

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

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\$1



PANTRY SWAP

Pittsford residents have a new way to save their extra garden veggies and pantry items from the compost heap: an online food-swapping group.

PG. 2



GARDENING CORNER

Lyn Desmarais reflects on changes to our way of life that have affected the delicate balance of the natural world, and ways we can help restore it.

PG. 3

NATURAL HISTORY TALK

The Brandon Museum will host a presentation about the natural history of the area this Sunday.

PG. 4



BIGGEST TREES

Brandon's Biggest Tree Contest winners received prizes this weekend in a small event honoring the very large.

PG. 7

PARADE PREP

It may only be February, but preparations are under way for this year's Independence Day Parade. Beat the winter doldrums by getting involved.

PG. 15



With 2nd Career Day, OV teacher Devon Karpak solidifies commitment to career readiness

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Over the last few years, “career readiness” and “workforce development” have been buzzwords in public education. There’s been a recognition throughout Vermont that the state needs to do a better job providing career pathways for youth who don’t want to pursue college degrees. There’s also been a recognition that throughout the state, there’s a shortage of plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and other skilled tradespeople.

As part of this push, OV Tech Ed teacher Devon Karpak is organizing the 2nd annual OV Career on Friday, March 7 to let OVUMS and OVUHS kids explore non-college career options and acquaint them with local career opportunities.

Last year’s Career Day—



OTTER VALLEY'S DEVON Karpak shows off some of the welding equipment in his teaching space. A \$114K grant from the VT Dept of Labor will expand the welding program, all part of Karpak's passion for Tech Ed and career readiness. For the past six years, he's helped OV students find non-college paths to livelihood and fulfillment. He's organizing the 2nd annual Career Day at OV on Friday, March 7 to give students a chance to learn about local opportunities.

OV’s first—saw roughly 30 “community partners” come to OV to talk with students about what they do and how

kids could pursue those jobs. Attendees included major local employers such as OMYA, Naylor & Breen, Casella, and G. Stone, as well as representatives from Stafford Technical Center in Rutland, trade unions, and military recruiters.

“Last year was successful overall,” said Mr. Karpak in a recent conversation in his classroom at OV. “Our community partners showing up for kids was amazing. It was our first time running the event, but we saw what it could be. It was great for kids to see career opportunities other than the clichés of doctor, lawyer, and astronaut.”

“We hear so much about kids who left the area,” Karpak continued. “These partners give our kids a reason to stay.

(See Career Day, Page 8)

Brandon SB discusses ethics, boundary lines, crosswalks

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The Brandon Selectboard convened for its regular meeting on Monday evening.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Brandon Town Manager Seth Hopkins delivered his report, which is reprinted in full in this issue.

At a previous Selectboard meeting, Board member Brian Coolidge had requested from Mr. Hopkins a breakdown of the number of service calls that the Brandon Police Department (BPD) received in the previous month, as a way to determine what level of staffing would be necessary as BPD tries to rebuild its ranks.

Mr. Hopkins replied on Monday evening that in January, BPD handled 93 calls during on-duty hours and the Vermont State Police responded to 5 nighttime calls for service from Brandon. This averages to 3 on-duty calls per day for BPD. Mr. Hopkins stated that these figures show that Brandon “has a sufficient amount of protection in place for safety of life and property.” He also noted, however, that these figures were likely lower because of winter weather.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Deputy Town Manager Bill (See Brandon SB, Page 9)



A delicate balance

A MASSIVE BLOCK of marble seems held in place by a tiny outgrowth of wood in a Proctor forest. Hard to believe all that weight is resting on that small shelf. Photo by Dale Christie

Pittsford SB talks resignations, grants, and murals

BY STEVEN JUPITER

PITTSFORD—The Pittsford Selectboard gathered for its regular meeting on Wednesday, February 5.

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager David Atherton delivered his final report to

the Board before his resignation took effect at the end of that week. The Board appointed Ann Reed, who had been Mr. Atherton’s assistant, to be Interim Town Manager. Board Chair Alicia Malay stated in a subsequent phone call that the Board has not

made any further plans or decisions.

The Board thanked Mr. Atherton for his contributions to the Town of Pittsford over the previous two years and expressed regret over his departure.

“He’s leaving us in a good

place,” said Ms. Malay.

“I, for one, hate to see you go,” said Board member Dan Adams.

“It’s been a fun two years,” said Mr. Atherton, adding that it was simply time for a change.

ATV ORDINANCE

(See Pittsford SB, Page 8)

Pittsford Pantry Swap: a new idea to help local residents make the most of their unwanted food

BY STEVEN JUPITER

PITTSFORD—What do you do when your summer garden is suddenly overrun with cherry tomatoes and you don't have time to preserve them? Or when that 5-lb. bag of rice sits unopened on your shelf week after week and you have to admit you're never going to make that recipe you bought it for? Instead of composting the tomatoes or letting the rice languish, what if there was a Facebook group where you could exchange what you have but don't want for what you want but don't have?

That's the general idea behind the Pittsford Pantry Swap (PPS), the brainchild of Jacob Cook of Pittsford. Cook hopes that PPS will help local residents cut down on food waste and avoid the corporate food industry as much as possible.

"It's pretty simple," said Cook. "You can trade what you have for what you need."

Maybe you have extra eggs but need flour. Maybe you grew too many cucumbers but want peppers. Maybe you snagged a deer and want to trade venison for pork. You go to PPS's Facebook page and let the forum know what you have and what you're looking for.

Cook, 30, moved to Pittsford last summer from Malone, New York, a small city not far from the Canadian border. He came to Vermont for the abundant opportunities for winter recre-

ation—he's an avid snowboarder—and settled in Pittsford because of its proximity to top slopes like Killington and Pico. To support himself, he works

thrift-shop clothing.

PPS fits right in with Cook's passion for upcycled clothing: nothing goes to waste.

"We can learn a lot from

hyper-processed state of what it offers. He's hoping that PPS will connect people who value food they grow themselves. "I think everyone should be

bought. If you have extra cans of Campbell's Soup or boxes of Frosted Flakes, you can post them on PPE, too. PPS does not allow alcohol or any other drugs. All packaging should be unopened with intact labels. And PPE does not take responsibility for the quality of what's offered.

"People need to do their due diligence and inspect what's offered," said Cook. Neither Cook nor PPS can guarantee freshness or safety. Neither Cook nor PPS will act as go-betweens, either, aside from having created the forum. All transactions will be between the individuals conducting the exchange.

Cook said he tried to get something similar off the ground in Malone, but it didn't catch on. Hopefully the mindset in Vermont will align more closely with Cook's vision—almost everyone here hunts, fishes, or grows.

And though he may be based in Pittsford, Cook emphasized that PPS is for anyone in the area who's willing to drive to make the trade.

Anyone interested in checking out the forum should find Pittsford Pantry Swap on Facebook.

In this era of high food costs, PPS can help folks keep their expenses down, get rid of food they won't be using, and find the food they really want.



JACOB COOK (RIGHT) sits with his uncle, the late Brad Norcross. Cook moved to Pittsford last summer and recently started the Pittsford Pantry Swap to give local residents a place where they can swap unwanted food and avoid corporate grocery stores. "I think everyone should be growing," he said.

as a welder and runs a clothing company called Biscotti Streetwear that specializes in t-shirts, hoodies, and upcycled

Native American culture," he said. His disdain for the food industry is based not only on its wastefulness, but also on the

growing," he added.

Though Cook's own emphasis is on home-grown food, PPS doesn't prohibit store

What USAID funding freeze means for Vermonters

BY KLARA BAUTERS/
VTDIGGER

The Trump administration's decision to freeze nearly all U.S. Agency for International Development programs could threaten Vermont nonprofits and businesses.

The decision halts funding for global development efforts, affecting organizations that provide health care, disaster relief and economic support in more than 130 countries.

Congress provided \$66.1 billion in foreign assistance appropriations in fiscal year 2023.

"The USAID provides life-saving assistance, healthcare, disaster relief and prevents them from coming into conflict. It's both moral but it also serves our national security," said Victoria Holt, director of Dartmouth Col-

lege's John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding.

Former Burlington Mayor Peter Clavelle previously worked for Tetra Tech/ARD, a consulting and engineering firm focused on water, environmental sustainability, infrastructure, renewable energy and international development. The company, which has offices in Winooski and Montpelier, has a long history of working with USAID funding, most recently securing a \$5 billion award in October.

Tetra Tech did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Clavelle said the decision to freeze USAID funding will have "a significant impact on Vermonters and the Vermont economy," and that its effects will be felt far beyond the state.

"The number of lives that will

be affected, jobs that will be eliminated, careers that will be destroyed, is far, far greater than the number of USAID employees in Tetra Tech/ARD," Clavelle said.

"I'm sure that there are ways, there are reforms that could make it more efficient and more effective, but that's true of any governmental agency," Clavelle said, adding that the agency "has done excellent work, has saved probably millions of lives and addressed famine in countries across the world."

U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt., took to the Senate floor Tuesday to condemn the freeze, warning that it imperils Vermont-based organizations that implement USAID programs.

Welch said it is disrupting nonprofit organizations, contractors and institutions of higher educa-

tion in the state—organizations with "a long history of implementing USAID humanitarian and development programs." He pointed to TetraTech/ARD and World Learning, a nonprofit that provides global education and exchange programs, as examples of affected organizations.

"Suddenly, out of the blue, without even an hour's notice, these organizations and others were forced to shut down programs and lay off staff, with no idea of what comes next," Welch said. "Many of their employees are working overseas where they are stranded without even the ability to have funds to pay for flights home."

Welch criticized President Donald Trump and Elon Musk for their role in dismantling the agency, saying the move is ille-

gal, unconstitutional and devastating to institutions with a long history of global aid work.

"It has a relatively small budget—less than 1% of the total federal budget—and it has a large responsibility to support humanitarian, economic development and governance programs in more than 100 countries," Welch said. He also criticized Musk's lack of government experience and his characterization of USAID as a "criminal organization."

When asked about potential legal action, Vermont Attorney General Charity Clark wrote in a statement, "We're reviewing every Executive Order and potential illegal act, and this is near the top of the list. However, I cannot comment further at this time."



GARDENING CORNER

BY LYN DESMARAIS

“There is nothing more inspiring than a fresh start.” Thought for the day from Stacey McNeill’s book “Fox Under the Moon.”

Unless you are me and looking at a piece of totally white paper and panicking thinking, “what in the world can I possibly have to say about plants that hasn’t been said before?” Actually, I wasn’t thinking of plants or gardens today, I was thinking of butterflies. Specifically, I was thinking of my younger brother who is very ill. I was thinking of our childhood and of the farm where we grew up. That got me thinking about haying and monarchs and how numerous these butterflies and milkweed were when he and I were children. Then I read this

poem:

“Floating” by John Goodson, M.D.

I want to float
To let the density of the
Outer world push me up
Beyond the clutch
Of expectation.
I want to leave the construct
To be above the looping
Circling unliberated world.
I don’t need to fly
Merely to float
Like the monarch
Catching warm currents
Returning to the fellowship
Of butterflies.

printed with permission from John Goodson, M.D., “100 Poems.”

Given all the cold and snow of this winter, I love this image of the monarch floating in the sky. I

can see them still, floating above my head as I walk down the farm dirt road to the hayfields, to help load the hay wagon, with my four brothers. We loaded the hay, loose the first few years as the bales were too heavy for us little ones. We used pitchforks to pass it up onto the hay wagon. One person, usually the littlest, would stand on top and tamp it down and grab a forkful with our hands, if the hay started to slip down. We were mindful of the sharp tines of the hay forks coming at us, but we rarely were injured. It was hot, sweaty work, but the ride back to the barn was heavenly. That’s when I’d look up and see them again following us back to the barn, orange and black dancing against the bluest sky.

That haying style was anachronistic even in the 1960s when we were doing it. People would take photos of us. We had no idea why. Now of course I realize how picturesque it must have been. We got older and got stronger, had bigger tractors and a used baler. It was a lot quicker but a lot noisier. We didn’t ride the hay wagon back to the barn. We drove in an old pickup truck by then, picking up the bales from the ground. I think that’s when I started to notice fewer songbirds and fewer butterflies. We saw bobolinks, meadowlarks, pheasant, and quail when we were kids. They were commonplace. And then they weren’t. And neither were the small square bales, or the cows out at pasture.

We in Vermont are lucky. Massachusetts Audubon is working with local farms to bring back some grassland birds and is helping with grants to make delayed mowing economically viable. If you are interested, please do contact them. We also seem to have a resurgence of younger people,

running small(ish) farms, and in some cases with animals out to pasture. It’s lovely to see. I am

also heartened by the number of flower farmers in our area as (See Gardening Corner, Page 11)



Spotlight On Business NATIONAL BANK OF MIDDLEBURY



National Bank of Middlebury is committed to the Brandon community. Our Brandon office is located in the heart of downtown at 6 Park Street. We are here for all your banking needs including checking and savings accounts, home mortgages, personal loans,

business services, commercial loans, and more. We also have a beautiful space available for free that can be used after hours for small events and meetings. Stop by today! Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.

The Stevens Farmstead in Sudbury is offering 12 weeks of professionally prepared, locally sourced meals, delivered every Tuesday to your door!

Email us to preview the menu or to sign up!
thestevensfarmstead@gmail.com
 Deliveries begin March 11

Numerous options, including vegetarian and gluten free!

Brandon
 Leicester
 Salisbury
 Sudbury
 Whiting



Vermont Declaration of Inclusion Initiative reaches goal and enters new phase

RUTLAND—To date, 160 towns, home to more than 79% Vermont residents, have adopted the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion (DOI). In addition, six other municipalities have adopted a DOI but have used language which differs from our version to such an extent that we were not able to list them with the towns that have adopted it. Altogether 166 Vermont municipalities, including Brandon, have committed to the principals and goals of the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion Initiative.

The first phase of the DOI Initiative is ending. By the end of 2024, all 247 municipalities in Vermont will have been contacted. Outreach to the communities that have not adopted the DOI will continue indefinitely. Phase two of the Initiative, finding ways to implement the DOI once adopted, will continue indefinitely as well.

To launch the second phase process, a survey was sent to the first 100 communities that adopted the DOI asking them what they were doing for implementation. A significant number - 50% - of them responded.

Of the 50 communities that responded,

- 84% have posted the Declaration on their town website.
- 78% have explained to their residents the reasons for adopting the Declaration.
- 54% have reviewed town policies, programs and ordinances for implicit or institutional bias.

Many of the communities were excited to share details on what they have been doing to support the DOI.

For instance, in Brandon,

penalties for late municipal payments have been postponed for those with economic challenges and civic engagement is off and running. “We have been tackling our policies and procedures one by one to better serve the entire community,” said Sue Gage, Town Clerk and Treasurer. “We will incorporate this work into all of our tasks.”

In Fairfax, the Selectboard passed a resolution acknowledging that ongoing and intentional work is needed to be an anti-racist community. “We recognize that this is a time to listen and to learn with a goal of gaining a more complete understanding of the needs of our community. This is the time to create space for and engagement with diverse voices and to be inclusive in meeting community needs.”

Colchester has a successful Get Engaged Program “to promote age inclusivity and diversity in town government,” said Pam Loranger, Colchester Selectboard Chair. It was promoted at its high school and in media and now, “The youth seats on our boards and commissions have filled up.”

The Declaration of Inclusion is a grassroots initiative begun by community members in the Rutland area, which has been assisted by the Vermont Interfaith Action, Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and the Vermont Council on Rural Development. Additional information on the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion may be found at vt-declarationofinclusion.org. This website is generously furnished by and maintained by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce.



I left my nest box for this?

LAST WEEK, THE photo had the owl ready to fledge peeking from its nest box. This photo shows the fledgling regarding the great outdoors.

Photo by Sue Wetmore

Community Forums

February 16th from 3 pm to 4:30

A presentation of the Natural History of Brandon at the Brandon Museum

An incredibly brief look at the last 1.3 billion years in Brandon, Vermont, with a focus on why this place is so unique and how it is constantly changing.

Presenter Len Schmidt will lead an exploration of how the history of the land, the climate,

and the people of Brandon have evolved over time to create the town and its environment, as we know it today. We will see how wildly different Brandon is today than it was 1.3 billion, 1.3 million, or even a mere 13 thousand years ago.

The Brandon Museum hosts this free event in its newly equipped education room at 4 Grove Street.

Parking is available across the street at Brandon Lumber and behind the Museum at the Baptist Church parking lot.

Green Up Vermont’s tax form check-off helps keep Vermont beautiful

MONTPELIER—For 55 years, the first Saturday in May – Green Up Day – has been all about gathering family and neighbors outside to clean up litter and debris from roadsides and waterways. Green Up Day is a much-loved, prideful tradition that continues to make our natural landscapes clean and

healthy, and that instills a sense of community care in every Vermonter from the smallest of hands to the oldest of hearts.

Green Up Vermont is the private nonprofit behind Green Up Day that works year-round to ensure stewardship for Vermont’s environment and teaches about waste reduction habits

to remove trash altogether. “With two consecutive years of catastrophic flooding here in Vermont and with massive climate events in other areas of the country, we simply can’t turn a blind eye to our climate. Our intent, along with taking action to clean up trash, is to

(See Green Up, Page 14)

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REPORTER

A community supported newspaper

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.

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Letters to the Editor

Why I choose Cecil Reniche-Smith for Brandon Selectboard

I am pleased that Cecil Reniche-Smith is once again seeking a position on the Brandon Selectboard.

For those who have had the opportunity to work with or share ideas with Cecil in any of her recent endeavors to grow and strengthen this community I'm sure I'm preaching to the choir. For those that only know of her, let me assure you that she is a perfect choice for Selectboard. She is genuine, approachable, capable and absent of ego. She appreciates all of what this Town is:

its diversity, its history, its charm, and its potential.

She sees our town as I do and as I'm sure many of you do, as a place for family, for friends, and proud to call home. Any conversation with Cecil will leave you knowing that she recognizes the changes, the challenges, and decisions that the Town faces, and that they are hers as well.

I've followed our Leadership Team for many years and helped through committees when able. One thing that always rang true throughout any topic or focus is

that we as a town are comprised of people with a broad range of backgrounds, interests, and perspectives. We are fortunate that at this point in time our Selectboard is a good representation of that diversity. Cecil has been and, if elected, will be the listening ear, open mind, and broad perspective that will address those interests in a cohesive and effective way.

I am happy to cast my vote for Cecil and encourage you to as well.

Barry Varian
Brandon

Message from Vicki Disorda, candidate for Brandon Selectboard

Greetings, fellow Brandonites. Please allow me to introduce myself for those who do not know me. My name is Vicki Disorda and I am running for a 1-year seat on the Selectboard. I am a fourth generation native Vermonter. My mother was literally born in Brandon, back when children were born at home. I was raised on the same street she grew up on. In fact, I still live there, only the name has changed from Clay Street to Union Street.

An Otter Valley graduate, I earned my diploma a year early. I was ranked 6th in a class of 99.

We made front page news in the Rutland Herald that year. All of the top ten were female.

After high school I was accepted into the machinist/toolmaker program at G.E. in Rutland. There I worked 40 hours per week and went to school three nights a week, maintaining a "full" college curriculum. I did not go to college the traditional route, but I did eventually earn a degree . . . debt free.

However, I am not just from a "small town." I lived and worked in five different states during my
(See Disorda message, Page 11)

Our local schools need to perform better

I am concerned about educational standards in Brandon schools, especially with another year of budget increases. I have served on Parent Teacher Boards and as a certified Quality Assurance instructor for school boards and educators. Growing up in Lexington, MA, I received an excellent education and understand the importance of quality education for all children. To ensure our children can fully participate in their community, the world, and have successful lives, education is crucial.

Last year when I attended the school budget informational meeting, I asked the question, "Where do our students stand in relation to state and national standards?" I was told the administration and teachers do not believe in standardized testing and that such methods of tracking how our children are progressing is not used. I was shocked that there was no accountability for parents or community

members to know if our children were actually learning and attaining the skills necessary at each grade level. I recently inquired of the new superintendent this same question and was told that there is a report on the district's website which shows how Vermont's students are faring against state and national standards.

When I looked up Brandon, only Neshobe School was listed (there was no information for Otter Valley for some reason). I was shocked at what I found. Under Language Arts: Grade 3 - 64.29% were Below Proficient; Grade 4 - 57.89% were Below Proficient; Grade 5 - 52.73% were Below Proficient; Grade 6 - 63.04% were Below Proficient. For Math: Grade 3 - 75% were Below Proficient; Grade 4 - 81.08% were Below Proficient; Grade 5 - 56.36% were Below Proficient; Grade 6 - 54.35% were Below Proficient. Science: Grade 3 - 65.45% were Below Pro-

ficient. These were the only statistics I could find on the website for Brandon.

Given how high our school taxes are, this is totally unacceptable. What are our taxes buying? Are our townspeople unaware of the lack of quality and due diligence our children are receiving? If I have misread or misinterpreted the information on this website regarding these statistics, I would gladly like to be corrected. But if not, it is time for a total accounting from our educators and the level of education our children deserves to be enforced.

Patricia Welch
Brandon

Why I'm voting for Cecil Reniche-Smith for Brandon Selectboard

I am writing in support of Cecil Reniche-Smith for Town of Brandon Selectboard. I worked alongside Cecil on the Town of Brandon Planning Commission. Cecil was open-minded, patient, considerate, and knowledgeable. I know from working with her that she has spent countless hours volunteering in a number of capacities. Cecil believes in a strong community and believes our community

members deserve equitable access to quality supportive services and affordable housing. In all that she does, Cecil exemplifies honesty, fairness, and thoughtfulness. Cecil will use these qualities to help Brandon grow while keeping the small-town feel that we all love! Please consider voting for Cecil Reniche-Smith this March.

Sara Stevens
Brandon

I will vote for Cecil Reniche-Smith for Brandon Selectboard

I am writing to heartily recommend Cecil Reniche-Smith for a position on the Selectboard of Brandon. I have known Cecil for several years and she is one of the smartest, most dedicated, and hardest working people I have ever met. She cares about all the people in this community and has put in the time and energy to help make it a wonderful place to live.

I can confidently attest to her dedication, leadership skills, and commitment to Brandon. She has already served on the Selectboard and was a member of the Planning Committee that prepared the current town plan. She is also a member of the Library Board. Because of her extensive experience, Cecil

is deeply knowledgeable about the responsibilities of the Selectboard, including setting town policies, overseeing budgets, and ensuring transparent governance.

Cecil's collaborative nature and problem-solving abilities make her an ideal candidate to work with the rest of the Board. Whether you are lucky enough to have lived here your whole life, or you are a recent addition to this community, I am certain she will represent all Brandon residents' interests and concerns.

I know Cecil will serve with integrity, compassion, and vision and I proudly endorse her candidacy.

Nicholas Curcio
Brandon

British Landscapes tour featuring England, Scotland and Wales September 14 — September 23, 2025 • 10 Days

The Brandon Area Chamber of Commerce and Colette tours are excited to bring you an adventure fit for a Shakespearean tale! We'll take you from verdant hillsides to bustling British cities rich with culture. Explore Edinburgh's historic ambiance along the Royal Mile. Explore the ruins of a Roman Fort during a visit to Hadrian's Wall. Enjoy medieval York. See the imposing castle of Caernarfon in Wales. Walk in the footsteps of the Bard in Stratford-upon-Avon. Personalize your tour with a choice of included excursions. See the quintessential sights of London.

Enjoy a stress-free experience on this exciting trip as you're picked up right here in Brandon and whisked off for departure from Logan International Airport in Boston. Upon arrival back in the states you'll be returned to bucolic Brandon with lots of memories and stories to share.

Please go to www.brandon.org and click on the links on our home page for more details and an itinerary. Also register there to join our informational Q&A Zoom meeting on Wednesday, February 19 at 6:00pm.

Worry-Free Cancellation! Purchase Collette's industry-leading cancellation waiver.



Obituaries

Peter Israel Mayhew, 74, Leicester

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved father, Peter Israel Mayhew, on February 4, 2025, at the age of 74. Peter was a devoted father, grandfather, and cherished member of the Mayhew family. His legacy will live on in the hearts of those who loved him. Born on May 4, 1950, in St. Albans, Vermont, Peter was the son of Norma Elizabeth West and Harlan Ray Mayhew. He grew up in Richford and Rutland, Vermont, and graduated from Rutland High School in 1968. Before serving in the U.S. Army, Peter worked as a metal worker at G.H. Grimm Company in Rutland, Vermont, from June 1968 to November 1969. He worked alongside his father, making Lightning Evaporators and hay tedders, learning valuable skills, and taking great pride in the work he did.



PETER ISRAEL MAYHEW

enjoying time together and sharing his love for nature. Peter also enjoyed spending time at his camp in Indian Lake, NY, where he found peace and joy in the quiet of the mountains. Those moments, surrounded by family, were some of the most cherished of his life. Peter was a man of few words, but his presence was always felt. Known for his sharp sense of humor, he had a way of brightening any room with his quick wit and dry humor. His family and friends will always remember him for the laughter he brought into their lives. Peter was also a member of the NRA and the Vermont Patriot Guard Riders.

Throughout his life, Peter was known for his kindness, his dedication to family, and his unwavering strength. His presence will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Peter leaves behind four chil-

dren: Joseph Mayhew (Daphne) of West Pawlet, Rebecca Walker (Aaron) of Swanton, Patrick Mayhew (Katie) of Leicester, and Michael Mayhew (Kirstyn) of Sudbury, as well as five grandchildren: Jacob Mayhew, Morgan Mayhew, Ivy Walker, Alana Walker, and Maci Mayhew, 4 brothers: Michael Mayhew, Mark Mayhew, and Greg Mayhew all of Rutland, and Jon Mayhew of Pittsford. Several nieces, nephews, & cousins also survive him. He was predeceased by his father, Harlan Ray Mayhew; his mother, Norma Elizabeth West; his brother, Brian Mayhew; and two grandchildren, Hayden and Colt Mayhew.

In honoring Peter's wishes, there will be no calling hours. A private memorial service and burial, with Military Honors, will take place at a later date at the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Randolph.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in his memory to the Vermont Veterans Fund, Office of Veterans Affairs, 118 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602 or the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, 1235 S. Clark St., Ste. 910, Arlington, VA 22202.

Our father will always be remembered for his love of hunting, his sense of humor, his dedication to family, and his unwavering strength. His memory will be a source of comfort and inspiration to all who were lucky enough to know him.

Rest in peace, Dad. You will forever hold a special place in our hearts.

Arrangements are with the Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon.



REPRESENTATIVES GATHER FOR a morning session in the House chamber at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Friday, Jan. 10.
Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

Vermont House passes mid-year budget tune-up after debate over shelter program

BY SHAUN ROBINSON/VTDIGGER

MONTPELIER—The Vermont House on Friday passed its version of an annual bill to true-up state spending midway through the fiscal year—and, at least for now, appears to have far more common ground with Gov. Phil Scott over its proposal than not.

Still, House budget-writers faced sharp pushback on the floor this week, largely from Scott allies in the Republican Party, over a decision to tuck on funding that would keep more people eligible for the state's motel voucher program into the warmer months.

The floor debate, after which one House member apologized for some of her remarks, underscored just how contentious the motel program continues to be in Montpelier.

Scott's "budget adjustment" proposal for the 2025 fiscal year, which his administration presented to lawmakers last month, would bump up state spending from about \$8.58 billion (the total of the state budget he signed last May) to about \$8.73 billion—a \$146 million increase that's possible because the state has brought in more revenue than it expected to. Vermont's 2025 fiscal year began in July 2024, and it ends this June.

The House has now made tweaks to the administration's proposal and put its proposed changes into a bill, H.141, that would increase 2025 spending by about \$161 million—\$15 million more than the governor's proposal called for. House members granted initial approval to the bill Thursday on an 87-51 vote, before formally passing it Friday on a voice vote.

The House-passed version will now head to the Senate for its consideration. After that, the two chambers would need

(See Mid-year budget, Page 19)

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Obituary Guidelines

The Reporter will publish paid obituaries and free notices of passing. Paid obituaries cost 25 cents per word and will be published, as submitted, on the date of the family's choosing. For those who do not wish to purchase an obituary, the Reporter offers a free notice of passing up to 100 words, subject to editing by our news department. Photos (optional) with either paid obituaries or free notices cost \$10 per photo. Obituaries may be emailed to news@brandonreporter.com.

Submissions must be received by 11 a.m. on Monday for publication in the Wednesday paper.

Brandon Biggest Tree Contest award ceremony was a celebration of our town's arboreal heritage

On Wednesday, February 5, the winners of the Brandon Biggest Tree contest were celebrated in Town Hall. Due to the nature of the entries, the Brandon Tree Group selected the Biggest Oak and the Biggest Maple trees. While some other species were entered, their circumferences were notably smaller than the two winners.

The largest entry in the maple class was Jacki Barchanowicz, whose tree measures a whopping 220-inch circumference. Very impressive. And, in the oak class, there were a couple of entries for a tree in the Hawk Hill Trails. However, one entry was excluded because of incompleteness. The winning entry, measuring a substantial 276 inches, was submitted by

also served. The brownie was tasty and beautiful, the cookies were lovely, and the baker of this edible art was Karen Rhodes of Forest Dale.

While enjoying the sweets and a healthy(?) array of pizzas and soft drinks, your Tree Warden, Neil Silins, presented certificates of accomplishment and gift cards from Red Clover Ale, Morningside Bakery and Pizza, and 22 Park Eatery to the winners. Many thanks to these Bran-

don restaurants and brewery for donating the gift cards. Neil spoke about some of the benefits of having trees in town and some recent developments in what we know about trees, followed by a presentation about the economic and other benefits that trees make to Brandon,

Everyone enjoyed the conversation, the company, and the chance to visit.



TOP: (L TO R) Brandon Selectboard Chair Doug Bailey, contest winner Marianne Buswell, Brandon Tree Warden Neil Silins, contest winner Jacki Barchanowicz, and Deputy Town Manager Bill Moore. Right: A whimsical "tree" cake made by Karen Rhodes. Above: Tree Warden Neil Silins addressing the gathering.

Marianne Buswell. A small group of devoted tree lovers gathered at Town Hall to participate in the ceremony. A very lovely brownie sheet cake was decorated with a bucolic landscape including trees, and "tree" cookies were

by Deputy Town Manager Bill Moore. Everyone enjoyed the conversation, the company, and the chance to visit. We're looking forward to another tree contest next year. Jack Schneider conceived of this "biggest tree"

contest. If you (or he) have ideas for the next contest, please let me know.

*Neil Silins
Tree Warden
Brandontreewarden@gmail.com*

Career Day

(Continued from Page 1)

My focus is showing students what's available in their own community.”

Karpak is organizing this year's event a little bit differently, with more age-based structure. Middle-school students will attend four 30-minute sessions on different career paths. Those in 9th grade will participate in a “career inventory” activity to help them narrow down their interests. Those in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades will attend a “Pathways Fair,” where they'll have a chance to meet representatives from employers and post-high-school training programs.

Brothers Tanner and Travis Romano, both OV grads, will deliver the keynote address as well. Tanner is a co-owner of Naylor & Breen builders in Brandon and Travis is general manager at G. Stone Motors in

Middlebury.

The hope is that this more structured approach will give employers and programs access to students who are closer to employment age and give younger students more context in which to make decisions about what path they want to take in high school.

Karpak's focus at OV is on “tech ed,” which older folks may have known as “shop class” back in the day. However, today's “shop class” involves much more sophisticated equipment and advanced technology. Karpak's classrooms are full of traditional woodworking tools and



CASELLA AND OMYA were two of the major local employers at last year's OV Career Day. They're set to return, along with Naylor & Breen, G. Stone, Rutland Regional Medical Center, and several more.

Photos provided



Golf Course

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Plan ahead for next year!

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

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

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

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

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

We look forward to welcoming you to the Neshobe family!

WE ARE HIRING!

Cook

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

Bartender

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

The golf course is OPEN!
Tee times available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
<https://neshobe.com> • (802) 247-3611

machinery, but a 3-D printer happily chirps away on student projects as well. Kids can learn to repair small engines but will eventually also be able to learn the basics of robotics and computer-aided design (CAD).

OV recently received a \$114K grant from the Vermont Department of Labor to establish a welding program. Work is currently underway to ventilate the welding area and Karpak hopes the program will be running by the fall.

For kids who decide to pursue vocational training, Karpak helps guide them to one of the

two available career and technical education (CTE) centers: Stafford in Rutland and Hanaford in Middlebury. Which center they attend depends on what program they pursue, though most OV students who follow this path end up opting for Stafford.

Karpak has been at OV for six years and has been fortunate to have arrived just as the interest in CTE was taking off statewide.

“I'm not officially CTE,” he said, “but I want to get kids interested. Our CTE partners have so much to offer our

students. They give our kids amazing opportunities.”

Administrators at OV and RNESU have also been very supportive of his work, he said. “[OV Principal] Michael Ruppel has been amazingly encouraging. And Rene [Sanchez, RNESU Superintendent] has a lot of great ideas.”

“This has been a labor of love for the last 6 years,” he added. “I'm happy with the direction we're heading in. Otter Valley is a special place that doesn't always get the attention it deserves. But the best is yet to come.”

Pittsford SB

(Continued from Page 1)

The Board reviewed the draft ATV ordinance that had been submitted to the town's attorney. The ordinance would allow the use of All-Terrain Vehicles on town roads. The attorney didn't have many revisions to the draft but suggested that the waiver fees be made “more reasonable,” in keeping with those of other towns with similar ordinances.

Vice-Chair David Mills questioned the necessity of closing roads to ATVs in the winter, stating that it would suffice to fine users who damaged roads. Other Board members agreed and the provision was removed from the draft.

And because the town does not have a decibel meter, the language limiting decibel levels was

stricken and replaced with language barring modified exhaust systems that create excessive noise.

The full text of the proposed ordinance, as it stood on 2/5/25, is available in the Selectboard packet on the Town's website.

The next step in the process is to hold public meetings to present the ordinance and receive feedback from the community. No dates have yet been set for any such meetings.

FT. VENGEANCE MURAL

The Board heard from local artist Doug Lazarus regarding his proposal for a mural depicting the defense of Ft. Vengeance in 1781. Fort Vengeance stood in Pittsford—there is a marble marker on Route 7 north of the village—and was the location of

an infamous raid in which all the local men were abducted, leaving the women to defend the site. The mural will be part of the celebrations of America's 250th birthday in 2026.

Mr. Lazarus, who lives in Brandon, distributed preliminary sketches and assured the Board that the funding for the project had been secured and no money was requested from the Town. Instead, Mr. Lazarus and a representative of the Pittsford Historical Society said they wanted to place the finished mural on the town green. The Historical Society said they were enthusiastic about the project.

Mr. Lazarus has painted numerous figures and scenes from Vermont history. A portrait he

(See Pittsford SB, Page 24)

Brandon SB

(Continued from Page 1)
 Moore delivered his report to the Board. Mr. Moore noted that the second installment of Brandon Idol 2025 will take place at the Brandon Town Hall on Friday, February 14 at 7 p.m. Board member Heather Nelson and other attendees shared their enthusiasm for the event.

Mr. Moore also noted that the Rec Department is seeking an Assistant to the Rec Director after the recent departure of Colleen Wright from that position. The job will be posted in various places, including in this paper.

An event for kids—Bounce House Karaoke—will be held at the Town Hall on March 1 from 4 to 6 p.m. The event is hosted by Colleen Wright Events.

A local theater troupe—One Room Theatrics—will be presenting “Private Peacefull” on February 20, 21, and 22. Tickets are available at paramountvt.org.

In response to previous questions from Mr. Coolidge, Mr. Moore also stated that the town had received a check for the Water Department’s share of the cost of the new water fountains at the Brandon Dog Park.

BOUNDARY LINE AT THE OLD TRAINING SCHOOL CAMPUS

The Board unanimously agreed to adjust the property line of a parcel near the intersection of Jones Drive and Mulcahy Drive on the former campus of the Brandon Training School. The parcel is adjacent to the lot owned by Ultravation that is slated to be purchased by the Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS). During the purchase process, RCHS became aware that the parcel belonged to the Town and not to Ultravation.

The Town had not maintained or used the parcel since it assumed ownership of the land after the closure of the Training School. In fact, the Town was unaware that it owned the parcel until RCHS brought it to the Town’s attention.

Board Chair Doug Bailey stated that the parcel, roughly half an acre, was not amenable to development

and was of little or no use to the Town.

The Board agreed to adjust the property line so that the parcel is now part of the lot that will be purchased by RCHS. No compensation was requested or received from RCHS.

GRAN FONDO BICYCLE EVENT

The Board unanimously approved a request to use Brandon’s roadways during the Gran Fondo cycling event on Saturday, June 28. The route will bring cyclists into Bran-

don on Route 73 from the Brandon Gap. The cyclists will then turn onto Route 53 and head north out of Brandon.

Organizers of the event stated that they will provide signage to warn drivers of the event and that they will have the cooperation of

local law enforcement to ensure safety.

Town Manager Seth Hopkins stated that this event was in no way connected to his own “side hustle” of organizing bicycle tours.

An attendee asked that the organizers be reminded that the cyclists still need to share the road with local drivers.

ASSESSOR’S CERTIFICATE

The Board unanimously approved the certificate of Brandon’s assessor stating that there are no pending legal actions stemming from the Grand List submitted in April of 2024.

PROCEDURE TO ASSESS CLAIMS OF ETHICS VIOLATIONS

The Board discussed the proper process for the evaluation of submitted claims of ethics violations under the state’s new ethics rules.

The discussion was prompted by the submission of a complaint by Brandon resident Sandy Mayo against Board member Tim Guiles. The complaint alleges that Mr. Guiles treated Ms. Mayo with disrespect during a previous Selectboard meeting. Ms. Mayo stated in her letter that Mr. Guiles “yelled” at her when she thought she had been given a cue to address the Board

by Board Chair Doug Bailey. Ms. Mayo’s full statement is available in the Selectboard packet for February 10 on the Town website.

Mr. Bailey said on Monday that he was concerned that Ms. Mayo’s complaint did not fall into any of the categories of prohibited conduct under the Municipal Code of Ethics (“the Code”), which seems to limit the scope of its coverage to “conflicts of interest.” The Code defines these conflicts primarily as financial conflicts involving self-dealing by town officials or employees. It was not immediately clear to him how Ms. Mayo’s complaint would be covered.

Mr. Bailey also said that submitted complaints should be discussed by the Board in public meetings so that town residents need not worry that complaints were being ignored.

Board member Heather Nelson agreed that complaints need to be discussed publicly so that residents would understand why the Board chose its course of action in any given case.

“If for some reason we don’t pursue a complaint, people will understand why,” she said.

Ms. Nelson and Mr. Bailey agreed, however, that if a particular
(See Brandon SB, Page 20)

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STUDENT: Sonora Gildrien

GRADE: 8th

SCHOOL: Otter Valley Union Middle School

TITLE: "Under the Sea"

MEDIUM: Acrylic

TEACHER: Tiffany St. Michaud

OUR CREATIVE KIDS

COMMENT FROM MS. ST. MICHAUD:
During our "Atmospheric Perspective" unit, Sonora painted an underwater scene using acrylic paints on a mini canvas.



Disorda message

(Continued from Page 5)

twenty-year career in manufacturing. From the toolroom, I moved into Quality Assurance, then supervisory roles, Process Engineering, Production Control and eventually became Operations Engineer. I worked for manufacturers from high tech gas distribution systems, plasma spray, plastic injection molding to fiber optics, many of whom held government (Military) contracts. I've worked to standard practice manuals of Pratt & Whitney, Hamilton Sundstrand, Rolls Royce and, of course, G.E. I was at one point a certified FAA Overhaul and Repair Person. At the plastic injection molding company I was employed by, I wrote the Quality Manual, all Process Control Documentation and procedures as well as documented the machine maintenance program, all in one year.

This is to say that I can do the work of Selectboard. Albeit, a person's qualifications matter not half as much as what is written in a candidate's heart.

I have been volunteering in Brandon since pre-Covid. My volunteer work has included The Bookstore, the Brandon Congregational Church, the Brandon United Methodist Church and the Brandon Area Food Shelf. I've also continued my

education. I am now the licensed pastor of the Brandon United Methodist Church. Did I mention caring for both of my parents on Hospice?

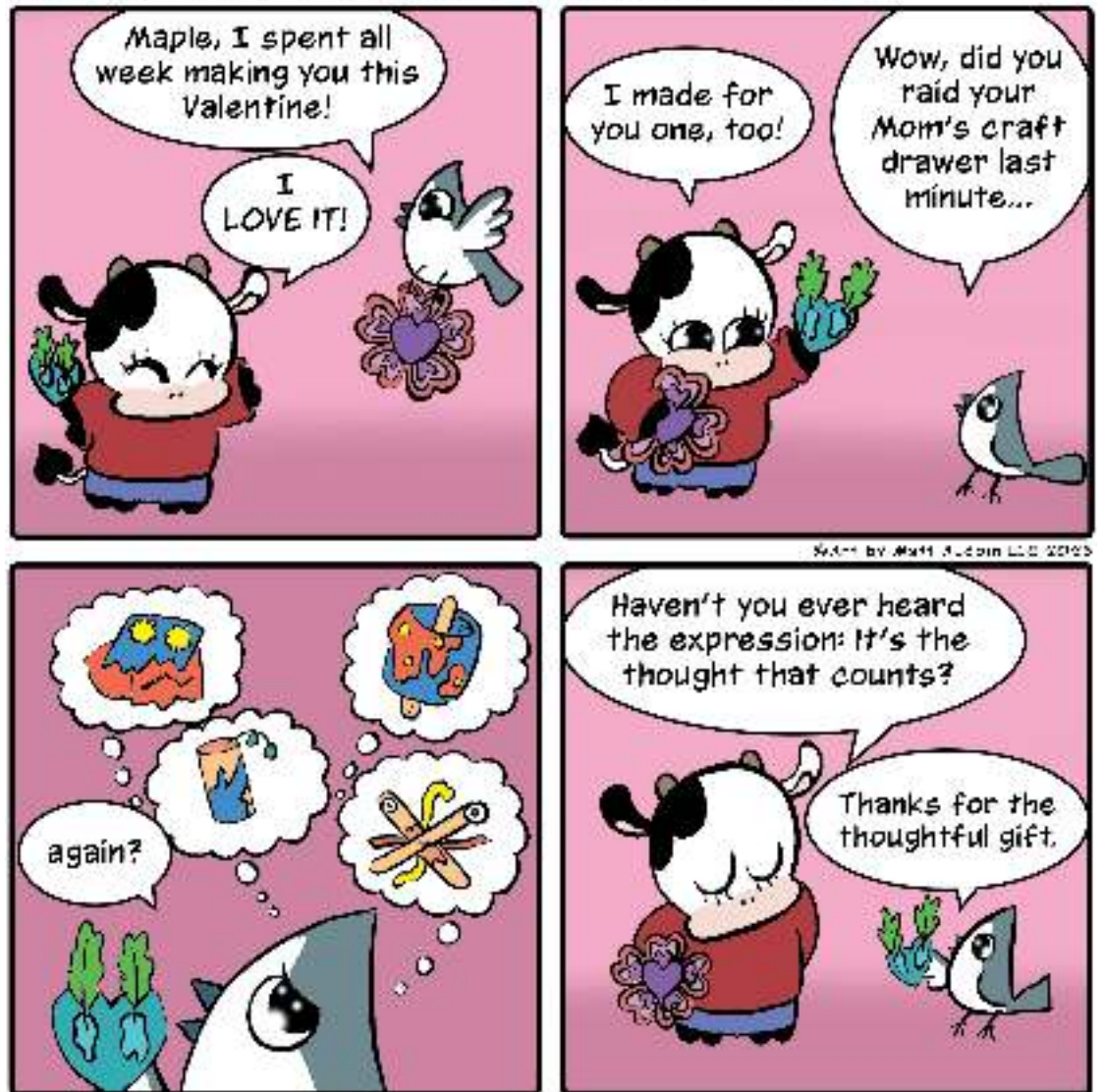
I know Brandon and Brandon knows me. I am honest, hardworking, intelligent and self-reliant. Above all, I am willing to give it my best shot to represent my peers. I strive to be transparent and open. No one has to wonder what I am thinking or what my intentions are.

I have been heavily involved in town governance since my appointment to the citizens "advisory" panel in February 2023. I was among the citizens who advocated for new sidewalks throughout the town, including Pearl Street and Carver Street. I wanted my friends and neighbors using mobility devices to no longer have to traverse the traveled portion of the road because the sidewalks were impassable. I was also a vocal opponent to last year's budget proposal.

Last spring, many diverse individuals came together to help advance a better budget and made a positive impact for our town. This experience broke stereotypes, crumbled walls and united us all. It is this spirit in which I am running for Selectboard.

Please consider voting for me in March. Thank you.

MAPLE the COW™ by Matt Aucoin



Gardening Corner

(Continued from Page 3)

they tend to be butterfly magnets. I know Renaissance Farm has tulip shares, and Understory Farm has flower shares and I'm waiting for an email from Woods about their farm shares this year. Jane Costello of the Stevens Farmstead in Sudbury will have a summer CSA. Please do write in and tell me about others I may be missing in our area.

As for the monarchs, we all must do our part. We can plant milkweed and not use pesticides. Common milkweed is the absolute best for them. Despite the

fact that it sets out runners and can colonize a site, it's easy to contain. Find a place where it can go wild. Then let it. Everyone needs a bit of wilderness in their gardens.

And as for my younger brother... I'll be doing a lot of thinking about him this year and reminiscing. I hope that he can somehow float above the sickness and pain he's experiencing and, like the wandering this article has taken, circle back to remember the freedom and happiness of watching monarch butterflies, when we were children.

SUBMIT YOUR BIRTH, ANNIVERSARY, OR WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

January inspections are due!

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Calendar of events

February

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

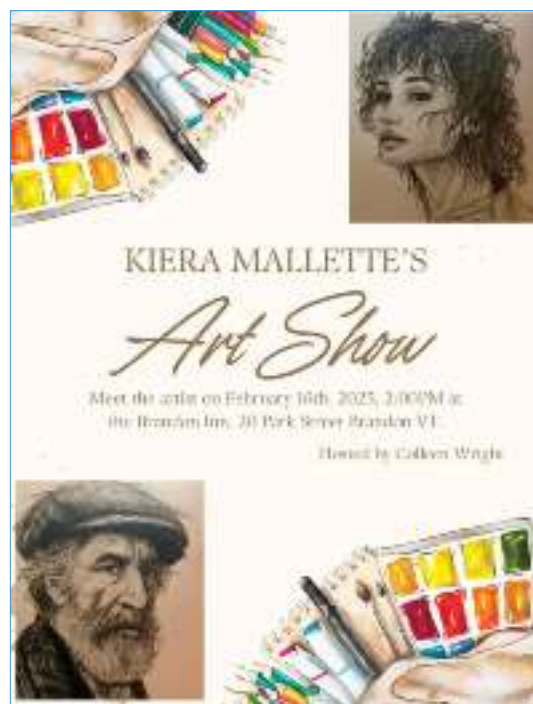
Maclure Library Yoga -

Gentle to moderate Kripalu yoga. Class includes physical movement, breathing techniques & meditation. Please bring a mat & any props you practice with. At 6 pm, \$10 fee. Sign up by emailing Paula Liguori at pali36@aol.com!

Tuesdays

Maclure Library Story Time Playgroup

Jessica Abbott from the Rutland County Parent Child Center hosts a weekly family program at the Library from 10 am–12 pm, geared towards kids ages 5 and under with singing, dancing, stories and crafts!



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).

Pokémon Club at the Brandon Free Public Library

3–5 pm. Ages 7+.

Magic the Gathering at the Brandon Free Public Library

5–7pm

Pins & Needles Craft Club at the Brandon Free Public Library

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

Free Drop-In Tech Support at the Brandon Free Public Library

5–6 pm

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.

Crafternoons

Join us from 12–2 pm at Maclure Library every Wednesday & bring your craft projects & supplies for an afternoon of art. Share tips, get ideas & inspiration for new projects with fellow crafters!

Free Drop-In Tech Support at the Brandon Free Public Library

5–6 pm

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

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

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

We spend a fair amount of the time exercising in a seated position in the chairs but if possible, we also do exercises standing, using the chairs for support. The exercises can be adjusted for individual needs and we move at a comfortable pace. I think you will soon notice a difference once you start. Looking forward to seeing you in class!

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

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.

Upcoming Rutland County Audubon Society Events

Saturday, February 15 — Join us at 8 am at the kiosk on Marble St, West Rutland for our monthly monitoring walk.



This is also the weekend of the Great Backyard Bird Count using the phone app "ebird." For more information on the walk or Great Backyard Bird Count, please contact birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

The Rutland County Audubon will be hosting a pop up bird seed sale Saturday, February 15 from 9-2 at Blue Seal in Brandon, 57

Alta Woods, Brandon, VT 05733. Proceeds from the sale of bird seed will help raise money for the Rutland County Audubon. Please share, if you are able.

Thursdays

Ukulele Group

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

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

Open Mic at Red Clover in Brandon

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

Rutland County Health Partners of February 12th, 19th and 26th

Free healthcare clinics for uninsured or underinsured adults in Rutland County will be offered by the Rutland County Health Partners (formerly Rutland Free Clinic) on February 12th, 19th and 26th from 10 am–12 pm at our offices at 204 North Main Street, Rutland, VT. No appointment is necessary.

Clinics will also be held on February 10th, and 24th from 3–7 pm. February 18th from 1–4 pm. Pointments are recommended for these clinics but walk-ins are allowed. The last patient seen at 6 pm. For appointments or questions, please call 802.1082.

Fridays

Chaffee Art Center All About the Arts Free Class for kids 3–5

From 11 am–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.

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.

Otter Valley School District leaders visit Whiting Saturday 22nd at 11:00 am

ie Bertrand, Chair of Otter Valley School Board, and Rene Sanchez, Otter Valley Superintendent, join Whiting residents for an open and informal discussion on education issues, including finances, taxes, educational opportunities, and

local control. The Otter Valley RNSU district includes Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford and Sudbury as well as Whiting. All are welcome; snacks provided. At the Whiting Town Hall.

the performers onstage, gives you perspectives ranging from the rafters to the back rows and enhances several numbers (notably their cover of Janelle Monae's protest song 'Hell You Talmbout'). And like the production, it's a wonderful showcase for Byrne's outsider-artist optimism that, for two hours, makes you feel the title's two words aren't contradictory." — Rolling Stone. 1h 45m. From 7–8:45 pm at Next Stage Arts, 15

and a feel-good attitude that is infectious. Andrews has collaborated with countless musicians and bands including Galactic, Trombone Shorty, Rebirth Brass Band, Allen Toussaint, Tuba Fats, Amos Lee, Delfayo Marsalis, Ivan Neville and many more. Glen David Andrews possesses an unwavering dedication to his roots and culture. He is an iconic musical trailblazer who continues to make a lasting impression on the music industry. 7:30–9:30 pm at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, Putney. \$10–25.

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

Kimball Hill, Putney. \$8.

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."

Thursday 13th

The Galentine's Day Show — Kaleidoscope, Rutland

Join us for our opening art reception celebrating women and female identifying artists. Everyone welcome. The show is FREE to attend. There will be a tarot reader on site for pop-up readings at \$5/each. The Galentine's Day Show is about celebrating women and female identifying folk in our creative community. Meet the artists and mingle with your

creative community. This is a FREE event to attend. Artwork will be for sale and there will be light refreshments served. Stop by for an oracle reading with our in-house tarot card reader. Support Local Art this Valentine's Day and take home an original piece on the 13th between 5:30–7:30 pm. Kaleidoscope, 37 Center Street, Rutland.

Wednesday 12th

Valentine's Perfume Blending Experience — Shelburne

Discover the art of botanical perfumery at this Bloom Lab (<https://www.bloomlabvt.com/>) perfume making event while creating your own unique perfume that is blended with intention to reflect your individual personality and style.

Offering Free Medical Care from 10 am–12 pm

February 12th from 10 am and 12 pm. Appointments will be available. Call 802-774-1082.

Rutland County Health Partners has a Vermont Certified Assister available to help you apply for or re-enroll in Medicaid. This service is by appointment only. Please call 802-774-1082.

Learn the basics of natural perfumery and blend a custom bottle of Eau de Parfum. For anyone interested in perfumery or simply enjoying good company while trying something new! You'll leave with one 30ml bottle of custom Eau de Parfum. You're invited to arrive early and shop the newest Mirror Mirror location. Cocktails can also be purchased from Fig Vermont (<https://www.figvermont.com>) throughout the event. *Limited spots available, reserve a spot for you and your friend today! From 6–8 pm at Mirror Mirror, 5573 Shelburne Road, Shelburne. \$75.

NXT Rockumentary Film Series: American Utopia (2020) — Next Stage Arts

"Spike Lee captures David Byrne's Broadway performance-art-cum-greatest-hits revue for posterity, and ends up delivering way, way more than just a concert film. It's the sort of joyous collaboration between a filmmaker and a musician that lifts up the form, much the way Byrne and his gray-suited band of singers, dancers, and instrumentalists lift up the audience's (and your) spirits. Lee snakes his camera through

Friday 14th Sunday 23rd

BarnArts presents "Antigone"

BarnArts presents "Antigone" by Sophokles, translated by Anne Carson and directed by Erin Bennett. In the aftermath of a bitter war, King Kreon honors only one of Antigone's brothers with a proper burial and forbids the burial of the other. Antigone's response kicks off a series of tragic events that challenge all in their path. Anne Carson's modern and vivid translation of Sophokles' classic Greek tragedy brings the tale of Antigone's unshakable moral compass to a contemporary world. Presented by a troupe of singing, dancing, juggling, clowning, kazoo-playing and ukulele-strumming

Ballroom Dance Classes with Patti Panebianco — Wallingford Town Hall

Have fun learning ballroom dance with one of the country's most sought-after instructors, coaches and ballroom judges Patti Panebianco! 4-week sessions in February and March.

Never danced before and want to learn? Are you already dancing and want to learn more? Did you used to dance but want to rekindle the joy it brings? Join us on Tuesdays and get your mojo on! No partner needed! First session each month is OPEN HOUSE and free to new students!

Tuesdays Feb 18, 25. 5–5:50 pm. Upon request: Kids/Youth — Swing & Salsa; 6–6:50 pm Foxtrot, 7–7:50 pm Rumba.



Tuesdays March 4, 11, 18, 25. 5–5:50 pm. Upon request: Kids/Youth — Swing & Salsa; 6–6:50 pm Foxtrot, 7–7:50 pm Rumba.

Cost is \$15 per person per class. Please note there is a 4-person minimum per class.

For more information please contact Patti Panebianco 516-909-1686 or email pattipdance@gmail.com.

Friday 14th

Valentine's Date Night Cooking Class — The Kitchen at Mission Farm, Killington

Ditch the overpriced chocolates and flowers and do something different this Valentine's Day. Join us in The Kitchen to create a fabulous meal, meet nice people and enjoy a fun night out. We'll cook, we'll laugh, we'll eat. Bring a friend, bring your mom, or bring your favorite someone. And do bring your favorite beverage. Dinner menu: Iberian Herb & Garlic Shrimp w/Crusty Bread, Lemony Ricotta Gnocchi w/Pancetta & Baby Peas, Winter Greens & Citrus Salad w/Toasted Hazelnuts, Double Chocolate Chunk Sharing Cookie Sundae w/Ice Cream & Milk Chocolate Sauce **Vegetarian options available. Please note in the comments when checking out.** Pricing is PER COUPLE. Please select (1) ticket per couple when purchasing. Scholarships are available for all classes and workshops. Please reach out to Holly at: thekitchen@missionfarmvt.org or (802) 265-1857. 6–9 pm at The Kitchen at Mission Farm, 367 Mission Farm Road, Killington. \$175.

Glen David Andrews Dance Party — Next Stage Arts

Glen David Andrews is a native son and treasured vocalist and trombonist who hails from the historic Treme neighborhood of New Orleans. His commanding voice, fierce trombone sound and electric stage presence create a musical experience that never fails to meet the moment. His musical career transcends genres and boundaries, combining New Orleans jazz, funk, gospel and rock, fusing it all into captivating and soul stirring performances that have explosive energy

local performers, this colorful production brings you a 2500-year-old story of love, bravery, and injustice as you have never seen it before! Fridays & Saturdays, Feb 14–15, 20–22 @ 7:30 pm, Feb 16 & 23 @ 2 pm, Barnard Town Hall, \$15–20. Tickets and more info: barnarts.org

Saturday 15th

Next Steps with Your Family History — Virtual

Are you ready to put a little more meat on the bare bones of your family tree? A little bit stuck? Do your family members roll their eyes when you start talking about genealogy? Go beyond the basics in your search for your family history. Marcie Crocker will introduce the use of research logs, timelines, maps, and more. She'll also touch on why you might want to put some time into the history and the languages that might be found in the area, as well as why you might want to research other family members, associates and neighbors. This hybrid class will be held in-person at the library, at 57 River Road, Essex from 10:30 to noon. It will also be available via Zoom. The cost is \$10. Please visit our website, www.vtgenlib.org to register.

Saturday 22nd

Spaghetti Dinner — Brandon United Methodist Church

Spaghetti w/meat sauce, Italian bread, salad, and dessert. Free will offering. All welcome to attend. 4:30-6:30 pm. 2 Union Street (Formerly 1 Franklin Street).

Goings on around town

Green Up

(Continued from Page 4)
empower every person to reduce waste and reuse whenever possible.” states Executive Director Kate Alberghini. “Studies show that litter and microplastics cause climate damage. Together, simply by picking up trash and changing a few habits, we can edit the direction of our climate, but we must work together.”

To help in this mission, Vermonters can support Green Up


Vermont Checkoff on Line 23 of the Vermont Income Tax Form. Together, Vermonters accomplish big things, including a Guinness World Records title last Green Up Day for the most pledges to pick up trash in 24 hours.

Green Up Vermont checkoff donations keep Vermont clean, green, and a beautiful place to live, work, and play. Contact Greenup@greenupvermont.org to get involved.



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

Restaurant guide




From Provence to You
De la Provence à Vous

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

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

11 Center Street, Brandon, VT



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

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

25 North Street, Proctor ☎ 802-459-3320

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

Brandon Town Manager's report

Considerable time the first few days of this reporting period were focused on preparing and assisting with delivery of accurate financial information in the slide presentation and answering taxpayer questions part of the “Pre-Town Meeting” held January 30th. This proved to be a wellreceived effort on the part of the selectboard, budget advisory committee, and town professional staff. Thank you to all who participated, whether by presenting, asking questions, or sharing their comments on the FY26 budget proposal.

On January 24th, a new institutional-grade flagpole donated by the Friends of the Town Hall was erected in the small green space in front of the Town Hall at 1 Conant Square. A flagpole that had stood near this location had been removed at some point a number of years ago. No tax dollars and no Town funds, staff, or equipment time were expended in this project. It was a gift to the community from the Friends, and it is appreciated. The Town will maintain the pole and the Flag going forward.

Two decaying public shade trees were removed on Park Street, with the wood picked up by community members to use for winter fuel.

their on-duty hours.

I had a productive and cordial meeting on Friday the 7th with representatives of the police union to advance the Town’s goal of retention of officers. I will report results to the board in executive session as it will entail amending the collective bargaining agreement.

I worked to advance the wastewater permitting for humane society relocation to Brandon (Park Village) and to advance the net metering agreement for offtaking of solar credits from the Novus installation proposed for the Brandon Industrial Park lot owned by the Brandon Industrial Corp.

I wrote and provided the support letter as directed by the selectboard for the SolarFest path, and completed a memorandum of understanding with SolarFest regarding construction, accessibility, and maintenance of the path.

I connected with the Department of Public Safety to do the paperwork required to increase the amount Brandon will receive for its July 2023 flood response from 92.5% to 97.8% [this cost exceeded \$225,000, so a few % points is meaningful].

I worked with the chair of the Brandon

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT	
Unrestricted / Unassigned Fund Balance	\$482,043
1% (Local Option) Tax Fund Available / Undesignated	\$250,223
Known Grant Matches Not Yet Designated	UNION STREET
Delinquent property taxes (prior years)	\$498,929 (was \$499,888)
Delinquent wastewater (prior years [over 120 days])	\$229,036 (was \$211,779)

On Thursday the 6th, I met with the prudential committee of the Fire District after requesting time on their agenda to discuss the solar credit (Green Lantern) offtaking with them. The prudential committee has stood up a working group to iron out details with the Town before their next prudential committee meeting.

In response to a selectboard inquiry at a previous meeting: The 2022 grant for the electric motorcycle has been reviewed by the chief of police, the Town’s grant administrator (bookkeeper), and me. None of us find any provision restricting disposition/sale of the motorcycle, though the

“expected measure life” and “project life” were both stated by the police department in its application as being ten (10) years at “a couple of months in the year”. The motorcycle requires replacement of a component (control board) before it can be returned to service or marketed. The chief has been authorized to pursue this repair.

In response to a selectboard inquiry between meetings: In January 2025, the Vermont State Police handed 5 emergency calls that required response during the period when Brandon Police were off duty. The officers of the Brandon police department handled 93 calls for service during the month during

Energy Committee to prepare to post the grant-funded (no Town match) Energy Navigator program. This is nearly ready to roll out pending pre-clearance from our insurers to make certain there is no liability being incurred by the Town.

Jackie continues work with the Town’s attorneys regarding their letter to incite collection of delinquent taxes. They advise that one of the new provisions of the tax sale legislation is that taxes must be delinquent for more than one year before they are placed in the tax sale process, so no FY24 delinquent taxes will be part of the collection letter or upcoming tax sale.

Tim Kingston has preliminarily interviewed a fourth candidate for the position of wastewater treatment system operator working under our chief operator and assistant chief operator.

Although I was on board-approved leave for several days during this reporting period, to bring on of my daughters on a college visit, I did still have many meetings with town officers, staff, townspeople, a journalist, VLCT Municibid buyers, and filed a number of requests for information.

Respectfully submitted,
Seth Hopkins

Summer daydreaming in the dark of winter

BY JANET MONDLAK

Brandon's July 4th celebration is months away, but I've been daydreaming about the magic of the day. This one day in Brandon, every year, designed to commemorate our independence and the founding of a country, engages all our senses and brings us together as a community. It may be February right now, but that doesn't mean we can't do a little dreaming. Our five senses:

Sight: The day starts with the 10 a.m. parade. Seeing it march down Park Street, swinging around the bank corner, going past our downtown and our majestic Town Hall and ending up at Crescent Park, elicits waving, clapping, cheering and lots of smiling. The day ends with fireworks at dusk, spreading its colors and designs all over our historic downtown.

Smell: The smell of a party is in the air. You might get a whiff of the horses, as they prance in the parade. Think about the food sizzling on the BBQs, the bread dough frying, and the popcorn popping.

Hear: There is music all day long, starting with marching units and musicians on flat beds in the parade. Bands are in our parks all afternoon. And the evening street dance is one huge party with DJ Cram cranking out today's most popular tunes.

Taste: You've already niversary! There are so many ways you can contribute to this day food can make grown men cry. From the food vendors in the park to the food trucks lining the street, it all screams "summer party!"

Touch: Feel the sun on your skin. Experience the excitement of the kids enjoying the post-parade activities behind the Brandon Inn. Hug someone you love as the fireworks rain down from above.

Brandon's celebration will be on Saturday, July 5th this year—our nation's 249th anniversary!

There are so many ways you can contribute to this special event. The parts and pieces of putting together this magical day are wide and varied. Here's a short list of how you can be a part of it:

Vote YES to the Brandon Independence Day Celebration—again, there are lots of ways. You can buy "ducks" that spill into the Neshobe River in the world-famous Duck Race. You can bid on goods and services at the silent auction. You can donate to the silent auction. You can sponsor the parade by just writing a check! You can buy 50/50 raffle tickets, which will be available as time moves forward.

Participate—It's a heap of fun to be in the parade. You can march, dance, ride on a flat-bed or a special vehicle. Are you part of a team? In a club or organization? Lead a kids group like 4H or the Scouts? Have a fun employer who would like to show off? Are you in a garage band? The more variety the better so think how you can join in the fun.

Spread the magic—do a little daydreaming of your own. July will be here before we know it! If you would like more information on being a part of putting together the magic, contact Bill Moore at the Brandon Town Office at bmoore@townofbrandon.com or by calling 802-247-3635 ext 213.



FIREWORKS LIGHT UP the Brandon sky at the 2024 celebration.

Photo by George Fjeld

Judy Anderson - Mornings from 6 to 10 am!

101.5 FM

MUD RADIO

The Roots of American Music



Mim's Photos

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



Recognized



Once again, our apologies: this time to Sue Wetmore, who last week correctly identified Rev. Kvetko of the Brandon Congregational Church, not the Grace Congregational Church, in the center of this photo. Noreen Babcock also noted our mistake.

It seems we may also have misunderstood one of the recognitions sent in: the woman whose face is partially hidden, second from left, is Betty Thomas. So let's try this again: (back row, left to right) unknown, Betty Thomas, Rev. James Kvetko, Bette Moffett, and Gene Childers. Thank you to Sue Wetmore, Terry Ferson, Noreen Babcock, and Linda and Bob Schmidt for your input!



Brud Leedom, Chuck Mitchell, Bud Coolidge, Sue Wetmore, and Terry Ferson recognized Lillian and Raymond Mulcahy in this photo. Mr. Mulcahy was superintendent of the Brandon Training School for many years. Mr. Ferson added that he and Mr. Mulcahy served together on the Brandon Selectboard in the 70s.



Patti LaDuke called to let us know that the recognition of this photo in last week's issue was incorrect. According to Ms. LaDuke, the man driving the golf cart is not Ted Larock, but Herbert Larock, Ted's brother. Patti says she and her family grew up near the Larock family.

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

Or call us at 247-8080

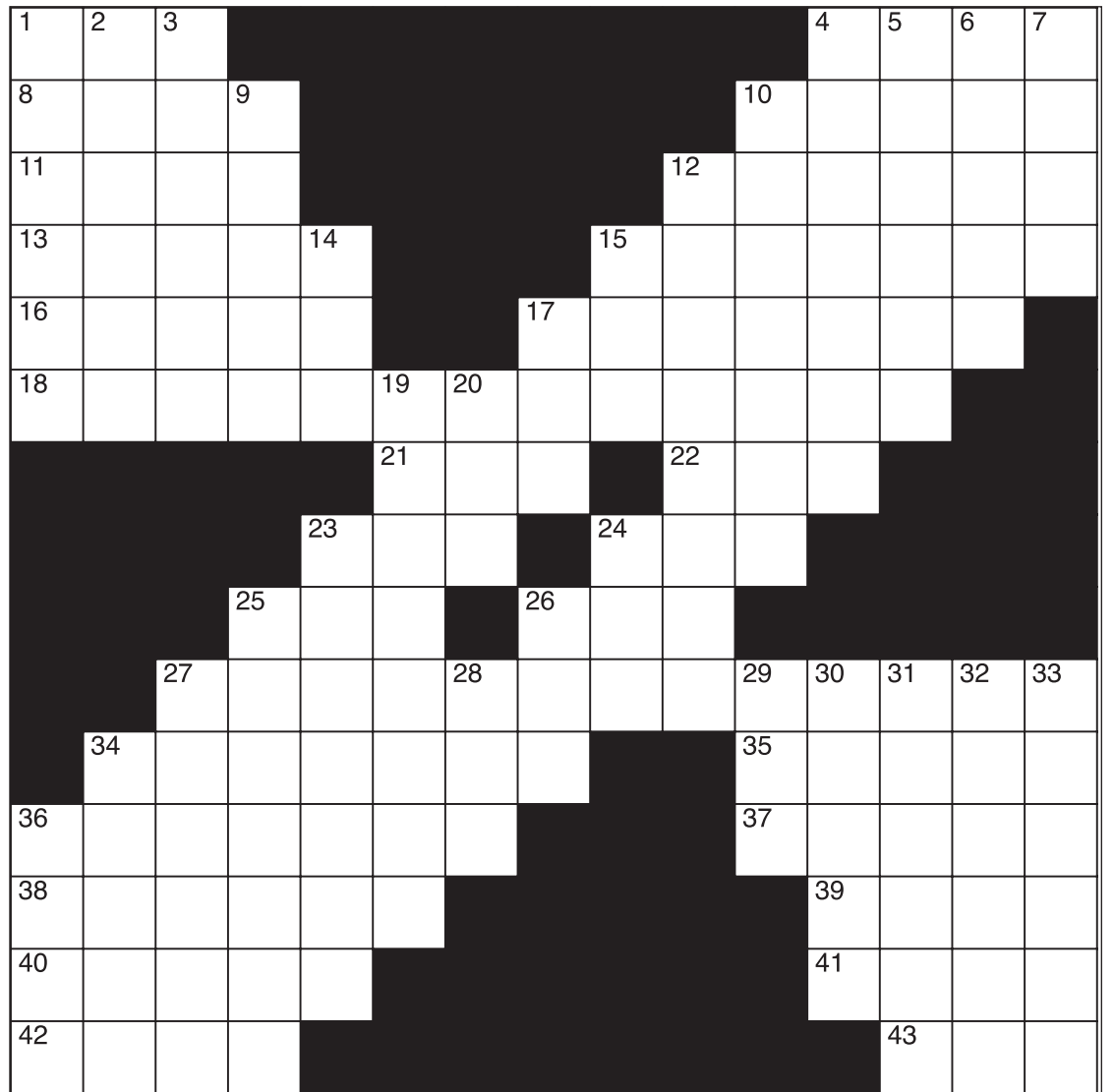
Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Racquet sport group (abbr.)
4. Norse god of thunder
8. Russian industrial city
10. What's good for the ___
11. Round-ish shape
12. Baltimore MLBer
13. French modernist painter
15. Burned with water
16. Intestinal issue
17. Take the lead
18. Prove oneself worthy
21. None
22. Tax collector
23. Swiss river
24. Gymnast Raisman
25. Baby's dining accessory
26. Canadian beer distributor
27. Iconic American tourist destination
34. More expansive
35. Alert
36. Popular boots Doc ___
37. Showings
38. Conclusion
39. Share a common boundary
40. Shooting sport
41. Popular side dish
42. Global energy firm
43. Chronicles (abbr.)

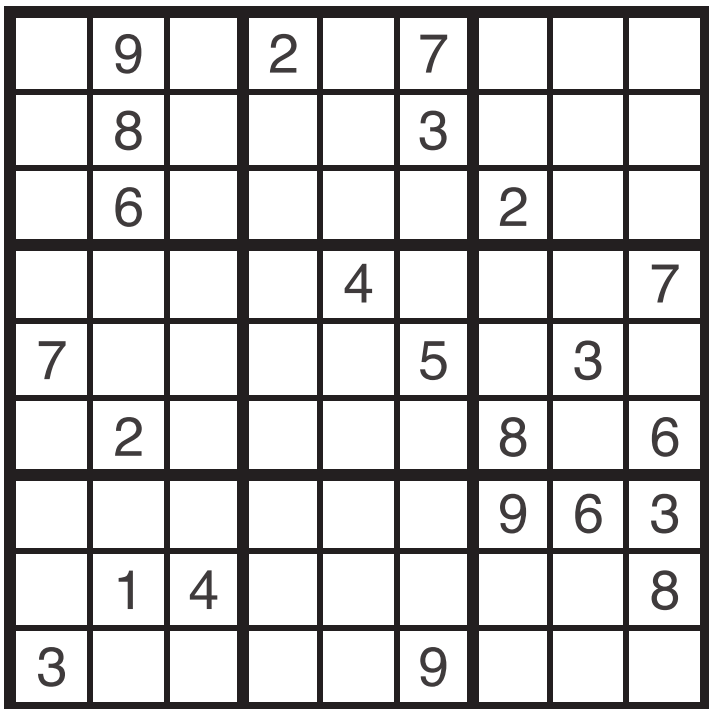
CLUES DOWN

1. Type of bomb
2. Polynesian island country
3. Heavenly body
4. Hard workers
5. Covered
6. Johns Hopkins Hospital founder
7. Plant of the grass family
9. Island person of the Bering Sea
10. Storehouse
12. Scarlet-flowered desert shrub
14. A pituitary hormone
15. Female sibling
17. Monetary unit of Afghanistan
19. Empowering
20. Space station
23. Disorder
24. State of fuss
25. Footwear for babies
26. Nuclear reactor (abbr.)
27. Drove
28. Affirmative
29. Male parent
30. Utter obscenities
31. Type of verse
32. Unpleasant person
33. One who settles down
34. Founder of source-based history
36. A way to snarl



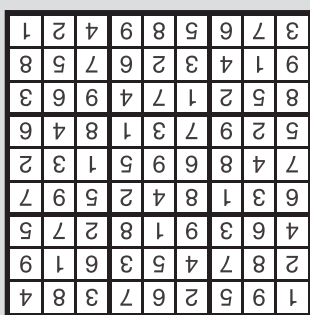
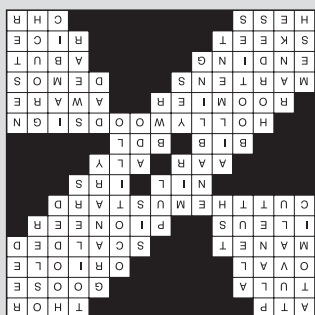
Sudoku

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



Level: Intermediate

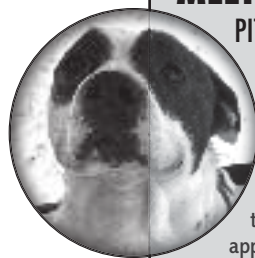
PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



Find Your Purr-fect Match This Valentine's Day!

Looking for unconditional love? The kind that greets you at the door, snuggles up on the couch, and never swipes left? This Valentine's Day, skip the dating apps and meet your furry soulmate at RCHS! We have so many amazing animals who are ready to shower you with love, loyalty, and plenty of tail wags or purrs. Whether you're looking for a playful partner, a laid-back cuddle buddy, or a best friend for life, we have the perfect match waiting just for you! Give RCHS a call at 802.483.6700 or stop by Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-4 pm to meet your match!

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



MEET DIESEL - *FOSTER-TO-ADOPT- 2-YEAR-OLD. NEUTER DATE SET.

PIT MIX. BRINDLE. Diesel is a young, energetic, and incredibly sweet pup who has been stealing hearts since he arrived as a stray on 1/22/25. He loves people and is always ready for fun! Whether it's a game of fetch or a round of tug-of-war, Diesel is eager to be your new adventure buddy. Despite his playful nature, Diesel knows some manners and is ready to learn more with the right family. Since we don't have any history of him, a proper introduction to other dogs at the shelter is a must. His behavior with cats is unknown, so careful introductions in the home will be important. Given his affectionate personality, we think he'd do well with kids who can keep up with his energy and love. Diesel has a neuter appointment scheduled for 2/26/25, so he will be a foster-to-adopt until then. If you're looking for a fun-loving, affectionate companion, come meet Diesel! Our Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 am to 4 pm.

MEET TYRONE - 2-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE. HOUND MIX. TRI-COLORED.

Looking for a handsome dog to add to your family? Well, meet Tyrone. He came to us in August when his previous owners could no longer care for him. This young guy is a sweetie, with a playful and energetic demeanor. He LOVES to play outside and sniff in the snow. He would be best in a home without young kids, or cats. But he would be good with other dogs, with a proper introduction. If you would like to meet Tyrone, stop by the Adoption Center open Tuesday through Saturday 11 am-4 pm. Hurry, he's waiting for you!



**RUTLAND COUNTY
HUMANE SOCIETY**

802-483-6700 • WWW.RCHSVT.ORG
765 STEVENS RD. • PITTSFORD



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



New Large-Print books donated by Brenda Whittaker

The Note by Alastair Burke, donated in memory of Madelyn C. Neumann

Presumed Guilty by Scott Turow, donated in memory of "Judge" Chet Ketcham

New DVDs

Wicked (Rated PG)

The untold story of the witches of Oz. Elphaba, a young woman misunderstood because of her unusual green skin, and Glinda, a popular young woman, gilded by privilege and ambition who has yet to discover her true heart. The two meet as students at Shiz University in the fantastical Land of Oz and forge an unlikely but profound friendship. Following an encounter with The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, their friendship reaches a crossroads, and their lives take very different paths. Glinda's unflinching desire for popularity sees her seduced by power, while Elphaba's determination to remain true to herself, and to those around her, will have unexpected and shocking consequences for her future.

Monster Summer (Rated PG-13)

When a mysterious force begins to disrupt their big summer fun, Noah and his friends team up with a retired police detective to embark on a monstrous adventure to save their island.

Alien: Romulus (Rated R)

While scavenging the deep ends of a derelict space station, a group of young space colonizers come face to face with the most terrifying life form in the universe.

Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes (rated PG-13)

Many years after Caesar's reign, apes are the dominant species living harmoniously and humans have been reduced to living in the shadows. As a new tyrannical ape leader builds his empire, one young ape undertakes a harrowing journey that will cause him to question all that he has known about the past and to make choices that will define a future for apes and humans alike.

The Last Rifleman (Rated PG-13)

A WWII veteran escapes his care home in Northern Ireland and embarks on an arduous but inspirational journey to France to attend the 75th anniversary of the

DID YOU KNOW?

On 2/15 we're hosting a puzzle competition from 12 to 3:30 p.m. — limit 8 groups. Sign up at 802-247-8230. Also, a special thanks to some snow-shoveling fairies who've helped keep our sidewalks clear.

D-Day landings, finding the courage to face the ghosts of his past.

The Substance (Rated R)

An aging actress takes "the substance," from which another her is born, decades younger. The catch? They share a consciousness and only one of them can be awake at a time.

Bluey

The sweet, animated adventures of Bluey, a pup from down under, and her family and friends. Seasons 1-3.

Paw Patrol: Rubble and Crew on the Job

What's more fun than a pup in a construction vehicle? Lots of pups in lots of construction vehicles. Rubble and his family—Aunt, Grandpa, cousins and all—are working hard to make their town, Builder Cove, a ter-ruff-ic place to live.

Brandon Police Report

Note from Brandon Police Chief David Kachajian: The Vermont State Police (VSP) are covering the Town of Brandon for emergency calls from 4 pm/6 pm until 8 am, 7 days a week, due to the staffing shortage at the Brandon Police Department (BPD). This log may not reflect calls that VSP receives during the time Brandon officers are off duty.

February 3

- Received a report of threats made via telephone.

- Responded to a report of suspicious activity at a residence on Deer Run Road that had been foreclosed on and where numerous burglaries had taken place. Officers determined that individuals from a cleaning company had been hired to clean the residence.

- Took fingerprints for school employment.

- Took fingerprints for a medical license.

- Responded to a residence on North Street for a report of a large raccoon that was being aggressive and attempted to attack the caller. It was later determined that a neighbor of the complainant shot the raccoon and that they were looking for assistance in disposing of the animal. Vermont Fish & Wildlife was notified of the incident.

- Responded to a mental health call on Pine Tree Drive.

February 4

- Received a late report of a crash at the intersection of Franklin Street and Nickerson Road.

- Received a report of a loose dog walking around Park Street with no owner. The area was checked, but the dog was not located.

- Received a late report of a minor fender bender that occurred on Union Street. Damage documented for insurance purposes.

February 5

- Vehicle stop on Marble Street for a vehicle that made an improper lefthand turn and cut off a police cruiser. Warning issued.

- Received a call of a missing person with a history of mental health issues. The whereabouts of the man's location were later discovered, and he was confirmed to be at a behavioral health facility.

- Vehicle stop at West Seminary Street at Conant's Square for a red-light violation. Warning issued.

- Police served a Relief From Abuse order upon an individual at the BPD.

- Police served a notice of a denied court order upon an individual at the BPD.

- Took fingerprints for a cannabis license.

- Responded to the area of Seminary Street and River Street for a report of an individual in a red car possibly having a stroke. The area was checked, but the vehicle was not located. It was later determined that the car was now on Route 7 and had headed into the Town of Leicester.

February 7

- Responded to Florence Road for a report of a vehicle that had gotten stuck down an embankment due to poor roadway conditions. The vehicle was towed out, and the operator was uninjured and able to drive the vehicle away from the scene without issue.

- Received a call of a suspicious vehicle near the area of Town Farm Road and Blackberry Lane.

February 8

- Assisted a man, with known mental health issues, in determining where his belongings, which he believed had been stolen, had gone. The items consisted of baseball bats, golf clubs, and hockey sticks and were found to have been secured by the individual's care providers for safety reasons.

- Dispatched to the area of Center Street for multiple 911 calls of a woman in a red sedan who was passed out behind the wheel. The driver was later reported to have left the area, where she proceeded to travel northbound on Route 7. The Vermont State Police – New Haven Barracks was notified; however, upon officers checking the area, the vehicle was not located.

- Received a report of an individual with a propane/heating service company that had entered a residence on Carver Street, unannounced, for work related purposes.

- Conducted a welfare check on Park Street.

February 9

- Received a walk-in com- (See Police report, Page 19)

Affordability is a leading concern shaping Rutland City mayoral race

BY GRETA SOLSAA/
VTDIGGER

With town meeting day just under a month away, the race for Rutland city mayor is shaping up to be a competitive one, with the current mayor Mike Doenges and sitting Alderman Henry Heck vying for the position.

The only challenger to the incumbent mayor, Heck served in local government as city clerk for 14 years. But, Heck was not reappointed to the position by Doenges when he was first elected as mayor two years ago.

The two candidates agree that

one of the top concerns on voters' minds is affordability and property taxes, and they agree that drawing more people to the city is a priority. But the candidates' approaches to tackling this issue differ.

Heck said that attracting people to Rutland is difficult because Vermont is an expensive state to live in, and that he would approach the issue "one bite at a time."

"Getting people to come here is not going to be easy, and it's not going to be easy because of housing, and it's not going to be

easy because of the cost, and it's not going to be easy because we don't have a lot of high paying jobs," Heck said.

At the forefront of the former city clerk's campaign has been a push to curb spending by the local government. Heck has taken issue with Doenges' proposed city budget and infrastructure projects, calling for slowing down investment in development and reducing cost burdens on city taxpayers.

"What it all boils back to is the taxpayers and trying to commit (See Rutland race, Page 20)

Mid-year budget

(Continued from Page 6)
to reconcile any differences before sending the bill to the governor, who could approve or reject it. The process typically wraps up in March.

(Lawmakers have already begun work on the state budget for the 2026 fiscal year, which starts in July, but the bill passed Friday largely impacts 2025 spending.)

Many of the spending changes lawmakers are considering would leverage the recent revenue upgrade the state received for the current fiscal year to help mitigate cost pressures on state government, administration officials said in recent weeks. High on that list, Scott officials have told lawmakers, are the rising costs of health care.

H.141 makes numerous changes to state spending that come as lawmakers reevaluate how and where resources should be allocated with part of the fiscal year elapsed.

For instance, it would reduce—by about \$13 million—the funding available through June for a state child care subsidy program. Rep. Robin Scheu, D-Middlebury, who chairs the budget-writing House Appropriations Committee, said the program has gotten less use than lawmakers and the administration had been expecting.

The House included the vast majority of Scott's proposed changes in its tune-up bill.

"We found common ground with the governor on more than 99% of what he proposed," Scheu said when laying out details of the bill on the House floor Thursday afternoon.

But it was the remaining fraction that appeared to be a line in the sand for many House members ahead of the bill's initial approval. Among those changes is an additional \$1.8 million for the motel voucher program that would keep certain eligibility restrictions, which are currently on pause due to the cold weather, from kicking back in until June 30.

As it stands, an 80-night limit on motel stays and a 1,100-room cap—restrictions that prompted a mass wave of evic-

tions last fall—are set to take effect again on April 1.

The House drew that money from a \$14 million appropriation Scott had proposed for state Treasurer Mike Pieciak's office that Pieciak later testified to lawmakers he did not currently need. Also included in the House's version, using that money, is about \$11.5 million to build out new housing capacity, including for adults with developmental disabilities.

The House would also use \$850,000 of that money to upgrade security and other infrastructure at courthouses around the state, according to Scheu.

Rep. Tiff Bluemle, D-Burlington, the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, said on the House floor Thursday that the \$1.8 million for the voucher program would extend housing eligibility for at least 457 households past the start of April.

"Let us avoid the chaos and cruelty of unhousing so many of our neighbors at a time when so much in our communities and at the national level is in flux," Bluemle said.

Several House members, from both the Democratic and Republican parties, said they were opposed to the measure that would extend eligibility for the program, or to the fact that the policy change was included in the budget adjustment legislation at all.

Rep. Will Greer, D-Bennington, voted in favor of H.141 but said by extending the motel program protections, the House was continuing to "erode the principles of personal responsibility over one's own choices," adding that in his view, lawmakers "cannot continue to help people that will not help themselves."

Meanwhile, Barre Town Republican Rep. Gina Galfetti charged that her Democratic colleagues had "taken over what should be a simple act of balancing out the budget" by using the budget adjustment process "as a vehicle to make hasty policy" as well.

"Has the majority become so nefarious that they need

to slide policy through in the (budget adjustment process)?" she asked during Thursday's floor debate.


On Friday morning, Galfetti apologized on the House floor for her Thursday comments and appeared to partly walk

them back, saying that "the use of my word 'nefarious' was over the line for the decorum that we have in this chamber."

Scott said at his weekly press conference on Wednesday that he was opposed to the House's move to extend cold weather

eligibility rules in the budget adjustment bill, saying instead that any such funding should go toward increasing the state's congregate shelter capacity.

The motel voucher program, he told reporters, "has proven to be a failed policy."



WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

LEO July 23-Aug. 23
Your words carry a lot of weight right now, Leo. Be very careful about the opinions you offer and the stories you share. By the weekend you may be called upon for some advice.

VIRGO Aug. 24-Sept. 22
Virgo, if you have been thinking about making some sweeping financial decisions, now is the time to take action. Putting things off for another day can wreck long-term plans.

LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23
Sometimes you have to give yourself a pat on the back when others are not offering the feedback you need, Libra. You are doing a great job and learning along the way.


SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22
You often keep your cards close to the vest, Scorpio. Others may be surprised to learn a project you have been working on for some time has come to fruition.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21
Personal ambitions are at the forefront of your mind, Sagittarius. However, you may be placing too much importance on financial matters rather than the other rewards from hard work.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20
You are doing quite well in your professional life right now, Capricorn. But in terms of home life, there are definitely some areas that can use improvement. Focus on those things.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18
Aquarius, you could be feeling a strong urge to declutter personal spaces, such as the garage, closets or even your home office. Find the time to start sorting through belongings.

PISCES Feb. 19-March 20
All it may take is a simple conversation to clear up some persistent misconceptions, Pisces. Figure out when to schedule that talk and afterwards you will feel better.



FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

Feb. 15	Galileo, astronomer (d)
Feb. 16	The Weeknd, singer (35)
Feb. 17	Michael Jordan, basketball player (62)
Feb. 18	Toni Morrison, novelist, Nobel laureate (d)
Feb. 19	Amy Tan, novelist (73)
Feb. 20	Trevor Noah, comedian (41)
Feb. 21	Nina Simone, musician (d)

Police report

(Continued from Page 18)
plaint from an individual receiving threatening and harassing text messages.

- Conducted a welfare check on an individual on Pearl Street. The subject was determined to be safe and sound.

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Brandon SB

(Continued from Page 9)
complaint involved allegations of a “delicate” nature, the Board might choose not to discuss them publicly.

In order to develop an official process for assessing ethics complaints, Mr. Bailey and Ms. Nelson agreed to form a working group that will come back to the Board with a proposal.

No further action was taken on Ms. Mayo’s complaint.

PUBLIC COMMENT

During the Public Comment portion of the meeting, Board Chair Doug Bailey reminded Brandon residents that the Otter Valley Unified Union School District annual meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 26 at 6:30 p.m. at Otter Valley. Mr. Bailey was especially concerned that residents attend this meeting because a floor vote will be taken to decide whether OV should convey 10 acres of its land for the development of the Valley Community Center, a new recreational facility proposed for the site. The cost of the facility is estimated to be \$12 million, to be shared by the taxpayers of towns that approve bonds to fund the project.

The vote will be held at the meeting and will be decided only by those who attend. Attendance at the annual meeting has generally been low in the past, prompting Mr. Bailey to encourage attendance this year in order to have a say in whether this project proceeds.

A discussion of the crosswalk in front of the Town Office then ensued when an attendee noted that traffic rarely yields for pedestrians

trying to cross the street there. He asked whether something could be done to encourage cars to yield. Other attendees agreed that the crosswalk was in a dangerous spot and that cars routinely ignored it.

Deputy Town Manager Bill Moore stated that there was no good place there to install blinking lights. Town Manager Seth Hopkins said that the crosswalk could be repainted in the spring or summer. He also noted that there is \$4K left in the Town’s signage budget and new Ped Xing signs could be purchased.

The discussion then turned to the parking lot in front of the Brandon Inn, which some drivers use in order to bypass the traffic lights on Route 7. It was suggested that stronger signage was needed to prevent this and to keep drivers from making illegal left turns from the Center Street end of the lot.

An attendee informed the Board that because of the federal government’s funding freeze, local programs like Meals-on-Wheels are unable to operate, leaving vulnerable citizens without food and some local residents without jobs preparing and delivering meals.

The pastor of the Brandon United Methodist Church, Vicki Disorda, noted that the church provides meals on Tuesday afternoons and holds dinners on the third Saturday of every month that are open to those who cannot pay.

WARRANT

The Board unanimously approved a warrant in the amount of \$126,660.68.

Minutes of Annual Friends of the Brandon Library Meeting February 2, 2025

All who attended were asked to sign in and provide contact information. All who attended were provided with copies of the proposed changes to both the Constitution and the By-Laws of the organization.

Chair Carol Fjeld opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m. and welcomed all present. Introductions of current Executive Board members, and vacant position of Secretary was noted. Nomination of current officers for 2025 was made by Gary Meffe and seconded by Lyla Fuller. There being no further nominations, the vote was unanimous. Chair – Carol Fjeld, Vice Chair – Bobbie Torstenson, Treasurer – Sue Stone. There was no nomination for secretary, nor did anyone step forward at this time.

Fjeld announced the updating of the Friends’ Web Page, located at the primary site for the Brandon Library.

Treasurer Sue Stone presented a summary/review of 2024:

Total income =	\$ 37,672.33
Total expenses =	\$ 35,144.52
Current checking =	\$ 13,502.06
Current savings =	\$ 916.00
12-month CD =	\$ 14,000.00

(term is mid-summer)

Noted we have fully paid the pledge of \$10,000 per year, for 5 years (construction). Noted we can now address our usual pledge to the Board for operating expenses.

Motion by Fjeld to commit payment of \$15,000 in April and another \$15,000 in October to the Board for operating expenses in 2025. Second by Mary Bugnacki. Motion passed with no dissent.

Fjeld shares that she believes in focusing on the “fun” in Fundraising; to focus on variety, and appealing to many different segments of the community.

The next scheduled event

is Cocktails for a Cause, on April 6th in the street-level-private dining room of Cafe Provence. Tickets at Library and on website.

Committee Chair is Carol.

At end of May is the Plant Sale (same day as the Congregational Church sale), which has proved beneficial in the past. Sarah Pattis is the chairperson. The Garden Tour is not chaired this year (usually July/August).

However, if someone wishes to head this up, it was successful previously. Other activities include Pizza by the Pond, the Golf Tournament in the fall, and the Auction in late November or early December. Fjeld noted that we are open to any new ideas or suggestions at any time, and those who wish to volunteer should contact any one of us.

Vice-chair Torstenson noted that the Auction and potential Book Sale will require significant re-organization/planning in regards to space and process.

Fjeld introduced the topics of a Constitution and By-Laws for our organization.

The Constitution is our “Mission Statement”, and the By-Laws are the “How To.” She noted these were originally written at the founding of the organization in 1955, and were last updated in 1975. Both have been recently reviewed by the Executive Committee and the proposed changes were presented.

Constitution: Motion by Lyla Fuller, seconded by Linda Gebhard to accept as presented. Gary Meffe raised a question about the wording in Article II. After some discussion, it was agreed to change wording from “it shall also be to raise money” to “and to raise money” (a stronger statement).

Motion to accept Constitution with changes by Lyla Fuller, seconded by Wyatt Waterman. Motion passed unanimously.

By-Laws: Motion by Billy Bullock and seconded by Layla Fuller to accept the changes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Bruce Ness, from the Library Board and Coordinator of the Construction Project had been invited to discuss the current status of the yet to be finished basement and attic. Unfortunately, Bruce was not available to attend but did provide a written report which Fjeld shared. As soon as there is access to a grant (already approved) he would re-engage the architect, Naylor & Breen, & others as needed. Planning may continue before then. Once we can move forward, it is estimated it will take 4 to 6 months to complete the projects.

Before closing the meeting, Fjeld asked if anyone had any questions or wished to say anything further. Wyatt Waterman stated he would like to “audition” for secretary. His interest was welcomed, and it was agreed he would attend the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

We then set a date for the next meeting as Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 10 a.m., in the upstairs meeting room of the Library. Fjeld noted these meetings are not exclusive, and any member is welcome to attend.

It was then decided that the dates for all meetings would be posted on Front Porch Forum and our website.

With no other business, motion by Lyla Fuller and seconded by Sue Stone to adjourn. Motion passed. Attendees were encouraged to mingle and enjoy the refreshments.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bobbie Torstenson,
Vice-Chair
Friends of the Brandon
Library*

Rutland race

(Continued from Page 18)
to a sensible growth where we’re not going to overburden the taxpayers with more and more taxes,” Heck said.

Doenges said that after working with the Board of Aldermen to determine priorities such as public safety and infrastructure, the city budget was cut to a 2.8% tax increase, which Doenges characterized as a “shoestring” budget.

“There is no frivolity in our budget. There’s nothing in the budget that isn’t a necessity for the city or has been specifically asked for by the taxpayer,” Doenges said. “That is a big, big difference versus other communities that are still working to play catch up on inflation.”

“Rutland is an expensive place to live”

Doenges said that the affordability issue facing Rutland residents is rooted in Rutland’s

shrunk population, and believes that investments in infrastructure is part of drawing more people to the Marble City.

“Rutland is an expensive place to live for different reasons, and one of those is the fact that we’re a city that is built for 30,000 people, and there’s 15,000 people paying for it,” Doenges said. “That makes it more expensive to be part of this community, and we have to grow that population.”

Doenges said his strategy for addressing affordability has been to find revenue streams to invest in infrastructure and housing projects that would not fall on taxpayers through a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, the Roofs Over Rutland Program and a Capital Investment Plan.

The Rutland City Board of Aldermen voted to approve the TIF district proposal last month, which is designed to attract pri-

private developers to take on public infrastructure projects, and the request to start a TIF district has been sent to the state for approval, Doenges said.

This past fall, the Roofs Over Rutland initiative headed by the Rutland Heritage Family Credit Union with Doenges’ support re-

ceived \$8 million in investments to offer incentives to developers working on housing projects in Rutland.

The Capital Investment Plan is a new initiative proposed by the incumbent mayor and approved by the Rutland City Board of Aldermen last month to prioritize

capital projects and fixing roads and sidewalks in the future, Doenges said.

Along with voting for who will guide the city into the future on Town Meeting Day, Rutland residents will have the chance to also vote on whether or not to

(See Rutland race, Page 23)

PUBLIC NOTICES/CLASSIFIEDS

TOWN OF PITTSFORD
Adoption of Town of Pittsford Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance
www.pittsfordvermont.com

This ordinance includes the Town of Pittsford authority, purpose, definitions, complaints, enforcement, appeals, other laws, severability, effective date, and the repeal process. A full copy of the ordinance is posted on the town website. Please reach out to the Town Manager with questions at PO Box 10 Pittsford, VT 05763 or by telephone at (802) 483-6500 ext. 200. Citizens have a right to petition pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 1973 for a vote on the Ordinance.

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NOTICE TO PROPERTY TAXPAYERS – 3rd QTR PAYMENT DUE
Town of Brandon

Notice is hereby given that payment for the property taxes assessed upon the grand list of the Town of Brandon for the 3rd quarter of the fiscal year July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 is due February 15, 2025. Third quarter payments not received by February 18 or postmarked after February 18 will be subject to interest at 1% per month. Please furnish the remittance slip with your payment. Payments may be made by mail, at the Town Offices, 49 Center Street, at either of the two drop boxes located in front of the Town Office and at the Neshobe School or by credit card through our online payment service which can be found on our website.

The Town Clerk's office will be open on Friday, February 14 for in-person payments. Monday, February 17 is a holiday.

Thank you.
 Susan Gage,

TOWN OF PROCTOR, VERMONT
Official Warning
Annual Town Meeting

The legal voters of the Town of Proctor, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Proctor Junior-Senior High in the Town of Proctor on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, between the hours of ten o'clock (10:00) in the forenoon (a.m.), at which time the polls will open, and seven o'clock (7:00) in the afternoon (p.m.), at which time the polls will close, to vote by Australian ballot upon the following Article of business:

ARTICLE VII
 Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Proctor in an amount not to exceed Five Million, Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$5,400,000), subject to reduction from available grants-in-aid be issued to finance the cost of maintaining and upgrading the Town's wastewater treatment facility, to include sludge removal, lagoon liner replacements, air diffusion system re placement and ultraviolet disinfection system replacement, the estimated cost of such improvements being Five Million, Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$5,400,000)?

The legal voters of the Town of Proctor are further notified that voter qualification, registration and absentee voting relative to said Annual Meeting shall be as provided in 24 V.S.A. §1303 and Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

The legal voters of the Town of Proctor are further notified that a public informational meeting will be held on Monday, March 3, 2025, beginning at seven o'clock (7:00 PM) in the evening, for the purpose of explaining the proposed maintenance and improvements to the wastewater treatment facility and the financing thereof.

Adopted and approved at a special meeting of the Town of Proctor Selectboard duly called, noticed and held on January 16, 2025.

DATED: 01/16/2025 TOWN OF PROCTOR SELECTBOARD

Lisa Mear, Chair
 Bruce Bacon, Vice Chair
 Linda Perry
 Alfred Wenz
 Jay Thompson
 (By a majority of board)

RECEIVED FOR RECORD January 16, 2025


Debra Linnart
 Civil Engineer
 Town Clerk/Treasurer

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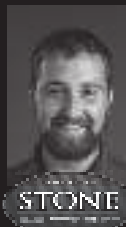
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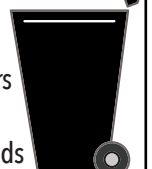
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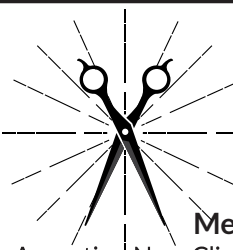
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Rutland race

(Continued from Page 20)
obligate a \$3.8 million bond towards the first project under the Capital Investment Plan.

If the article passes, the money would go towards replacing a 40-year-old ammonia-based chiller for the hockey rink at the Giorgetti Athletic Complex, which Doenges said would be harmful to human health if the system broke.

While Doenges said that plan looks at \$80 million worth of potential capital projects, the voters will have a chance to vote on allocating funds to each project individually.

‘Projects need to be paid for’
Heck has voiced concern that bonds taken out for capital projects through the Capital Investment Plan would be detrimental to property taxpayers.

“Some folks may not realize, with bonds we have approved for the projects, all of a sudden, you have to start paying it back,”

Heck said. “It can affect the tax structure, and definitely he’s going to increase property tax as far as that goes, because, again, those projects need to be paid for.”

Doenges said, on the contrary, the Capital Investment Plan would be funded through a 1% local option sales tax that

“people pay when they come to Rutland and they shop in our town.” Doenges said the Capital Investment Plan is a tool to address the need for capital investment while lowering the burden on the property taxpayer.

Rutland City residents voted in favor of implementing the local option tax in March of 2023,

and it went into effect in Rutland City in July of that year.

“That’s the first time in a very long time that the city of Rutland has bonded for something that doesn’t increase property tax,” Doenges said. “This is a huge benefit over the long run for the city.”

PUBLIC NOTICE

OTTER VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT February 26, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

The legal voters of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District, consisting of the Towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Sudbury and Whiting are hereby notified and warned to meet in person at the Otter Valley Union High School Auditorium on **Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 6:30 PM**, to consider and act upon the following articles (Articles 1-10) and for a public informational hearing to discuss the articles to be voted upon by Australian ballot (Article 11-12). **Legal voters who attend via Zoom may not act upon Articles from the floor but may participate for informational purposes only.** The legal voters are further notified and warned that voting on Articles shall take place by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the times and places listed for the official polling places of the respective Towns comprising the district below.

Virtual Option for Observing Annual District Meeting

Remote attendees may not act upon Articles from the floor but may participate for informational purposes only. The Meeting link and dial in information can be found on the calendar on the RNESU website: <http://www.rnesu.org>.

To be acted upon on Wednesday, February 26, 2025.

- Article 1: To elect a Moderator who shall assume office immediately and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.
- Article 2: To elect a Clerk who shall assume office on July 1, 2025 and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.
- Article 3: To elect a Treasurer who shall assume office on July 1, 2025 and serve one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.
- Article 4: To establish the salaries for the elected officers of the District.
- A. School Directors - \$1,500 per member per year and an additional \$750 for the member serving as the School Board Chair
 - B. Moderator - \$150 per meeting
 - C. Clerk - \$150 per meeting
 - D. Treasurer - \$6,000 per year
- Article 5: To approve all minutes from the last Unified Union District annual meeting to date.
- Article 6: Shall the legal voters authorize the School Board to borrow money by issuance of notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the fiscal year July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026?
- Article 7: Shall the voters approve the Unified Union District’s conveyance of a +/-10-acre parcel of land along the easterly boundary of the Otter Valley Union High School (OVUHS) property and southerly of the OVUHS’s access driveways, in exchange of One Dollar (\$1.00), to the Valley Community Center (VCC), contingent on VCC securing sufficient funds by March 30, 2027 to construct a community center or recreation facility with related improvements southerly of the OVUHS access driveways with no additional Unified Union District financial commitment to the property or to VCC?
- Article 8: To hear and discuss the Board of School Directors of the Unified Union School District’s presentation of its estimate of expenses for the ensuing year as stated in Article 11 to be voted upon by Australian Ballot.
- Article 9: To transact any other business which may legally come before this meeting.
- Article 10: To adjourn the meeting until 7:00 AM March 4, 2025, when voting by Australian ballot shall commence.

To be voted upon by Australian ballot on March 4, 2025:

- Article 11: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend Twenty-eight Million Twenty-two Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety-nine Dollars (\$28,022,999) which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The Otter Valley Unified Union School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$13,516, which is

9.38% higher than per pupil education spending for the current year.

Article 12:

To elect the following officers to serve from their election and qualification until March following the election and qualification of their successors:

- A. School Director, Brandon for a term of three (3) years
- B. School Director, Leicester for a term of one (1) year remaining of a three (3) year term
- C. School Director, Pittsford for a term of three (3) years
- D. School Director, Pittsford for a term of two (2) years remaining of a three (3) year term
- E. School Director, Sudbury for a term of three (3) years
- F. School Director, Whiting for a term of two (2) years remaining of a three (3) year term
- G. School Director, At-Large for a term of three (3) years
- H. School Director, At-Large for a term of two (2) years remaining of a three (3) year term

For the purpose of voting by Australian ballot:

In person voting will be available at local polling places on **March 4, 2025**. To request to have an OVUUSD absentee ballot mailed to you, please contact your Town Clerk, or use the “My Voter Page” online resource from the Secretary of State which can be found here: <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>. Please make your request for **mailed** ballots to your Town clerk no later than **February 25, 2025**. Absentee ballots must be returned before the close of the Town Clerk’s office on the day before the election, or to the polling place before 7:00 PM on the day of the election, to be counted.

The Town polls will be opened for voting March 4, 2025 as follows:

Town of Brandon	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Brandon American Legion Post #55
Town of Goshen	9:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Goshen Town Hall
Town of Leicester	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Leicester Town Office
Town of Pittsford	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Pittsford Town Office
Town of Sudbury	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Sudbury Town Hall
Town of Whiting	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Whiting Town Hall

Upon closing of the polls in Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Sudbury and Whiting, the ballot boxes will be sealed, transported to, and re-opened at Brandon American Legion Post #55 in the Town of Brandon, where the ballots will be counted and commingled by a tabulator under observation of representatives of the Boards of Civil Authority of the Towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Sudbury, and Whiting under the supervision of the Clerk of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District.

The legal voters of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District are further notified that voter qualification and registration relative to said meeting shall be as provided in Section 706(u) of Title 16, and Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

On behalf of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District Board of Directors:

Dated at Brandon, Vermont

January 14th, 2025



Laurie Bertrand, Board Chair
Otter Valley Unified Union School
District No. U053

TOWN OF BRANDON, VERMONT Job Posting for Assistant to Recreation Director

The TOWN OF BRANDON seeks a qualified candidate for a part-time position as an assistant to the recreation director. The primary job site is at 49 Center Street in Brandon, Vermont. The assistant to the recreation director works under the direction of the recreation director.

Brandon’s Recreation department is responsible for providing engaging programming for youth and adults. In addition to serving as the de facto athletic department for children that attend the Neshobe School & Otter Creek Academy, we create opportunities for people of all ages to enrich their lives through community events and activities.

A summary of job responsibilities is available and should be reviewed before applying.

The Town of Brandon offers competitive pay. The Town of Brandon is an equal opportunity employer.

To apply: Provide either a Resume OR complete the Town of Brandon Employment Application. Please submit to Bill Moore via:

Email (preferred): community@brandonvermont.gov.

Regular mail or in-person. (Town office address is: 49 Center St., Brandon VT 05733). This position is open until filled.

For information and links visit <https://www.townofbrandon.com/job-posting-assistant-to-recreation-director/>

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.

