us around the pond for live music and wood-fired pizza! Open to the public, all ages. BYOB. Includes all-you-can-eat wood-fired pizza buffet, lemonade & iced tea. Bring a picnic blanket/chairs. Adults: \$40, Under 12 years: \$20, Family: \$100



YOGA at the River Bend

July 20th at 6pm (Rain date July 21st)

45 minute outdoor yoga practice on the lawn behind the Brandon Inn, led by Judit from Brandon Yoga Center. Beginners are welcome! A slow and steady class to awaken and warm your body. Bring your yoga mat or a big towel. A few mats can be supplied. Tickets: \$20



Scan code for tickets or go to brandonpubliclibrary.org/library-events/

These events are brought to you by the Brandon Library Community Volunteers and all proceeds will benefit The Great Library Renovation.



Open Tues. & Wed. 10am-7pm, Thurs. & Fri. 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-4pm
THIS AD IS GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY AN ANONYMOUS DONOR

THE WINNERS FROM l to r: Rigatoni, Winky, and Nugget. Winky may not have come in 1st in the race but his unbelievable comeback put him 1st in our hearts.

DUCK RACE WINNERS:

- 1st Heather Shackett, Canton, VT (Rigatoni)
- 2nd Audrey LaFountain, Brandon, VT (Winky)
- 3rd Doug Henderson, Brandon, VT (Nugget)

Photos by Steven Jupiter



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Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.

Crossword & Sudoku on page 25


Classifieds

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 FOR SALE: - Gold 2012 Chevy Impala LT. 60k. \$7500 OBO. 802-247-3240.

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 SUDBURY: - Share a home w/ an avid reader in her 60s who enjoys volunteering & classical music. \$500/mo. plus sharing companion-

ship & outdoor chores. Must be cat-friendly! No smoking. Private BA. (802) 863-5625 HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, refs, background check req. EHO.

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



LEO July 23-Aug. 23
 Leo, share your optimism and level-headedness with someone who could use your support right now. You have an uncanny way of making others feel relaxed just by being in your company.

VIRGO Aug. 24-Sept. 22
 An interesting travel opportunity comes your way, Virgo. However, at first glance it might not seem like the type of trip you would normally take. Keep an open mind and be surprised.

LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23
 Libra, if you do not like the way things are going in one of your relationships, it is alright to speak up and encourage change. You are an equal partner and compromise is necessary.

SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22
 Scorpio, you have to jump on every opportunity to get ahead that is presented to you, even if it may temporarily upset your schedule and life. The investment will be worth it.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21
 Get involved with helping others as much as possible, Sagittarius. This way you will be in the unique position to help someone close to you who needs it soon enough.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20
 Capricorn, there is nothing that you cannot accomplish when you lay on the charm. Others will flock to you this week and want to hear what you have to say.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18
 Enjoy every meeting of minds that you encounter, Aquarius. Each relationship and discussion can help broaden your horizons, and you can use that information wisely.

PISCES Feb. 19-March 20
 Pisces, no matter how good a partnership looks on paper, if you are not meshing with this individual then it is not a partnership worth pursuing. Focus your attention elsewhere.

♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- July 6 Dalai Lama, spiritual leader (88)
- July 7 Michelle Kwan, figure skater (43)
- July 8 Artemisia Gentileschi, painter (d)
- July 9 David Hockney, artist (86)
- July 10 Chiwetel Ejiofor, actor (49)
- July 11 Jhumpa Lahiri, author (56)
- July 12 Malala Yousafzai, Nobel Laureate (26)

BRANDON YARD SALE DAY

SATURDAY AUGUST 5, 2023

REGISTRATION FORM

Name and address listing: \$10 OR

Enhanced listing: \$15
 \$15 buys you 25 words to describe your yard sale's "special" items plus your name and address in a boxed ad.

For ALL LISTINGS:
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For ENHANCED LISTING:
ADD 25 WORDS:
 (separate sheet of paper)
 MAIL TO: BACC, PO BOX 267,
 BRANDON 05733
 OR DROP OFF AT CARR'S GIFTS.
DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION:
 July 30, 2023
 Go to Brandon.org for more info!



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- minimum 2 insertions

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Special 4 for 3 rates not valid for the following categories: Help Wanted Services, Opportunities, Real Estate, Wood heat, Attn. Farmers, & For Rent).


DEADLINES
 Friday noon for Wednesday paper

CATEGORIES

<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

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SWISS ROLL EATING CHAMPIONSHIP

BY JIM LEARY AND GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON—The seventh annual World Championship Swiss Roll Eating contest held in Brandon on Saturday, July 1, hosted competitors from across the nation. But the outcome was the same as it has been since the inception of the event. World champion Arturo Mendiola once again successfully defended his title and claimed his seventh Little Debbie crown, thereby cementing his legacy as the GOAT. His late entrance into the eating arena gave a few competitors false hope of a victory. Making his entrance, Mendiola intimidated his fellow competitors by ripping off his shirt to reveal an amazing Swiss Roll physique.

The anticipated onslaught of foreign competitors never materialized. Evidently, many of the world's Swiss Roll eating clubs cautioned their members against participating in the event. As the manager of the Barcelona club stated, "We've got great talent on the squad, but we're just not ready to try to take down Mr. Mendiola quite yet. We will continue with our rigorous training regimen for another year with the hope of supplanting Mr. Mendiola in 2024."

There were some national competitors from as far away as Portland, Oregon, and Somerville, Massachusetts. Competitor Samantha McNally from Somerville gave up a free ticket to the Ed Sheeran concert to attend the competition. She said, "This is the highlight of my year. I've been training all year for this. I'm hopeful to take the



ARTURO MENDIOLA RETAINED his title and is crowned Swiss Roll champion by contest organizer Jim Leary.

Photos by George Fjeld

crown!"

Next year's contest should be interesting. Planning for the 2024 event is underway and our sponsors are extremely pleased to report that Little Debbie personally will attend the 2024 contest.

We can hardly wait!



MENDIOLA'S UNPARALLELED TECHNIQUE clinched him the win. His competitors look on in disbelief.

George Valley

(Continued from Page 1)

UCWR on June 18, taking over from Reverend Peter Hults, who at 86 was ready to pass the pulpit to a successor.

Though raised Catholic—he was once even a seminarian—Valley is no stranger to Congregationalism, having spent the last several years serving short stints (“pulpit supply”) at local churches in the denomination: Brandon, Pittsford, Proctor, and Salisbury. But now he will be the permanent pastor at UCWR.

“Someone once described the Congregational Church as ‘town meeting with religion,’” laughed Valley as we sat outside the sanctuary of UCWR. There isn’t the kind of top-down governance one finds in, say, Catholicism, with its clerical hierarchy. Instead, Congregational churches decide for themselves how to function and how to conduct their services. The pastor is there to act as a guide—the

school. So even though I was in the Catholic program, I took classes with people from other denominations.” Valley enjoyed learning about other traditions, and that intellectual curiosity has carried throughout his entire life.

When Valley left Toronto in the 1970s and attempted to find a clerical post in Vermont, the conservative bishop of the Diocese of Burlington at the time, John Marshall, objected to the fact that Valley’s spiritual advisor in Toronto had been a nun and required Valley to attend seminary again in Boston. It was there, in 1981, that he met a fellow seminarian named Michael Dwyer, with whom he would spend his life.

Valley and Dwyer both left the seminary and moved from Boston to Vermont, where they embarked on careers in education. Valley worked at the College of St. Joseph in Rutland for sev-

changed for them at St. Peter when members of the congregation discovered that Valley and Dwyer had obtained a civil union under Vermont’s new law. A letter was sent to Bishop Angell, who was inclined to simply ignore the matter. The next bishop, Bishop Matano, however, informed Valley and Dwyer that they could no longer participate in services.

“It ruptured any sense of community,” said Valley. The couple spent a few years away from church but eventually began attending the Episcopal Trinity Church in Rutland, where for 10 years they were involved in adult education, sang, and even preached. It was clear, Valley said, that even though he and Dwyer may have left the Church, “the vocation never left” them.

Valley considered becoming ordained as an Episcopal priest, but when Pittsford Congrega-

tion led by two married couples: Valley and Dwyer at West Rutland and Pittsford and Sara and Janei Rossigg at Brandon and Proctor, respectively.

Though West Rutland has a reputation as somewhat conservative, Valley has not experienced any reticence from his new congregation.

“People here are wonderful, warm, kind, and welcoming,” he said. “Someone I knew to be fairly conservative in the congregation recently approached me after services. She told me how happy she was to have me here. Her husband said, ‘Good

job, as always.’ That’s the best compliment you can get, that people are happy.”

In addition to the pastoral aspects of his new role, Valley is keen to promote UCWR as a cultural and community resource for West Rutland and the surrounding area. To celebrate the church’s 250th birthday, the church organized a musical tribute and hymn sing back in March.

“We made 40 programs and 85 people showed up,” Valley said. “We can have wonderful things happen here.”



GEORGE VALLEY STANDS in the sanctuary of the United Church of West Rutland. Many people in the area will also remember him from his days as a teacher at Otter Valley and Mill River.

Photo by Steven Jupiter

title “pastor” comes from the Latin for “shepherd”—but the congregation is ultimately in charge.

Valley is originally from Vermont, born and raised in the Burlington area. He attended St. Michael’s in Colchester for his undergraduate degree and then got a Master of Divinity from the University of Toronto in Canada.

“The University of Toronto was a wonderful place,” he said. “The school did a very smart thing: they consolidated all the different denominations in one

eral years, in Campus Ministry and teaching religious studies. A native speaker of French (his grandparents came to Vermont from Quebec, where his ancestors were governors and associates of Samuel de Champlain), he then taught French, Latin, and Spanish at Otter Valley and Mill River High Schools. He retired from Mill River in 2017.

During much of this time, Valley and Dwyer were active in St. Peter Catholic Church in Rutland. Valley organized adult education, was a communion minister, and a lector. Things

tional Church needed “pulpit supply,” he and Dwyer took turns preaching there. Dwyer is now the permanent pastor of that congregation. After the aforementioned stints preaching at Brandon (3 months), Proctor (2.5 months), and Salisbury (6 months), Valley is now the permanent pastor at UCWR.

In an unusual coincidence, 4 of the Congregational churches in the area now have LGBT pastors: West Rutland, Pittsford, Brandon, and Proctor. And to amplify the uniqueness of that situation, these 4 churches are

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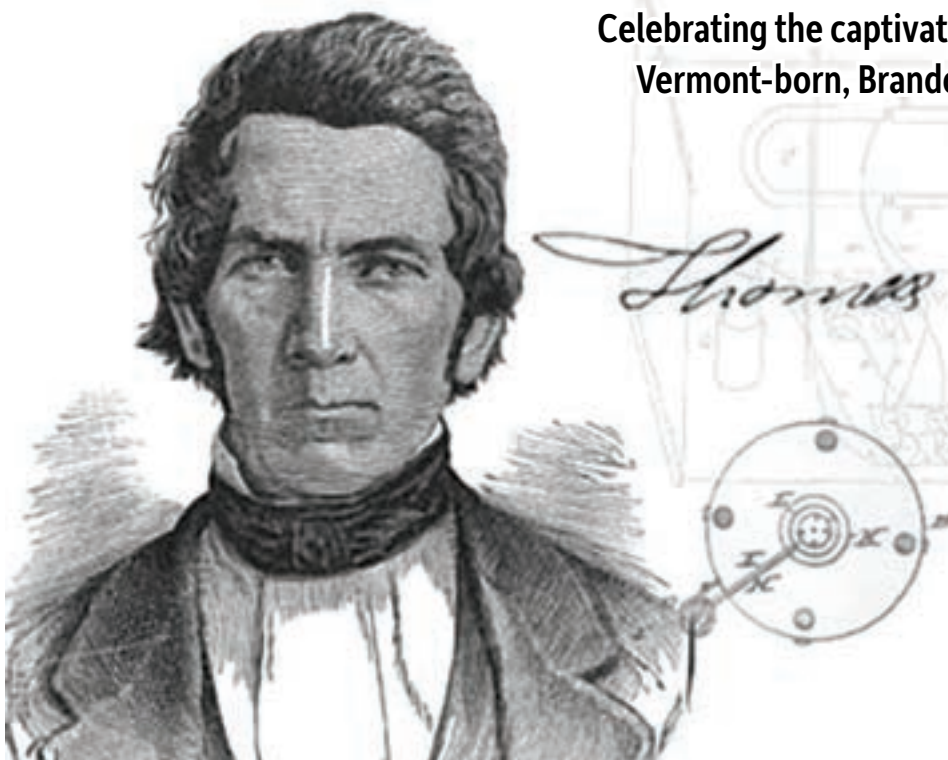
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