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A community supported newspaper

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\$1

We missed you...did you miss us?

Imagine if The Reporter ceased to exist. Where would you look for information about local government and town happenings? Would you miss Mim's photos, the police log, letters to the editor, or the gardening column? Maple the Cow, Our Creative Kids, or the calendar?

We want to continue producing this paper but need help, both monetarily and operationally. The Reporter is one of a vanishing breed of newspapers; 2 local papers go out of business every week in the country. Do not let

this happen to our critical local paper. You can donate money or time to help us continue.

We are asking all our subscribers for a donation in addition to the subscription cost. Give \$5, \$25, \$100, \$250, or whatever you can spare annually, and it will help. The Reporter is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation and contributions are tax-deductible.

We need writers to cover local events, sports, and meetings, a bookkeeper, people to sell advertising, and a managing editor. We need someone to answer the

phone, answer questions, and take subscription information. There is a way everyone can participate.

The Reporter had a 2-week break this year due to the holidays landing on our print days.

We had some time off to decompress and relax. It's amazing how quickly a week goes by and we must produce another paper. Please realize that a core team of 2 unpaid volunteers (George Fjeld as business manager and

Steven Jupiter as managing editor) and 2 part-time paid staff (graphic designer Sepi Alavi and operations coordinator Kate Saunders) have produced this paper for the last 2 years.

(See *We missed you*, Page 11)



OTTER VALLEY SENIOR Isaac Whitney battles previously unbeaten Collin Eddy in the 190-pound final of the Minickiello Wrestling Tournament in New Hampshire on Saturday. Whitney prevailed with a technical fall.

Photos courtesy of Meredith Cameron

OV wrestler Isaac Whitney earns title at big N.H. meet

Otter Valley wrestling team grabs five podium finishes and seventh place out of 39 teams at Keene tournament

BY DUKE WHITNEY

Otter Valley Union High School wrestling made an outstanding showing at the 2025 Annual Minickiello Wrestling

Tournament in Keene, N.H., on Saturday.

With 39 teams from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut taking to the mat to vie for the championship, the Otters came out in 7th place—the highest finishing

(See *OV wrestling*, Page 9)



OV ENGLISH TEACHER Steven Thomas (far left) with some members of the OV Debate Club (l to r): Aubrey Martin, Maggie Kingston, Sienna Torres, Jazmin Rivera, and Brendan McLoughlin. The team recently competed in its first tournament, with Rivera and McLoughlin nabbing 1st place in the novice category.

Photos by Steven Jupiter

OV's new debate team is off to a winning start

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—All of us have, at one time or another, walked away from an argument and immediately thought

of the perfect response to a jab that left us flummoxed in the moment. If only we'd thought of it when it mattered! That's the art of debate: thinking of

just the right response when it actually matters. And the members of the new Debate Club at Otter Valley, super-

(See *Debate team*, Page 20)

Rutland County Humane Society makes 'A Home for Hope' in Brandon

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS) has announced its plan to move its operations from its current location on Stevens Road in Pittsford, where it's been located since the 1960s, to a building on the former campus of the defunct Brandon Training School in Brandon.

According to Mei Mei Brown, President of the RCHS Board, the organization's current facilities, which were built decades ago, are showing their age.

"The building is crumbling on us," said Ms. Brown in her office at RCHS. "If it were in good condition, we could get by here."

In addition to the physical condition of the building itself, which encompasses 9,000 square feet on 17 acres, RCHS must also contend with

(See *'A Home for Hope'*, Page 21)



THE RUTLAND COUNTY Humane Society will be moving into this building in Brandon from its current location in Pittsford. The organization has outgrown its current building.

Photos by Steven Jupiter

Names lost in Vermont, Part 40: King & Dudley

BY MICHAEL F. DWYER

Our new year begins with a sequel to the last installment on the Stone family that is partly the recovering of a lost name and the unraveling of a complex mystery. Emma King (1870–1962) bore five children with Nelson Stone and five with husband Fred Smith. Identifying her parents has long confounded her descendants. As Laura King, daughter of Nelson King and Aurilla Dudley, Emma took out a marriage license in Ripton on February 23, 1888 to Alverton Harrington. She did not, however, marry him because later that same year, as Emma “Cane,” naming the same parents, she married Fred Smith as discussed in the previous article. Both records concur that she had been born in Schenectady, New York, a puzzling fact.

Failing to find a record of marriage between Nelson King and Aurilla Dudley, my search turned to learning more about Aurilla. I found her as Orilla Dudley, age 4, in Salisbury, Vermont’s 1850 census with her parents, Moses and Rosella Dudley, both of whom were born in Canada. Assuming the parents were married in Québec, I located the marriage record of Moise Daudelin and Rosalie Boucher at Henryville on August 4, 1845. Shortly thereafter, the couple moved to Addison County, where Aurilla was born. At the age of one, the parents brought Aurélie to St. Jean-sur-Richelieu for baptism. Their other children born in Vermont were baptized at St. Mary’s Church with the surname listed as Dodelin.

Aurilla’s father Moses Dudley volunteered to serve in

Company C of the 7th Vermont Volunteers on January 21, 1862. He was granted a medical discharge on February 25, 1863, and soon gained

ingly, it took Rosella several months to obtain her widow’s pension. The problem: the agent supervising her claim wrote to Canada seeking doc-

of the church record from the original French. The file contains this revealing deposition from Rosella, her story typical of many other Vermont immigrants from that era:

Neither my husband or myself could speak English when we lived in Henryville, Canada, from which place we moved to Vermont and neither of us could read or write. The name change in pronouncing our name, called Daudelin in French, to Dudley in English was brought about by our Vermont neighbors who could not speak French, and we accepted the change as a natural consequence. My husband enlisted as Moses Dudley because he was so known and so called. That is the real truth about the change in pronouncing our name. Not being able to read, I cannot tell anything about the spelling of our name in French or English.

These explanations won Rosella her widow’s pension which she collected until her death in 1907.

Back to the troubling story of their daughter: On November 24, 1865, Aurilla married Frederick Fales, twenty years her senior. They had a daughter Loraine Fales born on September 11, 1866. Evidently, Aurelia drifted away from Fred Fales because their daughter Loraine was living with her Dudley grandparents in 1870. In December 1876, several Vermont newspapers brought to light that Nelson King was “found

in bed with one Aurilla Fales, a married woman.” Under Vermont’s 1872 so-called Blanket Act, Nelson King was brought to trial and sentenced to one year of hard labor at the Vermont State prison in Windsor.

A marvelous repository of documents with a helpful staff, the Vermont State Archives [sos.archives@vermont.gov] holds some court records from the trial as well a copy of the prison register which gave a description of Nelson at the beginning of his incarceration. He was 29 years old, born Canada, height 5’11,” with black eyes and black hair, dark complexion.

Amid this turmoil, Aurilla died of consumption on January 1, 1877, just a week after Nelson’s sentencing. She was interred in her parents’ lot at Prospect Cemetery in East Middlebury, Vermont. Only her first name and dates of birth and death appear on the monument. Nelson served his year in prison. Upon his release, he changed his name to Nelson Metcalf and wed Elsie Hier on May 6, 1878. On his marriage license, he disclosed the names of his parents as Betal and Selena Metcalf. Yet, in the 1880 Middlebury census, he reverted to Nelson King, with his household consisting of new wife Elsie, and his daughter Emma. Oddly enough, he lived only a few doors away from Moses Dudley. There was

(See Names lost, Page 9)



CHERISHED PHOTO OF Emma King as a baby, posted on Ancestry.com by great-great-grandchildren.

a disability pension. Moses’s extensive pension file extends over 130 pages and chronicles his physical examinations and subsequent payments until his death on December 5, 1905 at the age of eighty-five. Surpris-

umentation of her marriage. Of course, there was no document with the name Dudley. In the second round of inquiries, someone realized the name had been changed from Daudelin, and the priest sent transcription

| Family No. | Name | Age | Sex | Color | Place of Birth | Married | Married in U.S. | Profession |
|------------|----------------|-----|-----|-------|----------------|---------|-----------------|------------|
| 12 | Moses Dudley | 33 | M | W | Canada | | | |
| | Rosella Dudley | 17 | F | W | Canada | | | |
| | Orilla Dudley | 4 | F | W | Canada | | | |

| Family No. | Name | Age | Sex | Color | Place of Birth | Married | Married in U.S. | Profession |
|------------|---------------|-----|-----|-------|----------------|---------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | Nelson King | 10 | M | W | Canada | | | |
| | Elsie Hier | 10 | F | W | Canada | | | |
| | Emma King | 10 | F | W | Canada | | | |
| | Loraine Fales | 14 | F | W | Canada | | | |
| | Moses Dudley | 15 | M | W | Canada | | | |



ABOVE: MOSES DUDLEY 1850 census. Below: Nelson King Middlebury 1880 census. Right: Moses Dudley Civil War discharge.

2024 was Vermont's warmest year on record — again

The state hit an annual average temperature of 50.9 degrees, blowing past last year's record of 50 degrees.

BY ERIN PETENKO/
VTDIGGER

In 2023, Vermont made headlines for having the warmest year on record, mirroring a worldwide trend full of extreme weather and hotter temperatures.

The state has just blown past that record.

The average annual temperature in Burlington in 2024 was 50.9 degrees — a full degree warmer than the year before, according to National Weather Service data.

vice data.

Last year's data is part of a long-term trend of rising temperatures since the weather service began tracking the measure in the 1890s. Vermont was about 8 degrees warmer in 2024 than it was in 1924, the data shows. For context, that's about the difference between Burlington and Philadelphia's average temperatures this year.

"Looking at our top 10 warmest years on record," all of them

have come "from 1998 onward," said Matthew Clay, a meteorologist for the weather service.

The warming trend in Vermont is consistent with international climate scientists' predictions of human-caused global warming within this century.

Several other weather service monitoring stations in Vermont with more than 20 years of reporting either hit a record in 2024 or had higher-than-normal temperatures compared with

previous years. St. Johnsbury had its warmest year since 1895. Montpelier tied for its second-warmest year since reporting began in 1949.

2024 was once again marked by extreme weather events, particularly the statewide flooding in mid-July and Northeast Kingdom flooding in late July. St. Johnsbury hit a record high in precipitation in 2024, in part, because of that late July event.

"They ended up getting that 8 inches of rain overnight," Clay said of the Caledonia County town. "That definitely drove their higher rainfall total. That was pretty crazy. It just sat over them all night."

It's too early to say whether this season's snowfall total will be lower or higher than average, but Clay said that Vermont has received more snowfall overall as the state warms up — though the data for snowfall is more

variable by year.

That could be the result of a lower number of extreme cold days. Clay said Burlington recently broke its record for the longest period of time between below-zero temperature maximums — almost two years. 2024 also had the second-lowest number of days where the minimum temperature dropped below 0.

Those colder days don't typically produce much heavy snowfall, so fewer extremely cold days could translate to more snow, Clay said.

"When you're 10 degrees below outside, if you're getting any kind of snow, it's the diamond dust — just like, tiny, tiny, tiny, little flakes," he said. "It's never going to accumulate to anything."

Of course, snow falling doesn't always translate to snow on the ground. Burlington re-

(See Warmest year, Page 7)



RENE SANCHEZ HAS been selected as the permanent Superintendent of Schools by the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union, which oversees the Otter Valley Unified Union school district (OVUHS, OVUMS, Neshobe, Lothrop, and Otter Creek Academy) and the Barstow School in Chittenden. Mr. Sanchez had been Interim Superintendent since last summer.

Rene Sanchez named Superintendent of Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union

BY MAX BURMAN/RNESU

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (RNESU) is excited to announce that effective January 1, 2025, Rene Sanchez will serve as the Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Sanchez previously held the position of Interim Superintendent of Schools—and has brought extensive experience, innovation, and leadership to the district.

Before joining RNESU, Mr. Sanchez served as Superintendent of the Champlain Valley School District, Assistant Superintendent of Operations in South Bend, Indiana, and as a secondary principal in both Houston and Austin, Texas. During his tenure as Interim Superintendent, Mr. Sanchez has focused on elevating student achievement, fostering

stronger community connections, and ensuring our schools effectively address the diverse needs of students, staff, and the broader community. His leadership reflects a commitment to creating environments where everyone can thrive.

Mr. Sanchez stated, "I'm honored and excited to be selected to serve as the full-time RNESU superintendent. Working with our staff, students, and community over the last six months has been truly rewarding. I look forward to partnering with our boards, employees, families, and eight towns to support our students and help them achieve success in school and beyond".

RNESU Board Chair, Laurie Bertrand, said of Mr. Sanchez, "The Board is thrilled that Rene is our permanent

Superintendent. Since his time here, he has proven to be a team player, student driven and community minded."

The search committee's decision was informed by stakeholder input that was received as part of the last superintendent search process held in the spring of 2024. Mr. Sanchez quickly rose to the top as the finalist of several applicants. The qualities that Mr. Sanchez embodies and the work that he has done as Interim Superintendent played a pivotal role in the search committee's decision to appoint Mr. Sanchez as Superintendent of Schools.

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union looks forward to Mr. Sanchez's continued leadership and vision as he steps into the role of Superintendent.

Spotlight On Business

BRANDON LUMBER & MILLWORK



Brandon Lumber & Millwork is proud to provide excellent customer service and quality products for all your needs. Building a new home? We have everything you need to build from the foundation up. Benjamin Moore paint to spruce up the inside and outside of your home! Supplies for lawn and garden. Our variety of soils, mulches, and tools will make your property shine. Stop in to see other exciting new items we will have for the new year!



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Jim & Liz McRae

Vermont's rate of homelessness now ranks 4th in the nation

BY CARLY BERLIN/VTDIGGER

As the number of people experiencing homelessness in Vermont continues to rise to record levels, the Green Mountain State's per-capita rate of homelessness remains among the highest in the nation.

That's according to a new analysis of the 2024 point-in-time count, a coordinated, federally-mandated tally of unhoused people taken each January. The annual report on the count, which took place nearly a year ago, was released by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development late last week.

The department found that about 53 out of every 10,000 Vermonters were unhoused when the count took place, putting Vermont fourth on the state-by-state list. In 2022 and 2023, it had the second-highest rate in the nation, a distinction that turned heads as Vermont's homelessness crisis has grown more visible.

But Vermont's shift in this oft-cited nationwide comparison shouldn't necessarily be read as an indication of improvement locally, said Anne Sosin, a public health researcher at Dartmouth College who studies homelessness.

"I wouldn't take it as a hopeful sign that it's fourth instead of second," Sosin said.

While Vermont's homeless population rose 5% last year, to a record 3,458 people in January 2024, other states saw much more dramatic increases.

Catastrophic wildfires in Maui displaced thousands of people from their homes, the HUD report notes, with many sleeping in disaster emergency shelters when the count took place in January. Hawaii saw an 87% rise in homelessness year-over-year, with 81 people per 10,000 residents recorded as unhoused — the highest rate in the nation. New York shared the same rate, which increased this year, in part, due to an influx of asylum seekers to New York City's shelter system, according to the report.

Across the country, the annual tally registered the highest number of people experiencing homelessness ever recorded since the point-in-time count began in 2007. Over 771,000 people nationwide were unhoused at the time of the count: a 18% rise from the 2023 count.

The "worsening national affordable housing crisis," inflation, stagnating wages, and "the persisting effects of systemic racism have stretched homelessness services systems to their limits," the report notes. And the end of pandemic-era supports, like the expanded child tax credit, have also likely contributed to the national rise in homelessness, it says.

The point-in-time count figure is generally considered to be an undercount. HUD does not tally people who are doubling up with relatives or couch-surfing, and people who are unsheltered are often more difficult to find.

Even as the number of people experiencing homelessness has ticked up, the HUD analysis reflects that Vermont has done a better job than most other states at keeping unhoused people indoors. Over 95% of Vermont's homeless population was in some form of shelter as of January — either a traditional shelter, or a hotel or motel covered by an emergency housing voucher. Only neighboring New York had a higher rate of people in shelter, according to the report.

Still, the January tally recorded a jump in the number of people living unsheltered in Vermont from a year earlier. And observers expect the 2025

(See *Vermont homelessness*, Page 19)



The better to eat you with my dear..

THIS IS A Canyon wren seen in Arizona that has a lovely cascading song. Note the long bill that probes for insects.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

Community Forums Vermont's preliminary report on 2024 Deer Season is now available

Hunters Took More than 17,000 Deer in 2024

MONTPELIER—The final number of deer taken in Vermont's 2024 hunting seasons will not be available for a few more weeks, but the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department says the final tally will be a little over 17,200 deer. Those deer will provide approximately 3.4 million servings of local, nutritious venison.

The buck harvest will be a little over 9,200, which will be down from 2023 (9,848) and the previous 3-year average of 9,533. The final antlerless deer harvest will be around 8,000,

which will be up from the previous 3-year average of 7,188.

"Season totals were mixed in 2024," said Nick Fortin, the department's deer project leader. "The harvest during the November regular season was down about 10 percent from 2023, and this accounted for all of the decline in the total buck harvest. Harvests during every other season were up compared to 2023."

The primary goal of Vermont's deer management strategy is to keep the deer herd stable, healthy and in balance with

available habitat. "Maintaining an appropriate number of deer on the landscape ensures deer and the habitats that support them remain in good condition and productive," said Fortin.

The 2024 White-tailed Deer Harvest Report with final numbers will be on Fish and Wildlife's website in early March. Beginning in late March, the department will be holding informational hearings to share biological information and to listen to any information people wish to share.

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The Reporter is a 501c3 nonprofit, community-supported newspaper managed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Current board members are Steven Jupiter, president; Dr. George Fjeld, treasurer; Barbara Ebling, secretary; Mitchell Pearl; Shelly Williams.

Graphic design by Sepi Alavi; Kate Saunders, Operations coordinator

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Letter to the Editor

The Brandon Selectboard must respect members of the community it serves

I recently read a letter to the editor of the Addison Independent. It regarded opinions on a Selectboard meeting in another town. The meeting sounded much like one I experienced in Brandon. A community member spoke in a condescending tone about a personal issue he had with me and apparently a member of the Board. His comments turned into an unprofessional, unethical, and insensitive airing of grievances. Although this sounded like a conflict of interest to me, the Board allowed him to continue. By not protecting the rights of one citizen, the Board made the meeting unsafe for everyone. Rather than intervene and create a positive environment where people are civil and engage in constructive dialogue, the Board promoted a climate of negativity and discord. The lack of respect shown for a member of the community that night went far to erode public trust.

Other situations where an audience member was berated and criticized by a Board member happen all too often. This type of leadership causes people to limit their attendance at town meetings and eventually lose interest in local issues important to all. We must not support public servants whose insensitive attitudes and demeaning words create conflict rather than compassion. Instead, we can support public servants who use a positive and collaborative approach working with all citizens. When doing this we create a more constructive public forum and a transparent Board, one that protects everyone's rights. When voting this year, let's vote for those who practice fair and open leadership, who respect and serve all the citizens.

*Sandy Mayo
Brandon*

Vermont State Scholastic Chess Championship to be held in March

The 38TH Annual Vermont State Scholastic Chess Championships will be held on Saturday, March 29, 2025 at Lamoyille Union High School, 736 VT-15, Hyde Park, VT 05655. This is the selection tournament for Vermont's nominees to the national Denker, Haring, Barber and Rockefeller Invitationals. This tournament is open to Vermont students in grades K-12. Par-

ticipants must be VT residents or be enrolled in a VT public or private school. VT resident home school students are eligible. Chessboards, pieces, and clocks will be provided. No prior tournament experience necessary. High School and 8th Grade sections will be USCF rated. K-7th Grade sections will be unrated. Individual and team prizes will be awarded. All players must pre-register

for the event. No walk-ins allowed. Registration closes on March 23rd. Registration may close prior to March 23rd due to space limitations. Online registration only, no entries will be accepted via mail or email. Complete rules and registration information can be found at <https://vermontchess.org/>.

Vermont Secretary of State announces upcoming release of Vermont's first civic health index, community conversations scheduled

MONTPELIER – Vermont Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas announced the upcoming release of Vermont's first ever Civic Health Index, a report measuring how civically engaged Vermonters are across the state and in relation to the rest of the country. The report is due to be published on January 15.

"Our society, and our democracy, relies on strong communities and engaged citizens," said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. "We need to be able to come together to solve problems that we can't solve by ourselves. Supporting Vermont's civic health is a core mission of my office, and this report gives us a crucial foundation to build from – showing what's going well, and what needs improvement."

The report was created in partnership with the National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC), UVM's Center for Rural Studies, SerVermont, Up For Learning, and Vermont Humanities. The NCoC defines civic health as "the way that communities are organized to define and address public problems," and the report breaks this concept into six domains: Volunteerism and Donating, Political Engagement, Community and Social Context, Cultural Access and Engagement, Media Trust and Access, and Government Trust and Access.

Compared nationally, Vermont ranks highly in several areas, with high rates of attending public meetings, volunteering, and collaborating with neighbors. The report identifies remaining gaps and challenges and presents ideas for next steps to continue strengthening Vermont's civic health.

Organizations and individuals engaged in a range of civic activities across Vermont provided feedback and helped contextualize the data about Vermonters' civic behavior and mindsets. In addition, the Secretary of State's office administered the YMCA and Knight Impact Youth Civic Health survey, receiving over 2,500 responses from students in grades 7-12 across the state.

"We are really proud to be the first state to utilize the youth survey results statewide," explained Director of Civic and Voter Engagement Robyn Palmer. "We felt that it was crucial to bring youth voices to the forefront. Young Vermonters are essential to the future of Vermont's civic health, and they're also one of the most engaged demographics right here and now."

"This is really just the start of our effort," said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. "This gives us a framework to talk about what we need to keep doing, and what we need to start doing. That's a discussion we need to

have throughout the state, so we're going to be kicking off a series of community conversations starting this month."

The community conversations, moderated by Secretary Copeland Hanzas, will be an opportunity to learn more about the report, offer feedback, and help prioritize next steps. The events currently planned are:

Brattleboro – Brooks Memorial Library – January 15

South Burlington – South Burlington Public Library – January 23

St. Johnsbury – St. Johnsbury Athenaeum – February 5

Barre – Aldrich Public Library – February 13

Rutland – Rutland Free Library – February 26

(All events are scheduled for 5:30 – 7:30pm)

The events are open to the public.

The Secretary of State's Office is planning to host more events in other parts of the state in the spring, and a virtual only session is also currently scheduled:

Virtual – (Hosted by the Vermont Council on Rural Development) – January 22, 10:00-11:30am

Link to register here.

All the sessions will be recorded and publicly available on the Secretary of State's website.

Community Forums continued New trophy trout stocking locations offer winter fishing opportunities

MONTPELIER—Anglers have some new opportunities to chase hefty thirteen- and fourteen-inch brook and rainbow trout at four ponds in southern Vermont this winter, thanks to a pilot late season stocking program from the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

"This past fall we stocked just over 1,500 trophy trout between Knapp Ponds #1 and #2 in Cavendish, and Lakes Paran and Shaftsbury in Bennington," said Fisheries Biologist Lael Will. "Our goal is to give anglers a new window from peak foliage right through the winter to go after some really nice fish in waters where winter trout fishing was not an opportunity before."

The newly stocked trophy trout, raised at the department's Bennington and Roxbury Fish Culture Stations, are part of a two-year pilot program to study whether fall stocking encourages anglers to get out on waters where fall and winter trout fish-

ing was previously closed or marginal. Starting this month, department fish biologists will be surveying anglers at the Knapp Ponds and Lakes Paran and Shaftsbury to learn about their experiences.

"We have had very enthusiastic feedback from anglers about our recent move to a January 1st opener for winter trout harvest," said Will. "We are excited to get out this month and hopefully hear from people taking advantage of these new trophy trout fishing opportunities."

To help anglers make the most of these opportunities, anyone interested in learning the basics of ice fishing for trout is invited to take part a workshop from the department's "Let's Go Fishing Program" at Knapp Pond #2 this coming Saturday, January 11, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. Registration on the department's website is required to attend.



Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.

See page 17

Obituaries

Tecari Shuman, 78, Brandon

Tecari Shuman dropped his earthly form in the early hours of January 12, 2024, at home, surrounded by the loving and compassionate presence of family and friends, both in person and in spirit. Complications of Parkinson's disease took him at the age of 78.

Born on April 26, 1945, in New York, NY, Tecari grew up in Brooklyn and Queens. According to family lore, he knew who he was from a young age, telling his parents when he was just three that they had given him the wrong name. He always chose the chow mein instead of classic deli fare, and discovered a deep affinity with the natural world while growing up in urban environments.

Tecari's sense of self and ability to remain true to who he was served him well throughout his life. Though he contracted polio as a child and lived with invisible weakness and pain ever afterward, he pursued a degree in horticulture and landscape design (from what was then Farmingdale University) and dedicated his life to caring for the earth despite the toll it took on his body. From running landscape crews

on Long Island, homesteading with his first wife, Ronne, in southwest Virginia, and overseeing the organic gardens for and managing Heartwood Institute in Garberville, CA, Tecari rolled up his sleeves to do the hard work to help sustain the planet that sustains all of us. Some questioned why he worked his body so hard, but for Tecari, it wasn't optional; his chosen name means "one who touches the earth."

What many never knew about him was that he also had a keen business acumen. Over the course of his professional life, Tecari returned two companies to financial stability while preserving their core purposes and values. He also created his own successful business in the Bay Area, supplying massage students and graduates with high-quality tables and other equipment necessary to serve their clients with excellence. He only walked away from it when his father's failing health called him to be fully present in his parents' lives.

Tecari had returned to the East Coast and was living and landscaping on Shelter Island, NY, when he met his person, Ann



TECARI SHUMAN

Marie Roth, while on retreat at Kripalu in the Berkshires. They made a home together in Montpelier and Monkton, Vermont, then in Albuquerque, NM, for several years. The Green Mountains eventually called them back, and Brandon welcomed them with open arms. Tecari spent his years with Ann Marie loving her deeply, supporting her personal, spiritual, and professional growth, introducing her to the healing power of whole plant foods, and teaching her so very much about what it means to respect and care for Mother Earth

and the creatures who inhabit it.

Ann Marie was just one person whose life was influenced for the better by knowing Tecari. He has left a legacy of decades-old friendships and even acquaintanceships that were shaped by his heart, ability to listen, generosity, and living in alignment with his values. He was physically strong, emotionally intelligent and available, ever-youthful, a savant when it came to growing food, and a handsome fella, too. Everyone seems to remember Tecari, even if they only met him once.

Tecari is and will continue to be profoundly missed and loved by his wife and partner, Ann Marie; he was her person, too. He is also dearly missed by his brother Barry Shuman and his wife Claire of Tampa, FL and Apple Valley, OH; cousins, nieces, nephews, in-laws, and their families on both sides of the family; and the many friends, old and new, he held in his heart. Tecari was predeceased by his parents, Abraham and Hazel Shuman.

Ann Marie would like to thank all those who helped Tecari maintain his quality of life, even as his body was failing. The "coffee

guys" welcomed him into their midst, always kept a space for him at the table, and showed him many acts of kindness over the years. His long-term care team, Savannah Martin and Andrew Cliver, kept him safe, active, and engaged for many years, and they became family along the way. Robert Black helped Tecari discover his gift for painting when the Parkinson's diagnosis felt like the end of his creative life. Melissa Falk, Celina Fuller, and many other providers from the VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region helped put Tecari back together when he chose to take risks, which really was inevitable, given his fierce independence. In his final months, Fran Tice, RN, guided Tecari's care with compassion, skill, and wise counsel. Because of their support, Ann Marie was able to honor Tecari's request to remain at home and part of the community until it was time for him to go.

At Tecari's request, no services have been held.

Gregory David Lemnah, 63, Brandon

Gregory David Lemnah, 63, of Brandon passed away on Christmas Day following a long illness. Greg was the fifth child of the late Robert and Myra (Knapp) Lemnah, born on July 3, 1961 in Proctor. He graduated from Otter Valley Union HS, Class of 1979, where he was an accomplished soccer player and also played hockey. While still in high school, Greg began plumbing with his brother-in-law, Tom Ransom. He earned his Master Plumber's license and he practiced it until he retired from UL 693 Plumbers and Pipefitters, South Burlington, in 2020.

Greg loved fishing, deer camp, snowmobiling, golf, camp at Echo Lake, playing cards, and helping people. He was absolutely the most stubborn, but kindest, most generous person one could know.

Greg leaves his children, Greer Gogolos (Christopher) of Merrimac, MA and Robert (Drew Pelchar) of Waterbury, VT, and granddaughter, Sophie



GREGORY DAVID LEMNAH

Gogolos; his former wife, Beth; his five siblings and their spouses, Susan Bessemer (Jeff), Lansing, NY; Gail Ransom (Tom), of Pittsford; Robert (Monica) of Clinton, Utah; Patrick (Karen), of Manchester, VT; and Liann French (PJ) of Forest Dale; as well as sisters-in-law Stacey (David) Whaley of Northfield and Kelsey Bussiere (Jason) of Merritt Island, FL, and brother-in-law David Pope (Jen) of Limington, ME; and several nieces

and nephews. Greg also leaves many cousins and friends, and his dear friend, Don Houle, of Brandon.

With apologies to Greg's snowmobiling and ice fishing friends, his immediate family invites you to join them at the Miller and Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon on Saturday, January 11 from 9:30 am until 12:30 pm. Gregory chose to be cremated.

Greg's family would like to thank Ashley Hudson and the Four Seasons Care Home for welcoming Greg and making him comfortable during his stay there; Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice for their gentle care; and Dr. Gordon Geig and his staff at Brandon Community Health for their kind attention, as well.

Arrangements are under the direction of The Kingston and Miller and Ketcham Funeral Homes of Northfield and Brandon, respectively.

Joseph Jerome Keith, Jr., Pittsford

Joseph Jerome Keith, Jr., referred to by most as Mike or Chico, left us on December 29, 2024. He transitioned peacefully, surrounded by family with the sound of a sports broadcast in the background.

Mike will be fondly remembered by a plethora of family and friends as a kind, deeply caring, and fun guy. He was a son, a brother, a father, a grandfather, a nephew, a cousin, a coach, a businessman, and a treasured friend to many. He loved to socialize, was always up for an adventure, and possessed an unmatched knowledge of sports statistics and trivia.

Mike grew up in Bennington and Pittsford VT, graduating from Otter Valley Union High School in 1970. He attended St.



JOSEPH J. KEITH, JR.

Michael's College, the University of Vermont, and Castleton State College. The bulk of his career was spent as owner/operator of Keith's Trading Post in the heart of Pittsford, offering a wide variety of goods that included sports, hunting, and fishing equipment, golf supplies, clothing,

gas, beverages, food, hot coffee, and the gossip of the day. If the Trading Post didn't have it, you probably didn't need it.

Mike is survived by his daughter Jade Atkinson and her husband Parish and their children of Harrisville, NY; his son Jesse Keith and his partner Kate LaRock of Pittsford, VT; his sister Maureen Leclair and her husband of Sarasota, FL and Pittsford, VT; his brothers Jon and Daniel Keith and their wives
(See Joseph J. Keith, Jr., Page 7)

Obituaries

Ann Marie Ford, 90, Brandon

Ann Marie Ford passed away peacefully at the Meadows in Rutland on December 29, 2024. She had just celebrated her 90th birthday on Christmas Day. Born in Wilmington, DE, she is the daughter of the late James A. and Ann Marie (Carr) Mayhart.

Before moving to Laurel, MD, Ann Marie was a kindergarten teacher at Sacred Heart School. While living in Maryland, she owned and operated the Crust-N-Claws restaurant. She returned to education as a Transfer Evaluator for Catholic University in Washington, D.C. After moving to Brandon, Ann Marie was the assistant manager and controller at the Brandon Inn before serving as the Interim Administrative Assistant at Castleton State College before retiring.

A professional tap dancer in



ANN MARIE FORD

her early twenties, Ann Marie was a member of the June Taylor Dance Company. She also loved flying and had a small craft pilot's license.

Ann Marie was predeceased

by her husband of 27 years, Lincoln S. Ford, and a nephew, Joseph A. Mayhart. Surviving her are her niece, Ann Marie Finney of Claymont, DE, along with five nephews: James A. Mayhart, III, and Glen P. of Wilmington, DE, Dean M. of Newark, DE, Jerry A. of Landenberg, PA, and Scott G. of Kennett Square, PA.

The family wishes to express their deep gratitude to Joe and Melly Flynn for their unwavering love and support this past year.

A Memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated in the Spring at Our Lady of Good Help (St. Mary's Church in Brandon). A graveside committal service and burial will follow at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

Warmest year

(Continued from Page 3) ceived 16.5 inches of snow in December 2024, an inch above the 30-year average. But the city only had 5 inches of snow depth throughout the month, 3 inches below average, thanks to thawing-and-freezing cycles.

That thawing and freezing pattern has led to extreme weather concerns as well. The state had a major flood event in December 2023 and minor flooding in December 2024 thanks to rain and snowmelt. Just a week ago, Montpelier was forced to use

wastewater to prevent an ice jam that was caused in part by thawed ice.

Clay said the lack of extreme cold could also mean more cloudy days. "We have a saying here in the office, 'when it's clear in the winter, it's cold.'"

Data from over the past 25 years appears to show that the number of overcast hours per year in Burlington has risen. But changes to the way cloud cover has been tracked make it harder to establish a long-term trend.



Joseph Jerome Keith, Jr.

(Continued from Page 6) of Pittsford, VT; the mother of his children, Joanne Keith of Pittsford, VT; seven grandchildren; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and countless valued friends.

He was predeceased by his beloved daughter Kylee Jo Keith;

his parents Yvonne and Joseph Keith, Sr.; his brothers Martin "Tubby" Keith and William Keith; and his life-partner Cathy Jasmin.

There will be no wake or funeral, as per Mike's wishes. A celebration of life will be planned at a later date.

Cynthia Lena Christian, 86, Orwell

Cynthia Lena Christian, age 86, passed peacefully at her home in Orwell with family at her side on Friday December 27, 2024.

"Cindy" was born in Middlebury on May 3, 1938. She was the daughter of Hugh and Lydia (Hathaway) Severy. She grew up in Brandon, where she received her early education and graduated from Brandon High School, class of 1956. On June 13, 1959, she married Thomas Lee Christian in Brandon. They made their home in Orwell, where they raised their 4 children. Tom predeceased her on April 10, 2020. She was also predeceased by her brother Donald Severy in 2017.

Cindy had worked many years as the hot lunch cook at the Orwell Village School. She enjoyed



CYNTHIA LENA CHRISTIAN

cooking and more especially baking. She was well known for her homemade pies and rolls. She belonged to the Orwell Ladies Auxiliary for many years.

Surviving her are her daughter Julie Christian (J.T.) of Bomo-

seen; 3 sons, Michael Christian (Shelley), Brian Christian (Debbie) both of Orwell, and Todd Christian (Heather) of Bomo-seen; 3 grandchildren, Dwight, Elysia, and Cael Christian; 2 great-grandchildren, Caleb and Rhya; and a sister-in-law, Barbara Blair, several cousins, nieces, and nephews.

The graveside committal service and burial will take place in the spring in the family lot at Mountain View Cemetery in Orwell.

Friends may call at the Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon on January 11, 2025, from 2 to 5 PM.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made in her memory to Orwell First Response Squad or Addison County Home Health & Hospice.

Penelope "Penny" Jean Baldwin, 79, Brandon

Penelope "Penny" Jean Baldwin, age 79, passed December 30, 2024, at her home; with family by her side.

Penny was born in Proctor on April 25, 1945. She was the daughter of Carmi and Glenna (White) Reed. She grew up in Forest Dale and received her education in local Brandon schools. She began her working career at the Brandon Training School. She later began working for RFL Industries, which eventually became Nexus. She

retired from there following 38 years of service. Penny enjoyed bowling, her house plants, and doing hair for family and friends. Penny also was an avid reader of crime and mystery novels, and she loved her animals. Her daughters said she enjoyed shopping and spending time with her family.

She is survived by 3 daughters: Sherri Pinkham, Lisa Bruce, and Kim Bruce, all of Brandon; 2 sisters: Carmen "Tootie" Williams and Linda



CYNTHIA LENA CHRISTIAN

Lamica both of Forest Dale; 2 Brothers: Jeffrey Reed of Brandon and Gregory Reed of Forest Dale; a stepson, Phillip "Skip" Baldwin, Jr. of Brandon; and a stepdaughter, Brandy Baldwin-Stanley of Pittsford. 14 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren and many nieces, nephews, and cousins also survive her. She was predeceased by her husband, Phillip Baldwin, Sr; a son, "Chipper" Bruce; a brother, Ronald Reed; and a sister, Jackie Brown.

The graveside committal service and burial will take place in the spring at Forest Dale Cemetery.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made, in her memory to Rutland Area Visiting Nurse & Hospice, 7 Albert Cree Drive, Rutland, VT 05701.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

Thank You Brandon

On behalf of The Board of Directors for The Friends of The Brandon Town Hall and Community Center, I would like to thank all the citizens and businesses of Brandon and the surrounding area for their tremendous support over the past 26 years. Also, thank you in advance for your continued support, so the next generation will have the luxury of visiting and using this grand hall. It is because of your donation of time and money that made it possible to ensure the beautiful Brandon Town Hall will remain a destination for entertainment, social gatherings, town meetings and school functions for State and local organizations. It

is time to pass the torch to a new generation to carry on the continued renovation, restoration and repair of this iconic building. We have listed the past and present 53 members who have served on this Board, many of whom are responsible for saving the Hall back in 1998. Then, the later board members who continued to raise funds, improve and upgrade the facility. Thank you Brandon! You have saved an important part of our history, please keep it safe.



Thank you, Dennis W. Marden for the 53 past and present board members of the Brandon Town Hall and Community Center.

Friends of the Brandon Town Hall Board of Directors 1998-2024

Lois Acinapura**
Phyllis Aitchison
Maria Ammatuna
James B. Anderson
Jon Andrews
Richard Baker
Doug Bailey
Barbara Blanco
Anne Bransfield
Chris Bretana
Bruce Brown
Mei Mei Brown - P #3
Joe Cannon

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Blaine Cliver - P #2
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Tim Guiles
Debra Jennings
Beth Karnes
Caleb Kenna
Warren Kimble
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Kathy Rausenberger
Gail Reed
Dave Rowden
Joan Salkins
Lynn Saunders
Michael Shane**
Michael Shank
Mary Shields
Wayne Stockbridge
Sheri Sullivan
Dotty White
Drew Whitney

**= Founding Members
P = President



Names lost

(Continued from Page 2)

no happy ending for Elsie. She was granted a divorce from Nelson Metcalf in 1886, stating he deserted her in December 1882. Elsie remarried but died in Middlebury's Poor House in 1904. We know the rest of Emma's story from the previous episode.

Determining Nelson King's parentage remains a work in progress, made more complicated because of his alias and absence from Catholic records. Certainly, he was born Narcisse Roy or Leroi [a translation of "king"] possibly with one of the dit names that accompanied Roy such as Desjardins or

Lauzier. My search will continue among the several Leroi/Roy families that lived in Henryville, whence the Daudelins came. Perhaps by the next in-

stallment, I will have cracked the case.



OTTER SENIOR ISAAC Whitney stands atop the podium as the winner at 190 pounds. Fellow Otter Keegan Reid earned fourth place in the bracket. Go, Otters!

OV wrestling

(Continued from Page 1)

Vermont team.

The Otters battled a tough competition but ended with 5 team members earning a spot on the podium—including a title win at 190 pounds by senior Isaac Whitney.

In the team competition, Concord, N.H., won with 219.5 points. OV earned 117 points with five wrestlers making podium finishes.

Otter senior Lincoln Wilcox finished 6th in the 165-pound weight class. Junior Drake Felkl came out with a 5th place finish at 215. Keegan Reid finished strong earning 4th at 190.

In the 157-pound class, sophomore Blake Allen wrestled very well but lost a very tight match in the quarterfinals. Wrestling back thru the consolation bracket, Allen captured third place and a spot on the podium.

Whitney was the highest place finisher on the OV squad.

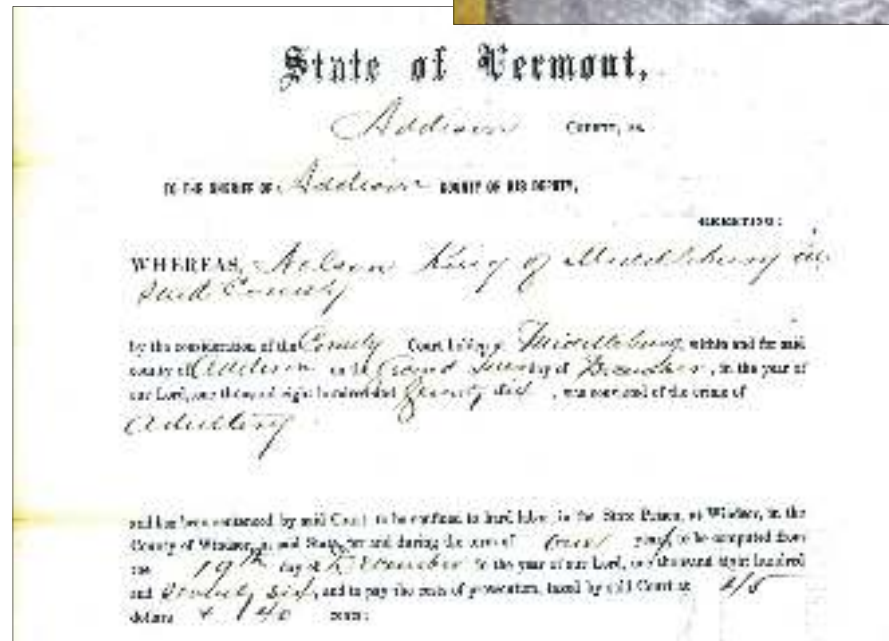
In the round of 16, he pinned Zachery Lavalley of Portsmouth, N.H., in 38 seconds. In the quarters, Whitney pinned Dylan Lake of Derry, N.H., only 36 seconds into the bout.

Facing a tough opponent in the semifinals, Chase Flagg of Bow, N.H., Whitney battled all three periods and earned the major decision, 9-0. The Championship bout brought 9-0 Collin Eddy from Montague, Mass., to the mat. Whitney wrestled extremely well and secured a technical fall—earning a 15-point lead—halfway through the second period, solidifying the championship.

The Otters' next meet is a three-way duel with Mt. Anthony and Middlebury on Wednesday, Jan. 8, at Otter Valley. The Otters then return to New Hampshire this coming Saturday, Jan. 11, for the annual tournament in Nashua.



ABOVE: AURILLA DUDLEY monument inscription at Prospect Cemetery, East Middlebury, from findagrave.com. Left: Nelson King prison sentence from Vermont State Archives.



DEEP FREEZE SALE!



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XLE, 4cyl, Auto, 1Laded, Only 29k miles!
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2014 TOYOTA TUNDRA
DB Cab, 4X4, TRD, 5.7 V8, 201k miles
\$15,995



2013 HONDA CRV
EX-L AWD, Loaded, Leather, Sunroof, 109k miles



2013 CHEVY SONIC
LT, 4cyl Turbo, Alabama Car! 96k miles
\$7,995



2017 TOYOTA PRIUS
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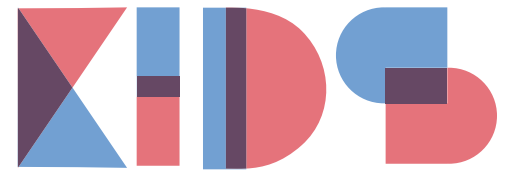
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Mim's Photos
Like all things vintage?
are on page 16!

OUR CREATIVE



STUDENT: Eleanor Dike

GRADE: 3

SCHOOL: Neshobe

TITLE: Untitled

MEDIUM: Paper, pencil, and marker

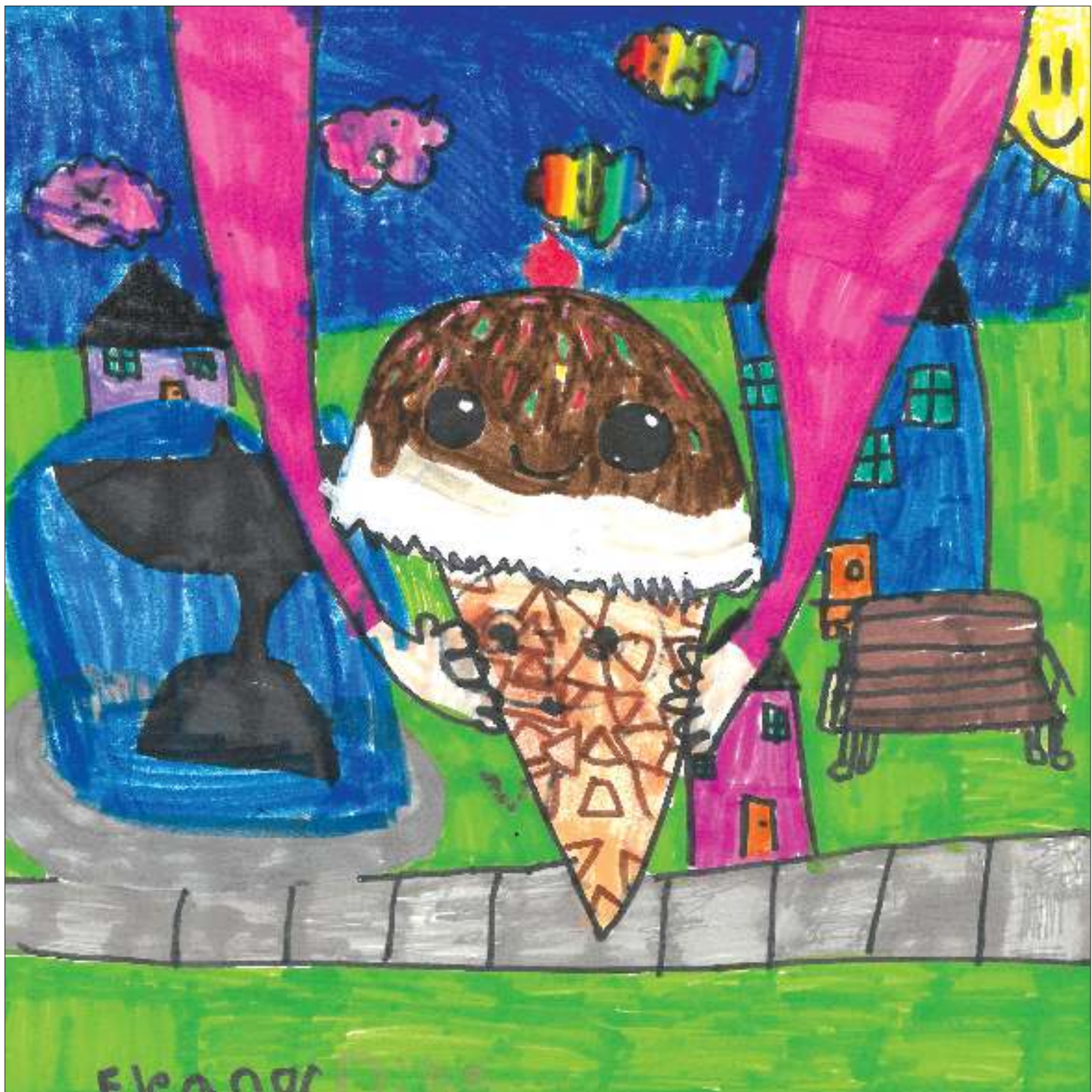
TEACHER: John Brodowski

STATEMENT FROM ELEANOR:

I chose to draw ice cream. I also love Brandon so I drew Brandon in the background. These things make me feel good and I was hungry for ice cream. My friends inspired me for the clouds. I used Sharpie. And this is the end.

STATEMENT FROM MR. B:

Eleanor is a fantastic artist and she always helps make art class more fun and interesting for everyone. I was so impressed with how well Eleanor captured the essence of the fountain and bench in the background of her drawing. It makes me think of sunny summer days in Brandon!



Our Creative Kids Poetry Corner Where I'm From

by Anna

5th grade class at
Otter Creek Academy

I am from bed, a sunrise to a sunset, and friends.

I am from the diencephalon and cortex.

I am from the hard workers and hard work,
from the Barbies and the smell of coffee in the
morning.

I am from pillows and blankets,
from TV and Nutella.

I'm from the tree in the woods and leadership,
from the VT and the USA.

I'm from an ocean as calm as me
and hunting days with a good book.

I'm from a glacier and Frozen One,
the pitcher's mound

and the amazing family members I have.

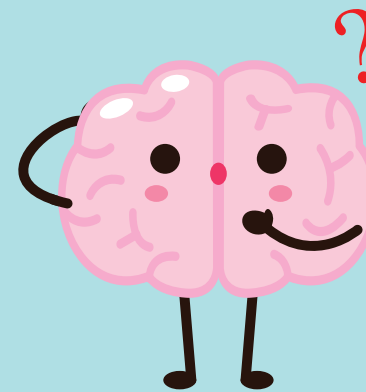
I am from the mountains of Pico and Killington
and cute skis.

I am from earth, a beautiful planet filled with life.

MAPLE THE COW™ by Matt Aucoin



Brandon Brain Buster



Benny
If Benny sits next to Cora, which of the following must be true?

- A) Alison sits next to both Desmond and Edna
- B) Edna sits next to both Desmond and Alison
- C) Cora sits next to both Benny and Edna
- D) Benny sits next to both Alison and Desmond
- E) Desmond sits next to both Alison and Benny

Answer on pg. 19

Five friends are going to have lunch at a round table with exactly five identical chairs. The five friends are Alison, Benny, Cora, Desmond, and Edna. The seating arrangements must conform to the following conditions:

- Benny cannot sit next to Cora unless Edna is sitting next to Alison
- Desmond must sit with Cora on his right
- Edna must not sit next to



We missed you

(Continued from Page 1)

During that time, we've had some wonderful content contributors whose work we (and our readers) greatly appreciate. We've also had support from the Addison Independent, which used to own The Reporter, but we are now a completely independent entity and cannot de-

pend on that support. But to be sustainable we need both a bigger team and increased revenue. We will not be able to maintain the paper as is indefinitely.

Whatever you can contribute will help, whether it be time or money. If you're interested in writing for the paper, please contact Steven Jupiter at sjupiter@brandonreporter.com.

If you'd like to make a tax-deductible donation, please send a check to The Reporter at 294 Wheeler Road, Brandon, VT 05733 or visit our website to make an online donation.

Please help us continue to publish The Reporter!

Calendar of events

January

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

Tuesdays

Maclure Library Story Time Playgroup

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

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



Friends Zone

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 or (802) 345-4125).

Pins & Needles Craft Club at the Brandon Free Public Library

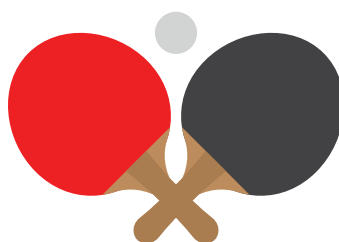
Drop in from 5:30–7:00 pm, and bring your projects to work on.



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.

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.

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.

Goings around

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.



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.

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).



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

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

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.

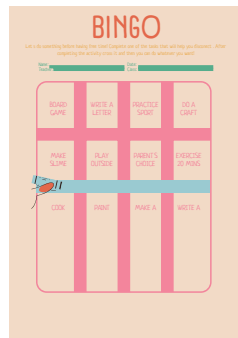
Play with whomever shows up each time or just practice your cornhole skills!

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, 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, 8th

NXT Rockumentary Film Series: Amy (2015)

At the age of 19, Amy Winehouse signed a publishing deal with EMI.

At 23, she'd release the 2006 album Back to Black and be considered one of the greatest vocalists in the history of popular

music. At 27, Winehouse would be found dead from alcohol poisoning.

Asif Kapadia's portrait of the black-bouffanted British powerhouse doesn't spare us the tragedy of her life, or the mercurial relationships in her life that contributed to her becoming a tabloid fixture and a casualty. But the movie also doesn't skimp on Winehouse's music, and you understand how the soul into those songs turned them into something immortal and timeless. — Rolling Stone.

From 7-9:15 pm at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, Putney. \$10.

Friday, 10th

Open House Reiki Share — Rutland

Celebrate the New Year with an Open House at Petra's Wellness Studio on Friday, the 10th, from 5:30 to 7 pm. Enjoy an evening of relaxation. This is the perfect way to end the week and prepare for the Full Moon with meditation and Reiki. Whether you are a practitioner or have never had Reiki, all are welcome.

Sign up: PetrasWellnessStudio@gmail.com. Petra's Wellness Studio, 41 East Center Street, Rutland.

Saturday, 11th

New Dances Dawning — Vermont State University Castleton Casella Theater

Marble Valley Dance Collective is looking forward to performing a varied program of vibrant and original choreography! Come and join us for this event.

From 4-6 pm, 45 Alumni Drive, Castleton. \$0-25.

The Smack Dabs and Rhythm Future Quartet — Next Stage Arts

The Smack Dabs specialize in good-time Swing Blues music from the 1930s, featuring the songs of Tampa Red, Big Bill Broonzy, The Harlem Hamfats, and many others. This delightful and timeless genre features a rich variety of musical styles, ranging from mournful blues to joyful celebrations, setting the stage for incredible solo and group improvisations and delighting audiences and dancers alike.

Rhythm Future Quartet has a straightforward agenda: keep the spirit of jazz manouche alive and expanding. Their virtuosity offers up a newly minted sound, influenced by the Hot Club of France, yet wholly contemporary, performing dynamic, lyrical arrangements of standards and original compositions drawing upon diverse international rhythms and musical idioms.

From 7:30-9:30 pm at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, Putney. \$10-25.

Monday, 13th

Culinary Mavericks — A Multi-Course Jamaican Fall Harvest Dinner

Join us for an unforgettable evening of bold flavors and culinary fusion at An Authentic Jamaican Fall Harvest Dinner, part of the Culinary Maverick dinner series hosted by Local Maverick in partnership with Cold Hollow Cider Mill. This special event will feature a multi-course meal created by Chef Shaneall Ferron of Thingz From Yaad, blending authentic Jamaican cuisine with the seasonal bounty of Vermont.

Jamaican chef living in Vermont, will showcase her incredible ability to merge the rich, vibrant flavors of her heritage with fresh, locally sourced Vermont ingredients. Each dish will celebrate the fusion of island spices and the flavors of a Vermont fall, creating a one-of-a-kind dining experience. Don't miss this chance to taste the best of both worlds!

6 pm – Welcome drinks | 6:30 pm – Dinner service. Cold Hollow Cider Mill, Waterbury.



We need help to continue producing this paper. The Reporter is one of a vanishing breed of newspapers; 2 local papers go out of business every week in the country. Do not let this happen to our critical local paper.



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- \$5

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'Leave the light on, we'll return in spring!'

JULIE LONERGAN OF Brandon sent us these photos of a wasps' nest hanging from a streetlamp in town. Though dormant for the winter, this massive nest will be buzzing again in just a few months.

Restaurant *guide*



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THE OTTER VALLEY Football Club (OVFC) made its annual donation to the Foley Cancer Center at the Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) in December. OVFC raises money for the center through the sale of cancer-awareness merchandise at football games. Pictured here are Nate McKay and Laurie Pelkey (left and right) of OVFC and Kim McDonnell (center) of RRMC.

Otter Valley Football Club supports Foley Cancer Center

If you have been to a football game at OV you will notice their pink breast cancer awareness attire for sale.

Each year, the Otter Valley Football Club gives back by

making a donation to the Foley Cancer Center at Rutland Regional Medical Center to support the good work they do.

The club followed up the holidays with a trip to the great folks

at Foley.

We promote community helping community.

Brandon Museum hosts screening of Jay Craven's Lost Nation at Brandon Town Hall

BY JENNIE MASTERSON

Filmmaker Jay Craven spent the afternoon of December 15 at the Brandon Town Hall, where the Brandon Museum was hosting a screening of his newest film, *Lost Nation*. Mr. Craven stayed after to answer questions about his research of Ethan Allen and the process of making a historically accurate movie. It was a full house, with 83 people in attendance, to experience the history of Vermont's beginnings.

Craven, known for bringing Howard Frank Mosher's books to the screen through his movies *Stranger in the Kingdom*, *Disappearances*, and *Where the Rivers Flow North*, explained to the audience that he might only have one or two movies left to make, but that he may

re-release some of his older movies. He shared humorous stories about the muddles of his assimilation into Vermont's culture upon his arrival in 1974. He also shared names of pub-



FILMMAKER JAY CRAVEN addresses the audience at the screening of his film "*Lost Nation*" at the Brandon Town Hall on December 15. The screening was hosted by the Brandon Museum and the Brandon Rec Department.

lications about Ethan Allen by contemporary historians as excellent research and reading.

The Museum is very grateful to Mr. Craven for his generosity in foregoing his usual ticket income so the Museum could offer this event to all wishing to attend. Thank you to the Brandon Recreation Department for working with the Museum on this event. Huge thanks go to Phoenix Feeds, National Bank of Middlebury, and Hanaford Marketplace, who made this event possible by underwriting the Kingdom County Productions screening fee. Please follow the Brandon Museum Facebook page and The Reporter for future Museum events that connect our community with its unique history

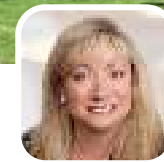
REAL ESTATE



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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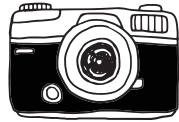
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Mim's Photos

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



Terry Ferson made a correction to his recognition of Eleanor Nickerson from our 12/18 issue: her name is Evelyn, not Eleanor.

Recognized



Kurt Kimball recognized the boy in this photo as Aaron Miner. The man behind him is Aaron's uncle, Eddie Miner, and the woman on the left is Aaron's aunt, Lynn Miner (and wife of Eddie). The photo was taken in front of their grandmother's sugar house in the Arnold District, most likely during sugaring season.



E-mail
kate@brandonreporter.com
if you can identify someone
in these photos.

Or call us at 247-8080



Terry Ferson recognized the young man in the center of this photo to be Travis Cousino of Brandon and OVUHS class of 1993.

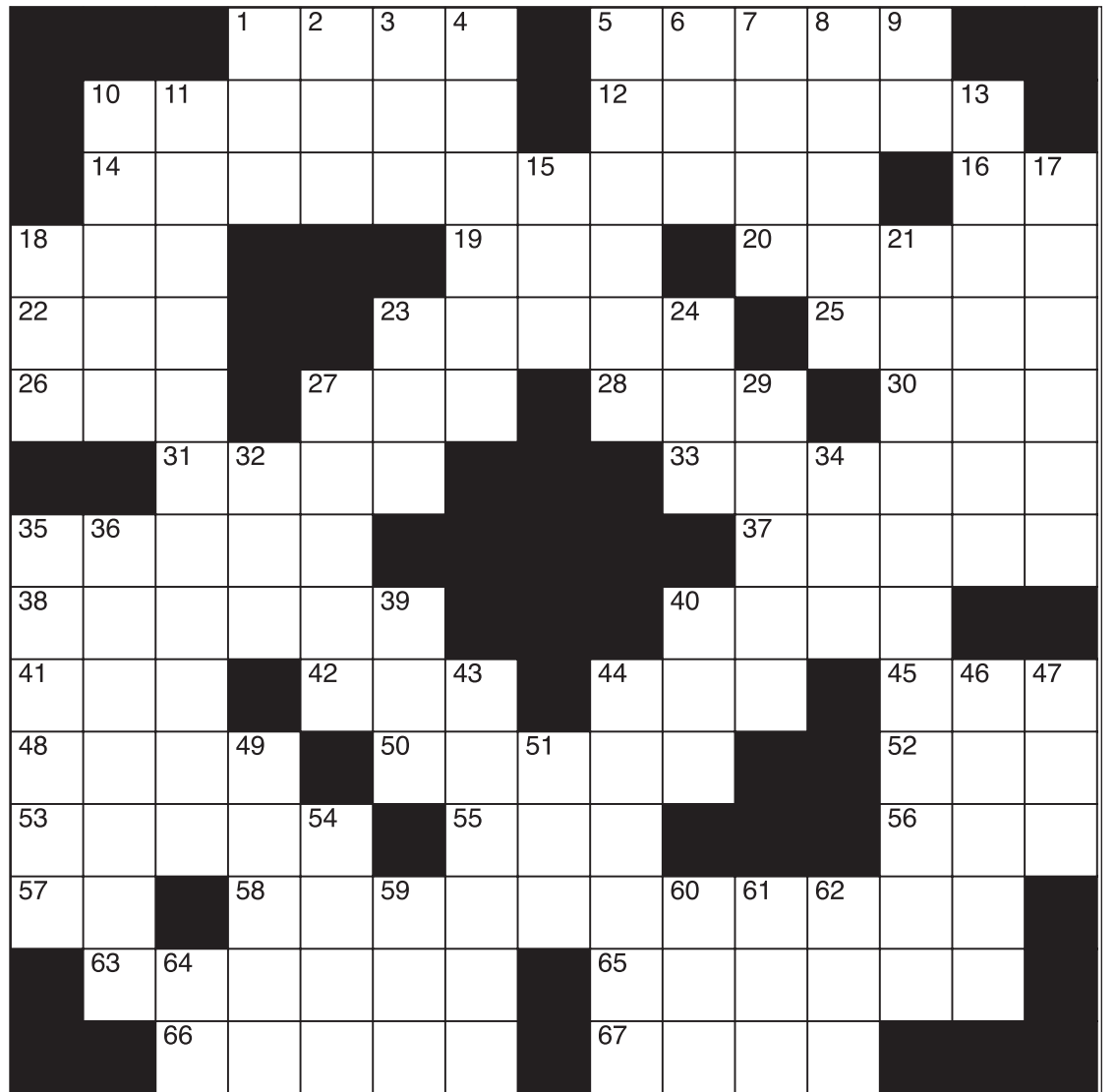
Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Hand (Spanish)
5. Siskel and ___, critics
10. Seaman
12. Chemical weapon
14. One who eliminates
16. They precede C
18. Baseball stat
19. Americans' "uncle"
20. Cassia tree
22. Surround
23. Crisp and Pebbles are two
25. A sudden very loud sound
26. Affirmative
27. Disadvantage
28. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
30. OJ trial judge
31. New York art district
33. Become more bleak
35. Upstate NY city
37. Clarified butters
38. One who witnesses
40. Condemn
41. ___ juris
42. Natural
44. Prohibit
45. Swiss river
48. Greek war god
50. 5 iron
52. New Zealand mountain parrot
53. Scandinavian surname
55. Follows sigma
56. Doctor of Education
57. Spanish be
58. One that feeds on bugs
63. Tooth issue
65. Get into
66. Lumps of clay
67. Overly studious student

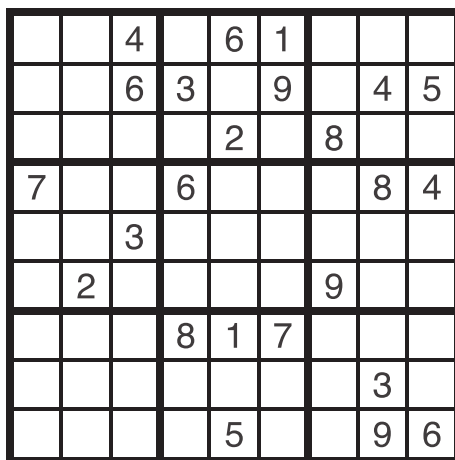
CLUES DOWN

1. Variety of Chinese
2. Boxing's GOAT
3. Japanese classical theater
4. Prayer
5. Inspire with love
6. Ballplayers' accessory
7. Retailer payment system
8. More raw
9. Atomic #81
10. Fencing sword
11. Hostilities
13. Sea dweller
15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
17. Businessmen
18. Rest here please (abbr.)
21. Loud devices
23. Make a soft murmuring sound
24. One point west of due south
27. Trout
29. Type of grass
32. South American plant
34. Letter of the Greek alphabet
35. Not secure
36. Traveler
39. Sweet potato
40. Period after sunrise and before sunset
43. Some are choppy
44. Asian country
46. Genus of mosquitoes
47. Cool!
49. Shrill, wailing sound
51. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
54. Within
59. Unhappy
60. Decorate a cake with frosting
61. Videocassette recorder
62. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
64. It cools a home

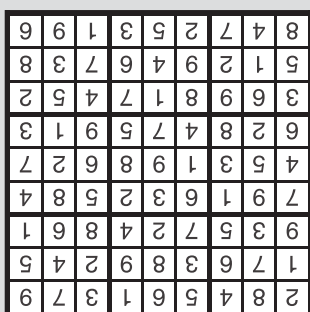
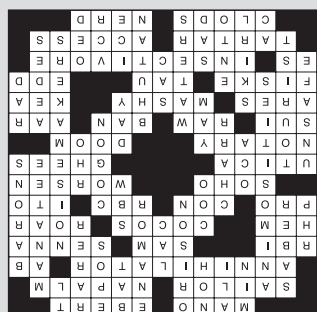


Sudoku

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.



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



New Year, New Routine — Let Your Pet Help You Reach Your Goals!

As you kick off the new year with resolutions, don't forget that your furry friend can be your best partner for success! Here are some tips to incorporate your pet into your new routine: **Get Active Together:** Whether it's daily walks with your dog or play sessions with your cat, staying active with your pet is a great way to achieve your fitness goals while keeping them healthy too! **Practice Mindfulness:** Take a moment to relax with your pet. Whether it's quiet cuddles or simply watching them nap, their presence can help you slow down and de-stress. **Stick to a Schedule:** Pets thrive on routine, and so do we! Use their meal times, walks, and playtime as anchors for your daily schedule to help you stay consistent with your new habits. **Learn Something New:** Teach your pet a new trick or work on training. It's a fun and rewarding way to bond while developing patience and discipline and strengthening your relationship with your furry friend. Whatever your goals may be, there are many ways to include your pets.

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



MEET MOANA *FOSTER-TO-ADOPT - 1-YEAR-OLD. FEMALE. GERMAN

SHEPHERD MIX. BLACK/TAN. Do you have Shepherd experience and are looking for a Moana is a strong, spirited pup with a big heart, and an athletic build to match. She's the perfect mix of playful energy and snuggly sweetness, making her an amazing companion for anyone ready to embrace her zest for life. Moana is affectionate and loves meeting new friends. Whether it's a game of catch, a long walk, or a cozy cuddle on the couch, she's always by your side, ready for whatever the day brings. She's house-trained, knows some basic commands, and thrives on being close to her favorite humans. Please do your research on the breed as they do have specific needs, and need an active family who will provide both physical and mental exercise daily. Moana is currently in a foster-to-adopt home, but she's eager to meet her forever family. If you're ready to embark on an adventure with this incredible girl, call the shelter to schedule a time to meet her!

MEET GRAHAM - 1-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE. GREAT DANE / PITBULL MIX. TAN/WHITE.

Meet Graham, the handsome charmer! While he may be a bit shy at first, once he warms up, Graham blossoms into a playful and affectionate companion. This treat-motivated boy has a special trick up his sleeve—he can "sit pretty" for his favorite snacks! He loves running around outdoors, soaking up the fresh air, and then winding down with a relaxing snooze in the afternoon. Graham didn't get along with the cat in his previous home, but he did well with an older child and might thrive with another dog, given the right match. Dog adoptions are currently by appointment only. If you're interested in meeting Graham, please call our adoption center at 802-483-6700 to schedule a time.



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OUR ADOPTION CENTER IS OPEN TUESDAY-SATURDAY FROM 11AM-4PM.



DVDs

Transformers One (rated PG)

The untold story of enemies Megatron and Optimus Prime, who were once as close as brothers and changed the fate of Cybertron forever.

Joker: Folie a Deux (rated R)

Arthur Fleck, now incarcerated at Arkham State Hospital, encounters Harleen Quinzel, a fellow patient who becomes dangerously obsessed with his Joker persona. Their shared psychosis fuels a destructive and increasingly chaotic relationship, blurring the lines between reality and fantasy.

Young Adult Books

The Spirit Bares its Teeth by Andrew Joseph White

London, 1883. The Veil between the living and the dead has thinned, dead-eyed mediums commune with spirits under the watchful eye of the Royal Speaker Society, and 16-year-old Silas Bell would rather rip out his violet eyes than become an obedient Speaker wife. According to Mother, he'll be married by the end of the year. It doesn't matter that he's needed a decade of tutors to hide his autism and that he is a boy, not the girl the world insists on seeing. After a failed attempt to escape an arranged marriage, Silas is diagnosed with Veil sickness -

a mysterious disease sending violet-eyed women into madness - and shipped away to Braxton's Finishing School and Sanatorium. The facility is cold, the instructors merciless, and the students either bloom into eligible wives or disappear. When the ghosts of missing students start begging Silas for help, he decides to reach into Braxton's innards and expose its guts to the world - if the school doesn't break him first.

Teach the Torches to Burn: A Romeo & Juliet Remix by Caleb Roehrig

Verona, Italy. Seventeen-year-old aspiring artist Romeo dreams of a quiet life with someone who loves him just as he is. In an attempt to forget his troubles for just one night, Romeo joins his cousin in sneaking into a Capulet party. During a fateful encounter in the garden, he meets the kindest, most beautiful boy he's ever met, and is shocked to learn he's Valentine, the younger brother of one of his closest friends. He is even more shocked to discover that Valentine is just as enamored with Romeo as Romeo is with him. So begins a tender romance that the boys must hide from their families and friends, each of them longing for a world where they could be together without fear.

The Sunbearer Trials by Aiden Thomas

As each new decade begins, the Sun's power must be replenished so that Sol can

DID YOU KNOW?

Starting 1/9! - Retro Games for Teens. First Thursdays will be retro video games, and other Thursdays will be board games.

keep traveling along the sky and keep the chaotic Obsidian gods at bay. Sol selects ten of the most worthy semidioses to compete in the Sunbearer Trials. The winner carries light and life to all the temples of Reino del Sol, but the loser has the greatest honor of all, he will be sacrificed to Sol, to refuel the Sun Stones, protecting the world for another ten years. For the first time in over a century, the impossible happens. Sol chooses not one, but two competitors. Seventeen-year-old Teo, and Xio, the thirteen-year-old child of the god of bad luck. Teo is determined to get himself and his friends through the trials unscathed or fame, glory, and their own survival.

Flopping in a Winter Wonderland by Jason June

Aaron just wants his brother Casey to get over his ex, but he's stuck at Winter Wonderland, a Christmas-themed Alaskan island Casey loves. Kris, hoping to make his uncle the first gay Santa, agrees to help Aaron sabotage Casey's love life, but their scheming leads to unexpected feelings for each other, despite not wanting romance for Christmas.

Brandon Police Report

December 30

- Assisted the Brandon Area Rescue Squad on New Road with an elderly gentleman who needed to go to the hospital for health reasons and was being aggressive toward medical staff at the facility he was in. The man was compliant and was subsequently transported to the hospital without issue.
- Responded to Park Street at Marble Street for a report of a tractor trailer unit that had gotten stuck in the mud while backing up the road, causing damage to a lawn. The vehicle was pulled out by a tow truck with minimal damage to the grass.
- Responded to Syndicate Road near Carver Street for a report of someone burning something by the side of the road. A check of the area was conducted, but nothing was located.
- Received a complaint regarding an aggravated assault on Conway Terrace in which someone was allegedly strangled. Investigation ongoing.

December 31

- Responded to an apartment on Conant Square for a welfare check on an elderly woman who hadn't been seen in over a week. The door to the apartment was found open and the responding officer went inside to check on the welfare of the occupant. No one was located inside.
- Assisted a complainant undergoing a landlord/tenant dispute on Valley View Drive.
- Received a report of a noise disturbance on North Street involving someone setting off fireworks in the area.
- Responded to a single-car crash at the intersection of Park Street Extension and Marble Street in which the car struck a utility pole. Crash under active investigation.

January 1

- Conducted a foot patrol in the area of Short Swamp Road. No activity observed.
- Received an alarm activation at a residence on Hollow Road. The alarm was determined to be false.
- Received an inquiry from a resident of the Brandon Motor Lodge about issues they were having with another tenant. The complainant was advised of their options regarding the matter.

- Received an alarm activation at the Neshobe Elementary School. It was determined that the alarm was accidentally set off and no police response was necessary.
- Responded to a report of suspicious activity on Mulcahy Drive involving two men in a gray car that were walking around the apartment complex with flashlights. The area was checked, but no one was located in the vicinity.

January 2

- Vehicle stop on Franklin Street for an equipment violation. Warning issued.
- Received a report from OVUHS that a student turned in a vape pen and a dab pen to the school administration. Investigation ongoing.
- Responded to the parking lot of the U.S. Post Office on Conant Square for a report of minor parking accident.
- Responded to a disabled vehicle on McConnell Road.
- Responded to a suspicious person at OVUHS. It was found that the man in question had run out of gas. Officers provided the man a small amount of gas and guided him to a nearby gas station so he could coordinate plans to get back home.

January 3

- Responded to Frasier Road for a report of a domestic assault that had taken place at the residence. Upon further investigation, the male suspect was placed under arrest and later lodged at the Marble Valley Correctional Center. The suspect is scheduled to be arraigned in the Rutland County Superior Court on 1/6/2025 for the crimes of First Degree Aggravated Domestic Assault, Domestic Assault, Criminal Threatening, and False Information to a Police Officer.
- Conducted a community policing detail at OVUHS during a sporting event.
- Received a request for a welfare check on an individual who had not been heard from in several days and who resided in Brandon. It was determined that the subject was in the hospital in Rutland.

January 4

- Responded to a report of an assault that occurred on Forest Dale Road. The suspect was later placed under arrest. (See Police report, Page 19)

Newbury saffron farm sustains vision of experimentation

About half the shares of Calabash Gardens are owned by family and friends, and 39% are owned by people of color.

BY SPENCER ROBB/
VTDIGGER

NEWBURY — Eager to start a farm and spread their values, a local couple searched long and hard for inspiration. They finally found it by growing the most expensive spice in the world: saffron.

Used in a wide variety of cuisines, saffron is known for its vibrant red-gold color and distinct flavor. It takes a lot of time and effort to grow, which makes it perfect for

a small farm.

Tucked away in the woods near Wells River lies a quaint house filled with light, plants and art. It backs up to a two-acre field: Calabash Gardens.

That is where couple Claudel "Zaka" Chery and Jette Mandl-Abramson have been cultivating saffron since 2018.

The farm takes its name from a tree that Chery said has a history of promoting sharing and exchange.

"It's where troubadours sat to tell stories in the village to bring people together around culture and stories and food," Chery said. "That's part of the idea behind the name."

Chery is known by his childhood nickname, Zaka, the name of the patron spirit of farming in Haitian religion.

He's originally from Haiti, where he descended from a long line of farmers. Chery moved to Newbury (See Calabash Gardens, Page 23)

Vermont homelessness

(Continued from Page 4)
count, which will take place in a few weeks, will capture an even larger number of people sleeping outdoors or in their vehicles.

That's because over 1,500 people were pushed out of the state's motel voucher program this fall, after a series of cost-cutting measures went into effect. The program's rules have since loosened for the winter, allowing some people to re-enter, though cold-weather access is more limited now than in previous years and both shelter space and motel rooms are scarce.

Already this winter, Burlington officials have observed more people living outside than this time last year, said Sarah Russell, the city's special assistant to end homelessness. When the city opened an extreme cold-weather shelter for the weekend before Christmas — in part because the opening of its regular seasonal shelter has been delayed until the new year — “the number of folks that we saw there was huge,” Russell said. About 50 people showed up the first night, and 80 the next.

“It's just too cold for people to be living outside,” Russell said.

The HUD report does show signs of progress. Nationally, homelessness among veterans dropped 8% last year — to the lowest number on record, according to a HUD press release. That success can be chalked up to specific housing programs targeted at veterans, the report says, and is often lauded by homeless-

ness advocates as a model for how to tackle homelessness among other groups.

“When there are more resources that are poured into, you know, housing supports for specific sub-populations of folks — the result of that is that it actually drives the numbers down,” Russell said.

The press release also notes several places that saw decreases in homelessness over the past year. Dallas saw its homelessness numbers drop after launching a new program to connect unsheltered people to long-term housing while closing encampments. Chester County, Penn., has seen a nearly 60% drop in homelessness since 2019, after putting in place eviction prevention

programs, expanding “housing first” training initiatives, increasing affordable housing groups, and providing fair housing education for migrant workers, according to the

release.

When Vermont lawmakers kick off the 2025 legislative session next week, they will get their next chance to tackle the state's homelessness problem. Their return comes after several deaths of people living outside that have captured the public's attention in recent weeks.

“My question to Vermont legislators is: how are we going to keep the population experiencing homelessness alive while we make progress on solving homelessness as a state?” said Sosin, the Dartmouth researcher.

“It's just too cold for people to be living outside.”

— Sarah Russell

Burlington's special assistant to end homelessness

Police report

(Continued from Page 18)
rest after a search warrant was conducted on his home, and he was charged with Aggravated Assault and Resisting Arrest. The suspect was subsequently lodged on \$500 cash bail at the Marble Valley Correctional Center and issued a flash citation to appear in the Rutland County Superior Court for arraignment on 1/6/2025 at 12:30 p.m.

- Took possession of a wallet that was found at the Champlain Farms on Grove Street and was turned into the Brandon Police Department (BPD).

- While enroute to an unrelated call, observed multiple tires and chairs in the roadway of Forest Dale Road, causing a traffic hazard. The officers re-

moved the objects.

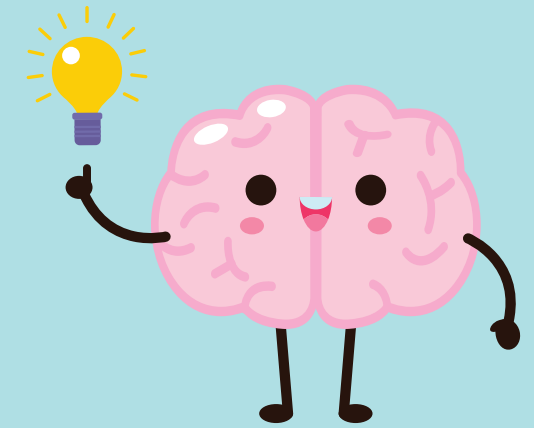
January 5

- Assisted with a 4-year-old child that had locked himself in a running vehicle on Case Street. Entry was gained into the vehicle and the child was found to be safe and sound.

- Received a report from a resident of Hollow Road that someone drove across his lawn and over his septic system.

- Conducted a search warrant of a residence on Church Hill Road for an individual wanted on a charge of aggravated assault. The suspect surrendered to police without issue. BPD was assisted by the Vermont State Police and the Pittsford Police Department.

Brandon Brain Buster Answered

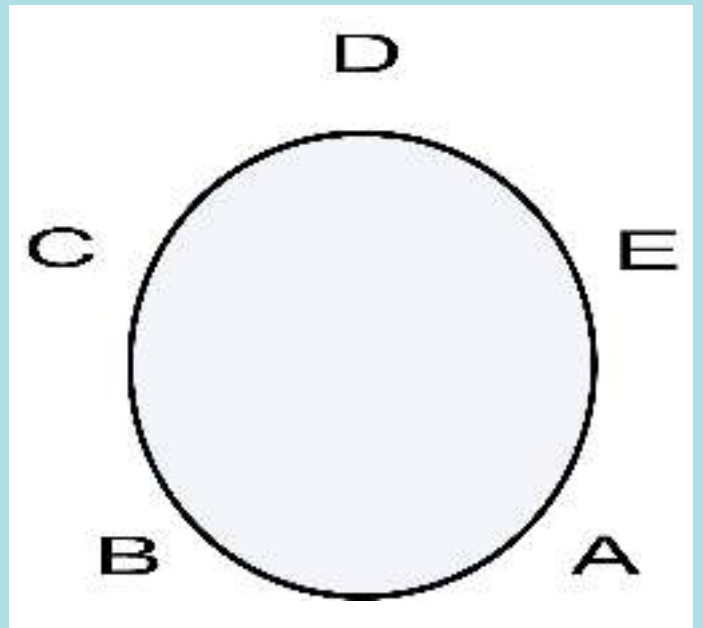



Answer: B

If Benny sits next to Cora, he must be sitting on her right, since Desmond must sit on her left (since Cora must be on Desmond's right). And if Benny sits next to Cora, we know that Edna must be sitting next to Alison. But since Edna cannot sit next to Benny, Edna must be next to Desmond and Alison must be next to Benny. The only possible configuration that conforms to all the conditions is this:

The only choice that reflects this configuration is B: Edna is sitting next to both Desmond and Alison.

The answer is B.





WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

that support by staying focused on the tasks at hand. It's time to move things along.

LEO July 23-Aug. 23
You are open to new activities and friendships, Leo. Luckily, you may not have to work too hard to make these things happen. Bring new members into existing friend groups.

LIBRA Aug. 24-Sept. 22
Do whatever it takes to have some quality time to yourself, Virgo. This may include taking a trip or booking a relaxing day at a nearby spa.

LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23
Libra, allow some time to pass by before offering an assessment. Responding too quickly might produce a knee-jerk reaction that could prove regrettable down the road.

SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Take extra care dealing with a sticky situation at work, Scorpio. You may need to be very careful about checking for mistakes in detail-oriented tasks without stepping on any toes.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21
You might need to bargain to get something you want this week, Sagittarius. Figure out what you are willing to give up

and then identify a person you can work with.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20
Clear communication is needed right now, Capricorn; otherwise, you may fall victim to hearsay or crossed signals. Get the facts before sharing your opinion.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18
Start contemplating big changes pertaining to your employment situation, Aquarius. An opportunity might come along that proves too good to pass up.

PISCES Feb. 19-March 20
The feelings you have for someone will help you overlook any imperfections you have noticed, Pisces. Keep your relationship strong by focusing on this person's good points.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|---------|--|
| Jan. 10 | Max Roach, Jazz drummer (d) |
| Jan. 11 | Mary J. Blige, singer (53) |
| Jan. 12 | Haruki Murakami, writer (75) |
| Jan. 13 | Julia Louis-Dreyfus, actor and comedian (63) |
| Jan. 14 | T Bone Burnett, record producer, musician (76) |
| Jan. 15 | Regina King, actor & director (53) |
| Jan. 16 | Ethel Merman, singer (d) |

Debate team

(Continued from Page 1)
vised by English teacher Steven Thomas, is already showing that they have the skills not only to research given topics, but also to think on their feet. In fact, two of the club's members—seniors Brendan McLoughlin and Jazmin Rivera—just took top honors in the novice category at the club's first tournament in December.

This isn't the first time Otter Valley has known debate success: a debate program was run for years by teacher David Gale and the trophy cases in OV's lobby are testament to the prowess of those teams. But after Mr. Gale retired in the early aughts, the program fell dormant until Mr. Thomas revived it at the request of interested students last year.

"We'd always heard that our debate club in the past was extraordinary," said McLoughlin

in a recent conversation with some of his teammates and Mr. Thomas during the club's regular meeting at school. "I jumped at the opportunity to get involved."

"I got involved because I'm really interested in good argument with good logic," said Rivera. "I wanted to improve my speaking skills."

Freshman Aiden Graham added, "Debating is a very important soft skill that everyone should have." He went on to say that he's used those "soft skills" at home and in classes, much to his parents' and teachers' chagrin.

Maggie Kingston, who is an OV junior enrolled in the criminal justice program at the Stafford Tech Center in Rutland, joined the club because she thought debate would be interesting.

Sophomore Aubrey Martin had been interested in debate since 7th grade, after having



AS A WAY to foster an atmosphere of civil debate, OV Debate Coach Steven Thomas created the "hat of disrespect" and the "trophy of respect." In debate, it's important to be able to argue respectfully.

seen the plaques in the school trophy case.

Junior Sienna Torres said she thought it would be a good learning opportunity for her, given her interest in becoming a lawyer.

And Torres wouldn't be wrong in that assumption. The skills that lawyers use—logical thrusts and parries—are the very skills that good debaters must possess as they defend their positions and attack those of their opponents.

The club practices by choosing topics that interest them and then arguing both sides against each other. The range of topics they've covered is broad, from lighthearted questions about the existence of extraterrestrials or age limits on trick-or-treating to more serious subjects like religion, where club members might already have deeply held beliefs.

But Mr. Thomas makes sure that everyone in the club remains respectful of one another, regardless of the topic at hand.

"We're all such good friends, we can poke fun at each other," said Rivera. But there's a limit and Mr. Thomas makes members who exhibit poor sportsmanship wear the "hat of disrespect." Every member, except Torres, has worn that hat at one point or another, according to the students.

"Respect among the students has increased from last year," said Mr. Thomas, noting that the emphasis on good sportsmanship and civility has had an effect. "We've forgotten how to talk to each other about hard topics," he added.

"We try to keep an open mind," said Torres. "You have to suppress your personal opinions and keep a professional outlook."

Rivera and McLoughlin won 1st place in the novice category by acing their debate on whether the United States should continue to support Taiwan. The topic of a tournament debate is provided well ahead of the event, to give the teams time to research the subject thoroughly because they will have to argue both sides of the question.

"Because you prep both sides, you can predict what your opponent will say," said Thomas. "It's a great intellectual exercise of putting yourself in someone else's shoes. It's a very valuable tool to be able to evaluate arguments."

Once at the tournament, the opposing two-person teams flip a coin and the winner of the flip gets to choose which side—pro or con—they'll argue first while the loser of the flip gets to choose whether they go first or second in the round.

For their debate, McLoughlin and Rivera prepared arguments both in favor of continued support of Taiwan (e.g., it would help keep our rival, China, in check) and against (e.g., it would antagonize China, a superpower).

For his part, McLoughlin knew he'd scored a major point against their opponents from Mill River when he met the argument about antagonism with a counterargument using the disas-

trous appeasement of Nazi Germany as an example. Mill River hadn't anticipated the argument and had no effective reply.

After the debate, the judges give the teams feedback on their strengths and weaknesses to help them learn from their successes and failures. Rivera and McLoughlin were praised for their command of facts and their quick thinking and dinged for sometimes failing to bring their arguments back to points they'd made earlier in the debate.

But all in all, it was a very successful outing for the Otters, as McLoughlin and Rivera nabbed 1st place as a team in the novice category, with McLoughlin coming in 2nd individually and Rivera 5th.

The club's next tournament will likely be on January 25 in Montpelier, with another on February 2 at Champlain Valley.

The students all laud Mr. Thomas for his guidance and leadership. And the praise is reciprocated by Mr. Thomas.

"I'm proud and privileged to work with these talented kids," said Thomas. "It's been a highlight of my time at Otter Valley. They're an amazing group of students."

So, if you encounter an OV student who talks circles around you, you'll know where they learned the skill.

Congrats and keep up the good work!

Golf Course

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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!

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'A Home for Hope'

(Continued from Page 1)

a septic system that can't keep up with the organization's daily output. Caring for so many animals—RCHS handles roughly 1,100 adoptions a year—requires a lot of water.

"We've got the washing machines going all day," said Ms. Brown. "We hose down the kennels every day. We do a deep clean of the whole building once a week."

Furthermore, the air-filtration system at the current facility doesn't remove pathogens from the air as much as it simply pushes them from one room to the next, according to Brown. The result is that animals frequently develop upper respiratory infections. This particularly affects cats, whose immune systems are more affected by the stress of a new environment than are those of dogs. But the cost of a new filtration system in the current structure would exceed \$500K.

"Airborne diseases need to be filtered out," she said. "Our facility needs to be sanitary. Every room in the new building will have its own

air filter."

RCHS initially sought to construct an entirely new facility, and even had architectural plans drawn up for a 16,200-square-foot complex, but the \$7-million price tag proved beyond their means.

"We did a feasibility study and realized that the most we could afford was \$3.5 to \$4 million, which wouldn't have gotten us what we wanted in a new building," said Brown. Since COVID, construction costs have skyrocketed and what seemed like a healthy budget just a few years ago now covers only a fraction of what it once did.

Moreover, the search for an appropriate parcel of land on which to build proved difficult. They initially focused their search in the Rutland area, near the intersection of Route 4 and Route 7, in order to provide maximum accessibility and convenience to county residents. But the available parcels came with so many restrictions and regulations under Act 250 and the Agency of Agriculture that new construction



THE RUTLAND COUNTY Humane Society's current facility on Stevens Road in Pittsford, where they've been since the 1960s. Issues with air filtration, size, and wastewater prompted RCHS to purchase a new building in Brandon.



RCHS BOARD PRESIDENT Mei Mei Brown stands along a row of dog kennels at RCHS's facility in Pittsford. "We're building for the next 60 years," she said of the organization's new location in Brandon.

wasn't financially feasible.

So, they began a search for an existing building instead.

"We looked everywhere: Wells, Castleton, Clarendon, West Rutland, Pittsford..." said Brown. But they kept coming back to the building at the former Training School in Brandon. Initially offered at \$650K, the current owners dropped the price to \$300K because they supported RCHS's mission.

"At first we thought that Brandon was too far north in the county,

but the financial aspect of the deal was just too good to pass up," said Brown. "Instead of \$400 per square foot for new construction, we're getting \$9 per square foot for this existing building."

And while it's true that Brandon sits at the northern edge of Rutland County, Route 7 passes right through it, with Route 30 only a few miles away in Sudbury.

"We're a destination," said Brown. "A lot of people only want (See 'A Home for Hope', Page 23)

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Vermont homelessness

(Continued from Page 4)
count, which will take place in a few weeks, will capture an even larger number of people sleeping outdoors or in their vehicles.

That's because over 1,500 people were pushed out of the state's motel voucher program this fall, after a series of cost-cutting measures went into effect. The program's rules have since loosened for the winter, allowing some people to re-enter, though cold-weather access is more limited now than in previous years and both shelter space and motel rooms are scarce.

Already this winter, Burlington officials have observed more people living outside than this time last year, said Sarah Russell, the city's special assistant to end homelessness. When the city opened an extreme cold-weather shelter for the weekend before Christmas — in part because the opening of its regular seasonal shelter has been delayed until the new year — “the number of folks that we saw there was huge,” Russell said. About 50 people showed up the first night, and 80 the next.

“It's just too cold for people to be living outside,” Russell said.

The HUD report does show signs of progress. Nationally, homelessness among veterans dropped 8% last year — to the lowest number on record, according to a HUD press release. That success can be chalked up to specific housing programs targeted at veterans, the report says, and is often lauded by homeless-

ness advocates as a model for how to tackle homelessness among other groups.

“When there are more resources that are poured into, you know, housing supports for specific sub-populations of folks — the result of that is that it actually drives the numbers down,” Russell said.

The press release also notes several places that saw decreases in homelessness over the past year. Dallas saw its homelessness numbers drop after launching a new program to connect unsheltered people to long-term housing while closing encampments. Chester County, Penn., has seen a nearly 60% drop in homelessness since 2019, after putting in place eviction prevention

programs, expanding “housing first” training initiatives, increasing affordable housing groups, and providing fair housing education for migrant workers, according to the

release.

When Vermont lawmakers kick off the 2025 legislative session next week, they will get their next chance to tackle the state's homelessness problem. Their return comes after several deaths of people living outside that have captured the public's attention in recent weeks.

“My question to Vermont legislators is: how are we going to keep the population experiencing homelessness alive while we make progress on solving homelessness as a state?” said Sosin, the Dartmouth researcher.

“It's just too cold for people to be living outside.”

— Sarah Russell

Burlington's special assistant to end homelessness

moved the objects.

January 5

- Assisted with a 4-year-old child that had locked himself in a running vehicle on Case Street. Entry was gained into the vehicle and the child was found to be safe and sound.

- Received a report from a resident of Hollow Road that someone drove across his lawn and over his septic system.

- Conducted a search warrant of a residence on Church Hill Road for an individual wanted on a charge of aggravated assault. The suspect surrendered to police without issue. BPD was assisted by the Vermont State Police and the Pittsford Police Department.

Police report

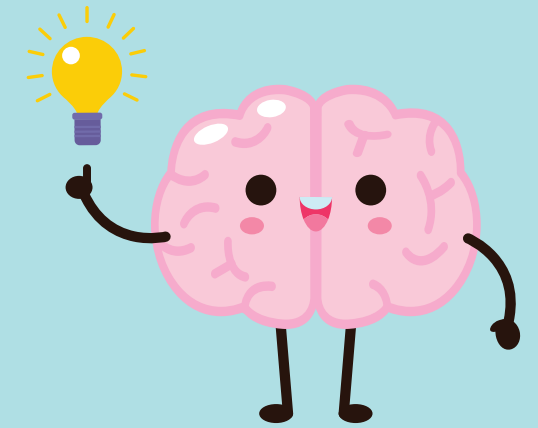
(Continued from Page 18)

rest after a search warrant was conducted on his home, and he was charged with Aggravated Assault and Resisting Arrest. The suspect was subsequently lodged on \$500 cash bail at the Marble Valley Correctional Center and issued a flash citation to appear in the Rutland County Superior Court for arraignment on 1/6/2025 at 12:30 p.m.

- Took possession of a wallet that was found at the Champlain Farms on Grove Street and was turned into the Brandon Police Department (BPD).

- While enroute to an unrelated call, observed multiple tires and chairs in the roadway of Forest Dale Road, causing a traffic hazard. The officers re-

Brandon Brain Buster Answered

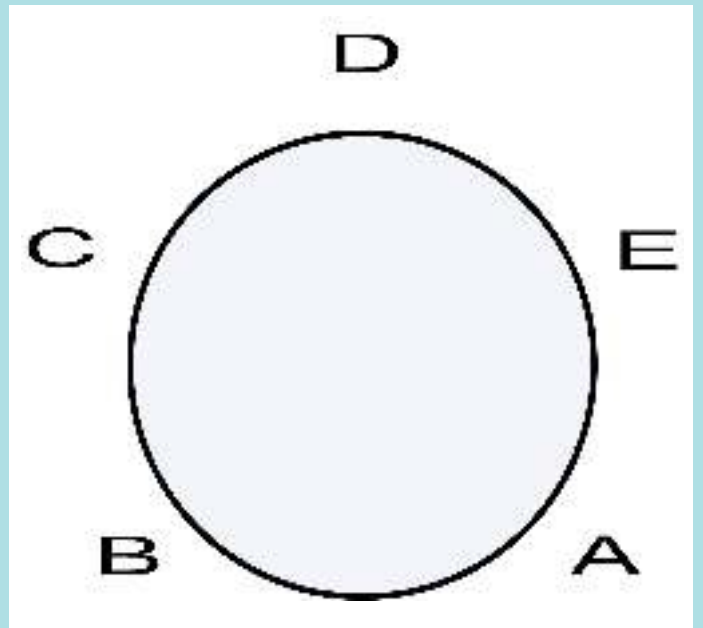


Answer: B

If Benny sits next to Cora, he must be sitting on her right, since Desmond must sit on her left (since Cora must be on Desmond's right). And if Benny sits next to Cora, we know that Edna must be sitting next to Alison. But since Edna cannot sit next to Benny, Edna must be next to Desmond and Alison must be next to Benny. The only possible configuration that conforms to all the conditions is this:

The only choice that reflects this configuration is B: Edna is sitting next to both Desmond and Alison.

The answer is B.



WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

that support by staying focused on the tasks at hand. It's time to move things along.

LEO July 23-Aug. 23
You are open to new activities and friendships, Leo. Luckily, you may not have to work too hard to make these things happen. Bring new members into existing friend groups.

ARIES March 21-April 20
Aries, charm is one of your strongest attributes. This week your magnetism is magnified and can work to your advantage. You might attract people who can help with a situation.

TAURUS April 21-May 21
Taurus, it is never easy to reevaluate finances and cut back. However, this is the week when you likely have to keep your credit card in your wallet; otherwise, the bills add up.

GEMINI May 22-June 21
Gemini, now is the time to turn great opportunities into big ideas. Make a plan of action and spell out the steps necessary to see an opportunity come to fruition. Ask for help, if needed.

CANCER June 22-July 22
Cancer, others are supportive of a new project you recently proposed. Maintain

and then identify a person you can work with.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20
Clear communication is needed right now, Capricorn; otherwise, you may fall victim to hearsay or crossed signals. Get the facts before sharing your opinion.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18
Start contemplating big changes pertaining to your employment situation, Aquarius. An opportunity might come along that proves too good to pass up.

PISCES Feb. 19-March 20
The feelings you have for someone will help you overlook any imperfections you have noticed, Pisces. Keep your relationship strong by focusing on this person's good points.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|---------|--|
| Jan. 10 | Max Roach, Jazz drummer (d) |
| Jan. 11 | Mary J. Blige, singer (53) |
| Jan. 12 | Haruki Murakami, writer (75) |
| Jan. 13 | Julia Louis-Dreyfus, actor and comedian (63) |
| Jan. 14 | T Bone Burnett, record producer, musician (76) |
| Jan. 15 | Regina King, actor & director (53) |
| Jan. 16 | Ethel Merman, singer (d) |

'A Home for Hope'

(Continued from Page 21)

shelter animals and will come to Brandon.”

The building sits at the corner of Jones and Mulcahey Drives in the heart of the old Training School campus. Formerly the cooking facilities for the school, the brick structure offers 15,500 relatively open square feet on 1.6 acres. While they won't increase the number of regular dog kennels they currently have (18), they will be able to add a number of specialized kennels and holding areas that they currently don't have room for. The new building will provide space for intake of new drop-offs, a “sick bay” for ill or injured animals, and a “maternity ward” for pregnant animals. The current facility doesn't allow sufficient dedicated areas for any of these functions, and animals that need extra space sometimes find

themselves held in the kitchen or administrative offices.

RCHS also hopes eventually to provide on-site spay/neuter services and access to low-cost veterinary care. While Brown doesn't want to take business away from local veterinarians, she says that a significant number of pet owners sometimes forgo medical care for their animals because of the cost.

“We see a lot of people skip vaccinations, especially for their cats, because of the expense,” she said.

RCHS sees itself as an animal-care organization, not simply as a disposal for unwanted animals. Its mission is to provide humane treatment for animals that need homes, hence its slogan “A Home for Hope.”

“We don't put animals down for space,” said Brown. “We have an extensive network of foster homes

where we can place dogs and cats that are looking for forever homes. We have a trainer that will work with difficult animals to get them ready for new homes.” Brown and other RCHS staff and volunteers often take home foster animals themselves.

RCHS deals mostly with dogs and cats (more cats than dogs, in sheer numbers), but will also accept other small mammals and birds, like ferrets, rabbits, and parrots.

“We don't take reptiles, but we do handle more than dogs and cats,” said Brown.

The deal on the new building will close this spring, after all the necessary permits have been obtained from the town and the state. The move to Brandon from Pittsford is likely to take a few years, as the new building is rehabbed for its new purpose.

“We want to be good neighbors,” said Brown. “We'll do what we can to minimize the noise for the surrounding apartment buildings. We'll insulate the building for sound and will only let the dogs remain in the yard from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. to cut down on the barking.”

Anyone in the area who'd like to volunteer should submit a volunteer form on RCHS's website (rchsvt.org) or call them at (802) 483-6700. Volunteer positions can range from answering phones to walking dogs to cleaning out kennels.

Similarly, anyone who's interested in donating to RCHS can find a donation button on the website with an option to donate specifically for the new building. And while people often drop off toys and bedding at their facility in Pittsford, RCHS does ask, however, that people refrain from donating food because

the dietary needs of its animals can often be very specific and most commercial pet food isn't suitable.

“But we so appreciate everything people donate,” said Brown. “It shows that people care about animals and that's the important thing to us.”

RCHS's current building is 63 years old and has provided “a home for hope” for decades. Thousands of Rutland County residents have been united with their animals through the organization's Pittsford facility. But the organization has outgrown its current complex and is ready for the next chapter in Brandon.

“It will take a village to get the new shelter up and running,” said Brown. “We're building for the next 60 years.”

Calabash Gardens

(Continued from Page 18)

in 2011 shortly after devastating earthquakes shook his home nation.

A filmmaker, writer and the first in his family to attend college, Chery has always felt a responsibility to represent farmers in an intellectual and artistic sense.

“I was always really proud to represent peasants and farmers, people that work with their hands and the dirt,” he said.

In 2016, he met Mandl-Abramson, his future wife, who lived across the border in New Hampshire.

Mandl-Abramson has a background in small-farm growing and herbalism. She felt strongly about pursuing agriculture in a traditional way.

Then, the couple saw an article describing saffron cultivation in Vermont by University of Vermont researchers Margaret Skinner and Arash Ghalehgholabbehbahani.

They knew they had found their future — one that combined Mandl-Abramson's dream of farming with Chery's intellectual drive.

“I wanted something that was going to keep me on my toes, that would keep me engaged intellectually,” Chery said, “where I have to research, and I have to explore a field.”

They decided to buy their property and invest in 2,000 saffron plants, starting with a test plot in the summer of 2018.

The first two years of their experiment were extremely successful, and they decided to officially open Calabash Gardens in 2020. With this move to production, they now had around 120,000 plants growing.

Flash-forward to November 2024: Chery and Mandl-Abramson had just finished up their season and are continuing to learn saffron's growing processes.

Saffron farming in Vermont is experimental, in part because its life cycle is the opposite of most plants.

Saffron is surprisingly resistant to cold and prefers a thick snow cover during the winter. The crop begins its reproductive process in late February before going dormant for the summer.

In the beginning of October, the plants begin to sprout and then flower. They continue to produce more sparsely into November.

Throughout the fall, when the flowers are blooming, Chery and Mandl-Abramson said they collect thousands of blossoms for processing. The picking and processing of the crop is long and laborious, which is why the spice is so expensive.

Three thin, red tendrils are embedded in each flower — stigmas, as they're called in botany, where the usable spice is found.

Once the stigmas are harvested from the flowers, they get dehydrated and put into a large jar to cure. The curing process deepens the flavor and scent of the spice and prepares it to be cooked and sold.

Every stage of the process includes regenerative agriculture methods, Mandl-Abramson said, such as sequestering carbon and building biodiversity on the prop-

erty and in the soil.

Mandl-Abramson hopes to implement a full cycle of cover cropping that would reseed itself, filled with herbs to use in apothecary work. With its life cycle, saffron could be the perfect crop to do this.

There is one major issue standing in the way: weeds. Because of the rich and biodiverse natural soils in Vermont, the weeds on the couple's farm grow fast and spread quickly.

For now, the couple mitigates that with landscape fabric during

off-season. Once they are able to reduce the weeds enough, Mandl-Abramson said she will be able to implement her goal of a self-sustaining cover crop cycle.

Business outside of the growing season is just as exciting: The couple sells products such as saffron-infused honey, tinctures and maple syrup.

Classifieds

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MOVING ANNOUNCEMENT

MERLE J. FRIEDMAN, AP DBA Brandon Acupuncture Center and Wellness is relocating to Ocala and closing the office in Brandon.

PUBLIC NOTICES

TOWN OF BRANDON, VERMONT Equipment for Sale

The Town has for sale the following equipment; to view listings, schedule an in-person inspection, and to bid, visit www.municipalbid.com and in the left column click on VERMONT. All the Town's listings will appear.

- *2012 Chevy Silverado 2500 pick-up
- *2013 Dodge Charger Police Cruiser
- *2014 Ford Taurus Police Cruiser
- *2011 International Work Star 7400 dump truck with plow and wing

TOWN OF BRANDON, VERMONT Job Posting for Wastewater Treatment System Operator

The TOWN OF BRANDON seeks a qualified candidate for a permanent full-time position as a wastewater treatment system operator. The primary job site is at 500 Union Street in Brandon, Vermont. The wastewater treatment system operator works under the direction of the chief wastewater treatment system operator and assistant. Secondly, this position provides support to the other aspects of the Town's Public Works operations, namely the Highway Department and Buildings & Grounds Department, through tracked time assignments.

A summary of job responsibilities is posted at: <https://www.townofbrandon.com/job-posting-wastewater-treatment-system-operator/>

The Town of Brandon offers competitive pay and a generous benefits package. The Town of Brandon is an equal opportunity employer. Reply to Seth Hopkins, town manager, at the Brandon Town Office, 49 Center Street, Brandon VT 05733 or by email to manager@brandonvermont.gov. This position is open until filled.

The Town of Brandon is committed to providing equal employment and volunteer opportunities without regard to race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, disability, or any other protected characteristic as outlined by federal, state, or local laws.

Senior spotlight

A chat with Jeannine McDuff Griffin

Jeannine McDuff Griffin was born a few years ago (her words) in Sherbrooke, Canada. She has been a naturalized citizen for over 40 years. Her father, Gaston, was a railroad foreman for the Canadian National Railroad, while her mother, Coleen Bouchard McDuff, was Mom. Jeannine grew up with a twin brother (12 minutes younger), one sister, and two younger brothers. She attended elementary Catholic School in Island Pond and North Country High School in Newport, VT. After graduation, she had different jobs, but her love was Neshobe School for 31 years! She was married to the Deacon Gary Griffin and they have three children, Greg, Mark, and Elaine, who are all military families. Needless to say, she is a proud Mom in Brandon! When asked what was

the best thing that ever happened to her, she responded “when I married Gary and we had our children.” The most embarrassing thing that ever happened to her was, “I can’t really think of anything.” Not that it was embarrassing, but she didn’t mention that she was in the Sound of Music at the Paramount as a singing nun, plus she was a waltz dancer in one of the ballroom scenes. How quickly she forgot...Her hobbies and interests include travel, music, and going on retreats. Her favorite thing to do is sing and be around children. When asked what was the most exciting experience that she was willing to share her answer was “visiting Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and partaking in the procession with people from all over the world.”



Brandon Senior Center’s “Spotlighted Senior”
Jeannine McDuff Griffin

Addison County's Hometown Dealer



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