

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

A community supported newspaper

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\$1



## LOST NAMES

In Part 39 of his series, Names Lost in Vermont, genealogist Michael F. Dwyer explores the history of the Stone family.

PG. 2

## ICE FISHING SEASON ALREADY?

Here's a last-minute gift idea for outdoor enthusiasts: Vermont 2025 hunting and fishing licenses are available for online purchase through VT Fish & Wildlife.

PG. 5

## ACT 250 CHANGES

The temporary relaxation of Act 250 has made it easier for developers to begin much needed housing projects, including, possibly, in Brandon.

PG. 6

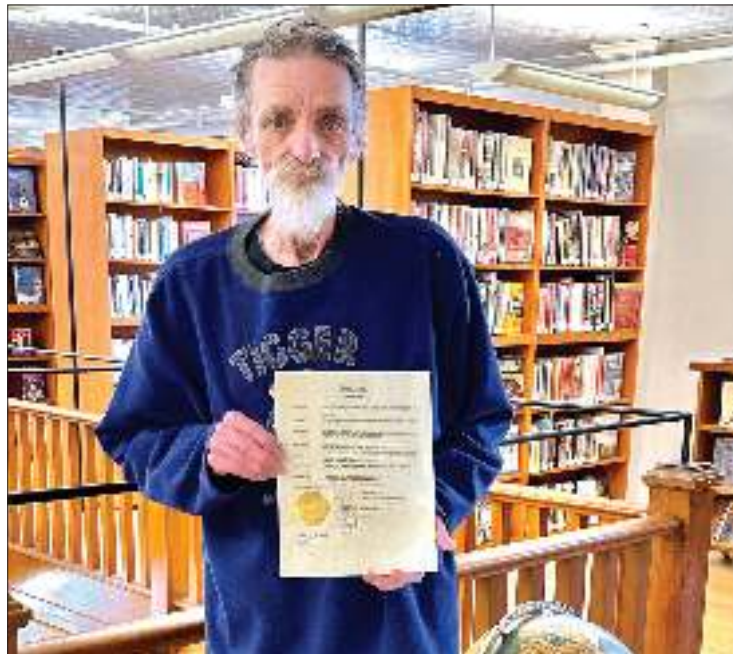


PG. 10

## DAIRY TESTING

Vermont dairy farms are preparing for new monthly avian flu testing.

PG. 6



CLIFF KENYON OF Brandon stands in the town's library and displays the "Rays of Kindness" declaration he received from Gov. Phil Scott in recognition of all the ways he tries to make his neighbors happy. "I try to make people smile," he said. Photo by Steven Jupiter

## Brandon resident wins 'Rays of Kindness' award from Gov. Scott

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Cliff Kenyon of Brandon has received a "Rays of Kindness" award from Governor Phil Scott in recognition of "his efforts to spread joy and kindness to all he meets." Mr. Kenyon received a letter from the Governor along with a declaration bearing a gold seal.

Mr. Kenyon was nominated for the award by Anne Chartrand, Chayanne Dezeree Towne, and Harriet Wyman. Ms. Wyman said in a written message, "I met Cliff when he started coming into the Transfer Station in Brandon. He was always kind toward my son and always treated him with ap-

(See *Cliff Kenyon*, Page 8)

## Brandon SB approves provisional FY26 town budget with 2.25% increase

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The Brandon Selectboard and the Brandon Budget Committee convened on Monday night to make the final decisions regarding the budget that will be proposed to Brandon voters in March.

The Board approved a pro-

visional budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 of \$3,403,965, which represents a 2.25% increase over the current year's budget of \$3,328,882. The amount to be raised by taxes in FY26 would be \$2,876,645, which represents an increase of 2.58% over the current

(See *Brandon SB*, Page 23)

## UVM men's soccer wins 2024 NCAA tournament, earning 1st national title in program history

BY KLARA BAUTERS/  
VTDIGGER

BURLINGTON — The University of Vermont men's soccer team lived up to its "Cardiac Cats" nickname Monday night, scoring late in the second half to send the NCAA national championship game into overtime before netting a golden goal to secure a 2-1 victory over Marshall University.

It was a historic night for the unseeded Catamounts, which won its first title in program history thanks to a sudden death overtime goal from Maximilian Kissel, a

junior forward from Germany.

While the game took place in North Carolina, the energy was palpable at Nectar's in Burlington, where more than 100 fans gathered for a watch party. The venue buzzed with excitement as free food and raffle tickets were handed out, and yellow-and-green bead necklaces sailed through the crowd — people mingled, snacked and sipped drinks while waiting for the game to start.

Most of the crowd consisted of University of Vermont students and recent graduates, but

(See *UVM men's soccer*, Page 14)



## Christmas generosity in action!

THE BRANDON AREA Toy Project (BATP) received gifts for 151 kids this year, filling the meeting room in the basement of the Brandon Town Hall this past Sunday and Monday. For over 15 years now, BATP has made sure that all local children get to experience the joy of Christmas gifts. The BATP also collected donations for veterans on behalf of the Silver Bells. Thanks also go to Brandon House of Pizza, Morningside Bakery, and Jiffy Mart for hosting the Angel Card Trees; to Blue Seal, Nifty Thrifty, and Fostering Wellness for collecting and donating toys and clothes; to Beth and Gale Quenneville for their work on Krista's Totes; and to all of the anonymous donors who make Christmas special for all the kids. See page 3 for photos of the tireless crews that made it all happen!





# Names lost in Vermont, Part 39: Stone

BY MICHAEL F. DWYER

The subtitle of this installment could well be “leaving no stone unturned.” Last week, over wine and cheese with a friend, I asked, “Are you sure your husband is really a Stone?” As you may expect, context is everything here. Having been acquainted

with several Stone families, I suspected some of them may have undergone a surname change from an ancestor from Québec whose name was La-roche or Lapierre. Alongside these changed names, some Stones, like that of my friend’s husband, had been Stones back to colonial times. Before pro-

ceeding further, let me say that the LaRocks or LaRocques never became Stones. Though it sounds like “rock,” Larocque comes from one of several plac-

es with that name in France.

At the time of the 1950 census, 160 individuals in Rutland and Addison Counties bore the Stone surname. Of these,

grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren. Digging deeper, Cyrus was “only” 98, born on 19 October 1868 in East Middlebury and baptized on 12 August 1869 at St. Mary’s Church in Middlebury, the son of Nelson Stone and Martha Surprenant. They were married in Middlebury on 6 May 1862 as Nelson Stone and Martha Superman [!] by Justice of the Peace Almon Tupper. For their children to have been baptized as Catholics, this marriage would be eventually blessed by a priest.

Cyrus’s father Nelson Stone was baptized on 13 January 1841 as Narcisse Laroche in Henryville, Québec, about 16 miles north of the Vermont border, eldest son of Narcisse Laroche and Adelaide Menard. Their next seven children were born there, ending with Philomène in 1855. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Cornwall, Vermont, where Nelson Jr. and Martha had several more children. In the late 1870s, they touched down in Rutland, Massachusetts, where they were counted in the 1880 census. Their household included Nelson’s niece, Ida, orphaned daughter of his brother Peter Stone. Labeled as “deaf, dumb, and idiotic” in census categories, Ida lost her hearing through scarlet fever. Far from being mentally deficient, she later married twice.

Back in Salisbury, Vermont, by the time of Martha’s death in 1888, Nelson’s life gets complicated. Within the next year, he assumed a marital relationship with Emma King, 30 years his junior. She had married in Brandon, Fred Smith on 15 September 1888 but was evidently soon estranged from her husband. Nelson continued to father children with Emma. The “Cornwall Conversation” column of Montpelier’s Argus-Patriot noted Nelson Stone “rejoicing over the arrival of a son his 11th child.” Returning to Holden, Massachusetts, Nelson and Emma had three more children including daughter Lillian born on 8 July 1897. Lillian married twice and lived until 4 December 1989, 148 years after the birth of her father! [Photo #4]

Returning once more to Cornwall, Vermont, Nelson and Emma moved in with his son Cyrus and family as indicated in the 1900 census [Photo #5]. Nelson died on 7 December 1900 of kidney failure; his funeral held from the Methodist Church in East Middlebury.

(See Names lost, Page 21)



LILLIAN STONE, DAUGHTER of Nelson and Emma, as a young woman, circa 1913. [Ancestry photo]



FRED SMITH, WIFE Emma, née King, with their grandson George Kent whom they raised, 1939. [Ancestry photo]

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**HAPPY New Year**

the oldest was widower Cyrus W. Stone, age 85, living as a boarder in Brandon. Investigating further, Cyrus Wilber Stone turns out to be Bernie and Steve Carr’s great-grandfather. Bernie’s excellent directions to his gravestone in St. Mary’s Cemetery in Brandon, “Go left from the statue of the Blessed Mother,” easily located the stone without having me to trudge through too much December snow. Another example of the Calvary cross, this perpetual care monument, originally erected in the 1920s, has the names of C.W. Stone, his wife Jennie, and son William, a World War I veteran accidentally shot by his brother Stanley while at deer camp in Leicester. [Photo #1] You can see my snowy footprints in front of the grave of Cyrus and Jennie’s daughter, Verna (Stone) Carr, wife of Marcus A. Carr, Sr. [Photos #2 and #3]

Cyrus Stone’s obituary from the Rutland Herald claims he passed the century mark, leaving 10 grandchildren, 61 great-





## Christmas Crews!

ON THE LEFT are the folks at Fostering Wellness who collected toys and clothes for BATP (l to r): Dr Charles Foster, Danielle Davis, Colleen Wright, Taryn Mason, and Angle Usleton. On the right are the folks at Brandon Area Toy Project (l to r): Dallas Ladd, Patty Moore, Katie Mitchell, Sue Danforth, and Brittney Danforth.

# Christmas Crooning at the Brandon Inn



BARN OPERA'S JOSHUA Collier captivated a full house at the Brandon Inn on Saturday with a fantastic free program of holiday music. Accompanying Mr. Collier were Tim Guiles on piano, Glendon Ingalls on bass, and Ross Edmunds on drums. What a great way to get into the holiday spirit!

## Correction

In last week's issue, the article "Brandon SB tackles health insurance, boundary lines, and chemtrails," a printing error omitted part of the text on the jump between pages 19 and 20. The full text should have been "Ms. Tessaro displayed photographs of the skies above this area, noting what she described as chemtrails created as part of a Congressionally mandated program designed to introduce various compounds into the atmosphere to counteract the effects of climate change." We apologize for any confusion the original omission may have caused.

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## Spotlight On Business EVERMONT SHUTTLE AND UBER



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Sincerely, Dorothea Langevin





# Vermont commission on public education shies away from offering cost-saving ideas

BY ETHAN WEINSTEIN  
VTDIGGER

The Commission on the Future of Public Education in Vermont approved its preliminary findings on Monday without making any recommendations about how to contain costs in the short term.

During the 2024 legislative session, as average education property taxes were slated to rise almost 14%, lawmakers created the commission as a vehicle to steer the state's public education system toward a more sustainable future.

Despite being tasked with producing "preliminary findings and recommendations, including short-term cost containment considerations" by Dec. 15, the commission decided not to include a slate of money-saving proposals directly in its report.

The group spent much of Monday's meeting discussing whether to include a list of ideas that could save money, brainstormed by a subcommittee focused on finance. The naysayers ultimately won out, arguing the list, which the full commission hadn't vetted, would come off as recommendations rather than merely ideas. Members of the 13-member body, composed of lawmakers, state leaders and education officials, said the December deadline had left them little time to meet their mandate.

Among those who argued against the list's inclusion was Zoie Saunders, Vermont's education secretary.

"I think we've all acknowledged that the list is not ready yet," she said. "The public will interpret this as a set of policies."

Others agreed that such a list of non-recommendations would be rife for misinterpretation.

The commission ultimately voted 8-3 to adopt the preliminary report, deciding to link to — but not include — the list of cost-contain-

ment proposals.

Still, some voiced concern over the absence of any suggested solutions. Oliver Olsen, who represents the Vermont Independent Schools Association, suggested the group could release target budget metrics to guide school districts and independent schools during the budgeting process already underway.

"We can get everybody working towards a common goal," he said, adding that budget recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year were one of the limited ways the commission could contain costs in the short term.

But with their preliminary findings already overdue, the commission's members decided to move ahead, handing off a report short on answers to the Legislature. Instead, the document offers an assessment of the current situation facing public education in Vermont, some key education data trends and a call for continued collaboration by all interested parties.

Democrats and Republicans in Montpelier, as well as Republican Gov. Phil Scott, have signaled they will prioritize education finance reform in the looming January session. That work will coincide with — and potentially overtake — the commission's work, which is oriented towards a final report expected by December 2025.

Despite loud promises of education reform, lawmakers and state officials have so far been quiet about specifics, as Seven Days recently reported, much as the future of public education commission has thus far avoided endorsing any policy recommendations.

The commission's report does, however, offer a summation of the challenge ahead: "Substantive change will require difficult decisions and significant political will."



**The better to see you with my dear...**

**THIS COOPER'S HAWK** has been frequenting my backyard with designs on a mourning dove dinner.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

## Community Forums

# Winter manure spreading ban for the year began on December 15th

Vermont protects environment through restrictions on winter manure spreading

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAF) would like to remind all farm operations that the annual winter manure spreading ban begins December 15th. Between December 15 and April 1, no manure or other agricultural waste (including compost and spoiled feed) may be spread on agricultural fields throughout Vermont. This annual ban is required by the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs), which is a part of Vermont's overall strategy to protect water quality, the working landscape, and natural resources.

The RAPs also prohibit the ap-

plication of manure or agricultural wastes on frozen, saturated, or snow-covered fields outside of the winter manure spreading ban. Manure does not soak effectively into frozen, snow-covered, or saturated ground. Manure spread during the winter months therefore has a heightened risk of running off to waterways when the snow and ground finally thaws.

For more than 35 years, restrictions on winter manure spreading in Vermont have been in place to protect water quality. These restrictions have minimized spreading and potential runoff during winter, when field conditions may

be particularly susceptible to it. The annual spreading ban requires farmers to either have a storage structure that can hold all agricultural manure and runoff that is required to be collected between December 15th to April 1st, which is 107 days, or they must be able to stack all manure produced in a way that meets RAP standards and will not lead to adverse water quality impacts.

Manure spreading is a common and widespread practice in Vermont agriculture, it enhances soil health and fertility for optimal crop production, plays a piv-

(See Manure ban, Page 8)

**The** Brandon • Pittsford • Proctor • West Rutland • Lake Dunmore • Leicester • Whiting • Sudbury • Goshen  
**REPORTER**  
A community supported newspaper

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## Community Forums continued Vermont 2025 Hunting and Fishing Licenses and Lawbooks Available

MONTPELIER—Vermont 2025 hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses, as well as the 2025 lawbooks for these activities, are now available on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department’s website and wherever licenses are sold.

“License sales have helped pay for some of Vermont’s greatest conservation successes,” said Interim Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Andrea Shortsleeve, “from managing habitat for game spe-

cies like the white-tailed deer and black bear to protecting habitat for nongame species like bald eagles and common loons.”

With ice fishing opening around the state as soon as cold temperatures arrive in January, Vermonters are encouraged to pick up their 2025 licenses at the earliest convenience. Existing five year, permanent or lifetime licenses can be updated online on January 1.

License buyers can also easily add a \$15 Habitat Stamp to their

purchase to further support habitat conservation in Vermont.

“In addition to updating your license, it is helpful for hunters, trappers and anglers to pick up the current 2025 lawbooks,” added Shortsleeve.

Printed copies of the 2025 Hunting & Trapping Lawbook and the 2025 Fishing Lawbook are available from license agents statewide. The department’s website has links to online versions as well.

**NOTICE: HOLIDAY SCHEDULE CHANGE**  
Because of the coincidence of both Christmas and New Year’s Day with our usual press days this year, we will not be able to publish on our usual schedule. Neither our printing press nor the U.S. Postal Service will be open on our usual printing/ mailing days. As a result, our last issue of 2024 will be published on 12/18 and our first issue of 2025 will be published on 1/8. We normally don’t publish the last week of December, so this change skips an additional week. We will add a week to all subscriptions to make up for this. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

THE REPORTER TEAM

## U.S. Forest Service encourages snowmobile travelers to exercise caution

MENDON (Dec. 13, 2024)—With additional snow expected in the coming weeks, the U.S. Forest Service is looking forward to a successful snowmobile season and wants to encourage all riders to put safety first out on the trails in the coming months.

Green Mountain National

Forest (GMNF) officials are advising snowmobilers to exercise caution when operating on the National Forest, and all lands, in Vermont this winter. GMNF officials remind snowmobile enthusiasts to heed to all gates and signs and to stay off roads and trails that are

(See *Snowmobilers*, Page 8)

## Leicester News

The Memory Tree will be lit on December 21st.

The Leicester Historical Society is accepting names for the annual Memory Tree, to be lit at the Four Corners in front of the Meeting House on Saturday, December 21, at 5:00 p.m. You can submit names, one dollar for each name, six names for five dollars, to Diane Benware at 1594 Old Jerusalem Road, Salisbury, VT 05769 until Monday, Dec 23.

The Memory Tree list will be available on the town website after Christmas.



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# Obituaries

## Harold 'Peanut' Reed, Jr., 74, Florence

Harold "Peanut" Reed, Jr., age 74, passed peacefully with family by his side on Saturday, December 14, 2024, at his home in Florence.

"Peanut" was born in Middlebury on October 1, 1950. He was the son of Harold and Phyllis (Trombley) Reed, Sr. He grew up in the Brandon area and received his early education at Leicester Central School. He graduated from Otter Valley Union High School, class of 1969. He began his working career with White Pigment in Florence, where he had worked weekends while in high school. Following the buyout by OMYA, he continued working there until his retirement in 2015, after more than 45 years of service. He was a member and past president of



**HAROLD REED, JR**

the Brandon-Forest Dale Lions Club, where he had also served as Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors. He was an avid hunter.

Surviving is his wife, Evie-

lyn "Evie" Reed of Florence; one daughter, Kari-Jo Kearns of Brandon; a brother, Douglas Reed & his wife Dale of Leicester; 3 grandchildren, Brynna K. Raskevitz & her husband Thornton of Braintree, Ryan E. Kearns of Hinesburg, and Delilah C. Kearns of Middlebury. Many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins also survive him.

The graveside committal service and burial will take place at a later date in the family lot at Forest Dale Cemetery.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made, in his memory to Brandon-Forest Dale Lions Club, P.O. Box, Brandon, VT 05733.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

## Vermont gears up to test hundreds of dairy farms for avian flu each month

### So far, none of Vermont's dairy herds have contracted avian flu

**BY EMMA COTTON/  
VTDIGGER**

Last week, at the University of Vermont dairy farm in South Burlington, Jess Waterman climbed up to an opening in a large storage tank, inserted a long metal dipper, and pulled out a test tubes' worth of raw milk.

Gathered around Waterman — a dairy farm inspector with Vermont's Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets — stood a handful of dairy farm inspectors, taking notes. They watched as Waterman transferred the milk into a vial to be sent to Cornell University, where scientists will test it for highly pathogenic avian influenza, also called HPAI, a form of avian influenza that is deadly to poultry.

The dairy inspectors were learning the sampling process, which they plan to soon conduct on about 425 dairy farms across Vermont each month. It's part of an effort to keep Vermont's farms free of the virus, and allow farmers to take quick action if it's identified in their milk supply.

Vermont's testing regimen follows an early December announcement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that it would begin testing the country's milk supply for the avian flu, which has circulated globally since 2022. Last spring,

highly pathogenic avian flu began to spread among dairy cows.

"This is the first time that we're aware of in the history of the world that HPAI jumped to dairy cattle," said E.B. Flory, dairy section chief at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets.

Since the spring, the avian flu has spread to hundreds of dairy herds in at least 16 states. At least 60 people — mostly farmworkers — have caught the virus, according to the NY-Times.

No Vermont dairy herds have tested positive for the virus. The closest states with dairy (See *Avian flu testing*, Page 18)

## Vermont loosened Act 250 rules for housing. Here's where developers are responding

**BY CARLY BERLIN/  
VTDIGGER**

When 10 apartments at the new Armory House building just outside of downtown Vergennes opened in June, they all had tenants within two weeks. To Peter Kahn, the building's developer, watching the new apartments fill up so quickly — most deemed as "workforce housing," and several as affordable to people with lower incomes — underscored the severity of Vermont's housing deficit.

"Seeing firsthand and experiencing the shortage at a personal level really illuminated how deep this problem is," Kahn said.

Kahn's plans for the Armory Lane lot have been guided by recent changes to Act 250, Vermont's land use review law. At first, he'd planned to build 9 apartments there, to avoid triggering scrutiny under Act 250, which he feared would add time and expense to the project. But after the Legislature made temporary tweaks to the law last year, he realized he could build 24 apartments without Act 250 kicking in. He quickly added a 10th unit to the building-in-progress, and started hashing out plans for a second, 14-unit building at the same site.

Then, the Legislature passed even bolder Act 250 reforms this year, as part of Act 181. Kahn learned he could add even more homes to the Armory Lane lot without bumping up against the land use law. He has also begun to sketch out plans for a much larger, 74-unit workforce housing apartment complex on a vacant lot near the police station in town. Kahn is shaping that new project around a new, temporary Act 250 exemption for 75 units or fewer in certain areas designated for growth.

"One-hundred percent, we are tailoring the project around that exemption," Kahn said.

The response of developers like Kahn indicates the reforms are beginning to work as in-

tended. Proponents had hoped the temporary carve-outs for housing in Act 181 would clear red tape and encourage compact housing development to ease Vermont's acute housing shortage. Since the law took effect in June, about a dozen housing developments have used the interim exemptions, most of which stipulate that construction has to have begun by 2027 or 2028.

*Tanner Romano, the owner of the company, said Naylor & Breen is working with several other local employers to create workforce housing.*

That's based on a VTDigger/Vermont Public review of develop-

ment proposals that have received explicit confirmation from an Act 250 district coordinator that the project will not require an Act 250 permit. Still more projects might be moving forward without seeking this official thumbs up, called a "jurisdictional opinion."

**'SIGNS OF SUCCESS'**  
The housing projects using the new exemptions span geography and scale. They include the conversion of a nursing home into 40 apartments in Hartford, the construction of a new subsidized senior housing project in downtown St. Johnsbury, and a hotel-plus-apartments development in the heart of Rutland.

"There are signs of success," said Alex Farrell, commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, about the interim exemptions.

Many developments taking advantage of the exemptions were likely already in the works, but will now have an expedited timeline—a positive outcome, Farrell said. But the bigger impact will come when more developers like Kahn take the exemptions into account early, and expand the number of homes they seek to build.

"I think this coming spring and summer, we're going to see some—probably some really exciting results," Farrell said.

But the exemptions are already encouraging developers to take on projects they may have shied away from other- (See *Act 250*, Page 20)

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# Whimsical Creatures by Gene Childers show at Brandon Library



THESE COLORFUL CRITTERS are the creation of Brandon resident Gene Childers. They're on display on the second floor of the Brandon Free Public Library all month. Stop by and check them out (and maybe a book, too) the next time you're in the area. They're delightful!



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# Manure ban

(Continued from Page 4)

otal role in the nutrient cycle, and reduces imported nutrients. Per the RAPs, farms are required to utilize nutrient management planning to minimize any adverse environmental impact. This includes keeping records of applications that occur including the date, time, amount, field location and weather and field conditions at the time of

application.

Questions about the manure spreading ban, spreading before the ban, requests for assistance in the selection of appropriate manure stacking sites, or to request an emergency exemption please contact Nate Sands at (802) 224-6850 or Laura DiPietro at 802-595-1990.

# Cliff Kenyon

(Continued from Page 1)

preciation for how Jon helped him whenever he came in. He was always so sweet and kind and thoughtful. He's always positive. One day, out of the blue, he brought me a rose just because he's just one of those people who see the good in others and appreciate what others do."

Mr. Kenyon, 67, hails from Poultney originally. As a young man, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, achieving the rank of Petty Officer, 2nd Class. He spent 6 years in military service, from 1974 to 1981. He worked on gun systems and traveled the world.

"I went through the Suez Canal and was deployed to the Persian Gulf during the Iran Hostage Crisis," he said in a recent conversation at the Brandon Free Public Library.

After the Navy, Mr. Kenyon relocated to Brandon to work at the Brandon Training School, where he was employed from 1982 to 1985.

"I worked with the residents in the dorms," he said.

Later, he had a series of other jobs around the area, including running a convenience store. Now retired, he's still quite busy

making wreaths every fall. The first wreath of the season always goes to the Pittsford Veterans Day ceremony, he said. He sells wreaths to customers as far away as Maine, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and even Florida.

But mostly he busies himself by finding ways to bring joy to people's lives. As Ms. Wyman noted, he likes to give flowers to brighten people's day. The employees at Hannaford in Brandon are frequent beneficiaries of his

acts of kindness. Though he doesn't work at the store, he sometimes brings in carts from the parking lot, just to help out.

"I don't suffer from 'not-my-job-ism,'" he laughed. "I once even bought a

half-dozen roses for one of the cashiers. She said I made her day."

Mr. Kenyon tries to bring lightness to the lives of those around him even when he's been dealt some difficult blows. He's been dealing with an aggressive form of cancer since 2014 and underwent intense radiation treatment. He's been left with lingering effects from the disease but it hasn't dimmed his outlook on life.

"I just keep going. I refuse to lose my sense of humor. I try to

make people smile. God kept me around to help people," he said.

He's also recently finished a book that's scheduled to come out in the spring. A Western novella in the vein of Louis L'Amour, it's called "Slater" after the main character. Kenyon plans to give readings of it once it's published. One of his 4 living children, daughter Angel Lee, is also an author, having written a trilogy called "Kindred."

And his desire to make life fun extends to his social media, where he runs games and contests on his Facebook account. Participants can even win prizes. A recent contest had participants guess the number of pieces of candy in a photograph he posted. Anyone who'd like to join in should feel free to send him a friend request.

Though the award was announced in late August, Mr. Kenyon felt too modest to bring it to public attention until his sister prodded him to contact the local paper, which he recently did.

"She said, 'This is a big deal. You should tell someone,'" he recalled.

"It made me feel proud," he continued. "You know, it's how you do all year 'round, not just at times like Christmas. It's a year-round way of being. People sometimes think you have an ulterior motive when you're nice to them. But I just like to make people smile."

Congratulations, Cliff!

*Now retired, he's still quite busy making wreaths every fall. The first wreath of the season always goes to the Pittsford Veterans Day ceremony*



## Golf Course

**Plan ahead for next year!**

It's that time of year again! Neshobe Golf Club is excited to reintroduce our special offer: Buy a 2025 Membership now and play the remainder of 2024 for FREE!

This incredible deal allows you to enjoy the rest of this year's golfing season at no additional cost while locking in your membership for 2025 at our current 2024 pricing.

New members only—this offer is designed just for you! Plus, every Neshobe membership comes with full Rocky Ridge Golf Club membership privileges at no extra charge.

Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to experience two great clubs for the price of one.

For all membership inquiries please visit the Membership Page on our website!

We look forward to welcoming you to the Neshobe family!

**WE ARE HIRING!**

**Cook**

We are currently seeking a skilled and dedicated Cook to join our culinary team at Neshobe Golf Club. The ideal candidate will have a passion for creating delicious and visually appealing dishes while ensuring a high standard of food quality and safety.

**Bartender**

We're currently searching for a skilled and enthusiastic bartender to join our team. If you have a passion for creating great drinks and providing excellent customer service, we want to hear from you.

**The golf course is OPEN!**

Tee times available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

<https://neshobe.com> • (802) 247-3611

# Snowmobilers

(Continued from Page 5)

closed. Forest Service employees and several snowmobile clubs throughout Vermont have been working to clear trees and other debris from trails. However, trail users should continue to use extra caution early in the season as some trees may be weak due to snow accumulation and downed tree hazards are likely.

Weather permitting, snowmobile use is allowed on designated trails within the GMNF for four months beginning on Monday, December 16, 2024, and ending on Tuesday, April 15, 2024. "We are concerned about user safety. Patrols which are aimed at enforcing rules and regulations, monitoring trail conditions and providing visitor information will occur throughout the Forest," said John Sinclair, Forest Supervisor for the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests.

The GMNF will continue to work closely with state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) to make sure that users of the trail system are respectful, responsible, law abiding, and safe.

The GMNF and VAST cooperate to maintain more than 345 miles of National Forest System trails that are part of the larger statewide snowmobile network. VAST is one of several snowmobile associations in the United States that has a cooperative partnership agreement with the U.S. Forest Service. "All of these trails allow mixed uses, so people are snowshoeing, hiking, and cross-country skiing, as well as using snowmobiles. Snowmobilers should travel responsibly and yield to other users," said Sinclair. The maximum speed is 35 miles per hour on state

and federal land.

The U.S. Forest Service is also warning the public of the dangers associated with riding, hiking and skiing on frozen water bodies. Trail users are encouraged to be mindful of fallen trees and other hazards they may encounter. Operators must maintain control of their snowmobile while riding; keep to the right at all times, wear helmets, and stay on designated trails only. All snowmobiles must be legally registered, have liability insurance, and operators must purchase a VAST Trails Maintenance Assessment decal. Officials also encourage winter trail users to pack a flashlight, cell phone, food, and extra warm clothing in case of an emergency. Trail users are encouraged to visit the VAST trail update for specifics on trail conditions and closures: <https://vtvast.org/trails.html>.



## Mim's Photos

**Like all things vintage?**

are on page 16!



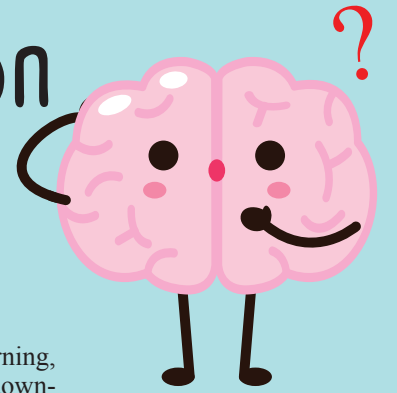


## Have a Holly Jolly Winter

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SPREAD cheer in Proctor.

Photo by Dale Christie

## Brandon Brain Buster



On Christmas morning, Alice and Bobby run downstairs to see what Santa has left under the tree. They find three identically sized boxes in green, red, and white wrapping paper. Their parents tell them one box contains empty peanut shells, one contains used-up ballpoint pens, and one contains a brand-new smartphone. They tell Alice, as the elder of the two, that she can pick one of the boxes first and keep whatever is in it. But she cannot touch or examine the boxes before choosing.

Alice chooses the green box.

Their parents then open the white box to reveal the used-up pens. They tell Bobby that the red box is now his unless Alice wants to swap her green box for it.

What should Alice do?

- A) Keep her original box
- B) Exchange her box for Bobby's

Answer on pg. 15

# Christmas with Shannon and Friends

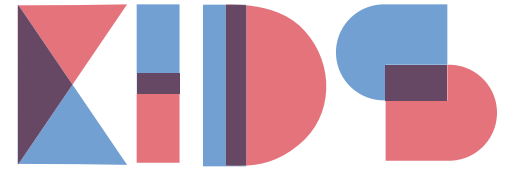
Join us in the beautiful Brandon Inn for an evening of Christmas music! Jess Crossman, Bill Moore, Sio Gallagher, Kristen Carr, Ross Edmunds and Shannon Wright will entertain you at this family friendly evening of music and Christmas! The Neshobe Pub will be open for beverages, and 22Park can meet your supper needs!



**Admission is free for this classic concert!**  
**Starts at 6:30, right after the Reverse Parade!**



# OUR CREATIVE



STUDENT: Ivy Manchester

GRADE: 12

SCHOOL: Otter Valley Union High School

TITLE: Untitled

MEDIUM: Watercolor

TEACHER: Tiffany St. Michaud

**STATEMENT FROM MS. ST. MICHAUD:**

For a free choice project, Ivy chose to do a series of watercolor pieces centered around toucans. She has a wonderful eye for color and is very patient when layering this medium.





# Our Creative Kids Poetry Corner Where I'm From

by Jasper

5th grade class at  
Otter Creek Academy

I am from Vermont,  
from my cortex and diencephalon.

I am from the wall of a rock climbing gym.  
I'm from carving and Hanukkah,  
from Ripstiking and dinos.

I'm from the pictures in Mexikid,  
from Ginger and Teddy.

I'm from the click of Legos.  
I'm from red rubber ducks and running,  
from camping and creativity.

I am from the roar of Jurassic Park.  
I am from Vermont.

## MAPLE the COW by Matt Aucoin



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news@brandonreporter.com

## LAST MINUTE XMAS DEALS AT WIMETT'S!



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**2017 TOYOTA SEQUOIA**  
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**\$19,995**



**2015 FORD F140**  
Crew Cab, 4X4, Lariat, V6 Turbo 126k miles  
**\$22,995**



**2013 SUBARU CROSTREK**  
Premium, AWD, Auto, Loaded 122k miles  
**\$11,995**



**2010 TOYOTA TUNDRA**  
DB Cab, 4X4, SR5, TRD, 5.7 V8 112k miles  
**\$18,995**

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See page 17



# Calendar of events

## December

### Mondays

#### Brandon Rec offers Aikido classes

Aikido with Brandon Rec -- Aikido classes for Youth (4:30) and Adults (5:30) at Brandon's Town Hall main floor. Beginners and Spectators always welcome! For more information, visit [www.AikidoVermont.org](http://www.AikidoVermont.org)

### Tuesdays

#### Maclure Library Story Time Playgroup

Looking for a fun, educational playgroup for your 2–5 year old? Look no further! From 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. join Miss Allie, a certified teacher, for a weekly FREE literacy-based playgroup. Light snacks will be provided,



along with stories, crafts, songs, games, and more. To register, please email [allie.griffiths@rcpcc.org](mailto:allie.griffiths@rcpcc.org) with your child's name, age, and contact information for your family.

#### Friends Zone

Need a safe space to socialize? Come join us at the Friends Zone. Open

Tuesdays 12–3 pm at the Brandon United Methodist Church, 1 Franklin Street, Brandon. Meet with old friends and make new ones. Play cards, cribbage, or Yahtzee. Put a puzzle together or bring your arts, crafts, and hobbies to work on. Snacks and beverages provided. All are welcome to attend.

For more information contact pastor Vicki Disorda ([vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com](mailto:vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com) or (802) 345-4125).

**Magic the Gathering at the Brandon Free Public Library**  
5–7pm

**Pins & Needles Craft Club at the Brandon Free Public Library**

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

### Wednesdays

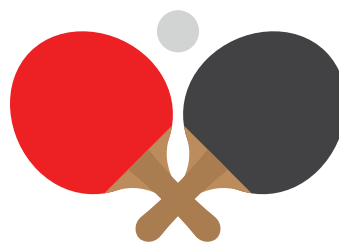
#### Ping Pong

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

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

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

For further information about the Green Mountain Table Tennis Club, visit our club's website at [www.gmttc.com](http://www.gmttc.com).



To stay tuned if there are any cancellations, follow on Facebook and get on our email list. \$15/class.

**Free drop-in homework help with Dan for grades K-12!**

Wednesdays 3:30–5:00 pm at the Brandon Free Public Library.

### Thursdays

**Coffee and Cards at the Brandon Free Public Library**

2–4 pm. Come play Bridge, Hearts, or other games! Coffee and tea are available.

#### 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.



## Free Medical Care at Rutland County Health Partners

### December 23rd, 3–6 pm

Free Medical Care – A free healthcare clinic for uninsured or underinsured adults will be offered by the Rutland County Health Partners (formerly Rutland Free Clinic) December 23rd from 3–6 pm at our offices at 204 North Main Street, Rutland, VT. No appointment is necessary. For any questions, call 802-774-1082.



**Free Drop-In Tech Support at the Brandon Free Public Library**  
4:30–6 pm

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

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

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

We spend a fair amount of the time exercising in a seated position in the chairs but if possible, we also do exercises standing, using the chairs for support. The exercises can be adjusted for individual needs and

we move at a comfortable pace. I think you will soon notice a difference once you start. Looking forward to seeing you in class!

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

#### 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 whomever shows up each time or just practice your cornhole skills!

### 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,

## Brandon Congregational Christmas Eve Candle

You are invited to join the Brandon Congregational Church for our Christmas Eve Candle Service on December 23rd at 7:00 pm. The Service will be a celebration of lessons and carols with special music by the choir. There will be a sharing of candles and a candle lighting as we sing Silent Night together to welcome the arrival of the Christ Child.

**Pokémon Club at the Brandon Free Public Library**  
3–5 pm. Ages 7+.



## Coming to the Maclure Library



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."

### Wednesday 18th

#### Wallingford Town Hall Concert Series

Bells of Joy directed by Karen James will present a wonderful holiday concert that is sure to lift your heart and spirit at Wallingford Town Hall on Wednesday, December 18 at 7 pm. The concert will feature traditional Christmas music as well as selections inspired by the Lessons and Carols Service from Kings College in Cambridge, England arranged specially for this unique instrument comprised of 5 octaves of bronze handbells and 5 octaves of lovely hand chimes. Suggested donations of \$10-15 per person at the door with all proceeds going as a fundraiser to Bells of Joy, less 10% to the Town of Wallingford.

Elevator entrance is on the east side of the building off Taft Terrace. For more information, contact the Town Administrator at (802)446-2872. This concert is being presented as part of the Wallingford Town Hall Concert Series.

## ional Church delight Service

on Congrega-  
s Eve Candle-  
4 at 7:00  
celebration  
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and original holiday music by John Doyle and Mick McAuley. Both natives of Ireland and each from musical families, John Doyle and Mick McAuley are true powerhouses in traditional Irish music. Their nearly telepathic musical connection began in the truly groundbreaking Irish-American band Solas. Both now have flourishing high-profile solo careers and periodically come together to brush off some Solas standards and lots of their individual material, played together, for these magical musical evenings. An Irish Christmas transports audiences to the quiet, small villages of rural Ireland through the songs, tunes, and stories most familiar to these two world-class artists. From 7-9 pm at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, Putney. \$10-25.

**Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest and 15% Off After Hours Shopping Event — Sparkle Barn**  
Get ready for a Holiday Sweater Showdown and 15% Off Shopping Exclusive! Join us at

the Sparkle Barn in Wallingford for an after-hours shopping event and Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest! Thursday, Dec 19th, 6-8 pm. Don your most creative, hideous or hilarious UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATER and enjoy: Exclusive after-hours shopping access to our entire store! 15% discount on all purchases made during the event! Enjoy holiday treats and drinks! A Polaroid instant picture of you and your party in front of our festive backdrop! Enter our Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest for a chance to win Sparkle prizes! Prizes: Adult Category (13+): 1st prize — \$75 Sparkle Barn Gift Card. Kid's Category (Under 12): — \$75 Sparkle Barn Gift Card. Runners-up in both categories receive a \$25 Sparkle Barn Gift Card. Mark your Calendars for Dec 19th, dig out or create the ugliest holiday sweater, and get ready to sparkle and compete! 1509 US 7 S Wallingford, VT, 05773. www.thesparklebarn.com

**MNFF Selects Presents "Jim Henson: Idea Man" — Middlebury Town Hall**

A very special holiday screening of the Disney+ documentary, Jim Henson: Idea Man, directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Ron Howard. From Henson's early years puppeteering on local television to the worldwide success of Sesame Street, The Muppet Show and beyond, Howard captures the creativity and artistic evolution of an artist who revolutionized television, inspired generations and created some of the world's most beloved characters. Middlebury New Film Makers Festival Selects presents monthly movie screenings at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. From 7-9 pm at the Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant Street, Middlebury. \$17-45.

### Friday 20th

**Holiday Open House — Rutland Railway Association**  
The Rutland Railway Association, located at the historic Center Rutland Railroad Station, is having their First



Annual Holiday Open House. On the 20th, from 6-8 pm, the station will welcome visitors to view the museum collection as well as the two operating model railroad layouts.

## Goings on around town

#### Winter Carols — BarnArts

Winter Carols is a BarnArts original event and highlights the talent of the local singers of BarnArts Chorale and BarnArts Youth Chorale. Michael Zsoldos serves as Music Director for a program that focuses on a Winter Solstice theme for a night of music and wonder. Instrumental performances from local musicians and audience sing-alongs will also be included. Don't miss this festive opportunity to join with neighbors and friends and celebrate the season as a community! The event is free and open to all, but reservations are required. 7pm, First Universalist Church and Society of Barnard, 6211 VT Rt. 12, Reservations: barnarts.org

**The Continuing Adventures of King Wenceslas and His Page Edith — Next Stage Arts**

Back by popular demand! Join King Wenceslas and his loyal page as they embark on snowy new adventures with Vermont Suitcase Company. We will be joined by Arthur Davis and friends singing songs of the season. Bring your friends and family and celebrate with laughter and song! 7-9 pm at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, Putney. \$5-12.

**Low Lily Winter Solstice Celebration — Middlebury Town Hall Theater**

Celebrate the Winter Solstice with Town Hall Theater and Low Lily.

New England-based Low Lily brings their signature soundscape of fiddle, folk, bluegrass, and Americana to a special Solstice celebration. This high energy show features three-part harmonies and masterful instrumental arrangements from their award-winning repertoire, including their latest album "Angels in the Wreckage." From 7-9 pm. Tickets: Orchestra/Balcony \$20, Table Seat \$30.

## Brandon Area Food Shelf

The Brandon Area Food Shelf is open Tuesdays 12-3 pm, Sundays 12:30-2 pm, to anyone who needs assistance. Walk-ins are welcome.

We are located at Brandon United Methodist Church, 1 Franklin Street, Brandon, VT

For more information, please call Kathy Mathis (802-247-3121) or Pastor Vicki Disorda (802-345-4125).



### Thursday 19th

**An Irish Christmas with John Doyle & Mick McAuley — Next Stage Arts**  
Next Stage Arts and Twilight Music celebrate the season with an evening of traditional Irish, British Isles,



# UVM men's soccer

(Continued from Page 1)

at one table, four retirees proudly donned UVM's signature green and gold — matching caps and cheek stickers included — to demonstrate their unwavering support for the team.

After a scoreless first half, Marshall struck first, with senior forward Tarik Pannholzer scoring in the 67th minute. The Marshall goal left the Nectar's crowd frustrated.

But the equalizer came in the 81st minute from forward Marcell Papp, a graduate student from Hungary. The goal brought life back to the UVM fans at Nectar's, prompting chants of "Go cats go."

UVM alum Katie Moino took her sister Elisabeth, who plays soccer for Essex High School, to the watch party. At the start of overtime, they said they believed UVM had a good chance to win.

"It's clearly the better team," Katie Moino said.

Less than five minutes into overtime, Kissel beat Marshall goalkeeper Aleksa Janjic one-on-one to claim the 2024 College Cup trophy for the Catamounts. Marshall, ranked No. 13, previously won the NCAA's College Cup in 2020.

On the big screen, UVM coach



**UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT fans watch as the UVM men's soccer team scores the winning goal in overtime to defeat Marshall University in the Division I national championship at Nectar's in Burlington on Monday, Dec. 16.**

Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

Rob Dow wiped away tears as he hoisted the NCAA cup. Inside Nectar's, Queen's "We Are The Champions" blared through the speakers. Fans laughed, cheered and sang along as they made their way outside.

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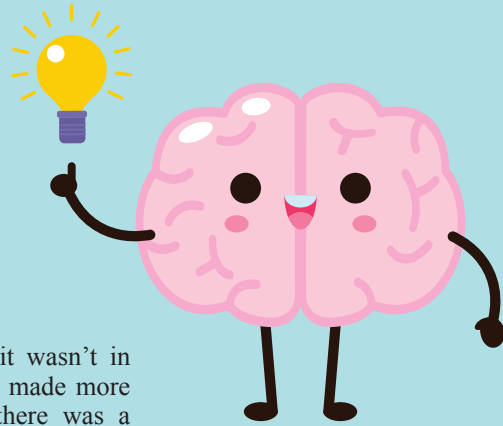
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# Brandon Brain Buster Answered



**Answer: B**

Alice should exchange her box for Bobby's. There is still no guarantee that she will end up with the smartphone (assuming she would prefer it to the peanut shells), but she will improve her odds by swapping boxes at this point.

Why?

Because when she originally chose a box, she had a 1-in-3 chance of choosing the smartphone and a 2-in-3 chance of NOT choosing it. In other words, her first choice was always going to be a risky bet based on pure probability. It was always more likely that the smartphone was going to be in one of the two boxes she didn't choose.

When her parents revealed that the smartphone was NOT in the white box, it was still more likely that Alice had NOT originally chosen the smartphone. But since she

then knew that it wasn't in the white box, it made more sense to think there was a greater chance it was in Bobby's red box than in her green box.

It may help visualize this if we imagine there had been a million boxes instead of three. Alice would have a one-in-a-million chance of choosing the right box. But if her parents then opened 999,998 boxes to reveal pens or peanut shells, we'd know that the smartphone was in either her original box or the other unopened box. But we'd also know that the odds were overwhelmingly AGAINST her having picked the correct box to begin with. And now that she sees that there's only one other box that the phone can be in, she should swap her box for it because she still has only a 1/1,000,000 chance of being correct if she sticks with her original box.

In the actual case, Alice had a 1/3 chance of choosing the phone, which means that there was a 2/3 chance the phone was in one of the other two boxes. When it's revealed that the phone was not in the white box, she still has only a 1/3 chance of having chosen correctly to begin with and there's still a 2/3 chance that the phone was in another box. Since there's only one other box, she should swap her original box for it.

The answer is B.

*[Editor's note: This question is a variation on a classic probability question called the "Monty Hall Problem" that famously stumped even trained mathematicians.]*

## REAL ESTATE



Charming village home with a nice wrap-around porch & detached garage with loft. This home has been well maintained and it shows! 3 bedrooms upstairs, eat-in kitchen, large living room, office, cozy den. Just a short walk to beautiful downtown Brandon with it's many parks and shops. \$320,000



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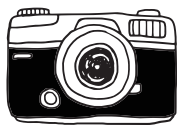






# Mim's Photos

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



## Recognized



Dolores Stone and another reader recognized this couple as John and Gina Vafias, who used to own Alpha Pizza in Brandon. The photo was taken when "Gina opened the bakery across from the pizza place" in the mid 1990s.



Kurt Kimball and Tom Whittaker recognized Ralph Hathaway of Pittsford on the left in this photo. Mr. Hathaway owned a gravel pit in Brandon.

Mr. Kimball and Terry Ferson recognized lifelong Brandon resident and USPS employee, Eleanor Nickerson, third from the left.

And all three identifiers this week recognized Donald Wetmore, better known as Buddy, third from the right. Mr. Wetmore was also a lifelong Brandon resident, and the cousin of Mr. Ferson's wife. He owned a gift shop in Brandon.

**E-mail [kate@brandonreporter.com](mailto:kate@brandonreporter.com) if you can identify someone in these photos.**

Or call us at 247-8080



# Crossword

## CLUES ACROSS

1. Miller beer variety
4. Member of people inhabiting Bering Sea islands
9. Stomach
14. Investment vehicle
15. Fictional soccer coach Ted
16. Irregular in botanical parlance
17. Cease standing
18. "American Horror Story" actress
20. Grow milk teeth
22. Plant parts
23. Snow house
24. Most contemptuous
28. Note to repay
29. Old English
30. Wings
31. Financial institutions
33. Parks and Lopez are two
37. Mr. T's "The A-Team" character
38. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
39. Give off
41. Semitic alphabet letter
42. Farm state
43. Actress Sarandon
44. Back parts
46. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
49. Touchdown
50. One point north of due east
51. Refurbishes
55. Silver and Dogg are two
58. Former Tigers catcher Alex
59. Type of envelope
60. Seriously considered
64. Unhappy
65. Past (archaic)
66. Asian wild dog
67. Old English letter
68. Young domestic sheep
69. Football players need to gain them
70. Witness

## CLUES DOWN

1. Dormant Peruvian volcano
2. Norwegian composer
3. Indicates location
4. Pubs
5. Unable to walk easily
6. Electronic warfare-support measures
7. World leader
8. Midsection
9. Jewish calendar month
10. Urological condition
11. A small quantity of anything
12. Mountain Time
13. Affirmative
19. Word element meaning ear
21. Carried away
24. Short-billed rails
25. Newborn child
26. Sword
27. Groups of people
31. Prickly, scrambling shrubs
32. Become less intense
34. Polishes
35. Indicates position
36. Songs sung to one's beloved
40. The 12th letter of the Greek alphabet
41. Insects
45. Israeli politician
47. Pre-digital
48. Roaming
52. Ambience
53. Brew
54. Late
56. Make ecstatically happy
57. Semitic alphabet letter
59. Blend
60. Dash
61. Self
62. Exclamation of satisfaction
63. Hill or rocky peak

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	
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17				18						19					
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65								66						67	
68								69						70	

# Sudoku

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

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

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

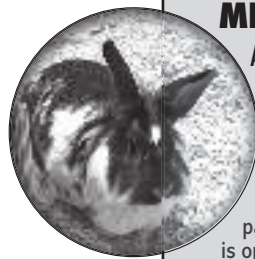
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## \$42,000 Year-End Matching Challenge!

We're already 10 days into our exciting \$42,000 Year-End Matching Challenge, and we've raised \$11,550 so far! Thanks to a few donors, every dollar you donate will be matched, doubling your impact and helping twice as many animals in need! We have until December 31st to reach our goal—time is ticking! Together, we can make a life-changing difference for the many animals in our care. Your support saves lives. Please consider donating today and spreading the word. Thank you for being part of this journey. Let's finish the year strong for the animals! Donate today: <https://rchsvt.harnessgiving.org/campaigns/16860>.

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



#### MEET STELLA \*BONDED WITH SNOWY- 2-YEAR-OLD. SPAYED FEMALE.

**AMERICAN. BROWN/WHITE.** Meet Stella! The first thing you may notice about this gal is her fancy hairdo! It gives her so much personality. Stella came in with another rabbit named Snowy. They are the best of friends and therefore must go home together. You can often find them hanging out together eating carrots and enjoying each other's company. They also love to play with tunnels. They were surrendered to us on 10/9/24 because their previous owner could no longer care for them. We do know that they are good with other rabbits; however, we have no known history of how they will do with other animals. If this pair sounds like the right fit for you, please stop by and visit with them. The Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday 11 AM to 4 PM.

#### MEET SNOWY \*BONDED WITH STELLA - 4-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED

**MALE. AMERICAN. WHITE.** Snowy arrived with another rabbit named Stella. They are the best of friends and, therefore, they must go home together. You can often find them hanging out together eating carrots and just enjoying each other's company. They also love to play with tunnels. They were surrendered to us on 10/9/24 because their previous owner could no longer care for them. We do know that they are good with other rabbits; however, we have no known history of how they will do with other animals. If this pair sounds like the right fit for you, please stop by and visit with them. The Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday 11 AM to 4 PM.



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## The following Large Print books were donated by Brenda Whittaker

### I Think I Was Murdered by Colleen Coble, donated in memory of Maxine Sawyer

Just a year ago, Katrina Berg was a rising star in the AI chatbot start-up everyone was talking about. Then her husband, Jason, was killed in a fiery car crash. Her most prized possession is the beta prototype for a new chatbot loaded onto her phone. The contents of Jason's email, social media backups, pictures, and every bit of data she could find were loaded into the bot, and Katrina has "talked" to him every day for the past six months. Sometimes, she imagines he isn't really dead and is right there beside her. On a particularly bad day, she taps out: Tell me something I don't know. The cursor blinks and seems frozen before the reply flashes onto the screen: I think I was murdered. Distraught, Katrina returns to her hometown in Northern California and enlists the help of a longtime acquaintance to try to parse out the truth of what really happened.

### Here One Moment by Liane Moriarty,

### donated in memory of Doris Whittaker

A jam-packed flight has a mysterious encounter with a woman who claims to know when everyone aboard will die.

### The Life Impossible by Matt Haig, donated in memory of Zula B. Sawyer

When retired math teacher Grace Winters is left a run-down house on a Mediterranean island by a long-lost friend, curiosity gets the better of her. She arrives in Ibiza with a one-way ticket, no guidebook, and no plan. Among the rugged hills and golden beaches of the island, Grace searches for answers about her friend's life, and how it ended. What she uncovers is stranger than she could have dreamed.

### The City and its Uncertain Walls by Haruki Murakami

We begin with a young couple: a boy and a girl, teenagers in love. One day, she disappears . . . and her absence haunts him for the rest of his life. Thus begins a search for this lost love that takes the man into middle age and on a journey into another world. The man ventures to a small mountain town, where he becomes the head librarian, only to learn the mysterious circumstances surrounding the

## DID YOU KNOW?

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gentleman who had the job before him.

## New DVDs

### Beetlejuice Beetlejuice (rated pg-13)

Michael Keaton returns as the bio-exorcist to plague Delia, Lydia, and Lydia's teenage daughter after the death of Lydia's father.

### Twisters (rated pg-13)

Ever since a devastating tornado encounter, Kate (Daisy Edgar-Jones) gave up chasing storms to safely study them on screens in New York City. Lured back to the field by her friend Javi and a once-in-a-lifetime scientific opportunity, Kate crosses paths with Tyler (Glen Powell), a charming self-proclaimed tornado wrangler and a social-media sensation. As storm season intensifies with terrifying phenomena unlike anything seen before, Kate and Tyler realize they may need to work together if they are to have any chance of surviving an unprecedented outbreak of destructive tornadoes.

# Brandon Police Report

## December 9

- Conducted a patrol on Center Street in response to a rash of vehicle break-ins.

- Dispatched to North Street to assist EMS with an individual who was having trouble breathing.

- Identified a vehicle that had fled the scene of a minor fender bender on Franklin Street. The case is under investigation.

- Dispatched to a vehicle slide off on McConnell Road. The officers arranged for a tow truck to pull the car back onto the roadway while they assisted with traffic control.

- Responded to Franklin Street for a report of a suspicious man walking around people's houses. Upon the officer's arrival, the person could not be located.

## December 10

- Assisted the Rutland County State's Attorney's Office with serving a subpoena on an individual who came into the Brandon Police Department (BPD). Court paperwork was served in-hand to the witness.

- Received a report of two people trespassing at a residence on Old Brandon Road. The trespassers fled the scene moments before officers arrived. It was discovered that they had stolen the powerline for a trailer. The suspects were identified and located later that day. They were issued citations for petit larceny. One suspect is scheduled to appear before the Rutland Superior Court on 1/27/2025 at 10:00 am. The second suspect is cited to appear on 2/10/2025 at 10:00 am.

- Received a request for a welfare check on an elderly resident living on Prospect Street. Contact was made with the individual who indicated that she was feeling under the weather but was otherwise okay.

## December 11

- Conducted a foot patrol and business checks on Center Street.

- Conducted a welfare check at a residence on Prospect Street on an individual who had been ill recently. The subject was determined to be safe and sound.

- Served a subpoena on an individual on Pratt Road.

- Responded to a residence on Smalley Road where an individual was having a mental health crisis. The subject was

cooperative and agreed to be transported to the hospital to speak with a mental health professional.

- Responded to the area of Pearl Street and Maple Street for a report of a suspicious man walking through the area who possibly fit the description of the suspect involved in the recent car break-ins throughout Brandon. The area was checked, but no one was observed walking in the vicinity.

- Received a complaint about a possible threatening text message that was sent to a student.

## December 12

- Took possession of a bank card that was found in Conant Square and brought to the BPD. Attempts to contact the owner of the card were unsuccessful.

- Responded to a residence on Deer Run Road for a report of unlawful entry by three suspects who had arrived in a silver vehicle. Upon officers' prompt response, the suspects were located and two (one male and one female) were caught walking out of the residence with stolen property. All three suspects were immediately detained. A loaded handgun was found on one man, and a container of suspected crack cocaine and fentanyl was recovered from the second man. All suspects were arrested and processed at the BPD. Two were charged with Burglary and one was charged with Unlawful Trespass pending additional drug possession charges.

- Investigated an untimely death that occurred at a residence on Mulcahy Drive.

## December 13

- Responded to the Green Mountain Market on Grove Street for a burglary alarm activation. It was determined that the alarm was accidentally set off by an employee who had punched in the wrong alarm code.

- Responded to the Hannaford Supermarket for a report of a pack of cigarettes that had been found at the store containing crack cocaine. The responding officer took possession of the drugs and disposed of them at the BPD.

- Helped two motorists exchange information after a minor vehicle crash on Center Street.

- Arrested an individual for (See Police report, Page 19)

# Avian flu testing

(Continued from Page 6)

herds that have tested positive for the virus are North Carolina and Ohio, and those cases were not recent, Flory said.

For officials with Vermont's Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the federal plan to take test samples from silos at regional processing facilities that contain milk from multiple states didn't seem to make sense for Vermont. If testing yielded a positive result, they wouldn't know which state the infected milk came from, or which farm.

"For us in Vermont, we export over 80% of

our milk, and we were concerned that our milk will end up in other states, mixed with other states' milk. And, what do we do when our milk is mixed with 12 or 15 other states, and there's a positive?" Flory said.

*"What we do not want to happen in Vermont, and what the federal government doesn't want to happen, is that this virus continues to spread, and that it mutates and becomes something that humans can contract and then spread to each other,"*

—E.B. Flory, dairy section chief at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Without on-farm testing, officials would have had to scramble to trace the positive test result back to its origins in Vermont so they could deploy procedures to quarantine the herd. The process of locating the farm could be disruptive to the dairy community and potentially mean infected cows aren't being appropriately handled

(See Avian flu testing, Page 20)





## Bench correction

THIS PHOTO APPEARED in our November 20 issue without the names of these generous souls from Nifty Thrifty who donated this bench to the Seminary Street Playground. From left to right: Kathy Rausenberger, Lynn Wilson, Laura Peterson, Dorothy Bird, Melly Flynn, and Lucy Rouse. Thanks, ladies!

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# Police report

(Continued from Page 18)

an outstanding arrest warrant out of Addison County while investigating a burglary in-progress on Deer Run Road.

- Responded to a residence on Rossiter Street for a report of a subject possibly having a heart attack. The patient was transported to the hospital by Brandon Area Rescue.

### December 14

- Opened an investigation into a report of a stolen pocketbook from a vehicle on West Seminary Street. The BPD strongly advises the public to keep their vehicles locked at all times, especially during nighttime/low-light hours of the day.

- K9 Unit assisted Middlebury Police with a drug sniff on a package suspected to contain illegal drugs. K9 Guinness alerted on the package.

- Vehicle stop on Route 7 for failure to maintain travel lane. Warning issued.

- Dispatched to a non-reportable crash on Center Street.

- Located a car key fob while on Center Street. If you are missing a key fob, please con-

tact the BDP.

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street near the Brandon Fire Department for failure to display license plate. Warning issued.

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street. Warning issued.

### December 15

- Responded to a two-vehicle crash at the intersection of North Street and Forest Dale Road. The operators were uninjured and both parties exchanged required information without issue.

- Received a 911 call from a woman concerned about a family member. The family member was later found to be home and safe in Pittsford.

- Conducted patrols around Brandon for ongoing car break-in incidents. No activity observed.

- Secured the inside perimeter of a re-possessed residence on Deer Run Road that was found to have been unlawfully entered again.

- Conducted a property watch on Deer Run Road.

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

**LEO July 23-Aug. 23**  
Leo, this week you might need to stick up for someone or fight for a cause you believe in, even if it adversely affects your popularity. Stand your ground in these situations.

**VIRGO Aug. 24-Sept. 22**  
Virgo, you might want to swallow your pride and ask for help rather than trying to do everything on your own. Going it alone hasn't helped you in the past, so why should it now?

**LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23**  
Someone steps in and helps you along at work, Libra. Instead of feeling he or she took liberties, thank this person for giving you the extra boost you likely needed at the time.

**SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22**  
Scorpio, try to look at a situation from a new angle and then you might get some of the answers you desire this week. Is someone acting out of character?

**SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21**  
Learn how to deal with conflict in a productive way, Sagittarius. Then you won't get bogged down by others when they are going head-to-head. Aries might play a role this week.

**CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20**  
This week you may find that all of your efforts to build up to a pinnacle moment perhaps didn't give you the feelings you desired. Try getting back to basics.

**AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18**  
Aquarius, something that has been stretching on for quite some time finally gets finished, giving you the closure you need. Share the news slowly with others.

**PISCES Feb. 19-March 20**  
Pisces, if what you are doing right now is giving you gratification, you might not need to make many big changes in the weeks to come.

**FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS**

Dec. 20	Sandra Cisneros, writer (70)
Dec. 21	Samuel L. Jackson, actor (76)
Dec. 22	Giacomo Puccini, composer (d)
Dec. 23	Eddie Vedder, musician (60)
Dec. 24	Jospeh Cornell, artist (d)
Dec. 25	Louise Bourgeois, artist (d)
Dec. 26	Ozzie Smith, baseball player (70)

### ARIES March 21-April 20

It's easy for your mind to wander and get caught daydreaming, Aries. You could be feeling a little restless and in need of a change. A vacation or a night with friends may just do it.

### TAURUS April 21-May 21

Taurus, even if you are trying to save money, this week some situations will arise that will require you to open your wallet. This is why you have an emergency fund.

### GEMINI May 22-June 21

Gemini, sometimes people do not know which side of you they might encounter and might keep you at arms' length as a result. Try to be more open this week.

### CANCER June 22-July 22

Exciting things are on the horizon, Cancer. This might be something you have been anticipating for some time.



# Act 250

(Continued from Page 6)

wise. In the Rutland County town of Brandon, Naylor & Breen Builders recently got word that they would not need an Act 250 permit to convert a former arts center into 24 units of housing, using a new exemption for commercial-to-residential conversions.

Tanner Romano, the owner of the company, said Naylor & Breen is working with several other local employers to create workforce housing. The project is not yet a guarantee, he said. But the fact that it will not need to go through Act 250 means the developers won't have to pour thousands of dollars into

permitting, design and engineering fees just to put a permit application together.

"So when you put that exemption into play, it's like, 'OK, now we can take a real crack at this'—without having to put all that money up front and run the risk of either not getting permitted or the project not going, and you've wasted that investment," he said.

Had the project been subject to the typical Act 250 requirements, Romano said, the company probably would have passed on it.

And the exemptions are making a difference for housing developments in some of Vermont's smaller towns, too. In

Fairlee, which has fewer than 1,000 residents as of the last census, the small real estate development firm Village Ventures is planning to rehabilitate an existing 10-unit apartment complex at the corner of Bridge and Main Streets, and is also planning to build two new fourplexes on the same property. That will nearly double the number of homes at the site. The project is taking advantage of a new Act 250 exemption for building up to 50 units of housing in village centers.

The developers plan to allow the current tenants to stay, and they're planning to apply for low income housing tax credits to keep the apartments affordable to people making less than the median income in the area. Rents will range from \$890 for a one-bedroom to \$1,653 for a four-bedroom, according to Austin Meehan, a development manager for Village Ventures. Several units will be set aside for people exiting homelessness and will come with supportive services, he said.

The hope is to create more housing options in a town that's largely a tourist hotspot for Lake Moree, Meehan said.

"Trying to get this village center activated—and kind of start becoming a job center, and also a housing center—will do a lot to help the area continue to grow, and not just remain a summer destination," Meehan said.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The temporary exemptions to Act 250 were put in place as the state undertakes a mapping process over the next several years, which will determine the law's reach for the future. Administration officials hope lawmakers will extend the interim

exemptions this year until the new Act 250 framework is finalized, said Farrell, the housing commissioner.

"What we could end up with right now," Farrell said, "is a sunset of the interim exemptions and then a long gap that creates uncertainty for home builders before the new, longer term exemptions come."

That change is one of several updates to Act 181 that Gov. Phil Scott's administration plans to pursue during the next legislative session, which kicks off in early January. Other proposals include making the exemptions apply

retroactively—assuring projects that were already in the development process before the law went into effect can still benefit from it—and clarifying how they apply to subdividing properties, Farrell said.

Sen. Keshia Ram Hinsdale, D/P-Chittenden Southeast, one of the chief architects of Act 181, said she "probably hear[s] more of the bad news than the good news" when it comes to the impact of the new exemptions—meaning she gets calls from developers when they hit a snag in the permitting process, rather than when it goes smoothly. She sees more need for permit reform.

"I think there's still more

work to do outside of Act 250. People still come to me to talk about the length and obscurity of the [Agency of Natural Resources] permitting process, and, you know, issues that still

increase the cost per unit of housing," she said.

Both Farrell and Ram Hinsdale see taking on the appeals process for housing as a priority this coming year. Proposals for reforming how neighbors can challenge new housing—a key issue at both the local and state permitting levels in Vermont—largely did not make it to the finish line last legislative ses-

*The housing projects using the new exemptions span geography and scale. They include the conversion of a nursing home into 40 apartments in Hartford, the construction of a new subsidized senior housing project in downtown St. Johnsbury, and a hotel-plus-apartments development in the heart of Rutland.*

sion. The issue of neighbor opposition hits close to home for Kahn, the Vergennes developer. Plans for a South Burlington development he worked on faced significant community pushback several years ago, as many neighbors voiced their concerns over the loss of open space. The specter of taking that project through the Act 250 process—with the potential for lengthy, costly delays—ultimately led the developers to abandon it, Kahn said.

He hopes lawmakers ultimately make the interim Act 250 exemptions permanent, to keep easing the path for more housing, he said.

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## Avian flu testing

(Continued from Page 18)

as quickly as they could be, Flory said.

Instead, Vermont is taking "a step above" the USDA's minimum requirements by sampling at the farm level, she said. It's one of only three states to conduct on-farm testing, and is home to many more farms than the other two states moving forward with the more time-intensive process.

Vermont's program is set to be funded entirely by the USDA, giving the state resources to carry out the wide-scale testing, according to Agency of Agriculture spokesperson Scott Waterman.

While the pasteurizing process typically kills pathogens, officials want to reduce the risk of spread as much as possible.

"What we do not want to happen in Vermont, and what the federal government doesn't want

to happen, is that this virus continues to spread, and that it mutates and becomes something that humans can contract and then spread to each other," Flory said.

If milk were to test positive for avian influenza through the state's sampling process, the agency would work with farmers to restrict moving animals, vehicles and people in ways that might cause the virus to spread "while still maintaining normal business functions for the farm and normal animal health functions," said Emily Buskey, the state veterinarian.

"Milk would still ship to market," she said. "It would still be pasteurized and be perfectly safe for consumption."





C.W. STONE MONUMENT in St. Mary's Cemetery in Brandon.



MARCUS A. CARR and wife Verna at wedding of their son Marcus A. Carr Jr. to Yvonne Kennedy in 1948.

Courtesy of Bernie Carr

## Names lost

(Continued from Page 2)  
A posthumous son, Robert Roy Stone, was born on 7 March 1901. Following Nelson's death, Emma resumed her marriage with Fred Smith and had five more children with him. [Photo #6] She died at the age of 91.

Resuming our focus on Cyrus Stone, one more aspect of the story needs to be told. As alluded to earlier, he married Mary Jane "Jennie" Stone in Cornwall on Christmas Eve, 1891. Her father was Nelson Stone, also born as Narcisse Laroche. Remarkably, he too

died in Cornwall in 1900! Some online family trees have understandably mixed up the two families, and that left me wondering if there was any close kinship between Cyrus and his wife. No—two different lineages. Cyrus's ancestor was Jean Baptiste Laroche from Chef-Boutonne, Deux Sevres, France, who married Marie Suzanne Turpin in Montréal in 1723. Jennie's Laroche ancestor was Amable Breillard dit Laroche who married Marie Lafond in Batiscan, Québec, in 1683. Amable also came from the same geographical area as

Family No.	Name	Birth Date	Birth Place	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Occupation	Education	Religion	Other
16	John Stone	1861	St. Albans, Vt.	35	M	Married	Farmer	Common School	Methodist	
	Mary Jane Stone	1876	St. Albans, Vt.	24	F	Married	Homemaker	Common School	Methodist	
	Robert Roy Stone	1901	St. Albans, Vt.	17	M	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	Harold Stone	1902	St. Albans, Vt.	16	M	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	William Stone	1903	St. Albans, Vt.	15	M	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	Elizabeth Stone	1904	St. Albans, Vt.	14	F	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	Anna Stone	1905	St. Albans, Vt.	13	F	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	John Stone	1906	St. Albans, Vt.	12	M	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	William Stone	1907	St. Albans, Vt.	11	M	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	Elizabeth Stone	1908	St. Albans, Vt.	10	F	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	John Stone	1909	St. Albans, Vt.	9	M	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	William Stone	1910	St. Albans, Vt.	8	M	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	
	Elizabeth Stone	1911	St. Albans, Vt.	7	F	Single	Student	Common School	Methodist	

1900 CENSUS OF Cyrus Stone family.

Jean Baptiste Laroche.  
Looking ahead to 2025. I plan to wrap up "Lost Names" when we reach our fiftieth episode. While I have a list of names yet to be explored, if you readers suspect you have a changed name from the original Québec last name, please contact me through The Reporter. My new research adventure thereafter will be called "Coming to America," the stories of immigrants who made Vermont their home. I look forward to cooperating with families who have been waiting for their history to reach a wider audience. With appreciation for the feedback I have received, I convey my best wishes to you for the holiday season and the new year.



GRAVE MARKER OF Verna Stone Carr and husband Marcus A. Carr Sr., with my snowy footprints.

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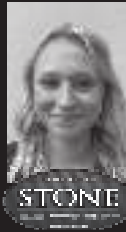
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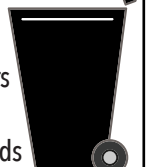
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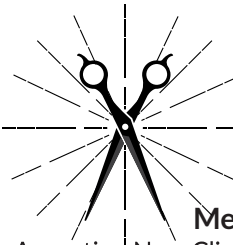
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# Brandon SB

(Continued from Page 1)

year.

The Board also approved an appropriation request of \$50,000 to establish a capital fund that the town would draw from for expenses such as equipment or infrastructure. If voters pass the appropriation in March, the total amount to be raised by taxes for FY26 will be \$2,926,645. This represents an increase of 1.29% over the total amount that was raised by taxes for the current year when the \$85,000 appropriation that voters approved for paving last March is taken into account.

Brandon Town Manager Seth Hopkins emphasized that these figures are “provisional” and might change if new information comes to light or if circumstances change between now and when the proposed budget has to be officially warned for Town Meeting in March.

The vote on this proposed budget was not unanimous. The Board voted 4 to 1, with Board member Brian Coolidge voting nay. Mr. Coolidge expressed discontent with the \$50,000 appropriation and with the sub-budget that the Board had approved for the Brandon Police Department earlier in the meeting.

Appropriations, which are stand-alone requests for funding that appear as separate questions on the ballot, have been controversial among the members of the Selectboard for years. Some members have called them “smoke & mirrors” because they believe that these requests mask the actual amount that taxpayers will end up paying. Other members have argued that appropriations give voters more control over spending by allowing them to approve a basic budget while accepting or rejecting additional funding requests for specific purposes.

For example, if Brandon voters approve the core FY26 budget while rejecting the \$50,000 appropriation for a capital fund, the core budget will remain unaffected by the rejection. But if the

\$50,000 were included in the core budget itself, voters who object to it would have to vote down the entire budget even if the \$50K were their only objection. As it stands, voters will be able to decide as a separate question whether to approve the \$50K. If they vote yes, that \$50K then becomes a tax liability for Brandon residents on top of the core budget.

Monday’s meeting capped off a process that began in September, when the Board and the civilian Budget Committee (who act in an advisory capacity only) began discussing priorities for the FY26 budget. The groups met with the heads of town departments, who explained their departmental needs. The groups then evaluated the departmental budgets one by one.

The Board and Committee spent the most time discussing the budget for the Brandon Police Department (BPD). The proposal that was approved on Monday set that budget at \$937,000 for FY26, up \$81,000 from the \$856,400 that was allocated for the current year. This represents an increase of 9.46% in the police budget and would increase the tax liability on a \$186K house by \$38 per year.

This \$937K budget will allow to maintain the Police Chief, 5 full-time officers, and 1 part-time officer. BPD currently has 6 full-time officers in addition to the Chief, but one officer is scheduled to leave the department in January.

In the proposed budget, that officer will not be replaced.

The proposed budget will not allow BPD to provide 24/7 on-duty coverage. Instead, there will be periods when officers will be “on call,” which means that they have returned home and can be summoned back to Brandon if calls for service come in.

Town Manager Seth Hopkins has estimated that the cost of 24/7 on-duty coverage, which would require having two officers in uniform and in Brandon at all times, would be around \$1.2 million.

No one on the Selectboard appeared willing to propose that figure to taxpayers. The spectre of last spring’s budget failures still haunted the room, causing the Board to hesitate to propose increases. Mr. Hopkins had devised another BPD budget scheme for the Selectboard to consider that would have cost \$950K but did not find enough support among the Board.

Another scheme would have lowered the BPD budget to \$750K but did not find adequate support on the Board or among the Committee, though both Mr. Coolidge and Board member Tim Guiles advocated its adoption in order to keep the budget “sustainable.” However, the \$750K scheme would have required the layoff of an officer (in addition to the loss of the officer scheduled for January), leaving BPD with only 4 full-time officers plus the Chief.

Mr. Guiles held that the reduction in police staff would bring Brandon in line with other communities of similar size in Vermont.

However, several members of the Budget Committee and several other attendees objected to any reduction in police staffing. Committee member Karen Rhodes repeated a question she had asked at prior meetings, “What price tag do you put on safety?”

Brandon Fire Department (BFD) Chief Tom Kilpeck cautioned the Board that a reduction in resources would hamper BPD’s ability to carry out its essential functions. He noted that the Board had approved a Veterans Day Parade but had not taken into account that BPD wasn’t adequately staffed to handle the accompanying traffic changes. Instead, BFD had had to step in to assist BPD with managing traffic.

He also cautioned that a reduction in resources might cause other

officers to leave the department.

Board member Heather Nelson said that the jump to 24/7 coverage might be too much for the budget to absorb in a single year but that the Board should work toward that goal.

Committee member Barry Varian expressed approval of the budget overall but questioned whether community members would be satisfied with the level of police service, noting that it could take up to 45 minutes for police to respond during on-call hours.

Ultimately, the Board agreed to increase the police budget sufficiently to maintain its current staffing (minus the officer leaving in January) but not to increase it enough to provide 24/7 on-duty coverage.

The next Selectboard meeting will be on Monday, December 30 at 6:30 p.m. in order to accommodate the holidays.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### TOWN OF BRANDON, VERMONT WARNING

The legal voters of the Brandon Fire District No. 1 are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Brandon American Legion at 550 Franklin Street in Brandon, Vermont on Monday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. to act on the following business:

- I. To elect a moderator and other officers of the district as required by law for the ensuing year.
- II. To fix the compensation paid to the district officers for the ensuing year?
- III. Shall the voters approve total general fund expenditures for fiscal year 2025–2026 of \$1,049,372.00, of which \$340,250.00 shall be raised by taxes and \$709,122.00 by non-tax revenues?
- IV. Shall the voters authorize the Prudential Committee to spend unbudgeted, unanticipated income received by the Fire District so long as the expenditure of such funds shall not create a deficit?
- V. Shall the voters authorize the Prudential Committee to expend an amount not to exceed \$75,000.00 from unrestricted reserve funds for land purchase, surveying, mapping and permitting for future water tank replacement.
- VI. To do any other business that is proper to be done when met.

Dated at Brandon, Vermont, this 19<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024  
 Kristy L Pinkham, Clerk  
 Brandon Fire District No. 1

### NOTICE OF DESTRUCTION OF PERSONNEL RECORDS RUTLAND NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION

Brandon, Chittenden, Goshen, Leicester, Mendon, Pittsford, Sudbury, Whiting (RNESU, Otter Valley & Barstow Unified Union School Districts)

Let this serve as notice that Personnel Records of employees who were employed at Barstow Memorial School, Lothrop Elementary School, Neshobe School, Otter Creek Academy (formally known as Leicester Central, Sudbury Country and Whiting Elementary Schools), or Otter Valley High School in the 1993 and 1994 school years are being destroyed in accordance with Federal, State and Local Guidelines.

Anyone who would like their record should call Kayla Emerson at the RNESU Office at (802)247-5757 prior to December 31, 2024 to make arrangements to pick it up.

Brooke Dahlin  
 Human Resources Coordinator





# CASELLA LIGHTS UP THE NIGHT



THE ANNUAL CASSELLA Christmas Convoy made its way through West Rutland, Proctor, and Pittsford on Friday, December 6. Thank you to Dale Christie for sending us these photos!



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