

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

A community supported newspaper

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Wednesday, November 8, 2023

\$1



## NAMES LOST IN VERMONT

Genealogist Michael F. Dwyer introduces readers to the Billings, Zeno, Sisters, and Go-drich families.

PG. 2

## CHILDREN OR ADULTS?

Addison County State Atty defends decision to charge 14 year old as adult in Bristol shooting.

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## SKIING SEASON IS UPON US

Ridgeline Outdoor Collective holds its 10th annual forum in Rochester.

PG. 8



PG. 10

## THE PROBLEM WITH LEAVES

Dave Praamsma shares his annual agony over trees: hug 'em or burn 'em.

PG. 8



## RING THE BELL

Proctor Fire Department celebrates 125 years of service.

PG. 21



## Brandon Has Talent Show 2023 a big success

THE PERFORMERS AT the 9th annual Brandon talent show gather onstage for their final bow after a terrific evening. Find out more and see more photos on pages 14 and 15.

Photos by Kevin White

## Local fire/EMS practice backcountry rescues as winter approaches

BY STEVEN JUPITER

GOSHEN—As winter approaches, many Vermonters dig out their skis and snowshoes in the hope that Mother Nature will grace us with an abundant snow season. Winter recreation is an integral part of Vermont culture. And while the slopes of Killington, Stowe, Okemo, and other popular resorts may get the lion's share of attention, there's a whole community of backcountry skiers and hikers who utilize a network of trails up in the mountains and other remote areas, well out of the spotlight.

But when those folks run into trouble and call for help, it's the local rescue squads that have to figure out how to reach them and, more importantly, get them down to safety and medical care.

It's not easy.

Last Saturday morning, members of the Brandon Fire Department (BFD), Brandon Area Rescue Squad (BARS), and Rochester Fire Department (RFD) gathered at the trailhead of the Long Trail, at the top of the Brandon Gap, to learn



DREW CLYMER (FAR left) of the Vermont State Police teaches rescue teams from Brandon and Rochester how to handle a litter on rough terrain up at the Brandon Gap. Photos by Steven Jupiter

and practice techniques for the safe transport of the injured from difficult and isolated spots.

The training session was run by Drew Clymer, who is the Search and Rescue Coordinator for the Vermont State Police and a mem-

ber of the Stowe Mountain Rescue Squad, a volunteer rescue service. A veteran of over 40 backcountry rescue missions, Clymer's goal in these trainings is to provide "not just competency but fluency." Res- (See Backcountry rescues, Page 6)

## Neshobe Principal Vicki Wells to resign in June 2024

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—On Friday, November 3, Neshobe Principal Vicki Wells submitted a letter to RNEU Superintendent Kristin Hubert stating her intention to resign at the end of the current academic year.

In an email sent to families and staff over the weekend, Principal Wells stated that "it was not an easy decision" and that she had been contemplating it for months.

Ms. Wells attributed the decision to the difficulty that she has had recovering from a recent bout of bronchitis and a desire to take care of her health.

"When I weighed all options, I made the difficult decision that it was in my best interest to focus on my health as my top priority," Ms. Wells wrote.

"It has been a pleasure working with you and your children over (See Vicki Wells, Page 18)



# Names lost in Vermont, Part 11: Billings, Sisters, Zeno, and Goodrich

BY MICHAEL F. DWYER

Matilda Billings sounds deceptively like a Yankee name—but we know that was neither her true first nor last name. Unable to speak English at the time of her marriage in 1846 to Austin [Gingras] Shangraw of Pittsford, Marguerite Bélisle may not have realized how the justice of the peace wrote her name. Her backstory provides another chapter in the saga of French-Canadian immigration to Vermont. Marguerite's father, impoverished farmer Michel Bélisle dit Levasseur of St. Hyacinthe, Québec, married his third wife, Louise Bernard, at the age of 44. Catholic baptismal records of their ten children allow us to follow their frequent moves, bringing them close to the Vermont border by 1840. Their eleventh child, Appoline ("Polly") was likely born in Pittsford in 1842. With no Catholic church nearby to register baptisms, Appoline is their last child whose life we can trace through later records. After moving several times between Québec and Connecticut, she spent the last twenty

years of her life in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

From Pittsford, "Mitchell Belille," wife Louise, and

seven children ranging in age from 2 to 19 moved to Southbridge, Massachusetts, where they were counted in the 1850

census. Thereafter, with fluctuating spellings of their names, some members of this family, including father Michel/Mitchell Bélisle, seemed to have disappeared. One son, Olivier Vasseur, lived in 1860 in Charlotte, Vermont, where he was recorded as "Oliver Belish." He, his wife, and several of their children eventually returned to Abbotsford, Québec. But as a widower in his old age, Olivier moved to Ware, Massachusetts, to join his son Oliver's household. The flip-



TINTYPE OF PITTSFORD-BORN Appoline Bélisle and her younger sister, circa 1880.



THE GRAVESTONE OF Napoleon Sisters in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Brandon.

flopping of names had not abated with time. Olivier Vasseur's will, dated January 1913, left bequests to seven sons with the Belisle surname, one who went by Vasseur, and another as "Johnny Vasseur or Belisle."

Shangraw's death certificate cited her maiden name as "Vasseur." Juxtaposing Margaret (Bélisle dit Lavasseur) Shangraw's life with that of her siblings underscores a notable difference. Aside from the fact

Back in Pittsford, Margaret

(See Names lost, Page 9)

## Addison County's Hometown Dealer



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# Further adventures with Starship Bean #3

BY GEORGE FJELD

Well, I caught my first redfish, also known as a red drum, in South Carolina, fishing with my good friend Chris. You would have thought that winning our flight in the Member-Guest tournament and getting to play in the

all-tournament shootout would have been the highlight of our stay in the Carolinas. I'm sure it was for Chris, but I have been trying to catch a redfish for a few years and we've won our flight before. Granted, the fish was 12 inches long and weighed about

half a pound (no exaggeration here), but it was really gratifying to catch a new species of fish. We were out on his 20-foot Carolina Skiff equipped with a new state-of-the-art trolling motor, which can lock you onto a "spot" despite wind and current. And we had both! A tropical storm was about 200 miles off the coast and the wind was blowing 15-20 mph. The current in the tidal waters in and among the low country islands was fierce. Tides were at flood stage because of the offshore storm. The new motor did its job admirably and we were able to get into and stay in some productive water. Chris and our new friend, Jake (from Wisconsin, not State Farm) both caught nice spotted sea trout. We were lucky Jake had agreed to come with us as he has a similar trolling motor and was able to provide a great tutorial on how to run the modern marvel. Life is full of happy moments.

The South Carolina coast, known as the low country, is an amazing environment. Lots of water and marshes with low islands are the landscape. The water is moving with big tidal rivers and huge marshes that flood with each tide. Birds and aquatic life abound. Osprey and bald eagles are seen diving and feeding on the fish. American oystercatchers, great blue herons, white ibises, and great egrets are all around the water. Mullet commonly leap clear of the water at seemingly random times

and for no apparent good reason. One of my favorite sightings is the plentiful dolphins. Carol and I joke with our hosts, Chris and Patty, that we can call them in by singing our version of the theme song from the old television show Flipper. But, believe it or not, it worked again and we saw a pod of about a dozen chasing bait and frolicking in the water. You know it is a pristine and rich environment when these apex predators are around.

Interestingly, the low country was a major refuge for emancipated people after the Civil War. The island of Hilton Head was captured by the Union and was the base for the blockade of Savannah and Charleston. Hundreds of enslaved Americans flocked to the island, where they could own land, go to school and live in government housing thanks to a Federal order to emancipate all the slaves in the

(See Starship Bean, Page 11)



GEORGE FJELD AND his long-sought redfish.

## Corrections

In last week's "From the Lion's Den," the location of the Brandon Food Shelf was erroneously given as the Brandon Baptist Church. The correct location is the United Methodist Church of Brandon.

In last week's "Mosquito District faces fines from state agency," we wrote that Wayne Rausenberger stated that the District had been fined before, but he has clarified that he had been referring to a driver and not the District itself.

## Spotlight On Business COMPUTER-EZ



Computer-EZ is a veteran owned business that specializes in providing incredible value, along with the best customer service in the IT business. Founded in 2000, we continue to provide computer and networking sales and service to many businesses and individuals in the Rutland/Brandon/Killington area. As members of the Brandon Area Chamber for over 20 years, Adam and Larry really



Larry Gold

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# Prosecutor defends adult murder charge against 14-year-old boy, calling it a 'starting point'

BY ALAN J. KEAYS/  
VTDIGGER

MIDDLEBURY — A 14-year-old boy accused of fatally shooting his peer when a gun discharged as he was waving it around in a car was released into the custody of his parents on Wednesday in a case that has raised questions around charging juveniles as adults and where they should be held.

Asked by a reporter why she decided to bring a murder case against the teen in adult court, Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos called it "a good question."

"A life was lost because of what happened, so we have to address that in the most serious of terms," Vekos said after a hearing in the case concluded Wednesday in Addison County Superior criminal court in Middlebury.

"Being charged as an adult doesn't mean he's necessarily going to be convicted as an adult, but it's a starting point," Vekos said. "This was a loaded weapon and the behavior as far as we're concerned was so, you know, reckless to an extreme where somebody's dead because of it."

Over the course of a hearing that started Tuesday, October 31 and stretched into Wednesday morning on November 1, Vekos initially sought to have the teen held without bail. But she ultimately dropped her request after hearing testimony from a Department of Corrections employee who said the defendant would have to be housed with adults or separated in a setting that is similar to solitary confinement.

Through his attorney, the teenager, a resident of Burlington, pleaded not guilty on Tues-

day to charges of second-degree murder, involuntary manslaughter and aggravated assault in the fatal shooting Monday night in Bristol of another 14-year-old, Madden Gouveia of Shelburne.

Police said they interviewed the two other passengers who were in the vehicle at the time of the shooting, including an 18-year-old who said that after the gun discharged he heard the defendant say, "I didn't mean to shoot you."

Marshall Pahl, Vermont's deputy defender general, who is representing the teen, said after the hearing Wednesday that it was too early for him to say if he believed the evidence supported a second-degree murder charge.

"We're at the very beginning of the investigation," Pahl said. "This is a case where the allegation is one of essentially tragic carelessness. Whether or not that's enough to support a second-degree murder charge, it's going to depend on a lot more facts coming out."

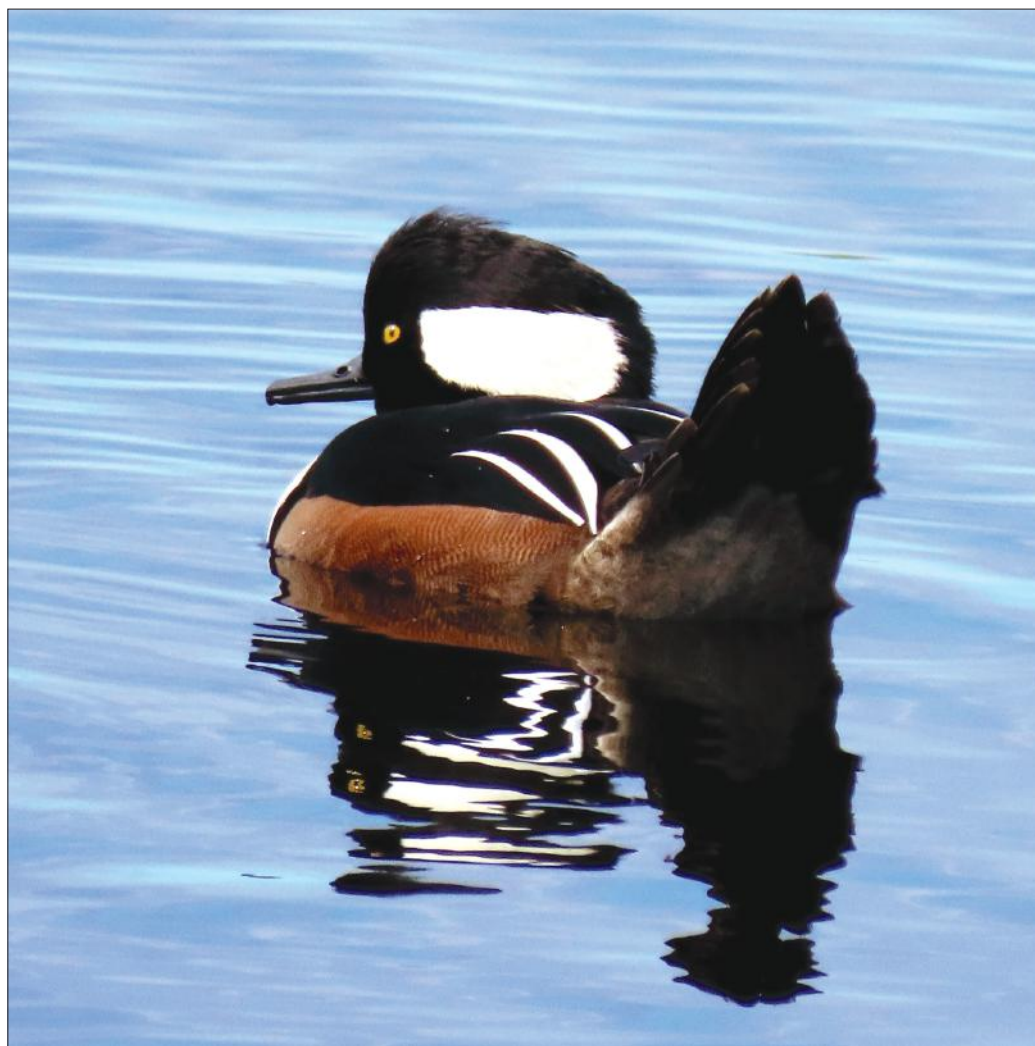
The defense attorney also said that it was too soon to say if he would attempt to have his client's case moved to family court, where the defendant would be treated as a juvenile and the proceedings would be closed to the public.

Vekos, the prosecutor, declined to say if she would challenge a bid to have the case moved to family court. "Not clear yet," she said when asked.

## WHERE TO BE HELD

A second-degree murder conviction carries the possibility of life in prison. That potential penalty made the defendant eligible to be held without bail while the case against him is pending.

Vekos said she dropped her push for the teenager to be held (See *Bristol shooting* Page 23)



## A hairstyle for every duck

THIS IS ONE of the hooded mergansers—members of the duck family—that are currently seen on ponds in the Brandon area.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

## Community Forums Same Sun to host solar event at the River Pub & Grill this week

BRANDON, VT — On Thursday, November 9th from 5-7 p.m., Same Sun of Vermont welcomes you to the River Pub & Grill, located at 18 Center Street in downtown Brandon. The enjoyable evening of complementary food, drinks, and giveaways will be an opportunity to learn about the benefits of solar energy for homes and receive new information that will help businesses and non-

profits go solar.

The evening is part of a series known as The River Events, celebrating Same Sun's 13th year in business at solar-powered venues. Roots LLC, which owns The River Pub & Grill, receives solar generation credit from an array that Same Sun built in Weston, VT.

All attendees will be entered in a drawing to win prizes, including a bottle of WhistlePig

Rye, and tickets to holiday events at the Paramount Theatre. All will receive access to our "River Event Promotion," offering a free solar site evaluation, and a potential discount of up to \$1,000 dollars off your solar project if you decide to move forward.

If you can't make this event, please call 802-775-7900 to see what November promotions (See *Same Sun*, Page 5)

## Otter Valley Football Club is proud to be a part of this community

The Otter Valley Football Club would like to express our gratitude to the community. This program promotes team spirit and school pride in a season that brings players, families and community members together.

During this year's senior game,

we honored our 7 seniors as they say goodbye to this wonderful team. Honored this year were seniors Gavin Disorda, Mason Bush-ee, Noah Drew, Chase Cram, Cody Mulcahy, Derek Li and Luciano Falco.

We wish you the best of luck as

you move on to new ventures.

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Depot Farm Supply, G Stone Mo- (See *OV Community*, Page 5)

## The REPORTER

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The Reporter is a nonprofit, community-supported newspaper managed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Current board members are Steven Jupiter, president; Dr. George Fjeld, treasurer; Barbara Ebling, secretary. Graphic design by Sepi Alavi

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## Notice

Forest Dale Road will be closed from Wheeler Road to Country Club Road on Thursday, November 9th from 8am to approximately 4pm to perform water system repair work. Traffic will be detoured via Park Street and Country Club Road. There may be a disruption of water service during this period that would affect Marble Street residences. Please use caution when traveling.

*Raymond Counter  
Water Superintendent  
/Manager*

*Brandon Fire District No 1*

## Letter to the Editor

### The Brandon Police Log keeps me informed

I have thought a lot about the issue of publishing the police log in the Reporter and, although intellectually I can understand the reasons against publishing it, in reality I realize how important it is to me. When I am mumbling under my breath about no police stopping the speeding cars by my house, it is very helpful to be informed

of what they are actually doing in town. I also appreciate the reminders when there is a rash of car break ins and stolen packages and how we need to be vigilant, particularly in those neighborhoods. I am also made more aware of the frail individuals in our community who receive help from our police. For me, most importantly, being

told that there was racial harassment in our community was a good reminder that we need to always care for our neighbors. I would have been oblivious to all of this.

*Shirley Markland  
Brandon*

## Sam Sun

*(Continued from Page 4)*  
you might be eligible for.

Same Sun of Vermont, Inc. was established in 2011 by Marlene Lederman Allen and Philip Allen of Rutland Town, Vermont as a solar sales and service firm. More recently, Same Sun specializes in instal-

lations of EV chargers. Headquartered in historic downtown Rutland, Same Sun focuses on customer-driven solutions for the residential and commercial marketplace in Vermont, New Hampshire and New York. Find us online at [www.samesunvt.com](http://www.samesunvt.com).

## OV Community

*(Continued from Page 4)*  
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and Garden, VT Soap Company, Wimett Trading Company, Winning Image, Brandon House of Pizza, Casella Construction, Marcell Oil Company, and National Bank of Middlebury  
Additional thanks go out to ... Bobby Laflam, Pete Felkl, The

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### 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.**  
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# Backcountry rescues

(Continued from Page 1)  
 cuers need to be able to execute correctly but also swiftly in extreme conditions, which in winter can include subzero temperatures, icy terrain, and deep snow.

Most of the rescues that first responders deal with in backcountry environments involve skiers or

hikers who have become unable to make their own way back to safety because of injury or illness and need to be carried out in a litter, which is essentially a shallow, body-length basket onto which the patient is strapped.

Clymer demonstrated several techniques for securing the patient

and maneuvering the litter down difficult trails, even when the litter is mounted on a wheel. Clymer at one point attached a length of strapping to a wheeled litter to create an effective “brake” that helps keep the litter from making abrupt drops when going down rocky slopes.

BFD has a contractual arrangement to provide services in Goshen, so when requests come in from injured skiers or hikers around the Gap, Brandon may be called upon to execute rescues.

BFD Chief Tom Kilpeck said that so far, the number of calls in the area hasn’t been large but the increasing number of people using backcountry trails is cause for stepped-up training.

“People are going further out than they used to,” said Kilpeck. Technology, such as GPS and electric bicycles, often makes the risks of remote recreation seem lower than they are, especially for people who are not experienced.

And when those forays go awry—a broken leg, a concussion, hypothermia—it’s the members of the rescue teams who must put themselves at risk to extract the injured parties from locations that might take hours to access.

None of the crew present on Saturday bemoaned their service; they were all there because they are happy to help their communities. But none of them wants to be a “secondary subject,” someone who ends up requiring medical care in addition to the person they initially set out to rescue. In fact, Clymer spent a good amount of time ex-

plaining to the crews how to take care of themselves in order to take care of the subjects.

“Leave a lot in the tank for when you get to the patient,” he said, meaning that crews shouldn’t expend so much energy getting to the patient that they don’t have enough “in the tank” for the arduous trip back down. The same advice applies to skiers and hikers: don’t exert yourself so much on the way up that you can’t make it back down.

An extraction can take hours. Clymer’s record is 12 hours (“From 5 p.m. to 5 a.m.”) on the Bamforth Ridge of Camel’s Hump. Fortu-

Clymer cautioned. When you’re in frigid weather and feel yourself unable to speak clearly or walk steadily, you’re probably experiencing a degree of hypothermia and it’s crucial to raise your core temperature and/or call for help.

Clymer also cautions against moving someone who has fallen into advanced hypothermia (unresponsive and immobile), since the sudden flow of unoxygenated, cool blood from the limbs back into the heart can trigger cardiac arrest. But if someone is responsive and able to move, get them moving to stave off further loss of body heat. And

## VETERAN'S DAY CEREMONY

**Saturday, November 11, at 11:00 a.m.**  
**Pittsford Town Offices**

**Welcome:** Town Manager David Atherton

**Song:** National Anthem sung by Miley Lape

**Invocation:** Pastor Joel Tate, Furnace Brook Church

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Pittsford Boy Scouts

**Keynote Address:** Eric Stage

**Song:** “My Country Tis of Thee”  
 – led by Lothrop School Chorus and Lothrop Music Teacher Carolyn Bruce

**Taps:** Played by Calvin Ladd

**Moment of Silence**

**Benediction:** Pastor Joel Tate, Furnace Brook Church

**Song:** “America The Beautiful”  
 – led by Lothrop School Chorus and Lothrop Music Teacher Carolyn Bruce

\* Refreshments Available in Town Office Conference Room following ceremony



**KEN BACKUS OF the Brandon Fire Department allows himself to be strapped into a litter by Drew Clymer, to demonstrate proper technique. Mr. Backus said he hoped the training would help first responders learn how to handle the terrain. This was the first year that Brandon and Rochester have requested such training from the state.**

Photo by Steven Jupiter

nately, it was a successful mission, and the patient made a full recovery. That kind of rescue requires an experienced team capable of working together toward the goal.

The existence of these teams may feel reassuring, but hikers and skiers must always keep in mind that it can take hours for help to arrive. So, it’s crucial to call for help as soon as you need it.

“If you think you need help, if the thought is even crossing your mind, you probably do,” said Clymer.

And because there can be a significant time lapse between a call for help and its arrival, Clymer advises backcountry users to carry certain items with them every time they venture out: headlamps, extra clothing, food & water, and a first-aid kit. But most important, he said, is an emergency blanket. If you have to wait a few hours for help to arrive, you need to keep warm.

“As soon as you stop moving, everything changes,” he said. The generation of body heat from locomotion can keep you warm, but as soon as you’re injured and have to stop, you put yourself at risk of hypothermia.

“Be on the lookout for the ‘umbles’: mumble, stumble, bumble,”

that emergency blanket can help enormously.

And before you head out, let someone know where you’re going, who you’re going with, where you plan to park, what route you plan to ski/hike, and when you plan to return.

“The more information we have, the easier it is to find you if you need help,” said Clymer. And keep in mind that the Brandon Gap is a “dead zone” for radio and phone communication. Phones that have excellent service in Brandon village can go dead up at the Gap, making it even more important to let someone at home know where you’re going and what you’re planning to do.

“It’s very common now for people to get in over their heads,” said Clymer. “They see stuff on social media and think ‘I want to do that’ but they don’t have the experience or training. Twenty-five years ago, there was a much higher barrier to entry for extreme recreation. Now, the barrier is much lower and you can go into any ski or bike shop and buy equipment you think will keep you safe.”

“Nobody thinks it’s going to happen to them.”

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## Hunters help to manage Vermont's growing moose population be sustainable

With high moose numbers in northeastern Vermont contributing to the abundance and negative impact of winter ticks, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is pleased to report on the results of a successful, regulated 2023 moose hunting season.

“Moose are relatively abundant in Vermont’s northeastern Wildlife Management Unit--WMU E,” says Nick Fortin, the department’s moose biologist. “This high density of moose contributes to high winter tick numbers that can negatively impact moose health and survival. A goal of this year’s hunt was to improve the overall health

of WMU E’s moose population by reducing its density.”

The department issued 180 moose hunting permits this year, resulting in 78 moose harvested between the October 1-7 archery season and the October 21-26 regular season.

Of the 180 permits available, 174 were issued by lottery, to which over 5,500 hunters applied. The department reserves the first five lottery permits for Vermont military veterans. Three non-lottery permits are reserved for persons with life-threatening illnesses, and three more are auctioned as a fundraiser for conservation.

Moose management goals were informed by years of monitoring data and extensive research on moose and winter ticks from the northeastern U.S. and Canada.

Vermont research has shown that chronic high winter tick loads have caused the health of moose in northeastern Vermont to be very poor. Survival of adult moose remains relatively good, but birth rates are very low, and many calves do not survive their first winter.

“This year’s hunt in WMU E was an important step towards achieving a healthy, sustainable moose population,” said Fortin.

## 10th Annual Backcountry Skiing Forum held in Rochester

BY GEORGE FJELD

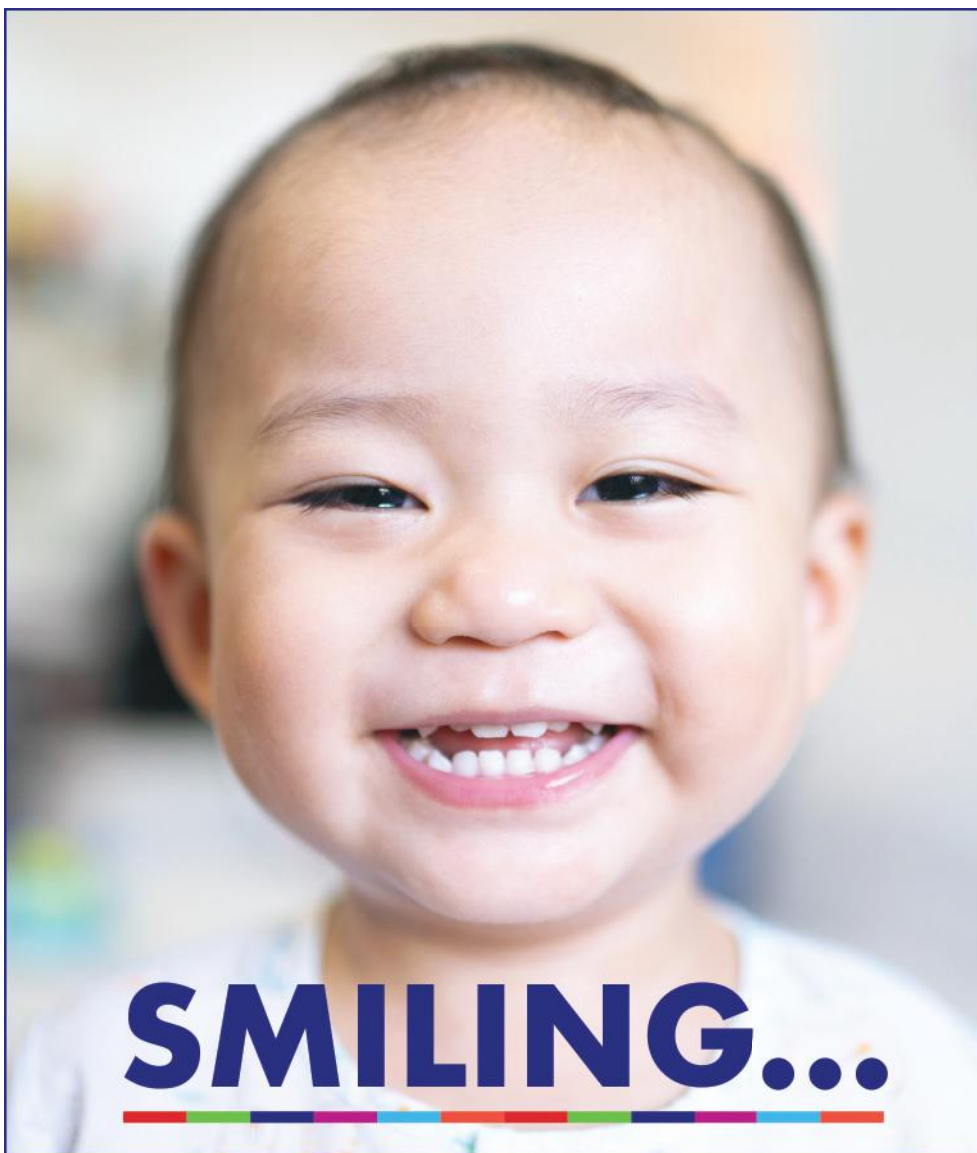
ROCHESTER- Ridgeline Outdoor Collective celebrated its 10th anniversary and hosted 150+ backcountry-skiing enthusiasts at Pierce Hall in Rochester last Thursday evening. The forum celebrated this anniversary with a big potluck dinner, multiple vendors, and a huge raffle. Ridgeline OC is the first organization to get permission from the U.S. Forest Service to cut trees and brush for the purpose of ski recreation. Over 20 ski lines have been established in the Brandon Gap area and these are used by skiers from all over New England. On wintery weekends, there is rarely a parking spot available at the Long Trail and Bear Brook parking areas on Route. 73.

David Goodman, author of Best Backcountry Skiing in the Northeast, reviewed the history of the sport, beginning with the cutting of trails in the mountains of New England by the Civilian Conservation Corps, including the Bruce Trail on Mt. Mansfield. Climbing up with skis on their shoulders allowed early skiers to begin the development of American skiing. Trail cutting

was confined to lift-served areas for decades. However, 10 years ago cutting of gladed lines in the National Forest resumed. Ridgeline, then called R.A.S.T.A., worked with Holly Reynolds from the Forest Service to sanction the first backcountry trail cutting since the 1930s. This has resulted in an explosion of trail cutting across Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine over the last 10 years.

Kathryn Wrigley from the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation highlighted the release of the Vermont Backcountry Ski Handbook, a guide for creating high quality, sustainable backcountry ski terrain in a cooperative fashion with forestland managers. The handbook was written with input from the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation, the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife, the US Forest Service, and the Catamount Trail Association. It is available on the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation website.

Remarks from Angus Cusker of Ridgeline OC and Drew Clymer from Vermont Search *(See Skiing Forum, Page 20)*

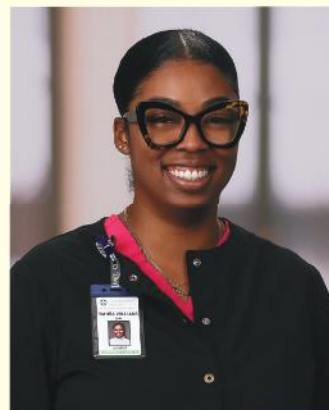


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# Hard Tellin'

BY DAVE PRAAMSMA

## To Tree or Not to Tree

I have a complicated relationship with trees. To me, a big, old, wind-topped maple tree is both a heartbreaking sight as well as a wonderful opportunity to rake in some free cord wood for the woodstove. Sights like this put me somewhere between my poetic love for trees and a pragmatic drive to make my fuel budget for the month.

If I have an inner Lorax and inner Lumberjack warring within me, I squarely blame Vermont. It is Vermont that has schizophrenically raised me into both a tree-hugger as well as a tree-burner. Late October usually brings this puzzling paradox to a head when I find myself both admiring the

trees and cutting them down at the same time. With chainsaw in hand, I pause long enough to take in the beauty, wipe away a dusty tear, and then plunge my blade back into the carcass of a defenseless tree sacrificing itself for my woodstove.

When it comes to lumber, I'm a sloppy pig's meal of emotions.

Where my true allegiance lies came to a head the other day as I heard some big equipment rumbling my way on our otherwise quiet dirt road. Some local farmers had bought the 200-acre field next to my home and they were looking to install some subterranean tilework for drainage. I knew things were getting dicey

when I saw the size of the diggers showing up. Suddenly the hedgerow of granddaddy oak trees along my road seemed like they were positively in the cross-hairs.

"Those trees out there must be shaking in their roots!" I belted back to my wife while looking out the window, both of us realizing that the landscape around our home was about to become a lot less shady.

A trot out to the guys in the field confirmed the bad news. Trees were no good. Clog up tilework, I was told. After a bleak and brief conversation, the verdict was in: it looked like about 25 innocent oak trees were approaching their final chapter (in a book of tragedy, just to be clear.)

Now I don't mean to get too sentimental about a couple of old-timer oak trees, but these silent timbers have been standing guard to my home for as long as I can remember. A stroll down my road in late fall was nothing short of an education in deep-bronzy colors. These were the trees that ushered me home each day. Saluting sentinels!

Of course, the Lorax in me

wanted to appeal to the farmers' humanitarian spirit. Maybe they planted a tree sometime in their past. Maybe they made a tree fort or two in their younger days. Maybe they had a loving mother that read them the Giving Tree as a child for goodness' sake!

As it turns out, nothing in life is simple and before I could make good on my indignation (now properly in a self-righteous lather) I heard my lumberjack self casually asking what was planned with all that fine wood. "I reckon we gonna pile 'em up and burn 'em" was my answer.

Well, anger doesn't seem to solve many problems – and it doesn't much serve when negotiating for free cordwood. "I suppose maybe you wouldn't mind parting with a bit?" I asked. And whether it was out of neighborliness or diplomacy (or a complicated stew of both), my invasive tree-remover was now generously hauling a winters' worth of free cordwood onto my lawn. To be honest, I wasn't sure whether I should thank the guy or toss him off the property.

If there's anything that spoils the enjoyment of a good wood

fire, however, its guilt. Where were my principles? The whole thing was nothing short of blood lumber! I had compromised and buckled like cheap lumber all for the sake of cheap lumber.

After some serious soul-searching, it appeared that there was only one righteous course of action: if reckless tree removal was the evil of the day, then tree-planting had to be the only right response. With shovel in hand,

I found a willing sapling and bravely planted it smack in the middle of that wind-swept wasteland. (And then quickly ran home to Google whether planting trees on neighbor's property was against the law.)

I don't suspect my lone Charlie Brown tree is getting much respect

out there in those 200 acres. In fact, I don't think it survived the first plowing. But it was a symbolic act. And no lawyers have called yet. And I suppose I have found just a bit more peace there by the woodstove.

Score one for the trees.

*Now I don't mean to get too sentimental about a couple of old-timer oak trees, but these silent timbers have been standing guard to my home for as long as I can remember. A stroll down my road in late fall was nothing short of an education in deep-bronzy colors.*

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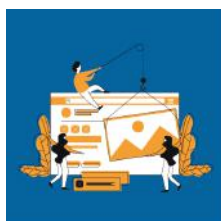
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Donations are now being accepted for Memory Tree bulbs in memory of loved ones. The cost of the bulbs is \$1.00 each.



2023 BRANDON AREA CHAMBER of Commerce

## MEMORY TREE BULBS



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(write additional names on separate sheet) Total \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Names with cash or check (made out to BACC) may also be dropped off at Carr's Gifts.

Deadline is Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023. Tree lighting and singing will take place on Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023 at 3:30 p.m. in front of the town hall.

Many thanks to Steve & Elsie Sherrill for generously donating the pretty trees and Dennis Marden and crew for help in setting up and lighting them!!



# Names Lost in Vermont

(Continued from Page 2)

leave the Catholic Church, which certainly would have set her at odds with her brothers and sisters. Margaret's funeral in 1912 was conducted from her home in Pittsford with Rev. Charles Smith, head of the Anti-Saloon League as well as Pastor of the Pittsford Congregational Church, officiating. The Rutland Herald reported the names of various out-of-town guests at her funeral; no Bélisles or Vasseurs present.

At first glance, it would seem unlikely that Napoleon Sisters (1858–1940) of Brandon shared a unique bond with Margaret Shangraw. Not only did they once share a common surname, originally Vasseur, Napoleon also had ancestors who hailed from St. Hyacinthe, Quebec—a common point of exodus for many other immigrants who settled in Rutland and Addison counties. Napoleon's stately monument with its cross of Calvary in Brandon's St. Mary's Cemetery gives us the bare bones of his life yet is a secret puzzle box waiting to be opened.

It requires explanation how Napoleon, born in Williston, Vermont to immigrants Joseph and Sophie (Millet) Levasseur, adopted the surname Sisters. The last syllable of Levasseur sounds like the French word soeur, which means "sister." And so, it stuck with this family. Napoleon wed a second-generation Vermonter, Filinda [Felanise] Zeno in 1883. Her true surname, however, was Lusignan, pronounced Loo-ZEEN-yon. Hence they came up with Zeno, two syllables instead of three. Let me interject here a question sometimes asked by students: "How do we know you are not making this up?" The answer is found in the Catholic church baptismal records, which almost always recorded the true French name and not an Americanized version.

As another example, Filinda Zeno's mother, née Mary Goodrich, seemingly had a Yankee-sounding name. Peeling back several more layers of Mary's Canada-born Goodriches revealed the real surname was Goddu, yet another family from St.-Hyacinthe! Filinda died in 1954, age 93, her date of death not engraved on her cemetery stone. At the time of her death, she had seven great-grandchildren, and a great-great-grandchild. Though I

**Pvt. E. N. Listers of  
Brandon Dies of Disease**

(Special to The Herald.)

Brandon, May 8.—In today's army casualty list issued by the war department appears the name of Private Earl N. Sisters, who is reported to have died of disease. Private Sisters is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Napoleon Sisters of this town, and was born in Huntington, 21 years ago. He was educated in the schools of Jericho and has lived in this town about three years, working at the Johnson printing establishment.

He enlisted in the army three years ago in the hospital corps and was with the soldiers who went to the Mexican border and later with the men who went over-seas with the first division.

The young soldier's parents received official notice from the war department at Washington, informing them that their son died April 27. Besides his parents he is survived by two sisters, Misses Leila of Brandon, and Gertrude of Springfield, Mass. and two brothers, Henry of Bristol, Conn., and Paul of this town.

CLIPPING FROM THE Rutland Daily Herald announcing the death of Earl N. Sisters on May 9th, 1919.

didn't know it at the time, a genealogy acquaintance of mine, Patience (Norton) Sisters (1923–2013) was married to Napoleon's grandson, Robert Sisters.

The inscription for Napoleon and Filinda's son, Earl C. Sisters, has its own story to tell. With his parents, he moved from Williston to Brandon in 1913. At the age of 18, he enlisted in the U.S. Army at Fort Ethan Allen and served briefly in Mexico. After the United States entered World War I, he sailed to France. In a letter to his parents, written in July 1917, he indicated that he was "enjoying himself immensely" as he played ball with French soldiers outside Paris. Alas, in the last winter of the war, he contracted pneumonia that culminated in tuberculosis. He died at the military hospital in Koblenz, Germany, when the

United States Army occupied the Rhineland after the collapse of the German Empire. A Rutland Herald typesetter erred in writing the name as Listers [see photo].

Lost names, whatever the reason, represent a break in one's personal history. When names from one culture, like Billings and Goodrich, get appended to those not born with those surnames, they mask their subjects' ethnic identity. Many Vermonters have thus been deracinated (i.e., cut off from one's roots), a seldom used but apt vocabulary word to describe these case studies.

With thanks to Barbara (Cole) Crowley for her collaboration with details of the Bélisle dit Levasseur family.

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\*\*\*\*\*

### BLOWOUT SALE

As we near the end of another fantastic golf season, we're excited to announce a special treat for all of you – our Blowout Sale at the Pro Shop!

**From now through the end of the season, we're offering a fantastic 15% discount on all items remaining in our Pro Shop. It's the perfect opportunity to snag those golf essentials, upgrade your gear, or find that perfect gift for the golf enthusiast in your life.**

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## Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.

See page 17

**SUBMIT YOUR BIRTH, ANNIVERSARY,  
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# OUR CREATIVE KIDS

STUDENT: Lydia Keith

GRADE: 7

SCHOOL: Otter Valley Union Middle School

TITLE: Name Art

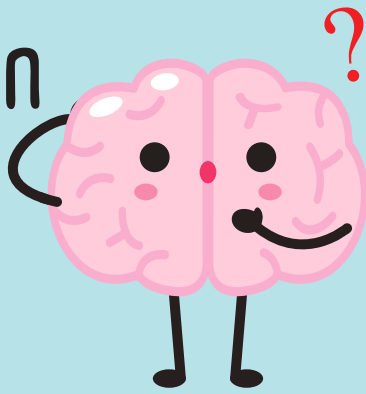
MEDIUM: Mixed Media

TEACHER: Dasha Kalisz





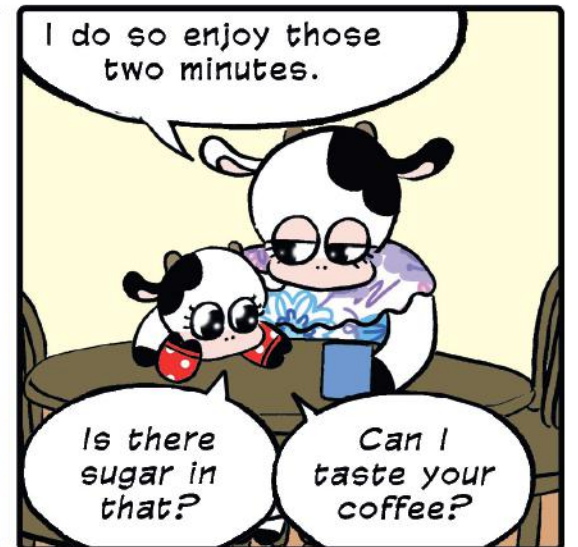
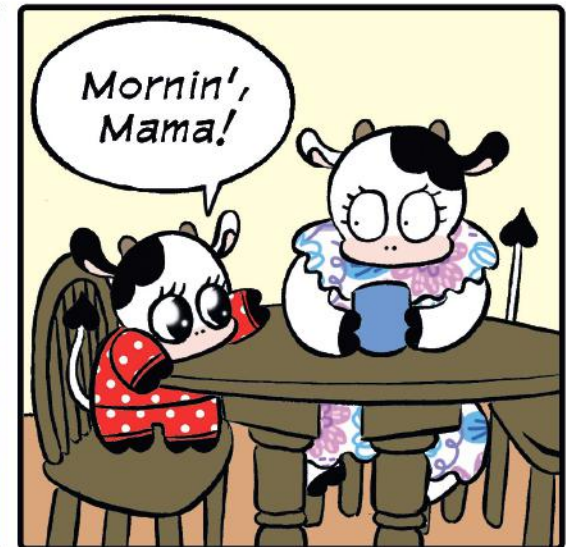
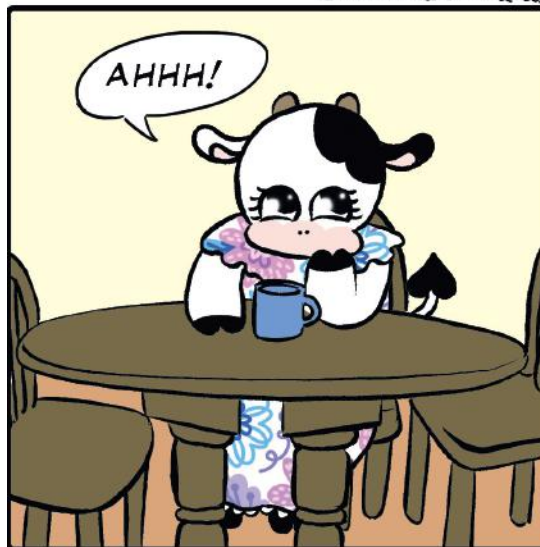
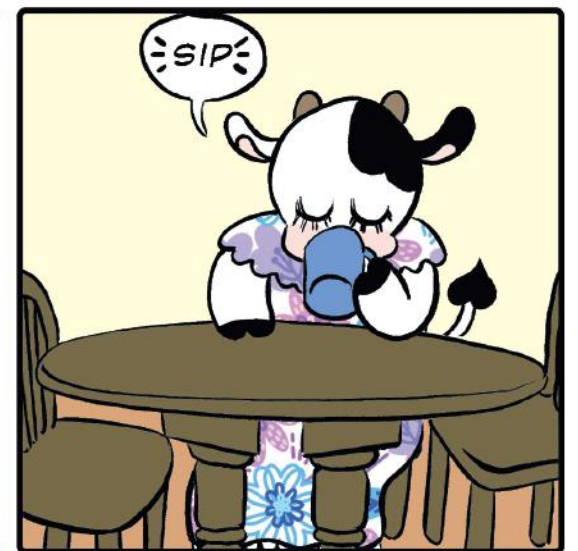
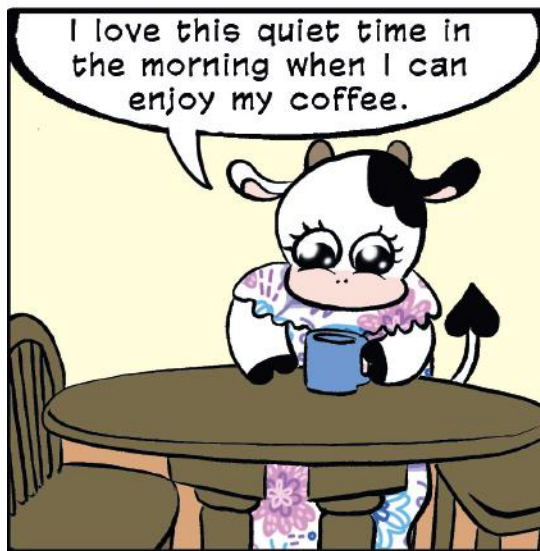
# Brandon Brain Buster



If the letters of the word “skate” are rearranged at random, what is the probability that the middle letter is “k”?

- A) 2/5
- B) 3/8
- C) 1/5
- D) 1/25
- E) 1/60

Answer on pg.21



SUNSET OVER THE low country.

Photo by George Fjeld

## Starship Bean

(Continued from Page 3)

low-lying areas of South Carolina and Georgia. Many black men volunteered for the 1st South Carolina Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Colored) which was a Union Army regiment during the American Civil War, formed by General Rufus Saxton. It was composed of escaped slaves from South Carolina and Florida. It was one of the first black regiments in the Union Army. Many families remained after the war and a native culture, Gullah or Geechee, with its own language was established here and in other low-lying islands. There is still

a corner of Hilton Head owned by the descendants of these formerly enslaved people.

Needless to say, it is very different from our home in Vermont. And now for a word from Bean:

BORING!!! That's all I can say. Stuck in the driveway for a week with the hot sun beating down on me! No trips, no neighbors, and they didn't even sleep or eat with me. However, they did put a nice memory foam mattress topper on the bed so I'm hopeful we'll be traveling soon. I could have done without this stop.

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# Calendar of events

## November

### 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](http://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](mailto:allie.griffiths@rcpcc.org) with your child's name, age, and contact information for your family.

### Wednesdays

#### Ping Pong

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

The club has begun 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](http://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

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](mailto:ceastman88@gmail.com)

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

### Thursday 9th

#### Same Sun of Vermont

We are hosting a party at The River from 5–7 p.m. Free food and drinks, door prizes, information on going solar. Call Same Sun offices at 802-775-7900 for more information or to RSVP.

#### Vets Town Hall - South Royalton

All are invited to a Vets Town Hall at the Vermont Law

## Red C is turni

#### Thursday the 16th:

made mexican food fro

#### Friday the 17th: Bl

Shady J BBQ providing

#### Saturday the 18: 1

and DJ Fancy Pants, Le

8–close The Worm D

at the Brandon Town H

## VTSU Castleton's Wind Symphony presents "Riots and Revolutions"

VTSU Castleton's Wind Symphony presents their fall concert on Wednesday, November 15th at 7:00 PM in Casella Theater on the VTSU Castleton Campus. The theme of the program is "Riots and Revolutions", and features music inspired by and written for protests and revolutions around the world

The VTSU Castleton Wind Symphony is conducted by Professor

Joshua Thompson and will feature student conductor, Krystina Carnifax.

Tickets for the event are \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors. Faculty, staff, and alumni tickets are free! Tickets can be reserved by calling the Casella Box Office at 802-468-1119 or purchased at the door up to an hour before the performance. All tickets are general admission.

All VTSU Castleton

student music concerts are FREE for any prospective

student hoping to audition or apply to Vermont State Castleton. Please reach out to our Coordinator of Arts Recruitment at [Joshua.Thompson@VermontState.edu](mailto:Joshua.Thompson@VermontState.edu) if you are interested.

For any additional questions, please contact Fine Arts Center Director Marisa Valent-Altland at [Marisa.Valent@VermontState.Edu](mailto:Marisa.Valent@VermontState.Edu).

#### 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 ([hzfm@hotmail.com](mailto:hzfm@hotmail.com) or (802) 282-7532) or Vicki Disorda ([vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com](mailto: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.

### Thursdays

Storytime at the Brandon Free Public Library



School's Chase Community Center in South Royalton, Vermont. Veterans are invited to speak about what their service means to them. Non-veterans are encouraged to attend and listen. This event is non-political, and all perspectives are valued. There will be no debate on American foreign policy.

Dinner will be served at 5:30pm. The Vets Town Hall itself will begin at 6pm.

RSVPs are required for the dinner. For the Vets Town Hall itself, RSVPs are optional, but encouraged.

For all attendees: All community members are invited to this event. Only veterans will speak, but non-veterans are encouraged to attend and listen.

Throughout the event, you may hear something you agree or disagree with. You may have a question. Or you may want to say encouraging words with the intention to help. However, we ask that you please refrain from responding. We are simply here to listen and learn about what it was like to serve in the wars that this nation has chosen to fight.

For speakers: Tell us what your service means to you. Please tell us about your own experiences, whatever they may be, rather than speaking broadly

help with outreach \* Cabot Cheese, for providing snacks \* This event is supported in part by the Vermont Humanities. (Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed do not necessarily represent those of the Vermont Humanities or any other supporting organization.) \* ...and the many individuals and organizations who have offered advice, feedback, and support

## Friday 10th

Promise Game & Cheer Up Dusty w/ Shy Husky and Vallory Falls at the Underground—Listening Room

Advance: \$14 // Day of show: \$17

Doors: 7:00 // Show: 7:30

BYOB

Promise Game

"Promise Game is a beautiful blend of what made the scene what it is today. Taking the old style even with its production and tones to heart and creating something truly lost and forgotten. Hitting all areas from emo like Brand New to pop punk like New Found Glory, Promise Game will have a really easy time grabbing the ears of everyone in the scene in one way or another." - GhostKiller Entertainment

Combining the harmonies of The Rocket Summer with the bright melodies of Motion City Soundtrack, Promise Game finds its own unique sound in a post-Warped Tour world. The band was named CTRL + Space.com's "Band of the Year" in 2021, as well as selected to appear in Discovered

Mag-

ton (The Used, Atreyu, The Ataris), they find their sound, creating a solid debut that showcases their precise songwriting while maintaining the edge and energy they bring to their live shows. Based in the Upper Valley of Vermont and New Hampshire, Shy Husky is a staple of their local music scene and has roots growing throughout New England.

## BAG Holiday Gift Show

Join us from 5:00–7:00 p.m. as the Brandon Artists Guild presents its annual holiday gift show, offering hand made artisan gifts. Mediums of jewelry, woodcraft, fabric art, glass, photography, paintings, pottery, prints, and notecards.

## Friday 10th Sunday 12th

Theater in the Woods' Ten-Minute Plays Fall Fundraiser at Stone Valley Arts

Eight plays by area writers, dynamically read by community actors are presented over two nights after a dinner of soups, salads and sides. Three children's plays will be read at the Sunday matinee.

THEATER IN THE WOODS VERMONT'S 10-MINUTE PLAYS - A FUNDRAISER FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10, SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11 EVENINGS 5:30-6:45 for dinner; 7 pm readings.

CHILDREN'S PLAYS READ SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12 MATINEE 2:00 pm readings followed by snacks Free will donation for Sunday admission

Eight plays written by area writers - and one from Chicago - form the centerpiece of two nights of delicious food and entertainment at Stone Valley Arts in Poultney, Friday November 10 and Saturday November 11. The included dinner is served from 5:30-6:45; plays begin at 7:00 pm. New this year is a matinee reading of three children's plays (by young actors) at 2 pm on Sunday November 12; the matinee admission is a free will donation.

For adults, four plays are presented each night after a delectable harvest dinner. The plays are skillfully directed by Meg Bouchard, Glenn Tarbell, Wheaton Squier, and Melissa Chesnut-Tangerman. If you want to see all eight, a discount is offered for both night's tickets.

The authors and their plays are:

Herb Childress	Acceptance
Melissa Chesnut-Tangerman	Just Ask
Allison Fradkin	The Strand that
Cheryl Gushee	Beads You
	Gloria and the
	Pianoman
	Last Chair
Karina Jutzi	
Jon Mathewson	Adulthood
Linda Peavy	This is a True Story
Chip Stevens	Dystopia, Why?
For children:	
Jeanne Arsenaault	Big Red Wagon
Frank Asch	Little Red Riding Wolf
	(scene)
Glenn Tarbell	Change

Friday and Saturday: for a \$25 ticket enjoy a scrumptious fall dinner of soups, salads and sides served from 5:30-6:45, and an evening of four plays presented in workshop; a talk-back with writers and actors follows. \$40 for both nights. Reservations at [www.theaterinthewoodsvt.org/ten-minute-plays.html](http://www.theaterinthewoodsvt.org/ten-minute-plays.html); please plan to pay at the door.

Sunday: The children's plays begin at 2 pm, with snacks served after the readings. Free will donation for the matinee.

Theater in the Woods' fundraiser benefits the scholarship fund and operations of its summer camps in Middletown Springs for children ages 7-16. The four directors Megan Bouchard, Melissa Chesnut-Tangerman, Rainbow Squier, and Wheaton Squier founded Theater in the Woods Camp in 2016. The camps serve 70 kids from Rutland and Bennington counties with an individualized approach to creating and strengthening community through theater.

Celebrate community theater and support Theater in the Woods camp at the same time!

Kindly sponsored by Noble Ace Hardware, Foley Services, McDonalds of Rutland, Querrey Industrial Services, Inc. and media sponsor The Mountain Times.

## lover ing 5!

Open mic with home-m Mari  
oodroot Gap playing,  
g the food  
2-7 pm 2 new beers  
ndell the LAN chef  
Dogs from Burlington  
all

## Comics & Collectibles in Rutland on the 12th

The Tri Town Collectors Club, coupled with the Glens Falls club, will hold a Coin,

Sports, Postcard and Comic Book Family Hobby Show on Sunday, Nov. 12th from 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the Rutland Elks Lodge on Pleasant St.

Many dealers and collectors from the area meet two times a year with a daylong series of hobby activities that is packed with fun for the whole family.

Besides the usual offerings of coins, currency, sports cards, and comic books there will be a special quiz for collectors.

At this event two new Vintage Sports card collectors will be present as well as many dealers and collectors and with a large presentation of coins and paper money.

Show organizer Joe Fuller says there will be material for collectors of all ages. There is no admission charge and anyone wishing to set up a card table to sell their material may do so without charge by calling Joe Fuller at (802) 379-2353, or email at [joseph@yahoo.com](mailto:joseph@yahoo.com).



about an issue or organization. You're a member of our community, and it's your stories, reflections, and insights that we're anxious to hear.

Each veteran will be given up to 10 minutes to speak. (This time may vary somewhat depending on how many interested speakers we have.) Veterans who would like to speak can contact [vermont@vetstownhall.org](mailto:vermont@vetstownhall.org), or you can indicate interest in speaking when registering. If you're considering speaking but prefer not to register, we encourage you to attend. After pre-registered speakers go, the host will take speakers from the floor, time permitting. The goal is for every veteran who would like to speak to have a chance to do so.

Of course, veterans (and all community members) are also welcome to simply attend and listen.

If you're interested in speaking but aren't sure what to speak about, click here for some questions that can serve as starting points (<https://vetstownhall.org/speaking-at-a-vets-town-hall/>).

Thank you to: \* Sean Braunstein, our local coordinator \* Vermont Law School, our venue sponsor \* Vermont Veterans Outreach Program for attending and being available to provide peer support \* Community College of Vermont, for

azine's "Undiscovered Class of 2022." So, what's next?

Promise Game is taking life as it comes, because spontaneity is when the magic happens and everything puts itself into place.

Cheer Up Dusty

Cheer Up Dusty is a dynamic four-piece rock group from NJ, founded by vocalist Justin Humenik in 2019. Their signature sound blends powerful vocals, catchy hooks, and hard-hitting instrumentation, showcased in their successful release "Everybody Hates Me". With their recent EP release, the band has delivered their most mature and introspective work yet, highlighting their growth as artists and their commitment to their craft.

Vallory Falls

Burlington, VT based hippie ass Bernie sanders maple syrup skii resort 3 foot snow storm punk rock

Shy Husky

Simultaneously nostalgic and fresh, Shy Husky's music serves as an update to the 90's alt-rock they grew up on. Big, distorted guitars and pounding drums blend seamlessly with modern clean, pop-infused vocals to create a new style that lands at the intersection of emo, pop punk, and modern alt-rock. On their 2023 self-titled EP, produced by Matt Apple-



# BRANDON'S GOT TALENT IS BACK AND AS GOOD AS EVER



The 9th annual Brandon talent show lit up the stage at Brandon Town Hall on Saturday. More than 100 people came to see the 19 acts, who offered up music, dance, and even hula hoops.

The event is a fundraiser for the Town Hall, which is about to replace the wood floor in the main space. All proceeds from Saturday's show—about \$1000—will go towards that project.

The evening was emceed by the inimitable Dennis Marden, who underwent no fewer than 19 costume changes ranging from traditional tux to mad scientist to ponytailed cheerleader.

The show was sponsored by Hayes Pallets, Ronald Hayes, Carolyn Hayes, and Ricky Hayes.

**THE ACTS:**

- Kathy Mathis & Charlie Gillam "We're a Couple of Swells"
- Hillary and Chloe Collier "All Is Found"
- Bethany White "Daylight"
- Woody Laraway "Bones"
- Tim Shields "His Eye Is on the Sparrow"
- Remi Barry "Lost Boy"
- Apple Laraway "Reckless Love"
- Audrey Carrier "You Belong with Me"
- Mackenzie Howland & Pais-

ley Laraway "A Million Dreams"

Adeline White & James Shorey "Evelyn, Evelyn"

Jeanette Devino "Forget Him," "Tammy," & "Walking after Midnight"

Blake Pockette, Eleanor Dike, & Audrey Carrier "Girls on Fire"

Adeline White "My Immortal"

Wyatt Waterman "Life by the Drop" & "Grinnin' in Your Face"

Apple & Paisley Laraway "Mama"

Collin Marcotte "Defying Gravity"

Michael Eaton "Grow for Me"

James Shorey "Waving Thru a Window"

Emma "Hoops" Page "Dance the Night"

**THE CREW:**

- M.C.: Dennis Marden
- Costumes, Dresser, Props: Kathy Mathis



Lighting/Tech: Will Mathis & Erica Mathis

Backstage: Deb Jennings, Mary Shields, Barbara Blanco, Christi Koch

Auditions: Dennis Marden, Kathy Mathis, Deb Jennings, Barbara Blanco.











# Mim's Photos

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

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

## Recognized

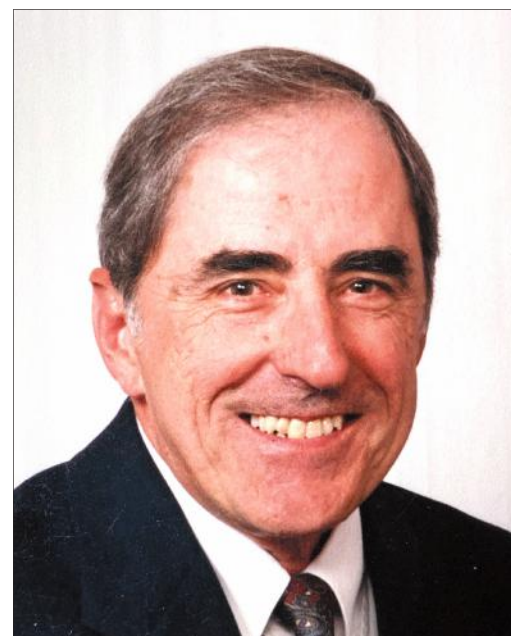


Linda Schmidt thinks that the girls paying field hockey are, from left to right: Ashley Cook and Tracy Moran.



Michael Dwyer also recognizes this young woman as Kalle Fjeld with her saxophone in the Otter Valley Jazz Band. At the time, she was also writing a memorable fun vocabulary exercise for me on the adventures of "Helga the Pirate."

Terry Ferson also believes that is Kalle Fjeld, the daughter of the Reporter's own Dr. Fjeld of Brandon.



Brannon & Leslie Godfrey say that the obvious answer to who's who in Mim's Photos is— Joe Acinapura. Not "real" Vermonters, but Joe and Lois welcomed us to their home and to the Town when we first arrived in 1992. "I love seeing this treasure trove of photos each week – keep 'em coming."

Michael Dwyer confirmed that this is, of course, Joe Acinapura who served the Brandon community with many hats, among them a Republic representative to the State Legislature.

Terry Ferson also recognizes Joe Acinapura, who was a state representative for the Rutland Vermont district.



Luanne Merkert says that the basketball team is, front left Dottie Chastain, Diane Martin, Debbie Chartrand, Shelly Papineau, coach Drew, Maria Hetzel McDonough, Debbie Cummings, Pat Wood, Tammy Johnson and Chris Markowski(?).

Michael Dwyer identified these players, top row from left to right: Chrissy Markowski (Fowler), Tamee Johnson, Patty Wood, Debbie Cummings, Maria Hetzel (McDonough), Coach Darlene Drew.

Bottom row from left to right: Dottie Chastaine, Diane Martin, (Racette), Debbie Chartrand, and Shelly Papineau (Hendee). I believe this was taken in 1978!

Terry Ferson of Brandon called to recognize the coach, on the far right. She is Darlene "Trombley" (maiden name). Darlene grew up in Whiting, graduated from OVUHS in 1969. Photo is probably from 1975 or 1976. Darlene married Jack Drew and later she relocated to California.







# OFF THE SHELF

## NEW BOOKS AND NEWS



### Adult Fiction:

#### Hester by Laurie Lico Albanese

Isobel Gamble is a young seamstress when she sets sail from Scotland in the early 1800s with her husband, Edward. An apothecary who has fallen under the spell of opium, his pile of debts has forced them to flee Edinburgh for a fresh start. But only days after they've arrived in Salem, Mass., Edward abruptly joins a departing ship as a medic—leaving Isobel penniless, alone, and forced to make her way by any means possible. When she meets a young Nathaniel Hawthorne, the two are instantly drawn to each other: he is haunted by his ancestors, who sent innocent women to the gallows—while she is an unusually gifted needleworker, troubled by her own strange talents. As the weeks pass and Edward's safe return grows increasingly unlikely, Nathaniel and Isobel grow closer. Together, they are a muse and a dark storyteller; the enchanter and the enchanted. But which is which?

#### Murder by Degrees by Ritu Mukerji

Philadelphia, 1875: It is the start of term at Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Professor Dr. Lydia Weston is immersed in teaching her students in the lecture hall and hospital. When the body of a patient is found in the river, the young woman's death is deemed a suicide. But Lydia is suspicious, and she is soon brought into the police investigation. Aided by a diary filled with cryptic passages of poetry, Lydia draws nearer the truth. Soon a terrible secret will be revealed. But Lydia must act quickly before she becomes the next target.

## Vicki Wells

(Continued from Page 1)

the past few years!" she continued. "Please know I remain committed to continuing to move Neshobe forward for the remainder of the year and will support the transition to a new leader when the time comes."

Ms. Wells has been at Neshobe since 2021, having taken the position after the retirement of Judy Pulsifer. Before Neshobe, Ms. Wells was the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services at Addison Central Supervisory Union in Middlebury. She holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Vermont.

In an email to The Reporter, RNESU Superintendent Kristin

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Our Annual Holiday Auction is Sunday, December 3rd. If you'd like to donate auction items, please give us a call at 802-247-8230.**

#### Some of Us Are Looking by Carlene O'Connor

An imminent meteor shower, the shocking death of an elderly local, and a caravan of young people have the gossip running wild at Dimpna Wilde's veterinary practice. One of the caravan's members is a young woman named Brigid Sweeney. Brigid later turns up at her practice, her clothing splattered in blood and an injured hare tucked into her shirt. She claims that a mysterious stranger has been trying to obtain a lucky rabbit's foot. Dimpna is incensed at the thought of anyone mutilating animals. On the night of the meteor shower, Dimpna finds Brigid's body tied to a tree, her left hand severed. She has bled to death. Wrapped around her wrist is a rabbit's foot. The rabbit's foot, the severed hand, the coinciding meteor shower—the deeper Dimpna and Detective Sergeant Cormac O'Brien investigate, the more ominous the signs seem to be, a warning that Dimpna fears will prove fatal to overlook.

#### These Burning Stars by Bethany Jacobs

Jun Ironway, hacker and con artist, has gotten her hands on a piece of info that could set her up for life: proof that implicates the powerful Nightfoot family in a planet-wide genocide seventy-five years ago. The Nightfoots control the sevite that fuels interplanetary travel. Someone is sure

Hubert stated that Ms. Wells had been in conversation with RNESU Central Office about her departure for several months.

Ms. Hubert also said that the job posting will go up within the week and that the District anticipates beginning interviews in late December or early January. If the search process continues beyond the current school year, RNESU has "a chain of command and succession protocols" that will be implemented, though the District "[doesn't] envision this happening," Ms. Hubert said.

One staff member at Neshobe expressed concern to The Reporter that "there is a very shallow hiring pool of qualified candidates seeking positions like this." Ms. Wells's career at Neshobe has been short—only 2 years—but she is currently

to pay handsomely for anything that could break their hold. The Kindom, the ruling power, is inextricably tied up in the Nightfoots' monopoly, and they can't afford to let Jun expose the truth. They task two of their most brutal clerics to hunt her down: Chono and Esek, who also happens to be the heir to the Nightfoot empire. But Chono and Esek are haunted in turn by a figure from their shared past, known only as Six. What Six wants is anyone's guess. And the closer they get to finding Jun, the surer Chono is that Six is manipulating them all. It's a game that could destroy their lives and devastate the stars. And they have no choice but to see it through to the end.

#### The House of Doors by Tan Twan Eng

The year is 1921. Lesley Hamlyn and her husband, Robert, a lawyer and war veteran, are living at Cassowary House on the Straits Settlement of Penang. When "Willie" Somerset Maugham, a famed writer and old friend of Robert's, arrives for an extended visit with his secretary Gerald, the pair threatens a rift that could alter more lives than one. Maugham, having long hidden his homosexuality, his unhappy and expensive marriage of aa becomes unbearable after he loses his savings—along with the freedom to travel with Gerald. His career deflating, Maugham arrives in desperate need of a subject for his next book. Lesley, too, is enduring a marriage more duplicitous than it first appears. Maugham suspects an affair and, learning of Lesley's past connection to a Chinese revolutionary, he decides to probe deeper.

the longest-serving principal in the RNESU School District.

Superintendent Hubert assured The Reporter, however, that "new administrators are also given formal mentors and coaches who help them acclimate to our organization and communities."

Ms. Wells experienced some public criticism after an incident last spring when 2 students threatened acts of violence at school. Some parents felt that the principal's office did not communicate the threats quickly enough to Neshobe families. A letter to the editor in The Reporter even called for Ms. Wells to resign.

Emails seeking comment from Ms. Wells and from Laurie Bertrand, Chair of the OVUUS Board, were not answered at press time.

## Landlord goes rogue and trashes renter's home

**October 30**

- Vehicle stop on Forest Dale Road for operating without headlights on. Warning issued.

**October 31**

- Vehicle accident on Grove Street in which a car struck a utility pole. The driver fled the scene. Incident currently under investigation.

- Brandon Police Department (BPD) responded to Barlow Avenue for a report by a resident that a neighbor's car door was open and the neighbor was home asleep, leading the complainant to suspect a break-in. The car's owner was contacted and it was determined that the car door had been accidentally left open earlier in the evening.

- A search warrant related to a drug investigation was served on Forest Dale Road. The incident is under investigation.

- Officers responded to a report of a man screaming in the cemetery on Forest Dale Road. The man was located and left the cemetery of his own free will. No criminal activity was observed.

- Officers responded to Franklin Street on Halloween for a report of a male and female that stole Pokémon cards out of a bowl at a residence that were meant for trick-or-treaters. The area was checked, but the responding officers were unable to locate the subjects.

- Vehicle stop on Town Farm Road for failure to maintain travel lane. Tickets issued for operating without a license, operating an uninspected vehicle, and for driving on roadways laned for traffic.

- Assault reported at a residence on Union Street. Investigation ongoing.

- Officers responded to a complaint on Church Street regarding a dirt bike that was revving its engine. The responding officer was unable to locate the bike or operator.

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for failure to display license plates. Warning issued to operator. Drug investigation conducted regarding a motor vehicle that was stopped on Franklin Street. Investigation ongoing.

**November 1**

- BPD K-9 Unit was deployed at the Brandon Police Station regarding a vehicle that was seized as a result of a drug investigation.

- BPD received a telephone call from a woman reporting that she believed that her mon-

## Brandon Police Report

ey had been stolen the previous days somewhere in Brandon. It was later determined by the investigating officer that the caller appeared to be somewhat confused, at which point an agency assist was requested of the Vermont State Police to have a trooper go to the individual's home in Leicester for a welfare check.

- Vehicle stop for equipment violation on Grove Street. Warning issued.

- Officers conducted a welfare check on Brookdale Street. The subject was located safe and sound and was asked to call the family member who had originally requested the welfare check to let him know she was ok.

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for following too closely. Warning issued.

- Vehicle stop on Park Street for failure to obey stop sign. The driver failed to provide proof of insurance, resulting in tickets being issued for that violation and for operating with a civilly suspended license and operating an uninspected vehicle. The vehicle was towed from the scene.

**November 2**

- Complaint received regarding an overloaded dump truck shedding excess sand on Town Farm Road.

- Joshua Rollins, 33, attempted to flee a BPD officer on an ATV on Town Farm Road. His ATV became lodged in the mud while cutting through a field and officers were able to apprehend him. Rollins was charged with Eluding a Police Officer and was issued a citation to appear in Rutland County Superior Court on 1/29/24 at 10 a.m. Rollins's ATV was confiscated as evidence and Rollins was issued several tickets: Attempting to Elude an Officer, Registration/TAD required, Operation Across Public Highway, Equipment Required, Operating Without Insurance, and Operating with a Civilly Suspended License.

- Officers responded to Cat-tails restaurant on Route 7 for a suspicious vehicle in the parking lot. The male operator advised that he was sleeping. The vehicle was found to lack valid registration and insurance. The operator advised he would have

(See Police report, Page 19)



# Police report

(Continued from Page 18) the car towed. When the car was towed from the premises, the officers cleared without incident.

• Officers responded to High Pond Road for a 911 call for a medical emergency. The caller informed the officers who arrived on scene that assistance was not needed.

• Directed traffic enforcement at the intersection of Champlain and Grove Streets for an ongoing problem with stop sign violations and cellphone violations.

## November 3

• BPD served a subpoena for bank records regarding an ongoing criminal investigation involving fraud. Subpoena served in hand to the bank's Custodian of Records.

• Business owner advised an officer of a woman who operates her vehicle while intoxicated on a frequent basis. The report was documented for informational purposes.

• BPD responded to a residence on Church Street for a report by a tenant that his landlord was breaking into his dwelling. The landlord, later identified as Lillia A. Rivers of Brandon was found inside the dwelling destroying her tenant's property. It was later determined that she had assaulted one of her tenants in the presence of a child. Rivers was charged with the offenses of Burglary, Simple Assault (Of-

fense Committed in the Presence of a Child) and Unlawful Mischief. Rivers was released on a citation as well as Conditions of Release to appear in Rutland Superior Court-Criminal Division on 11/6/23 at 12:30 p.m. for arraignment.

## November 4

• Officers took a report made by a concerned citizen regarding potential abuse/neglect within a household on Church Street regarding elderly adults as well as a child. Outside agencies were notified of the information provided to police.

• Multiple vehicle stops on Franklin Street for invalid inspection stickers. Warnings issued.

• Vehicle stop on Union Street for invalid inspection sticker. Warning issued.

• Officers responded to Heritage Family Credit Union on Franklin Street for an alarm. Officers found nothing out of place.

• Vehicle stop on Grove Street for following too closely. Warning issued.

Police assisted a motorist after witnessing a juvenile outside of a car on Grove Street. The juvenile was found to be experiencing car sickness and was ok.

• Police were made aware of potential abuse of a vulnerable adult on Union Street. APS was notified. A welfare check was

later conducted.

• Police attempted to locate a tractor trailer reported to be driving erratically on Route 7 coming into Brandon from Leicester. The vehicle was located but there was no indication of erratic driving or dangerous operation.

• Police located a "Be-On-Lookout" vehicle on Franklin Street, which led to a subsequent domestic disturbance investigation.

• Police responded to a report of an elderly female that fell down on Forest Dale Road near the golf course. The woman was transported to Rutland Regional Medical Center after it was determined that she had suffered a head injury in the fall and was experiencing a diabetic emergency.

• Officers responded to a complaint from residents on Church Street that someone had entered their house and moved their possessions around without stealing anything.

• Officers attempted to locate a vehicle on Route 7 that was reported to be operating in the breakdown lane/shoulder with a tire that was down to the rim. Officers did locate tire debris but were unable to find the vehicle. Adjacent agencies were made aware of the vehicle heading into Addison County.

• Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for speeding. Ticket is-

sued for operating without liability insurance.

• Property watch at the Brandon Liquor Outlet on Conant Square.

• Property watch at the Jiffy Mart on Grove Street.

• Officers received a complaint about an ATV or dirt bike riding up and down Carver Street. Officers were unable to locate the ATV or dirt bike.

• Property watch at Union Street Market.

## November 5

Officers responded to a report from Carver Street of a man suspected of breaking into cars and damaging property. Officers located the man and determined that he was intoxicated and had lost his way after leaving a friend's home. He was returned to that friend's residence and left in his care. No crimes were found to have occurred.

• Officers reported to a residence on Franklin Street for a prowler report. Officers secured the perimeter around the caller's residence and patrolled the area. The suspect in question was not located.

• BPD assisted Brandon Rescue with a medical call on Rydon Acres.

Officers received a complaint about an adult that was harassing a female juvenile motorist and had followed the juvenile to the Dunkin' Donuts in Conant

Square from Sudbury. As a result of the investigation into the complaint, Kristi Theise, 48, of Sudbury was cited to appear for arraignment on 1/29/24 at Rutland County Superior Court on the charge of disorderly conduct.


• BPD assisted Vermont State Police with a fight in progress at a gas station in Leicester.

• Officers responded to a residence on Grove Street for a complaint by a male party that his wife had violated her Conditions of Release. Upon further investigation by the responding officers, probable cause was not found to place any party under arrest. The male and female parties remained separated for the remainder of the evening.

• Officers patrolled the area of North Street in Forest Dale for a report of a female and child "flagging down cars" near the Leicester/Brandon town line on Lake Dunmore Road. Officers were unable to locate the woman and child.

• Police assisted DCF at a local residence on Grove Street with a welfare check on some children at the house. The children appeared to be safe.

• Vehicle stop at the intersection of Franklin Street and High Street for failure to display license plates. Warning issued.



## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

been missing for some time. In fact, it is so simple you won't know why you missed it before.

**LEO July 23–Aug. 23**  
Leo, you may need some financial fixes this week. Take control of your spending and identify ways you can curtail it further going forward. Ask for help, if necessary.

**ARIES March 21–April 20**  
Aries, you may see the details of a situation a little differently this week. While you may have been sticking to one way of doing things for some time, a new way may mean a breakthrough.

**TAURUS April 21–May 21**  
Taurus, your passion for a long-forgotten project is renewed. Dust off what you started, and see it through to completion. The results may surprise you.

**GEMINI May 22–June 21**  
Are you ready to communicate, Gemini? It's time to have an important conversation with someone close to you. It may not always be comfortable, but it needs to be done.


**CANCER June 22–July 22**  
Cancer, a message will come to you that will shed light on something that you have

stay put at work or maybe look elsewhere.

**CAPRICORN Dec. 22–Jan. 20**  
Actions speak louder than words, Capricorn. Others will take note of your efforts and embrace any chance to work alongside you.

**AQUARIUS Jan. 21–Feb. 18**  
It is time to stop waffling on a particular situation, Aquarius. You have done the research and checked it over many times. Make a decision knowing you are prepared.

**PISCES Feb. 19–March 20**  
You may need a crash course in negotiation, Pisces. There is something you have your eye on, and you may have to haggle over the details so things go your way.



**FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS**

Nov. 10 Neil Gaiman, writer (63)  
Nov. 11 Kurt Vonnegut, writer (d)  
Nov. 12 Juana Inés de la Cruz, Baroque-era writer, philosopher composer & poet (d)  
Nov. 13 Auguste Rodin, sculptor (d)  
Nov. 14 Fanny Mendelssohn, musician and composer (d)  
Nov. 15 Georgia O'Keefe, artist (d)  
Nov. 16 Chinua Achebe, writer (d)



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# Skiing Forum

(Continued from Page 7)  
and Rescue followed. Ridgeline has expanded to include a summer division which focuses on mountain biking. They are working with partners to develop a continuous mountain biking trail from Massachusetts to the Canadian border.

Alpine Options in Warren, Vermont donated a pair of backcountry skis, Green Mountain Bicycles donated a mountain fat

bike, and Bolton Backcountry donated a full-day guided tour which were raffled off to participants. Other prizes, including mountain running shoes, heated socks, gloves/goggle package, backcountry-hut stays, specialized backcountry bindings, a backpack, and lift tickets to Sugarbush and Middlebury Snow Bowl were awarded to happy recipients.

## Restaurant *guide*

*Restaurant*



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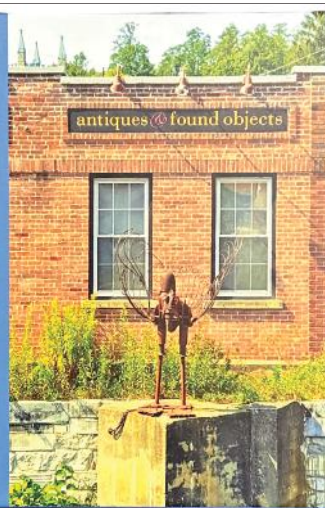
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**FACADES OF BRANDON**  
*old familiar faces ... old familiar places*  
 Original Photographs by Robert Black



### A house is not necessarily a home

BRANDON-BASED ARCHITECT AND teacher Robert Black led a conversation about the concept of “home” at the Brandon Library last Saturday, asking attendees to share their understandings of the term. “Safety,” “family,” “warmth,” “comfort” all came to mind. Having designed many homes in his career, the difference between a house and a home is of paramount importance to him. He’s recently released a compact volume of some of the most intriguing buildings in Brandon.

Photos by Steven Jupiter



### Killington kicks off ski season

THE SKI SEASON gets off to a start as Killington opens its slopes to eager skiers.

Photo by George Fjeld

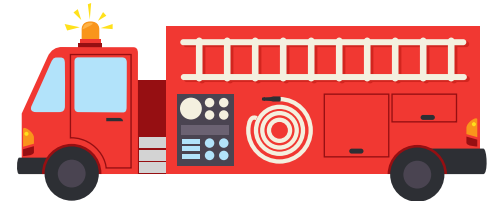


# PROCTOR FIRE DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES 125 YEARS



THE PROCTOR FIRE Department celebrated its 125th anniversary on Saturday. The entire team poses in front of one of its trucks in commemorative jackets provided by the Mortimer R. Proctor Trust. The three department members with the longest tenure: Vinnie Gatti (42 years), Sandor Vida (52 years), and John Burns (48 years). The four members of the Yard Committee.

Photos provided



## REAL ESTATE

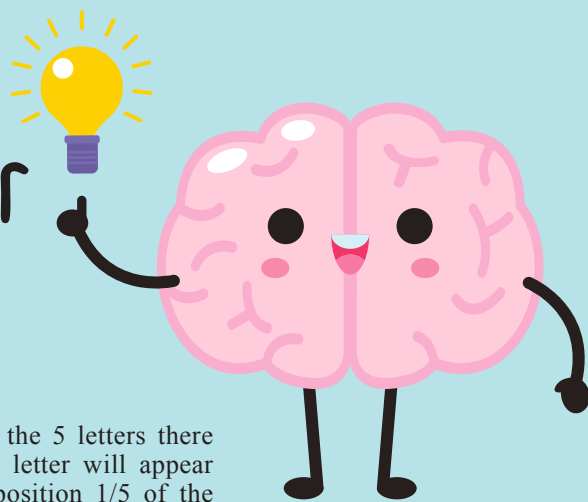


Brandon Village home with surprising privacy and a country feel! Entry through the oversized and well-lit carport. The cozy living room has a pellet stove and plenty of natural light. The newer side porch looks out to the landscaped and terraced yard, enclosed by a wooden picket fence. Lots of room for pets, kids, and gardening! The finished basement has full sized windows, a 3/4 bathroom, a private entrance, and could be converted to a nice rental. A great combination of comfort and convenience. \$395,000



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## Brandon Brain Buster Answered



Answer: C

The easiest way to approach this is to recognize that each letter has an equal chance of being in any specific position. So, no matter how many total arrange-

ments of the 5 letters there are, each letter will appear in each position 1/5 of the time. Therefore, "k" will be the middle letter in 1/5 of all possible arrangements, yielding a probability of 1/5.



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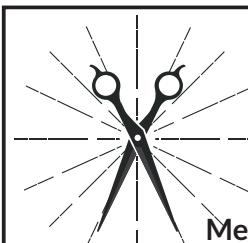
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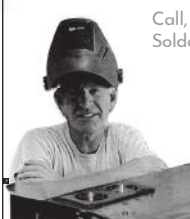
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# Bristol shooting

(Continued from Page 4)

push for the teenager to be held without bail after the court heard from Joshua Rutherford, a facilities administrator for the corrections department.

If a judge ordered the corrections department to hold the 14-year-old boy, the department would house that teen out of "sight and sound" contact with other incarcerated people in an adult prison, Rutherford told the court. That would be similar to solitary confinement, he said.

A judge's order could include a provision that would let the corrections department allow the teen to interact with the adult population, but Rutherford said that raised a number of concerns for the teen's welfare.

Following that testimony, Vekos asked for a break so she could talk to the teen's defense team. After about 20 minutes, the attorney came back into the courtroom and told Judge David Fenster that the parties had reached an agreement to seek the defendant's release on conditions. Fenster accepted the deal.

The teen was released to the custody of his parents in Burlington and must abide by a 24-hour curfew at his home except for school, medical appointments, therapy sessions and court hearings. In addition, the teen is not permitted to possess any firearms or other dangerous weapons.

"After hearing that testimony, it was evident, and should be brought out to light, that the only option is really to house a youth with adult inmates, which is never a good idea," Vekos told reporters. "From my point of view, it didn't seem to be consistent with public safety to put this youth in a situation where he would learn from adult criminals, or become

mentally, physically harmed by being housed with them or also physically and mentally harmed by being in isolation."

The prosecutor also talked about the lack of options that have existed in such situations since the 2020 closing of the state's only secure detention facility for minors, the Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center in Essex.

"The case has brought to light one of the serious failings that our state has made when it comes to juveniles, crime and how to deal with it," Vekos said.

The state closed the 30-bed Woodside facility after a federal judge granted an injunction calling for improvements, amid accusations of improper use of restraints and seclusion, as well as the mistreatment of youth held in the facility. At the time, a declining number of youth were being held at Woodside.

Asked why she initially pushed to hold the teen without bail when it is widely known that there are limited options for housing a youth in custody in Vermont, Vekos again called it a "good question" and a "starting point."

She had since worked to have "all the issues fleshed out," including meeting the teen's family and hearing about the options at corrections facilities.

Pahl, the Burlington 14-year-old's defense attorney, said the question of where to hold juveniles in custody facing serious offenses is one that may be addressed in the coming months. The state hopes to open four secure residential beds in Middlesex at the site of a former psychiatric facility. The facility is not expected to be ready until at least January.

"We need placements for children who find themselves in situations like this," Pahl said.

"If this had happened eight or nine months from now when the Middlesex facility is up and running, I would expect we wouldn't have had this type of a hearing. But as (it) is we just simply do not have placement available for (Pahl's client)."

## Juvenile issues

The prosecutor said that the judge's ruling Tuesday against her request to close the courtroom to the public limited her ability to bring in additional evidence related to juvenile matters that have to be kept confidential.

"It was really unfortunate that we couldn't bring in evidence that we wanted to yesterday, because I think that would have painted a different picture, but we were barred by confidentiality rules," she said.

A motion filed Tuesday by Vekos seeking to hold the defendant in custody without bail stated that he had been in violation of conditions of release by possessing a firearm and being with the three other people in the vehicle when the shooting took place. The filing does not mention why conditions had been imposed on the defendant, nor whether they stemmed from juvenile or adult court proceedings.

In another Addison County case in September a juvenile allegedly shot and killed a 48-year-old woman in Waltham, according to police. The victim was identified by police as Michelle Kilbreth, but citing the juvenile's age, the authorities did not name him.

Police said Kilbreth had been in a fight with another woman and Kilbreth lost control of a handgun she had in her possession. A juvenile picked up the gun and fired it, striking Kilbreth several times and killing her, according to police. Her death has been ruled a homicide.

Vekos said Wednesday that the Waltham case remained under investigation and that she was meeting weekly with state police on it. The prosecutor pushed back on a suggestion that the Waltham homicide was similar to the Bristol case — but treated differently.

"A lot younger, a lot younger than 14 in the Waltham case, so age made a big difference in that case and there were just extenuating circumstances there," Vekos said. "Those two shootings, fatalities really aren't comparable in my mind."

Vekos declined to reveal the age of the juvenile in the Waltham case, saying, "We're talking about a juvenile and an open investigation."

Gov. Phil Scott deferred when asked about the prosecutor's charging decision during his weekly press conference Wednesday.

"Obviously, this is her decision to make. The state's attorney has their prerogative," Scott

said. "But I would say under the circumstances, depending on the information she has that I may not have, she's doing what she thinks is best, and I support that."

The governor's deference to the county prosecutor in this case stands in contrast to a move he made in 2019 when he objected to a decision by Chittenden County State's Attorney Sarah George to drop three high-profile murder and attempted murder cases.

The teen entered the courtroom Wednesday with his ankles in cuffs and wearing a dark-colored T-shirt and gray pants. On Tuesday, he was dressed in red prison clothing.

He left the courtroom Wednesday with family members who attended the court proceeding and sat behind him in the gallery.

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