

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

A community supported newspaper

Vol. 29, No. 30

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

\$1



BLUEBERRIES FOR FREE

Wild blueberries are ripe for the picking at the Blueberry Management Area in the Moosalamoo National Rec Area in Goshen.

PG. 3



NEW SEASON, NEW LOOK

Otter Valley Football Club refurbished its concession stand on Markowski Field at OV this past week.

PG. 8



GARDENING CORNER

Garden columnist Lyn Desmarais shares her frustrations and joys with summer gardening.

PG. 9



MUSICAL ANARCHY!

Brandon's first-ever punk music fest—Punkstock 2024—will take place on Saturday, August 3 at Estabrook Park in Brandon.

PG. 14



A visit to the historic Vail House in Sudbury, 'the most elegant house in Vermont,' is a step back in time

BY STEVEN JUPITER

SUDBURY—New England offers some excellent opportunities for time travel. The region is full of historic sites that take you back to days gone by, places where you can get a glimpse of how life was for those who lived here in the earliest years of the United States. And though Vermont may not boast as many of these sites as our neighboring states, we still have enough to provide easy access to anyone looking for a wonderful way to spend an afternoon.

Among the historic sites in our own area is the Vail House in Sudbury, a truly lovely Federal-style home built in 1826 for Barnard and Polly Ketcham on land along the Crown Point Road, which had been laid by the British military in the 1750s and was one of the principal routes by which Europeans came to settle Vermont after the Revolution. The land was also originally part of the "Governor's Lot," the portion of land set aside for New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth in each of the towns he chartered in 1761 in what later became known as Vermont.

The house is easy to miss if you aren't actively looking for it, as it sits at an angle to the road and

(See *Vail House*, Page 2)



THE VAIL HOUSE in Sudbury looks as if time stopped in 1826, the year it was built. Designed by Thomas Dake for Barnard and Polly Ketcham, it retains many of its original features and was once called "the most elegant house in Vermont." Now maintained by a nonprofit, it is open for tours by appointment.

Photos by Steven Jupite

Brandon SB sets tax rates, discusses football & fountains

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—At its regular meeting on Monday evening, the Brandon Selectboard unanimously approved the total tax rate for FY25, which comprises both the municipal rate for the town budget and the education rate for the school budget.

The total residential tax rate for FY25 will be 2.6691, an increase of 0.2794 (11.69%) over FY24. The total nonresidential tax rate for FY25 will be 2.8594, an increase of 0.2497 (9.566%) over FY25.

The residential tax rate applies to primary residences, while the nonresidential rate applies to all other taxable real property.

A rate of X means that a homeowner will pay \$X per \$100 of assessed property value. To calculate the tax liability for any residence, divide the assessed value by 100 and then multiply the result by the applicable tax rate. So, if a primary residence

is assessed on the Grand List at \$100,000, for example, then the tax bill on that house will be \$2,669.10 ($100,000/100 = 1,000$. $1,000 \times 2.6691 = 2,669.10$). A vacation house that is assessed at \$357,000 on the Grand List will have a tax liability of \$10,208.06 ($357,000/100 = 3,570$. $3,570 \times 2.8594 = 10,208.06$).

However, the final tax bill for a primary residence will also depend on the income of the household, because the state will adjust the tax liability based on "income sensitivity." This program lowers the tax liability for households whose total annual income does not exceed \$128,000. The maximum credit for the education portion of the tax bill is \$5,600, while the maximum credit for the municipal portion is \$2,400. The state will calculate the credit and notify both the homeowner and the town in which they domicile. The credit is then applied toward

(See *Brandon SB*, Page 11)

Town underbudget for FY24; sewer fund surplus Pittsford SB discusses paving, vehicles, and retirement

BY STEVEN JUPITER

PITTSFORD—The Pittsford Selectboard convened for a brief regular meeting with a limited agenda on Wednesday, July 17.

The board unanimously approved the sale of the town's first responder vehicle, a 1990 Suburban, for \$600. In March, the board had decided to replace the Suburban with a used Durango for an amount not to exceed \$25,000. The total actual cost of the Durango was \$19K.

The board unanimously approved the bid submitted by Wilk Paving of Rutland for the repaving of the section of Plains Road that will be disturbed by the sewer-line replacement that will begin in August. Markowski Excavating will replace 3,800 feet of sewer line. Wilk's bid was for \$62,959 (835 tons of asphalt at \$75.40 per ton). The only other competing bid was from Pike Industries at \$68,607.20 (847 tons

of asphalt at \$81.00 per ton).

The board agreed to change the retirement plans of the following town employees: Assistant to the Town Manager, Highway Supervisor, Water/Wastewater Supervisor, and Assistant Water/Wastewater Supervisor. The employees receive retirement benefits through the Vermont Municipal Employee Retirement System (VMERS) and the board approved a change in the terms of their benefits, moving them from Group A (annual employee pre-tax contributions of 3.25% and town contributions of 4.75%) to Group C (annual employee pre-tax contributions of 10.75 and town contributions of 8%).

Town Manager David Atherton stated that the change would make employment with the town more attractive and aid in employee retention.

Mr. Atherton also noted (See *Pittsford SB*, Page 23)

Vail House

(Continued from Page 1)
is largely shielded from view by trees in the summer. But as

you approach the brick house, which is mostly isolated from newer structures, you wish you

were arriving by horse-drawn carriage. It absolutely has the feel of an era frozen in time.

Gary Bowen is the current Steward of the property. A writer and artist originally from New Hampshire, he's lived in the house since 1978, when he was 27, and has devoted the greater part of his life to the preservation of the house and its acreage. On a recent afternoon, he was gracious enough to give this writer a tour of the place.

Before we even entered the house, Bowen pointed out the finely carved woodwork surrounding the front door. As was typical of fine homes of its time, the door is flanked by sidelights and with a fanlight above it. But the fineness of the carving was evident, even with centuries of paint obscuring some of the details. The keystone in the arch above the door bears a Masonic inscription—Barnard Ketcham was a Mason—and the Masonic year 5826, which corresponds to the common year 1826. The house was designed by Thomas Dake of Castleton, who is thought to have studied at a school founded by Asher Benjamin, one of



THE KEYSTONE IN the arch above the front doorway bears a Masonic inscription and the Masonic year 5826, which corresponds to 1826, the year the house was built for Barnard Ketcham, an active Mason. The house hosted Masonic rites in the 1800s.



AN EARLY 19TH-CENTURY chest of drawers by Caleb Knowlton, a well-known cabinetmaker in Brandon who had Stephen A. Douglas as an apprentice. The piece was recently acquired at auction by the Vail House, which has worked to assemble a collection of period-appropriate Vermont furniture.

the great names of early American home design.

“Imagine the skill it took to do this,” said Bowen, who has studied every nook and cranny of the house for decades now. Though the area was considered fairly remote when the house was built in 1826, there were clearly enough well-trained tradesmen in the region to provide high-quality work. The bricks were fired on site

and some of the marble blocks that make up the foundation were quarried on the property as well. The construction of the house keeps it “cool in summer and cold in winter,” according to Bowen. No surprise, then, that the Ketchams (later becoming the Vails through marriage) chose to spend their winters in a warmer abode on Park Street in Brandon.

(See Vail House, Page 20)



G. Stone Motors and Stone Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram

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Wild blueberries are ripe up on Hogback Mountain! And they're FREE!

BY GEORGE FJELD

GOSHEN—Wild blueberries are abundant and free for the picking in Goshen, the Wild Blueberry Capital of Vermont (per the Vermont Legislature). On a recent visit to the management area on Forest Road 224 off Flora White Road in Goshen, my family and I found the picking easy and plentiful. While not as easy to pick nor as large as those that grow on cultivated high bush blueberries, these small berries are more flavorful and are the right size for pancakes and muffins! The Blueberry Management Area on Hogback Mountain is located within the Moosalamoo National Recreation Area and is managed for the growth of low bush wild blueberries. By periodic clearing and controlled burns, the competing vegetation is kept under control, allowing the blueberry bushes to flourish. The burns usually are done in the spring and the berry bushes recover to produce a year later during the summer. Presently there are about 25 acres of blueberry meadows to pick in. Head on up to Goshen and get your free blueberries!



NED FJELD SITS among the blueberry bushes, doing the hard work of picking the sweet berries. Photos by George Fjeld

Correction

In last week's issue, we erroneously stated that the cause of the fire on Old Brandon Road on Monday, July 15 was an electric-car battery. The cause was in fact a car battery, but for a conventional gas-powered vehicle and not for an electric vehicle. The car's conventional battery was being charged via an electric charger. We apologize for any confusion the error may have caused.

Brandon's Annual Yard Sale Day

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3 RD



GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

Every year, hundreds of people descend upon Brandon for the Chamber Annual Yard Sale Day!

With dozens of sales registered on the official listing, and scores

more set up around town, Brandon will be a busy place.

Find the official regular and enhanced listings at 7am on-line at and at the Brandon Museum & Visitor Center at 4 Grove St.

Celebrate Christmas in July!

Great summer savings on perennials, bushes & trees. Colorful annuals & hanging baskets 50% off.

Come browse our healthy plants and enjoy a summer snack. (It's Mary's birthday!)

Fresh, local corn and veggies from Grabowski's farm in West Rutland

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WE NEED U

From 'Verd Mont' to Paris: Green Mountain athletes set for Olympics

BY KEVIN O'CONNOR/
VTDIGGER

Vermonters are famous for skiing and snowboarding off with Winter Olympic medals. But three athletes with Green Mountain State ties are aiming to sprint, grand slam or speed their way into Summer Games history.

Montgomery runner Elle Purrier St. Pierre, Burlington rugby player Ilona Maher and Norwich rower William Bender are part of a more

than 500-athlete team set to represent the United States in Paris starting Friday.

Although generations of Vermonters have won gold in the Winter Olympics, only about two dozen have even competed in the Summer Games — the most recognized being the late 1912 long jumper Albert Gutterson, known for the namesake fieldhouse of his alma mater, the University of Vermont.

Purrier St. Pierre, a 29-year-old

dairy farmer turned U.S. record holder for the indoor mile and two mile, is set to race the Olympics' 1,500-meter event a year after the birth of her son.

"I feel like everything I do in my life right now is something that I really enjoy," the two-time Olympian recently told Harper's Bazaar. "I love being a mom, I love being a runner, and I love being a farmer."

Purrier St. Pierre's farming- and-wellness foundation is selling

fundraising lawn signs at several northern Vermont businesses, while Montgomery's Phineas Swann Inn and Spa is scheduled to host a "community watch party" for her event on Aug. 8, according to its Facebook page.

In rugby, Maher lettered in field hockey, basketball and softball at Burlington High School before moving to her current sport at age 17. A decade later, the 27-year-old will join the 12-woman U.S. team

for a second time, with matches starting July 28.

And in rowing, Bender, a 22-year-old recent Dartmouth College graduate, will compete with schoolmate Oliver Bub in the men's pairs event beginning July 28.

"The publicity, gear, the Olympic village, they're all distractions," Bender told VTDigger in advance of the Games. "The goal is to stay focused on racing."

Tough cuts, leadership changes: one year into the Vermont State University experiment

BY THEO WELL-SPACKMAN/
VTDIGGER

Vermont State University tried to do a lot in the last 12 months: revamp its hybrid academic offerings, cater to a wider variety of students and keep all five of its campuses operational.

But as the state university completed its first year late last month, some worried that in all the budget balancing, people have been left behind. The plan for consolidation, dictated in large part by state mandates, is under pressure from several angles.

Faculty position losses skewed heavily toward the liberal arts, leaving some programs cut and many surviving departments wondering whether they will ultimately survive the transition. Students said they returned last fall to campuses that felt vacant and saw staff members they had relied upon laid off.

In September 2021, the trustees of the Vermont State Colleges System voted unanimously to create a single institution that combined Castleton University, Northern Vermont University and Vermont Technical College.

The 2023-2024 academic year

will see this plan put into place for the first time. Five main campuses — Castleton, Lyndon, Johnson, Williston and Randolph — and more than 5,000 students were united under one institution and one set of academic offerings.

Controversy and uncertainty have made leadership continuity a problem over the last two years. Faculty and staff unions voted "no confidence" in the administration in February 2023, and student government associations across the university followed suit that November.

The resignation of state university president Parwinder Grewal in April 2023 followed an unpopular set of recommendations that included closing physical libraries. Mike Smith served as interim president until that November. Two weeks later, current president David Bergh took the reins — though he, too, is described as "interim."

The new university has started to do — out of necessity — what the state mandated three years ago: cut \$5 million a year from its budget for five years and keep all five main campuses open.

It's a show of commitment that the state has rewarded in its budget

for the 2025 fiscal year, softening its mandate to \$3.5 million in cuts per year for the remaining two years of the agreement.

Rep. Marc Mihaly, D-Calais, serves on both the House Appropriations Committee and the board of the Vermont State Colleges System.

He is also a former dean and president of Vermont Law School, now called Vermont Law and Graduate School.

"I've actually been very impressed so far by the leadership, particularly at the top," he said of the state university's transition.

Mihaly also said that VTSU is not alone in its predicament. "The traditional model of education ... is in trouble," he said, "in a world which is largely not government-financed."

Despite an uptick in state support (See *VTSU experiment*, Page 5)



The hunter becomes the hunted

THIS MOCKINGBIRD APPEARS to be figuring out how to look through this spotting scope.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

The REPORTER

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; Mitchell Pearl; Shelly Williams. Graphic design by Sepi Alavi; Kate Saunders, Operations coordinator. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brandon, Vt. 05733

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Lordy, Lordy!
Shawn Devino turned 40
on July 19th!

Love, Mom & family

Happy Birthday!



VSU experiment

(Continued from Page 4)

since 2020, Vermont still ranked 49th out of 50 for higher education appropriations per full-time student in 2023, according to the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association. To reach the mean for this metric, those appropriations would have to nearly double.

Nonetheless, legislators have been “very firm” in their requirement that all five main campuses stay open, according to Sarah Truckle, the state university’s vice president of business operations.

In part, she said, it’s a measure that reflects a commitment to the goal of providing a local campus to as many students as possible.

Over half of the VTSU student body is comprised of first-generation college attendees, and over half are students returning to education later in life, as opposed to entering directly from high school. Many of them work or have families.

It’s “no secret,” said Maurice Ouimet, vice president for admis-

sions and enrollment, that “we are Vermont’s public higher education access system.”

The university’s website indicates that roughly 72% of its students are in-state, meaning the university likely served around 3,780 Vermont students in fall 2023. By contrast, less than a quarter of the University of Vermont’s student body — just under 2,500 in 2023 — is drawn from Vermont. Just 1.5% of UVM’s undergraduates are over 25, according to a 2022 report.

Rather than consolidate departments to specific locations, the university plans to continue to keep them dispersed across the campuses to best serve students who are less able to relocate, according to Nolan Atkins, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Each location houses a subset of curricula, many of which have the ability to reach students both in person and virtually. For studying literature and writing, the Castleton, Lyndon and Johnson campuses are

all options for in-person learning with some virtual components. For a Bachelor of Science in nursing, one would necessarily be based on the Castleton campus.

The administration emphasized that the campuses aren’t five iterations of the same institutional offerings. “Unique attributes will continue to attract students to be residential students at those locations,” said Ouimet.

But to some extent, the university has struggled with enrollment. Last year’s institutional changeover saw a drop of just under 14% in the incoming first-year class, Ouimet said. There was also an overall dip of just under 6% across the university, from 5,554 in a fall 2022 headcount to 5,251 in fall 2023, according to university spokesperson Katherine Levasseur.

Levasseur declined to provide projected enrollment numbers for VTSU this fall, saying “we enroll all the way up to when classes start.” She confirmed via email that fall enrollment numbers are currently up 7% over last year.

Spread too thin? Five campuses, *(See VSU experiment, Page 6)*

BRANDON YARD SALE DAY SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 2024 REGISTRATION FORM

Name and address listing: \$10 OR

Enhanced listing: \$15

\$15 buys you 25 words to describe your yard sale’s “special” items plus your name and address in a boxed ad.

For ALL LISTINGS:

NAME: _____

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ADD 25 WORDS:

(separate sheet of paper)

MAIL TO: BACC, PO BOX 267,

BRANDON, VT 05733

OR DROP OFF AT CARR’S GIFTS.

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION:

July 30, 2024

Go to Brandon.org for more info!



Obituaries

Chester Stanley Hallock III, 53, Goshen

Chester Stanley Hallock, III, stepfather, Rachel and Allen Atwood, Jr; a brother, Shawn Lee Hallock and his wife Jen of Pittsburg, NH; a sister, Lynn Marie Thow of Linden, UT; 2 nephews, Zack and Ryder, and several cousins also survive him. He was predeceased by his father.



CHESTER HALLOCK III

Chet was born in Rutland on January 7, 1971. He was the son of Chester and Rachel (Brown) Hallock, Jr. He grew up in Goshen and received his education in Brandon schools. He graduated from Otter Valley Union High School, class of 1989. He began his working career with New England Woodcraft, for a few years. He enjoyed camping, loved animals, playing poker, and cruising in his jeep. He devoted his life to caring for his late father and his uncle.

He is survived by his mother and

stepfather, Rachel and Allen Atwood, Jr; a brother, Shawn Lee Hallock and his wife Jen of Pittsburg, NH; a sister, Lynn Marie Thow of Linden, UT; 2 nephews, Zack and Ryder, and several cousins also survive him. He was predeceased by his father.

A private graveside committal service and burial will take place at a later date in the family lot in the Old Goshen Cemetery.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made in his memory to Rutland County Humane Society, 765 Stevens Road, Pittsford, VT 05763.

Arrangement by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

VSU experiment

(Continued from Page 5)
one curriculum.

Some faculty say that, in practice, consolidation into one dispersed set of academic offerings has meant that many academic areas have experienced debilitating cuts.

According to Linda Olson, a former sociology professor at Castleton, the cuts made to the university's academic workforce have been "damaging to our ability to continue to operate."

She accepted a retirement buyout offer last semester. It's difficult, she said, but she's more concerned about the health of the academic programs she's leaving behind.

Under Mike Smith, the university announced its "Optimization 2.0" plan last October. The administration expected, according to a later report, only one layoff and some 17 buyouts among faculty. The plan detailed strategies to limit losses in many areas of study through consolidation, programming changes or discontinuation.

Smith left the organization the day after filing the report.

In "Optimization 2.0," Olson's sociology department was marked for "major modifications" due to its "negative net position" and "low enrollment."

The section noted that social sciences' enrollment issues were "exacerbated by multiple-campus offerings." Psychology's optimization recommendations also bore this addendum.

Sometimes, cuts have come in the form of attrition not reflected in

the layoff and buyout reports. Just in Olson's department at Castleton, she says, "we've essentially gone from, like, five full-time faculty to two" through unreplaced retirements.

Olson said faculty members have attempted to communicate their views on the consolidation process through existing avenues of shared governance, but their recommendations have often been paid little attention.

"The (reception to the) input of the faculty and staff has been largely performative," she said.

Isaac Eddy, a former theater professor, was on a committee that attempted to address the future of performing arts on campus. He submitted a proposal last year defending the importance of specific aspects of the Johnson campus' performing arts program to the local community.

In particular, he argued, theater courses must be in person rather than virtual.

When "Optimization 2.0" was circulated, Eddy's "Performance, Arts and Technology" program was marked "discontinue." Without warning, in an all-faculty memo, his career evaporated.

"It felt like a real disconnect," he said. "Like we were speaking two different languages."

There were 18 to 20 students in Eddy's program when its dissolution was announced. Of those, a few graduated and nine remain enrolled, he said in a text message. The rest transferred to finish their degrees.

Eddy said he never received conclusive word from the administration about whether he might be offered a position at Castleton, where the Theater Arts program will continue. Feeling that he had no other choice, he accepted a retirement buyout at 45.

"I just was left in the dark," he said. "I have a family here ... I had been teaching and living in Johnson for eight years."

Sometimes, he said, he wonders whether he could have saved the program if he was less insistent on teaching it in person. In trying to be uncompromising about the quality of his teaching, he worries he might have accelerated its end.

Eddy and Olson say they feel that fields like theirs that fall into the traditional "liberal arts" are in particularly acute danger at VTSU.

"I do think that humanities have been harder hit in all of this," Olson said.

According to the university's own reports on faculty position losses, 17 of the 29 faculty positions that have gone unreplaced since 2022 have been in the humanities or social sciences. Nine were in STEM fields, and technical degree programs accounted for just 3.

"Is it a liberal arts education if there's no performing arts on your campus?" asked Eddy. "I'm not really sure."

According to Nolan Atkins, the university's provost and vice president for academic affairs, "a strong liberal arts foundation is essential for any VTSU grad to be successful in the workforce."

The fact that some programs are being strengthened while others are (See VSU experiment, Page 11)

ONLINE AUCTION
(1605) Kubota Tractors & Woodworking Equipment + Tools & Household (180 Lots)
Auction Closes: Tuesday, July 30 @ 10AM

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DID YOU KNOW?

WE'RE SO MUCH MORE THAN BOOKS. (ALTHOUGH BOOKS ARE PRETTY AWESOME.)

The library is closing for the month of August to move back into our renovated building! Last day to check out materials from Town Hall location is AUGUST 2nd and we will be reopening in our renovated building on September 3rd!

BRANDON Don't have a library card yet? Stop in!

Brandon Town Manager's report, July 9–19

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Town issued invitations to bid our FY25 sidewalk paving and road paving projects; these were mailed directly to several area contractors, published on the Town website, the VLCT Classifieds, and the State of Vermont bid registry. Bids will be considered at the August 12th selectboard.

I attended the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) meeting warned for July 9th. The meeting was not able to convene due to lack of quorum. There are now two vacancies on this commission. One applicant has stepped forward to fill one of the vacancies. The commission will attempt to schedule a meeting when at least one of the vacancies is filled by the selectboard. The commission has received the final report from VHB on the historic assets in Brandon outside the designated historic district. This report is quite interesting and is published on the Town website on the Historic Preservation Commission page. Community members with suggestions, additions, or corrections based on their own knowledge, photographs, or documents, are invited to provide those to the town manager for inclusion in future efforts by the HPC.

Bill Moore worked with Brian Sanderson who expects the Town will be cleared to proceed with the McConnell Road culvert later this summer after environmental, historical, and archaeological review by VTrans.

Larry Stevens began work as zoning administrator this week, and Jeff Biasuzzi is assisting with orientation training for several days.

The replacement truck for wastewater was delivered and put into service. The 2015 Diesel truck is being evaluated for repairs before it is transferred to Highway. When that is back in service, we will look to divest the 2012 HWY truck through public offering locally and/or Municibid.

Tax sale: The provisions of Act 106 of 2024 were enacted as of 13 May 2024, and amend 32 VSA § 5252 governing tax sales. The Town's attorneys recommend pausing our tax sale process while

they modify all the legal notices used for this process to ensure compliance with the statute as just amended. The pre-tax sale letter from the attorney falls into this category. Until such time, no correspondence will be issued to property owners regarding tax sale. The attorneys are preparing guidance for all the Towns they serve.

FOCUS AREAS DURING REPORTING PERIOD

With assistance of Tim Kingston, I spent considerable time working to meet annual requirements for inspection and reporting of functionality of various Segment 6 stormwater structures. This remains in progress.

Flood Resilient Communities Funding (FRCF), which is the identified voluntary buyout funding for some Newton Road properties, is "still waiting on new funding" per a July 12th message from the hazard mitigation grants manager. Additional owners are interested in buyouts and in non-buyout hazard mitigation (remaining in place but protecting their homes through authorized means).

We activated the Town's opt-in emergency text alert system for the failure of water service to the Prospect Street and Mt Pleasant area due to firefighting the afternoon of July 15th.

I had many meetings with town officers, staff, townspeople, and responded to a number of requests for information from various parties. Public works matters were the most frequent topics.

FOR AWARENESS OF THE SELECTBOARD

Chief Kachajian has secured a grant of \$1,725 from the Governor's Highway Safety Program which allows the Brandon Police Department to replace a radar unit.

Chief Kachajian reports that State of Vermont data indicates a 29% drop in automobile crashes in Brandon year over year. He attributes this success to our officers' concentration on getting drunk drivers off the road and in general to a department focus on traffic safety enforcement.

The State Environmental Analyst who oversees the

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT	
FY24 Revenue Budget \$3,448,880 Actual \$3,762,330	107.84% thru funds / 100% thru year
FY24 Expense Budget \$3,346,150 Actual \$3,378,032	100.95% thru funds / 100% thru year
Actual Revenue Minus Actual Expense / Net Gain or (Loss)	\$384,298+
Expect adjusting entries by Town Bookkeeper and Treasurer during July	
Unrestricted / Unassigned Fund Balance	\$560,265
1% (Local Option) Tax Fund Available / Undesignated [\$100,000 board-reserved for paving not included at right]	\$213,507
Known Grant Matches Not Yet Designated	UNION STREET
Delinquent property taxes (prior years)	\$572,321 (was \$568,965)
Delinquent wastewater (prior years [over 120 days])	\$198,514 (was \$199,943)
Tax Sale Status	70 accounts at attorney for letters

Town's monitoring of the closed landfill has amended our requirement by removing well #1 and #3 from the additional PFAS testing; well #2 and #5 will still be monitored for PFAS twice yearly by a qualified professional.

The Town has been advised that its FY24 "true up" from Green Lantern for the 2016 solar installation on Town-owned land at the Brandon Industrial Park will be \$23,127 and is the largest yet. Last year's true-up was \$9,846.

This true-up is applied to FY25 B&G and WW revenue.

A public hearing is scheduled for 6:30PM on August 12th ahead of the regular selectboard meeting. This hearing relates to the accessibility grant for the Brandon Library. Notice is scheduled to appear in The Reporter on July 24th.

A real estate closing is scheduled for Wednesday 24 July on a Newton Road voluntary buyout that Bill Moore has been steering.

NINE & DINE
GOLF & DINNER

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 JULY 27TH
 AUGUST 3RD
 AUGUST 24TH

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 milnegolf.mandy@gmail.com

OV Football Club gives concession stand a makeover!



THE OTTER VALLEY Football Club rolled up their sleeves and spruced up the concession stand on Markowski Field last week. The work entailed replacing siding and a broken door, all in anticipation of an exciting season, according to OVFC member Nate McKay (pictured with drill in hand at far right). Near right: the finished product. Looks great! Thanks, OVFC!

Photos provided by OVFC






Friday, July 26
Salisbury Meeting House
853 Maple St. Salisbury

Friday, August 9 Salisbury Meeting House
Thursday, August 22 Salisbury Meeting House
Friday, August 30 CVUUS, 2 Duane Court, Middlebury

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GARDENING CORNER

Three tenets of gardening— watering, weeding, and deadheading

BY LYN DESMARAIS
WATERING

The 1995 book “365 Days of Gardening” tells us that “today we should remember to water newly planted trees, plants, and shrubs.” By this they mean “get the heck out there with your hose and give those babies you planted this year, and probably last year’s plantings as well, a drink of water, now.” It also reminds you to water all summer long and into the autumn, consistently and deeply. Don’t wait until your plants’ leaves curl up and scream in agony. All in all, not bad advice. If you are open to taking advice, I’d take this advice.

I’m watering my trees every ten days without fail. I’m using tree watering bags. They were new to me until I saw them being used in Brandon for the new trees planted during Segment 6. There is an art to watering. Mainly try to water your plants at the base of the plant or tree or shrub. Let it soak in 10-15 seconds. Try to avoid spraying the leaves. Most of our plant pests are fungi. Mois-

ture and fungi go together like a “horse and carriage.” Just as importantly, you’ll be conserving water. Drip systems seem to be the best if you have the time to put them in. They deliver water consistently in the right location. There’s almost no runoff. Timers are great too. It is also recommended that plants be watered in the morning, not during the day or evening, but hey water when you can. It’s better to water than

not at all. Annuals require frequent watering and if they are in pots, you must water daily in these hot days. If you’d like to be surprised, feel the soil heat in

your container plants. You’ll be amazed at how hot it is. The same goes for water in your hoses in the sun. I wouldn’t water with the hot water that comes out. Wash something off, then water your plants with cold water.

WEEDING

Most people don’t like to weed. A few do. They say it’s their therapy. Hmmm. Okay we’re all different. Different is good. Variety is the spice of

life and all that. In case you haven’t noticed, I do not have a harmonious or zen relationship with weeds. And I have a lot of weeding to do. This year I’m trying a few new things to lower my stress. I am using straw for mulch rather than bark mulch. It gives an interesting and casual look. I’m not sure that I like it, but it definitely will break down faster than mulch. And it forces me to accept a less polished and perfect look. I’m also weeding in the evening after 5 pm or very early in the morning 5-7 am. These short bursts have been working better than past weeding methods. Finally, I am listening to books on tape as I weed. That has helped with the monotony. If you’re super lucky, someone like your children will take pity on you and help you weed- and so far, for me, that’s worked the best of all!

DEADHEADING

There are lots of new varieties of annuals, mainly petunias, that no longer require deadheading to look great all summer long. Dollar for bloom, annuals are the “best buy” of summer plants for folks like us with shorter growing seasons. They do, however, require a lot more care than perennials in terms of weeding, water-



ing, feeding, and deadheading. That’s if you want them to look like they did when you bought them. There are several glorious displays of annuals in pots in Brandon. Ellen Walter gets a shout out because consistently year after year she chooses beautiful color combinations

and shapes of leaves. The town pots look great too and again thank you to all the storekeepers that water them so often. I personally love the plants outside Morningside Bakery. The perennial gardens are looking so happy this year in Brandon. (See Gardening corner, Page 21)

ARTIST: Isabella Gra

GRADE: 3

SCHOOL: Lothrop

MEDIUM: Sharpie and Watercolor Paint

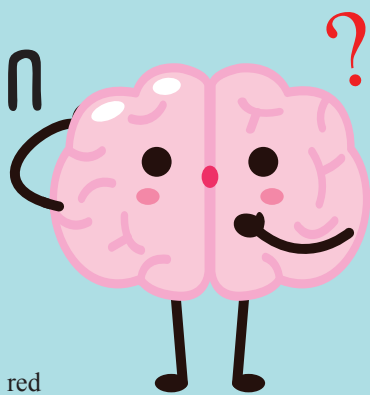
TEACHER: Matt Aucoin



Statement from Mr. Aucoin

Isabella used the wash technique to create this painting. The wash technique is when you totally wet your paper with water, and then paint with watercolors on the already wet surface. This is a fun technique. Isabella's picture really turned out well.

Brandon Brain Buster



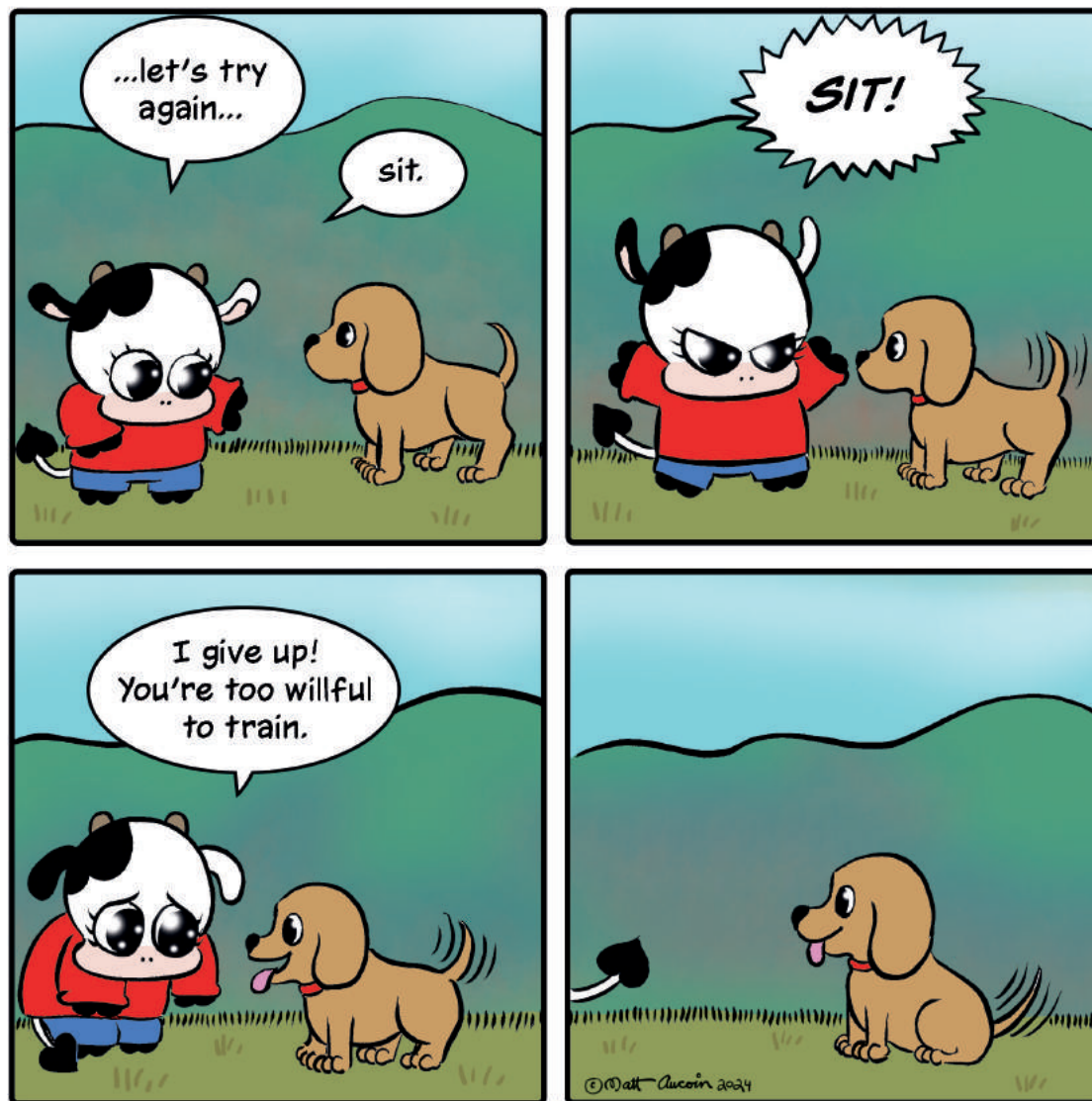
Bag A contains 3 red marbles, 3 blue marbles, and 3 white marbles. Bag B contains 4 red marbles, 4 blue marbles, and 4 white marbles. If one red marble is transferred from Bag B to Bag A and one white marble is transferred from Bag A to Bag B, how many blue marbles should be transferred from Bag B to Bag A so that the probability of randomly choosing a red marble from

Bag A is the same as the probability of randomly choosing a red marble from Bag B?

- A) Cannot be done
- B) 1
- C) 2
- D) 3
- E) 4

Answer on pg. 21

MAPLE the GOW™ by Matt Aucoin



Brandon SB

(Continued from Page 1)

the homeowner's tax liability and will be reflected in the tax bill issued by the town.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Brandon Town Manager Seth Hopkins presented his report to the Selectboard. The report is reprinted in full in this issue of The Reporter.

Of particular note was Mr. Hopkins's statement that town spending and revenues for FY24, which ended on June 30, were in line with the projections in the budget for that fiscal year.

Also of note was Mr. Hopkins's recommendation that the board hold onto \$100K in unspent paving funds left over from FY24 until the paving bids for FY25 paving projects come in and the board gets a clearer picture of actual vs. estimated costs.

That "extra" \$100K resulted from savings on the Arnold District Road paving project last year. The project had been estimated to cost \$350K. The actual cost of the project was \$250K, because the town's Highway Department was able to

complete much of the work that it had initially expected to contract out. \$200K of that cost was covered by a paving grant and the town used \$50K of a \$150K Highway Department carryover from FY23. This leaves \$100K in unspent paving funds that the town can use either to fill funding gaps in planned paving projects this year or to complete smaller paving projects around town.

Recreation Department Report

Rec Director Bill Moore presented his report to the board. The full report can be found on the town website in the Selectboard packet for 7/22/24.

Of note was a discussion regarding the reimplementation by Brandon Rec of tackle football for middle-school kids. The Vermont Principals Association (VPA), which oversees school athletics throughout the state, had decided to allow tackle football for middle schoolers once again after it had previously prohibited it in favor of flag football.

Board member Tim Guiles asked Mr. Moore about the safety of the

decision, given the attention that has been paid recently to the potential damage caused by tackling. He also asked about the town's legal liability in case of injury. Board Chair Doug Bailey echoed those concerns.

Mr. Moore stated that the prohibition of tackle football in Vermont middle schools had triggered the formation of independent, unregulated football clubs where proper supervision couldn't be guaranteed. The VPA had wanted to bring those kids back into an environment where they could play tackle football with proper supervision. Mr. Moore explained that a similar rationale guided the Rec Dept's own decision.

Board member Heather Nelson expressed gratitude to the Rec Department for its summer theater pro-

gram, Camp Broadway, which her daughter had greatly enjoyed.

APPOINTMENTS

Following a brief executive session during which the board interviewed applicants, the board voted unanimously to appoint Shirley Markland to the Historic Preservation Commission for an indefinite term and Olya Hopkins to the Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District for a term ending at Town Meeting in 2025.

WARRANTS

The board unanimously approved two warrants in the amounts of \$65,803.70 and \$111,364.42 to cover obligations and expenses. The town paid two warrants because it is still settling expenses from FY24, which ended on June 30.

Board member Brian Coolidge expressed regret at not having spo-

ken more forcefully at a previous meeting against the installation of two water fountains on Seminary Hill, one in the dog park and one in the playground. He called the fountains an unnecessary expense, even with the Water District paying half the \$7,200 cost and donations covering \$2,500 of the remaining amount. He suggested that a spigot would be sufficient and would reduce the likelihood of vandalism.

Deputy Town Manager and Rec Director Bill Moore countered that a spigot would be unsafe, impractical (it can be left open), and unbecoming. He stated that significant effort had been put into the parks on Seminary Hill and the fountains would help improve the facilities.

Ms. Nelson added that the fountains would help improve accessibility for those with mobility issues.

VSU experiment

(Continued from Page 1)

cut, he said, is not entirely within the administration's control.

"We have not intentionally steered money away from the liberal arts," Atkins said.

The university received over \$600,000 in federal grant money last November to develop its hybrid learning format, which the universi-

ty has termed "Face-to-Face Plus."

The Vermont Legislature set aside \$3.8 million for tuition coverage in 2024 for students preparing for what it considers "critical occupations," such as nursing or mental health counseling. The fund applies to both in- and out-of-state institutions.

The university also announced

last fall that over \$6 million in federal funding was granted to double the capacity of its nursing program.

The total operating budget of VTSU will be just shy of \$135 million for the 2025 fiscal year, according to Levasseur.

Bergh, the university's interim president, said that funding must to some extent correspond to the popularity of individual programs. "Students," he stated, "are voting with their feet."

"We're always going to have a

pendulum," he said, which may be "swinging back toward the need for ... students in the humanities."

But Eddy said he thinks the liberal arts can't wait that long. Without a willingness to reverse-engineer student interest, he said, programs like his won't survive.

"We can't hire full-time faculty because the student enrollment is so low, but the student enrollment is so low because we don't have enough full-time faculty," he said.

Olson agrees. "We've been fo-

cus on cutting to sustainability," she said, "which is not a sustainable proposal."

Rep. Mihaly said he understands that the balance between people and funding is hard to strike. Though he supports the university's trajectory, he acknowledges that the belt can only be tightened so far.

"You can't ultimately cut your way into success," he reflected.

The empty building problem As a child, Zib Miller lived so (See VSU experiment, Page 19)

Calendar of events

July

Mondays

Brandon Rec offers Aikido classes

Youth Class at 4:30 and Adult Class at 5:30. Beginners and spectators welcome. Classes at Neshobe School Gym until mid-July, then returning to Town Hall. Visit www.AikidoVermont.org for more info.

Tuesdays

Maclure Library Story Time Playgroup

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

Friends Zone

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

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

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

Pins & Needles Craft Club at the Brandon Free Public Library

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

Wednesdays

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

**Free PICK UP BASKETBALL –
For rising 6th – 8th graders
Wednesday evenings in July from 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
(July 17, July 24, July 31)**

There will be a 10 minute instructional session followed by pick up games. We will engage in 2vs2, 3vs3, and 5vs5 full court games. Come and have some fun playing

basketball with your friends. No need to sign up, just show up. For further information or if you have any questions call Fred at 247-6722 or 282-5423.

tournaments.

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

For further information about the Green Mountain Table Tennis Club, visit our club's website at www.gmttc.com.

Yoga Prana Shakti

Zoom & Studio Chair Yoga, Gentle, Wednesdays

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

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

Shoreham Ice-Cream Social on July 28

The Shoreham Congregational Church will host an Ice Cream Social on Sunday, July 28, 2024, from 12 to 3 PM in the Church Fellowship Hall on 28 School Road in Shoreham.

Come get your take-out ice cream and celebrate the Shoreham community in conjunction with the Car Show on the Town Green.

Enjoy a dish of vanilla and/or chocolate ice cream for only \$4, or make it a sundae for only \$7.

Toppings include chocolate, caramel, maple, strawberries, and homemade whipped cream, adorned with nuts and sprinkles.



Rokeby Museum Pie and August 11

Ferrisburgh, Vermont: Having a great day is as easy as pie at Rokeby Museum's annual Pie & Ice Cream Social. Come hungry, and plan to enjoy music and games on Sunday, August 11, from 1 to 4 pm.

This special day includes yards and yards of homemade pies, ice cream donated by Ben & Jerry's, live music from Vermont Folk Life Sugar in the Pan Trad Band, raffle baskets, croquet, and badminton on the lawns. Let's Grow Kids will have table with games for kids! The historic house and museum exhibitions will also be open to the public.

Admission to Pie Day music, games, and museum exhibitions is free. Pie and ice cream are \$8 per serving, \$2 for ice cream, and \$1 for beverages. At the end of the event, if any pies are still available, they will be sold for \$20. Raffle tickets are 1 ticket for \$5 and 5 tickets for \$20.

If you haven't had the opportunity to visit the newest Underground Railroad, this is an excellent opportunity to sup-

port the museum! Seeking: The Underground Railroad and the Legacy of an Abolitionist Family is a groundbreaking exhibition that explores the Railroad's complexities and the Underground Railroad's history.

Marble Trail Financial Services, Inc. sponsors the event. Thanks to dozens of bakers and to City Market, Arthur Baking Company, and Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream.



Goings on around town

2024 Music at the Riverbend lineup

July 24
Enerjazz
Vermont's High Energy Big-Band

July 31
Jenni Johnson
Old & New school; Jazzy & Swinging & Funky

Aug 7
Breanna & the Boys
Local folk rock power trio

Aug 14
Tom Caswell Blues Band
Providing authentic blues sounds in the Chicago, Texas, Delta and West Coast styles.

Aug 21
Extra Stout
Vermont's Premier Irish Band

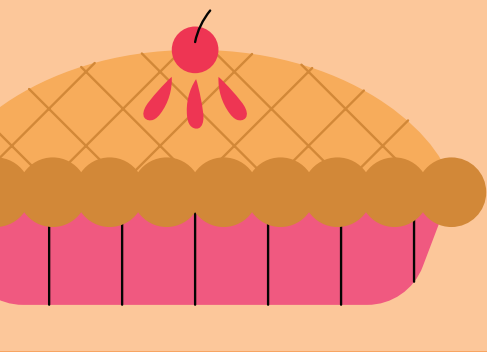
Aug 28
Red Hot Juba
Soul, swing, rock n roll, blues and country music

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 you will soon notice a difference once you start. Looking forward to seeing you in class!

Ice Cream Social

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About Rokeby Museum
Rokeby Museum is a 90-acre historic site and National Historic Landmark designated for its exceptional Underground Railroad history. From 1793 to 1961, Rokeby was home to four generations of the Robinson family, who were farmers, abolitionists, artists, and writers. The Museum is located on Route 7 in Ferrisburgh. Open daily until October 13. Guided tours are available Wednesday through Monday at 11 AM and 2 PM or by appointment. www.rokeby.org



cancellations, follow on Facebook and get on our email list. \$15/class.

Thursdays

Ukulele Group

Free at the Chaffee Art 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 Art 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.

Brandon Senior Center Game Day

Come join us every Friday at 2:00 p.m. Cards, darts, puzzles, board games, coloring.

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 whom-ever shows up each time or just practice your cornhole skills!

2024 Live at Kennedy Park line-up

July 27

Tom Van Sant, Rock Covers

August 10

Electrostatic Cats, small band, big sound

August 24

Jim Shaw, Folk, old-time, blues, pop oldies

September 14

Melissa Moorehouse, Singer/Songwriter

September 28

Bird Boombox, Alt. Folk/Rock Trio

Proctor Town Green, 7 pm



July 24

Chaz Canney

August 7

Whisper Band

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

To stay tuned if there are any

Saturdays

Bingo at the Brandon Senior Center

First Saturday of each month from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. Bring lunch, and the Center will provide beverages, desserts, and a good time. A great way to pass a Saturday afternoon. Please direct any questions to Kathy Mathis at 247-3121.

Storytime at the Brandon Free Public Library

Join us every Saturday at 10:30 a.m. for picture book storytime. All ages welcome.

Sundays

Brandon Town Hall Painting with Crystal

Crystal Ketcham leads an all ages painting event!

Yes, you CAN paint! More info, contact Crystal at ceastman88@gmail.com

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

Friday 26th

Luminous Crush w/ Rick Redington & Tuff Luv — The Underground - Listening Room

Luminous Crush Laura Molinelli and Bay Campbell deliver dream pop alt country vocal harmony bliss, drawing from over seven albums' worth of independently released original music. This summer, they are supported by the talents of Christian Heins (bass), Bill Conley (pedal steel, dobro and lap steel) and Andy Simmons (drums). With a freshly pressed vinyl dubbed Anthology (featuring songs from their entire album roster including their latest—Farewell to the Rainbow Cattle Company) they are out on the music trail

covering Vermont and New York state on a tour that has been partially funded by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and The Vermont Arts Council. Laura has been a staple of the Vermont music scene for over 20 years collaborating with such artists as Sean Kelly of The Samples, Jim Gilmour and The Solarfest House Band. She has opened shows for Amy Helm, Lucinda Williams, Dar Williams, Lou Gramm as well as The Legendary Lead Singers of the Temptations. Bay (formerly Ben) is best known for his role as the high, sweet and powerful voice of the original Orpheus in Anais Mitchell's Hadestown as well as some well garnered underground fame on college radio under the pseudonym Saint Albums. Founded in 2015, with roots in bedroom pop as well as traditional folk and Americana, they deliver a unique and original sound. They are known as "the best original band you've never heard of" and Jordan Adams of Seven Days has this to say: "Luminous Crush live up to their name: They dazzle with brightly appointed music, and they're easy to love." Rick Redington & his band Tuff Luv have survived the angry waters to bring some much-needed Sunshine to the Day. R.R. on guitar & other stringed things is provided the perfect bottom end by longtime Luv alumnus Heather "Boom Boom" Lynne alongside Rolling Thunder drummers David "Trichomes" Lewis & Jay "Crazy Legs" Osborn.

Advance: \$14 / Day of show: \$17. Doors: 7 pm / Show: 7:30 pm. BYOB (21+) All Ages.

Saturday 27th

Bandwagon Summer Series: Bombay Rickey

Praised as "a true treat for the adventurous ear" (TimeOut NY), Bombay Rickey is a five-piece band with a unique sound evocative of 1960s movie soundscapes. The group plays both covers and original music that borrow equally from the worlds of surf rock, cumbia, spaghetti-Western, and Bollywood, balanced out with soaring operatic vocals.

Since its inception in 2012, Bombay Rickey has become a fixture at Brooklyn mainstay Barbés, as well as having played live on WFMU, opened for Cambodian psychedelic band Dengue Fever, and having been featured in an ad for Citibank. Bombay Rickey's debut album, Cinefonia, was named best debut of 2014 by New York Music Daily and received the Vox Pop Award for Best Eclectic Album from the International Music Awards. Most recently, Bombay Rickey was invited to create an opera cabaret based on the life of Yma Sumac for the prestigious PROTOTYPE Festival in New York City. The show ran for seven sold-out performances and was hailed as a "rocking musical show" by the Wall Street Journal. The band features Kamala Sankaram: vocals, accordion; Drew Fleming: guitar, vocals; and Jeff Hudgins: alto saxophone, vocals; with Nick Cuduahy: bass; and Brian Adler: percussion. All longtime NY musicians, the five members of Bombay Rickey have done previous work with John Zorn, Anthony Braxton, Chicha Libre, and Alarm Will Sound, to name a few. Co-presented with New England Center for Circus Arts.

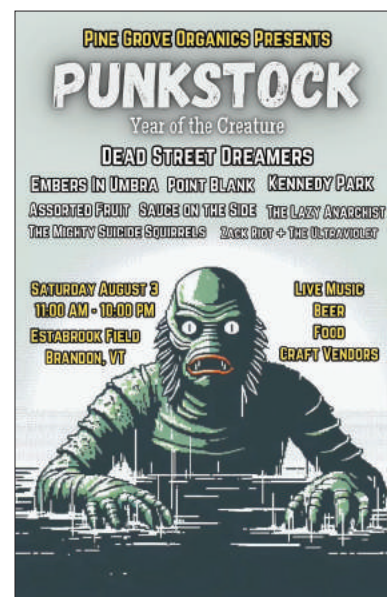
From 6–8 pm at New England Center for Circus Arts, 10 Town Crier Drive, Brattleboro. \$20–25.

Cabot Arts and Music Festival

A multi-genre festival including 12 Bands on Four Stages, Dances, Kids Activities, Food Trucks, Crafts Vendors, and a Community Art Project. 2024 Artists include: Rose & The Bros, The Mammals, Kieran Kane and Rayna Gellert, Soggy Po Boys, Bob and Sarah Amos, Modern Times Theater, Brad and Ken Kolodner, Pointe Noir Cajun Band, Corrugated Spectacles, Tim Jennings, Oliver Scanlon, and presenting Lars Hasselblad Torres with a Community Collage Art Project.

Full Schedule Info: www.cabotarts.org/ 802-793-3016.

Advance Admission: \$30 Early Bird / \$40 Advance / \$50 At the Gate. Kids 16 and under admitted Free of Charge. Gates open at 11:30 am. The festival runs from Noon–10 pm.



Brandon hosts first-ever punk music festival

PUNKSTOCK 2024 BETTER LIVING THROUGH ANARCHY:

BY MAT CLOUSER

BRANDON—Hardcore, steadfast, resolute, tough. Vermonters by any name are fiercely independent and self-reliant from living at the edges of society. There's a necessary premium on the homemade, homespun, and homegrown.

And yet, mutually beneficial relationships flourish in the pragmatic exchange of goods and services—over back fences, in driveways and pastures, and, more recently, online in places like Front Porch Forum. Local governments and community associations are

propelled by volunteers with a solidarity of community spirit that thrives because of differing political opinions, abilities, and idiosyncrasies. Vermonters are self-organized folk who've adhered to the do-it-yourself (DIY) code far longer than it's been a lifestyle buzzword.

It may startle some to hear, but Vermont is also punk rock! Think of the core tenants of punk: Life on the fringe? Check. DIY ethos? That's Vermont to a T—and if you can't make it yourself, you've probably got a neighbor with just the thing “down cellar.” But, what about the scarier part of punk—the part that chills some to their core—what about ... Anarchy? It's rarely called out by name, but Vermonters already live large swaths of the anarchist utopia daily via community volunteerism, mutual aid, and self-organization—actions that many would hate to give up. As it turns out, anarchism in practice isn't nearly as frightening as it might sound.

Brandon native Lennon Philo knows from positive community involvement and punk rock. He's long been involved with each via numerous direct-action campaigns and political protests, and from playing in bands and attending shows (he specifically credits his wife for turning him on to punk in 2018). More recently, Philo started a production company, Ex-Mortis Management, as a way to promote local bands with a harder edge. “Vermont has an amazing underground music scene that needs to see a larger stage,” he said. He's backing up those words in a big way this year, too, by organizing Brandon's first-ever punk festival: Punkstock, to be held Saturday, August 3, from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. at Estabrook Park in Brandon.

Punkstock will be a free, all-ages show with a litany of bands from all over the Northeast, including Brandon's post-hardcore prog-spacemen, Kennedy Park, and as the headliner, Rutland-area classic punk darlings, Dead Street Dreamers. In addition to the music, there will be craft vendors, food, beverages, and games—even a cooling station to beat the summer heat and the face-melting goodness of all that rock and roll (vendors can still apply at www.punkstockvt.com).

To that end, attendees should expect things typical of summer rock shows—mostly a lot



TOBY MILLS OF Kennedy Park at the drums. The band will bring its hard-driving sound to Brandon's first-ever punk music festival at Estabrook Park on August 3.



TOP: LENNON PHILO, driving force behind Punkstock.

BOTTOM: BEN ATHERTON of band Kennedy Park, which will be performing at the event at Estabrook Park on August 3.

Photos provided

of fun. Yet, while it is a free, all-ages show, Philo does advise some parental discretion, saying, “There may be suggestive lyrics or outfits.” Whether or not that's anyone's taste is up to them, of course, but punk has always been primarily about a healthy freedom of expression, even if it's sometimes misunderstood.

“Punk isn't the devil's music,” adds Philo, “Every era [has] music that [others] don't understand. It's okay to not understand... That doesn't mean it's scary. Come learn about [it] through experience. See the diversity [and] community that comes with it... We are beautiful in our own ways. Sometimes it takes stepping out of your comfort zone to discover something you enjoy. Let Punkstock be that step.”

Philo's idea for Punkstock was initially smaller in scope than an all-day event, but he credits Brandon Rec's Colleen Wright for urging him to go bigger—even suggesting the use of Estabrook Park. “[She], Bill Moore, Dennis Marden, and Kathy Mathis turned our town into a family and do everything they can to liven [it]

up with events... they knock it out of the park every time,” he said.

After getting the green light from Brandon, Philo began searching for bands and sponsors. It took him just two days to find some 50 interested bands, and the vendors and sponsors weren't far behind. In particular was the lead sponsor, Brandon's beloved Pine Grove Organics (PGO), who Philo says jumped in almost as soon as they heard the news. PGO co-owner Nate Reitman has been crucial to Punkstock, says Philo, both for his business acumen and passion for all things punk. “Nate has been there at every corner, pitching ideas, recruiting volunteers, and promoting the festival.”

Philo also highlights Brandon's Mike Mitrano, owner of Dark Shadows Entertainment, as being an “absolute godsend” with logistics—unsurprising given the multifariousness of his credits, which include far-flung acts like Sun Ra Arkestra, Mavis Staples, Patti LaBelle, Neko Case, Tony Bennet, Richard Marx, G-Eazy, and Flo Rida.

(See Punkstock 2024, Page 21)

Can you guess the street?

BY LAURA PETERSON

Last week's photo was a view of upper Center Street and Central Park from the foot of the Civil War Monument. The Civil War monument has been in exactly that same position since it was erected in 1886. The center of town has grown and changed around it, but the monument is unmoved.

The monument is made of Vermont granite engraved with the names of 54 Brandon soldiers who died during the Civil War. When the town bought the monument in 1886, it cost more than the town's annual budget. Imagine the controversy that must have ignited! And then there probably was bickering about the location.



UPPER CENTER STREET and Central Park from the foot of the Civil War Monument. now (above), and circa 1890 (right).



Your mystery for next week!

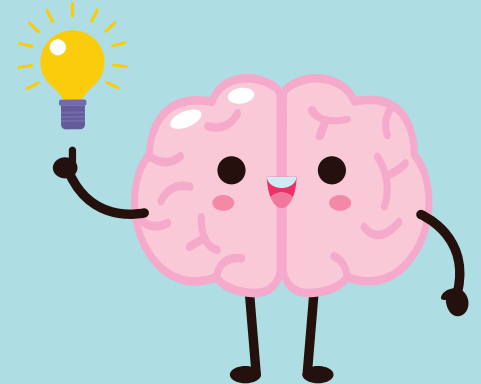
Brandon Brain Buster Answered

Answer: D

Bag A starts out with 3 red, 3 blue, and 3 white. Bag B starts out with 4 red, 4 blue, and 4 white. After the transfers, Bag A contains 4 red, 3 blue, and 2 white, for a total of 9 marbles. Bag B contains 3 red, 4 blue, and 5 white, for a total of 12 marbles. The question asks how many blue marbles should be transferred from Bag B to Bag A so that the probability of randomly choosing a red marble is the same for each bag.

After the transfers, there are 4 red marbles out of a total of 9 marbles in Bag A. There are 3 red marbles out of a total of 12 marbles in Bag B. So, the probability of randomly choosing a red marble from Bag A is now $\frac{4}{9}$ and the probability of choosing a red marble from Bag B is now $\frac{3}{12}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$. We want to make those probabilities be the same by transferring blue marbles from Bag B to Bag A.

If we transfer 1 blue marble from B to A, the probab-



ity of randomly choosing a red marble from A would be $\frac{4}{10}$ (since there are still 4 red marbles but now 10 marbles total) and from B would be $\frac{3}{11}$ (since there are still 3 red marbles but now 11 marbles total). Eliminate Choice B.

If we transfer 2 blue marbles from B to A, the probability of randomly choosing a red marble from A would be $\frac{4}{11}$ and from B would be $\frac{3}{10}$. Eliminate Choice C.

If we transfer 3 blue marbles from B to A, the probability of randomly choosing a red marble from A would be $\frac{4}{12}$ (or $\frac{1}{3}$) and from B would be $\frac{3}{9}$ (or $\frac{1}{3}$). Since these probabilities are now identical, we know the answer must be D.

REAL ESTATE



It's Time to Build!

Wonderful views of the mountains and beautiful rolling farmland from this 2.09 acre building lot on a nice country lane just south of Brandon village. You'll have country quiet, yet only minutes away from all the amenities that downtown Brandon has to

offer. New survey available and awaiting final approval of the wastewater permit. **\$85,000**

Scenic and serene country location for this 0.51 acre lot. Ready to go with town water and sewer and electricity at the street. Located just north of town, this is lot no. 8 on the newly named Jupiter Lane off of Steinberg Rd. Lot no. 9 at 0.50 acres is also available. **\$45,000**



802-236-9112 • Wendy@RoweRealEstate.com
RoweRealEstate.com

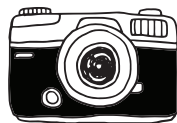


Mim's Photos

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



Recognized



Kurt Kimball recognized the woman in the big truck as Pat Scott, the former Brandon town manager in the '80s.

Sue Wetmore let us know that the woman pictured here in the town truck is Brandon's former town manager Pat Scott.

Terry Ferson also identified Ms. Scott.



Terry Ferson and Kurt Kimball have both identified this man with the fish as another former Brandon town manager, James Mann.



Franci Farnsworth recognized her husband, Frank Farnsworth, in this photo. She and Frank think the year must have been sometime between 1985-88.

Mr. Farnsworth was also recognized by Nan Jenks-Jay, Terry Ferson, and Sue Wetmore. They noted that Mr. Farnsworth took over the Brandon Bugle after Mim Welton passed away. Ms. Jenks-Jay wrote: "The photo is a spitting image of [Frank's] son John who worked for us when he was in high school and college here at Miller Hill Farm, Nursery & Gardens in Sudbury. John is probably now the age Frank was in this photo. What fun to see the likeness."

Mr. Ferson believes the man sitting in the background in this photo, dressed in a black shirt, is Dick Smith, who worked at Neshobe School.

Kurt Kimball corroborate that this photo is of Frank Farnsworth, and Kurt believes that the man behind him on the left is Ernie Miner.



OFF THE SHELF



NEW BOOKS AND NEWS



LIBRARY NEWS:

Our last open day is Aug 2 and then we're packing and moving! Interlibrary loans need to be returned by 7/31. While we're closed, please keep all checked out BFPL items until we reopen on Sept 3.

New fiction

Familiaris by David Wroblewski

It's spring 1919, and John Sawtelle's imagination has gotten him into trouble ... again. Now John and his newlywed wife, Mary, along with their two best friends and their three dogs, are setting off for Wisconsin's Northwoods, where they hope to make a fresh start—and, with a little luck, discover what it takes to live a life of meaning, purpose, and adventure. But the place they are headed for is far stranger and more perilous than they realize, and it will take all their ingenuity, along with a few new friends—human, animal, and otherworldly—to realize their dreams.

Malas by Marcela Fuentes

In 1951, a mysterious old woman confronts Pilar Aguirre in the small border town of La Cienega, Texas, sure Pilar stole her husband. In a heated outburst, the old woman lays a curse on Pilar and her family. More than forty years later, Lulu Muñoz is dodging chaos at every turn: her troubled father's moods, his rules, her secret life as singer in a punk band, and her upcoming quinceañera. When her beloved grandmother passes away, Lulu finds herself drawn to the glamorous stranger who crashed the funeral and who lives alone on the edge of town. Their unexpected kinship picks at the secrets of Lulu's family's past. As the quinceañera looms—one woman must make peace with the past, and one girl pushes to embrace her future.

Lady Killer by Katherine Wood

Gia and Abby have been friends since childhood, forever bonded by the tragedy that unfolded in Greece when they were eighteen. Now thirty, Gia is back in Greece with her new husband, entertaining glamorous guests with champagne, while bookish Abby works fourteen-hour days as an attorney. When Gia invites Abby on an all-expenses-paid trip to Sweden to celebrate her birthday, Abby's thrilled. But on the day of her flight, Abby receives an email that threatens to unearth the skeletons of her past. When she and Gia's brother, Benny, arrive in Sweden, Gia isn't there. Worried, Abby and Benny fly to Greece, where they find Gia's estate deserted, the sole clue to her whereabouts is the manuscript she penned, detailing the events leading up to her disappearance. Gia's narrative reveals the dark truth about her provocative marriage and the dirty secrets of their guests. But the pages end abruptly, leaving more questions than answers. How much of Gia's story is true? And will Abby find her before it's too late?

Honey by Isabel Banta

It is 1997, and Amber Young has received a life-changing call. It's a chance thousands of girls would die for: the opportunity to join girl group Cloud9 in Los Angeles and escape her small town. She quickly finds herself in the orbits of fellow rising stars Gwen Morris, a driven singer-dancer, and Wes Kingston, a member of the biggest boy band in the world, ETA. As Amber embarks on her solo career and her fame intensifies, her rich interior life is fre-

quently reduced. Surrounded by people who claim to love her but only wish to exploit her and driven by a desire for recognition and success, for love and sex, for agency and connection, Amber comes of age at a time when the kaleidoscope of public opinion can distort everything and one mistake can shatter a career.

The Night of Baba Yaga by Akira Otani

Tokyo, 1979. Yoriko Shindo, a workhorse of a woman who has been an outcast her whole life, is kidnapped and dragged to the lair of the Naiki-kai, a branch of the yakuza. After she savagely fends off a throng of henchmen in an attempt to escape, Shindo is permitted to live under one condition: that she will become the bodyguard and driver for Shoko Naiki, the obsessively sheltered daughter of the gang's boss. Eighteen-year-old Shoko, pretty and silent as a doll, has no friends, wears strangely old-fashioned clothes, and is naive in all matters of life. Originally disdaining her ward, Shindo soon finds herself far more invested in Shoko's well-being than she ever expected. But every man around them is bloodthirsty and trigger-happy. Shindo doubts she and Shoko will survive much longer if nothing changes. Could there ever be a different life for two women like them?

Brandon Police Report

July 15

- Conducted a patrol on Forest Dale Road due to recent calls about vandalism in the area.
- Received a report of an animal incident on Union Street in which a dog allegedly killed some fowl in a neighbor's yard. The issue was determined to be a civil matter and was referred to the Brandon Animal Control Officer.
- Assisted with traffic control for a funeral procession in front of the Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home on Franklin Street.
- Vehicle stop on Park Street for a stop sign violation. Warning issued.
- Received an ATV complaint on Richmond Road.
- Took fingerprints for school employment.
- Assisted the Brandon Fire Department (BFD) with a fully engulfed house fire on Old Brandon Road. All occupants and animals were evacuated from the home safely. One individual was arrested for trying to drive through the road closure barricade.
- Responded to a residence on Champlain Street for a report of a juvenile problem involving threats that had been made. No enforcement action taken.
- Completed HIN verification for a boat owner on Forest Dale Road.
- Received a request for a welfare check at Hannaford supermarket for what appeared to be a homeless family panhandling in front of the business. The area was checked, but the individuals in-question had left prior to the arrival of the responding officer.

July 16

- Attempted to serve a citation and Order of Trespass on an individual on Carver Street.
- Received a report by a complainant that he was followed by a vehicle from Castleton into Brandon. No criminal activity took place, but the incident was documented as being suspicious.
- Served in-hand a Relief From Abuse Order on a subject who came into the Brandon Police Department.
- Attempted to serve a Notice of Hearing for a Final Relief From Abuse Order. The subject was not located.
- Observed a vehicle on Union Street traveling on the wrong side of the roadway and conducted a vehicle stop in Conant Square for failure to maintain travel lane.

July 17

- Conducted a foot patrol on Union Street. A suspicious vehicle was located loitering in the area.

- Conducted a search warrant to locate a wanted individual on Frasier Road. The wanted man was located and taken into custody. He was transported to the Rutland County Superior Court for arraignment on the outstanding warrant.
- Vehicle stop on Center Street on a vehicle that was uninspected. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Champlain Street for speeding. Ticket issued.
- Vehicle stop for speeding on Arnold District Road. Ticket issued.
- Took fingerprints for employment.
- Vehicle stop on Grove Street for a speed limit violation. Ticket issued.
- Received a call regarding several small children riding their bicycles in the roadway on Franklin Street. Franklin Street as well as the adjoining side streets were checked, but the children were not located.
- Took fingerprints for teacher licensing.
- Took fingerprints for foster care.
- Took fingerprints for employment.
- Received a request for assistance from the Addison County Superior Court in serving a subpoena on an individual in Brandon believed to be living on Barlow Avenue. It was later determined that the individual no longer lived at the residence.
- Vehicle stop at the intersection of Center Street and Union Street for failure to use care in starting stopped vehicles. Ticket issued.
- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for failure to display license plate. Warning issued.

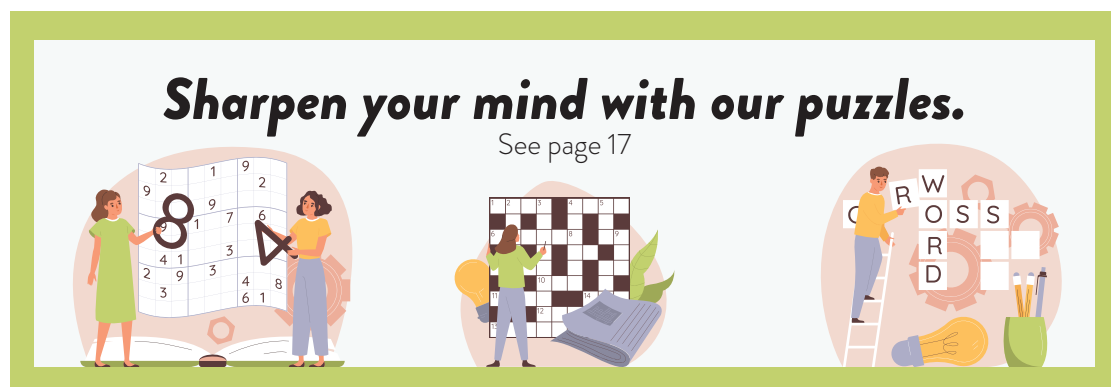
July 18

- Observed a suspicious woman in the downtown area who was behaving strangely. After a brief investigation, officers determined she was not doing anything criminal and she was sent on her way.
- Vehicle stop on Grove Street at Lovers Lane for speeding. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Grove Street at Larch Lane for speeding. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street at Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home for illegal passing. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Grove Street at Arnold District Road for speeding. Warning issued.
- Received a call regarding a suspicious woman who had been ringing a doorbell late at night at a residence on Brookdale Street and then left abruptly. The woman was later identified. Incident documented for informational purposes.

(See Police report, Page 19)

Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.

See page 17



Police report

(Continued from Page 18)

- Responded to the area of Route 73 near the Brandon/Goshen town line for a report of a tree down in the roadway. The area was checked, but no tree was located.
- Vehicle stop on Grove Street at Estabrook Park for a stop sign violation. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Lovers Lane at Grove Street for a cell phone violation. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Marble Street for a cracked windshield. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Marble Street for a stop sign violation. Warning issued.
- Received a call from the Rutland Regional Medical Center regarding a female patient that may have been the victim of a sexual assault and that the incident may have occurred in Brandon. Investigation opened.
- Assisted the Brandon Area Rescue Squad with a medical call on Conant Square regarding a Life Alert alarm activation. It was later determined that the activation was accidental and that there was no

emergency.

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for failure to maintain travel lane. Warning issued.

July 19

- Conducted traffic enforcement on Center Street.
- Vehicle stop on Champlain Street for defective equipment. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Grove Street for defective equipment. Warning issued.
- Conducted speed enforcement in the area of Grove Street near Brandon Community Health for ongoing issues with speed violations. Several vehicle stops were made.
- Vehicle stop for speeding on Grove Street. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop for stop sign violation at the intersection of Steinberg Road at Grove Street. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Grove Street near Brandon Community Health for speeding. Ticket issued.
- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street near the Pittsford town line for speeding. Ticket issued.

- Vehicle stop on Carver Street for driving while using a cell phone. Warning issued.
- Assisted the Vergennes Police with a victim interview at the Brandon Police Station for a sexual assault that occurred in Vergennes.
- Received a report of an ongoing issue involving a suspicious vehicle seen around lower Grove Street that had been parking in area driveways at homes that were vacant or where the owners were away. Officers were made aware of the complaint.
- Posted a property watch for a residence in Brandon.
- Received a report of a large snapping turtle in the middle of the street on Forest Dale Road at Wheeler Road. The officer removed the turtle from the roadway and onto the side of the road.
- Received a report that someone had stolen the caller's private driveway sign along Farm Road.
- Conducted a patrol on Grove Street.
- Took a report from a caller that several of his ducks were struck and killed on Forest Dale Road by a passing motor vehicle and that the complainant believed it was done deliberately.
- Conducted traffic enforcement at the intersection of Franklin Street

- and Park Street for cell phone/texting violations. No violations were observed.
- Conducted traffic enforcement for cell phone violations at the intersection of Champlain Street and Conant Square. No violations were observed.
- Vehicle stop on Union Street for having no rear lights on during nighttime hours. Warning issued.

July 20

- Conducted a foot patrol and business checks on Center Street.
- Vehicle stop on Center Street. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for a speed limit violation. Ticket issued.
- Received a complaint of a child on an ATV on Birch Hill Road.
- Responded to a residence on Furnace Road for a report of a physical altercation between two women. Upon further investigation, one of the women was arrested for simple assault. She was released on an appearance ticket.
- An officer on his way home stopped to assist a disabled motorist on Route 73. It was determined that the driver was all set and was just waiting for an acquaintance to bring them gas.

- Conducted a patrol on Franklin Street.
- Conducted a patrol on Park Street.

July 21

- Assisted the BFD with a call on Park Street.
- Conducted a property watch on Basin Road.
- Received a complaint of a vehicle that was tailgating the caller's vehicle on Route 7 in Brandon. The area was checked, but the vehicle was not located.
- Vehicle stop on Champlain Street for speeding, operating without an inspection sticker, and excessive window tint. Tickets issued.
- Observed an open door at Cat-tails on Grove Street. The business was checked and found to be secure.
- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for speeding. Warning issued.
- Vehicle stop on Marble Street at Park Street for a stop sign violation. Warning issued.
- Conducted traffic enforcement on Franklin Street for cell phone violations. No violations were observed.
- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for having an unregistered vehicle. Warning issued.

VSU experiment

(Continued from Page 11)

close to Johnson State College that he'd sometimes swing by to swim in the pool or just hang out on campus. Now that it's Vermont State University, Johnson campus, the atmosphere has changed.

"There would be people around," he remembered of that earlier period. "It actually looked like a college campus."

Now, as a rising junior there, he said it feels empty. Two of the five residence halls were closed entirely in the 2023-2024 academic year. Next year, an additional one will be shut down.

On the weekends, he said, people often go home rather than stay on the vacant campus.

"You'll walk through the quad on a Friday afternoon and there's absolutely no one else on the quad," he said.

Miller, previously a student in Isaac Eddy's now-defunct performance program, has decided to graduate early from the university with an associate's degree, rather than complete the remaining years for a bachelor's degree.

According to Truckle, who oversees business operations, VTSU's campuses are roughly 30% overbuilt. The university's data, however, indicates that less than half of the university's available beds were in use in fall 2023.

When one removes the Castleton campus from the equation, the occupancy level falls to less than 37%.

Bergh said he's uncertain whether the newly flexible hybrid curriculum will diminish the incentive for students to live and learn on campus.

"We can't be all things to all people," he acknowledged. "As long as we're positioned to be flexible and responsive, I think we'll be in good shape."

Last year, the university sold a section of its land in Lyndon to the Vermont National Guard, which plans to build a new readiness center right near campus.

Bergh sees the potential for more sales like this. "These facilities might be repurposed in ways that ... meet some of the needs of the communities and regions that they're situated in," he said.

Much of the unused infrastructure is residential. "Vermont has very pronounced housing needs right now," acknowledged Bergh.

A report last year from Chittenden County Homeless Alliance estimated that 3,300 people statewide were experiencing homelessness, with 137 counted as unsheltered. Last fall, 1,625 beds were vacant at VTSU.

Bergh added that given the proximity of the empty residential buildings to active dormitories, there is a danger of "compromising that (student) experience" by introducing a new residential population.

Students say that, in many ways, their experience is already being compromised.

Cohen Repaci, a rising junior at the Johnson campus, said that many student clubs are evaporating or getting "downsized." They said that there's "just not enough interest" among the small community of students to maintain continuous leadership of extracurricular activities.

According to Repaci and Eddy, the outing club and the choral en-

semble, among other groups, have fallen by the wayside.

Social patterns, Repaci stated, are deeply constricted. "You see the same five people," they said, "every single day."

Rapaci is envious in some ways of the students at the Castleton campus.


"They have a lot more students,"

they said, "they're really well-funded in their sports, their education programs."

"It's a little unfair," they concluded. "We're still students here."

"Impossible": the role of support staff

Amy Miller, a former coordinator of activism, advocacy and non- (See *Legislative report*, Page 23)



WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

LEO July 23–Aug. 23
Leo, although you might want to keep your aspirations to yourself, it is helpful if you run your ideas past a few trusted people to see if their enthusiasm mirrors your own.

VIRGO Aug. 24–Sept. 22
Virgo, you can certainly proceed according to logic, but you might be better off trusting your gut for the time being. It rarely steers you wrong with the bigger things in life.

ARIES March 21–April 20
Aries, show off your true colors and let others see who you are and what makes you tick. You are given the spotlight right now to shine and get noticed even more.

TAURUS April 21–May 21
The full equation may not be revealed this week until you start to unravel some of the pieces, Taurus. You will need to remain patient as the process plays out.

GEMINI May 22–June 21
Gemini, you are discovering more people you can trust and who have your best interests at heart. Continue to surround yourself with these winning individuals.

CANCER June 22–July 22
Right now you have to take a leap of faith if you really want to grow, Cancer. Take a trip somewhere you've never visited, learn a new language, or make an effort to meet new people.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22–Jan. 20.
Now isn't a good time to think you can fake your emotions, Capricorn. Others will see right through you and read your mind quite easily. It's better to be honest and open.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21–Feb. 18
Someone you haven't spoken to in a while might be on your mind, Aquarius. This might be the right time to bridge the gap and open lines of communication.

PISCES Feb. 19–March 20
Pisces, it can be difficult to delegate to others and not handle everything yourself. But you have to trust in others and support them if you want them to learn and grow.

♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

July 26 George Bernard Shaw, playwright (d)
July 27 Maya Rudolph, comedian (52)
July 28 Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, First Lady (d)
July 29 Ken Burns, historian, filmmaker (71)
July 30 Buddy Guy, blues musician (88)
July 31 J. K. Rowling, author (59)
Aug. 1 Jerry Garcia, guitarist (d)

Vail House

(Continued from Page 2)

Past the main door, a staircase curves gracefully to the second floor. The original faux-marble wallpaper remained intact in the front hall until an electrician ripped it down in the 1960s. However, Mr. Bowen and an assistant used their artistic skills to replicate the pattern based on a small remaining section of the original. Those remaining original pieces have been repasted under the curved stairway. Bowen has used those artistic skills to replicate period wallpaper and stenciling in other rooms of the

house as well.

Mr. Bowen walked us through several rooms on both floors, pointing out architectural flourishes and pieces of furniture that were either original to the house or were recent acquisitions of some note. For example, the house had just acquired a chest of drawers by Caleb Knowlton, a cabinetmaker who worked out of Brandon for many years (and who once had Stephen A. Douglas as a young apprentice).

The house remained in the Ketcham-Vail family until the late 1960s, when the late Sylvia

Keiser purchased it from Angeline Vail Walsh, the last of the original family to be born in the house. Ms. Keiser's grandfather had owned the Bank of Orwell and she'd grown up admiring the home, according to Bowen, who became a close friend of Ms. Keiser's. Ms. Keiser was keen on preserving the house, which was once called "the most elegant house in Vermont" by preservationist Ralph Nading Hill, who helped the Shelburne Museum acquire its famous steamship, the Ticonderoga.

Ms. Keiser and her husband had several properties and didn't live at Vail House full time, so she set up a nonprofit foundation to provide for the maintenance of the house and convinced her good friend, Mr. Bowen, to become the property's steward.

"I'd wanted to take on the restoration of a historic house," said Bowen, and Ms. Keiser managed to persuade him that Vail House was the one. Forty-six years later, it seems she was 100% correct, because

Mr. Bowen is still here and is still in love with the place. The foundation supports the maintenance of the house and its property, but there are other benefactors who have helped

mont to stay in Vermont."

One of the stipulations of the foundation was that the house be made available for public viewing and Mr. Bowen is happy to accommodate visitors.

There is no admission fee and "donations are neither expected nor refused." Anyone interested in visiting the house can call Mr. Bowen at (802) 623-8481 to schedule an appointment. The house is located at 879 Vail Road in Sudbury. Traveling from Brandon, take Champlain Street (Route 73) to Route 30 and Vail Road is directly opposite at the intersection, a dirt road that seems to cut through a dairy farm.

The house is well worth a visit for anyone interested in early architecture and/or local history. Mr. Bowen is a



BARNARD AND POLLY Ketcham, the original owners of Vail House. The house was constructed in 1826, but studio portraits were not common until the 1840s and 50s. This portrait hangs in the front hall of the house.

Bowen acquire period Vermont furniture, such as the Knowlton chest of drawers mentioned earlier.

"Sylvia thought it was important for Vermont treasures to remain here," said Bowen. "She wanted the best of Ver-

gracious guide and a repository of knowledge about the house and the styles of its era. And, true enough, even on a hot day, it remained cool inside, an enjoyable leap back in time and a great way to spend a summer afternoon.



ABOVE LEFT: AN 18th-century stone marker from the grounds inscribed "G., L." for "Governor's Lot." Right: details of the fine carving on the columns flanking the front door.

Restaurant guide

Robert's
Café Provence

From Provence to You
De la Provence à Vous

Wednesday – Saturday: 11:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Want a reservation? Please book through the website <https://cafeprovencet.com> or call (802) 247-9997

11 Center Street, Brandon, VT

Franklin's
FOOD, FRIENDS & FUN

Full Menu 7 days a week
Eat In or Take Out
Available for Parties

Prime Rib Every Friday & Saturday from 4–9 p.m.

25 North Street, Proctor ☎ 802-459-3320

Ad design included in pricing
Call 802 236-4662, or email george@brandonreporter.com
for more information

Punkstock 2024

(Continued from Page 14)

Punkstock doesn't have names like that—yet—but early success (next year's date is already booked) shows big long-term potential. Any larger success won't come via the traditional commercial route, however. Philo didn't have time to create a Punkstock 501c3 non-profit this year but says he'll have one next time out. "This isn't about making money. I love my community and I love music. To [host] this year after year... help vendors and bands grow because they were discovered at [Punkstock]—that's payment enough... Too many things in life are for profit and it creates a selfish, cold world. I want to be the spark that ignites a movement towards boosting your peers rather than stepping on them on the way to the top."

Like many, Philo knows communities thrive most when residents are empowered and engaged. Essential to that strength is diversity. When towns like Brandon support things like Punkstock—which may or may not appeal to everyone—they can accentuate feelings of belonging among those who might not always see themselves represented in more traditional events like Independence Day celebrations, or who may sometimes feel their voices go unheard elsewhere. Punk rock (and Punkstock) is, at its core, about freedom—that



GUNNAR TINSMAN OF Kennedy Park. He and his bandmates will be performing at the inaugural incarnation of Punkstock at Estabrook Park in Brandon on August 3.

most quintessential American ideal. Just like America, punk is rebellious, too. And, yes, more than a little anarchistic—in the best possible way.

More information on Punkstock can be found at www.punkstockvt.com.



Gardening corner

(Continued from Page 9)

And all last year's rain seems to have had a wonderful effect on hydrangeas. They are blooming heavily all over town in shades of white, cream, pink, and blue. Wow. They look spectacular. I am told that whenever you cut hydrangeas, they retain that color. I'm eager to see if that is true.

I'll end this column with some gardening quotes:

1. Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is

not adding it to your fruit salad.

—Miles Kington

2. I've never known a gardener who isn't a little bit crazy.

—Unknown

3. Gardeners dream bigger dreams than emperors.

—Mary Cantwell

4. A weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

5. The only thing worse than weeding is not weeding.

—Unknown



This little piggie dance with a porcupine

"PORK-U-PINE" BY JUDY Knope is one of the dozens of decorated wooden piggy banks that will be auctioned off as part of "Art of the Pig" on August 16, 17, and 18 at the Brandon Town Hall to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Brandon Artists Guild.

Gagnon Lumber

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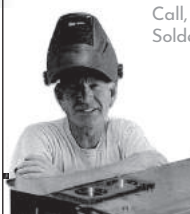
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Pittsford SB

(Continued from Page 1)

that Pittsford's General Fund ended FY24 with a balance of \$210,690.15 and a total fund balance of over \$600,000, which he called "very healthy." The town's Highway Fund ended FY24 with \$7,385.04 balance. The Water Fund ended FY24 with

a \$76,961.88 balance. And the town's Sewer Fund ended FY24 with a \$141,144.21 balance, the first time the town has seen a positive balance for the year in the Sewer Fund.

Mr. Atherton credits the close communications that he and Assistant to the Town Manager Ann

Reed maintain with town department heads for their success at staying at or under budget. Mr. Atherton also noted that the change to private management at the transfer station, which had consistently lost money under the town's management, also saved the town \$60K in FY24.

VSU experiment

(Continued from Page 19)

violence education at the Castleton campus, said that there isn't just a shortage of students living at VTSU's far-flung campuses. There is also a lack of staffing in crucial areas.

Miller left her position in late January, citing a lack of job security. She said she'd watched a number of her colleagues get let go over the previous two years.

Before the consolidation, Miller had a full-time advocacy position that included sexual assault prevention and education in Castleton, working alongside the Title IX office.

This past semester, she said, the position was vacant. Although Jamia Damzy, the dean of students at VTSU, confirmed that Miller's position will be replaced, it will now have a statewide responsibility — all five residential campuses and over 5,000 students.

"That's impossible," said Miller of this coverage change. "It won't be prevention; it'll be only intervention."

She said it's not just a volume problem. Working with sexual assault survivors requires intimate familiarity not just with the student body and campus, but with the surrounding community and off-campus resources. In other words, it can't be as effective in a virtual space, especially serving so many locations simultaneously.

"It's like fluff to tell parents that we have a person in that position," she said.

Last fall, when she went to a board meeting to complain about the first round of cuts, Miller said, staff members were shut down. They were told certain topics of concern were off-limits, as well as various individual words, like "president."

In the middle of her comments, Miller said, she was continually interrupted by reminders that she had strayed from these verbal bounds. "It was extremely frustrating," she recalled. In the end, she stopped trying to talk and simply sent her complaints via email.

Damzy said that cuts have been challenging throughout her staff. Four onsite dean positions were cut last fall, centralizing staff leadership

even further.

When asked if she was confident the replacement for Miller's position would provide sufficient coverage, Damzy said she couldn't be sure.

"We'll have to continue to figure out what works best for our community," she said.

Zackary Durr, president of the university's class of 2025, emphasized the importance of in-person student support. "We need face-to-face interaction," he said, "rather than (meeting) virtually."

Durr was on the student government association last fall when it voted no confidence in the university's administration. Much of his reasoning surrounded staff cuts.

Alongside the academic austerity measures recommended by Optimization 2.0 last fall, several rounds of layoffs and reorganization resulted in the loss of 33 staff positions.

"That cut a bunch of really important positions on our campus ... (in particular) the associate dean of students," he said. The loss of that onsite support at Castleton, he remembered, was tangible.

Durr does feel that things have stabilized in this last semester under new leadership.

President Bergh, he said, has been "very transparent with the faculty, the staff and the students."

Durr said he's grateful for that. As a student leader, he hasn't always felt heard.

Bergh's tenure saw the student governments from each campus create a new constitution, which Durr hopes will allow for greater collaboration and contact between the geographically separate student bodies.

Billie Neathawk, a library coordinator at Castleton and the staff union chair, said that much of the staff still feels overwhelmed.

She began working in the library 26 years ago as a young mother. It was supposed to be a temporary, part-time gig. But, she said, "I loved the way that people were treated ... we were respected."

Since the merger, she said, "we have not felt that at all." It feels, she said, like someone has been making cuts based on a spreadsheet.

Neathawk was told she had been laid off in February 2023, before the decision was abruptly rescinded following Parwinder Grewal's exit.

Even so, her library staff has shrunk from 14 to four during her time there, Neathawk said, and that's par for the course. "Everybody in every department is doing two or three jobs," she said.

"They do have a hard job," she said of the central administration, but at the beginning of Bergh's tenure, she said, "all confidence and trust in leadership (was) gone."

"It's important for them to build that back," she said.



PITTSFORD'S NEW FIRST-RESPONSE vehicle. Decals by Winning Image.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TOWN OF BRANDON, VERMONT Notice of Public Hearing

The Town of Brandon received a \$100,000 Accessibility Modification Grant from the State of Vermont under the Vermont Community Development Program. A public hearing will be held on August 12th, 2024 at 6:30 PM at the Brandon Town Hall at 1 Conant Square, via ZOOM: Meeting ID (253 279 4161), by Conference call: Dial (929) 205 6099, to obtain the views of citizens on community development; to furnish information concerning the range of community development activities that have been undertaken under this program; and to give affected citizens the opportunity to examine a statement of the use of these funds.

The VCDP funds received have been used to complete physical accessibility modifications at the Brandon Free Public Library, including a limited use, limited access lift, and stair tower servicing all four levels of the building.

Information on this project is available at the Brandon Town Offices, 49 Center St., and may be viewed during the hours of Monday through Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm. Should you require any special accommodations, please contact Town Clerk Sue Gage at 802-247-3635 to ensure appropriate accommodations are made. For the hearing impaired please call (TTY) #1-800-253-0191.

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