

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

A community supported newspaper

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\$1

## 2025 Town Meeting results

### Brandon Town Meeting was civil and began with praise for volunteers

BY GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON—About 100 people attended Brandon's annual Town Meeting in Brandon Town Hall on Monday night to hear the Selectboard present the budget, decide on a continued property-tax exemption for the Brandon Senior Citizens Center, and conduct any

other business proper to be done when met. The mood was civil and the meeting hall comfortable. Bill Moore moderated and Town Manager Seth Hopkins and Town Clerk Sue Gage were available for questions. The Selectboard, consisting of Chair Doug Bailey, Vice-Chair Heather Nelson,

Tim Guiles, Ralph Ethier, and Brian Coolidge was flanked by the Budget Advisory Committee, whose members this year were Tricia Welch, Barry Varian, Karen Rhodes, Gabe McGuigan, and Jan Coolidge.

Boy Scout Troop 110 members Lucia and John Carrara presented

the American and Vermont flags and then led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order at just after 7 p.m. Bill Moore read the dedication of the Town Report, which was to all of Brandon's volunteers who make this a better place to live. Heather Nelson outlined the

budget-building process, which included 4 groups: the Selectboard, the Budget Advisory Committee, town management and department heads, and the public. They held biweekly meetings beginning in September. They initially defined the needs and (See *Brandon Town Meeting Page 5*)

### Pittsford voters approve budget & appropriations

BY STEVEN JUPITER

PITTSFORD—Pittsford held its 2025 Town Meeting in the gymnasium at Lothrop Elementary School on Monday evening. Though scores of residents attended, there remained numerous empty seats in the room.

The meeting began with an explanation of the procedures

of the meeting by Moderator Rob Spensley. Unlike Brandon, which votes on its budget and other articles by Australian ballot the day after Town Meeting, Pittsford asks its residents to approve or reject the proposed budget and other articles at its Town Meeting. Residents vote (See *Pittsford Town Meeting, Page 6*)

### Brandon passes budget on first try

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—In a marked contrast to last year's drawn-out budget woes, Brandon voters approved the proposed 2025-2026 budget on the first attempt by almost a 2-to-1 margin. With a total of 932 ballots cast, 607 voters said yes while 318 voters

said no.

Voters approved expenditures of \$3,403,965, of which \$2,876,645 is to be raised by property taxes and \$527,320 is to be raised by non-tax revenues.

Voters also approved all of (See *Brandon budget, Page 19*)

### Ethier, Haylon, and Reniche-Smith prevail in Brandon race

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—After a particularly crowded race, with six candidates vying for three available seats, Ralph Ethier, Jeff Haylon, and Cecil Reniche-Smith will join the Brandon Selectboard this month.

Mr. Ethier won a 3-year seat

vacated by Tim Guiles, who did not run for re-election after two terms on the Board. Mr. Ethier had previously held a 1-year seat since 2022, when he was appointed to replace Mike Markowski, who had stepped down.

Mr. Ethier received 746 votes. His opponent, Isaiah Webb, received 89 votes. There were 9 write-in votes. The total number of ballots cast overall (See *Brandon Selectboard, Page 4*)



### A new flag at Brandon Town Hall

THE FRIENDS OF Town Hall (FOTH) gifted Brandon with a new flagpole bearing the American and Vermont flags. The pole stands proudly in front of Brandon Town Hall. FOTH members in attendance were Kathy Mathis (at the pole), Dennis Marden (in baseball cap), Jan Coolidge (far right), and Mary Shields (not pictured). Also present were Tim Kingston (in orange), Stacy Shields (in green), and Brandon Deputy Town Manager Bill Moore (in blue shirt). Big thanks to Mr. Kingston of the town highway crew for his help readying the pole and rigging in preparation for this flag raising.

Photo by Mary Shields

### 5th officer to leave Brandon PD since December

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Another Brandon PD officer, Corporal Michael VonSchleusingen, has tendered his resignation, bringing to 5 the number of officers that have left Brandon PD since December. Corporal VanSchleusingen's resignation will take effect on Friday, March 7.

Brandon Police Chief David Kachajian delivered Cor-

poral VonSchleusingen's letter of resignation to Brandon Town Manager Seth Hopkins on Tuesday, February 25. Corporal VanSchleusingen, who joined Brandon PD in 2019 as a patrol officer, praised Chief Kachajian and cited career advancement as the reason for his departure. He will be joining the Ludlow Police Department.

In response to an email query

from this paper, Chief Kachajian stated that until the Department's ranks are replenished, Brandon PD will consist of him, one full-time officer, and one part-time officer. The Department will provide coverage Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., occasionally 6 p.m. Otherwise, the Vermont State Police will provide coverage (See *Brandon PD, Page 8*)



# Names lost in Vermont, Part 44: Poro, Shoro, Gallipo, and Sharrow

BY MICHAEL F. DWYER

The first three surnames, all ending with “o,” represent modified spellings from their original Québec names. Remarkably, all three families hail with the throng of émigrés from St. Hyacinthe who settled in our area. Let us consider for a moment the communication network that brought French-Canadians here. Many of the immigrants could not read or write. Most settled here before railroad lines were completed. Therefore, the train of migration was communicated literally by word of mouth with individuals traveling by horse

death. Ambroise’s father, with the same name, died at the age of 29. His widow soon married Jean Plourde who raised the Porreau children. In fact, some of the Porreau children went by the Plourde name. At age 21, Ambroise married Marriane Gauthier [Gokey in Vermont]. Together they had 12 children before Marianne died early in 1851. One can see the variant spellings when they were counted in Pittsford’s 1850 census.

Soon after Marianne’s death, an “Andrews Powreau” married Sophia McIntyre, a descendant of a Scottish immigrant

Rutland, being a central town, poor people who are chargeable to other towns are continually applying for help. Soon after Mr. Beatty’s [overseer] election, he found a man

and his wife who belonged in Pittsford, but upon whom had been expended nearly \$200 by this town. The overseer of Pittsford was notified; and he took them away and thus saved

this town a large future expense.

Among those discharged, “Ambrose Poro, Mrs. Ambrose Poro.” Sophia and Ambrose ended their lives supported by the Town of Pittsford. Three of Ambrose’s sons from his first marriage all served in Company G of the 12th Vermont Regiment: “Jock” Poro (1837–1914), Alexis “Chig” Poro (1839–1865), and Felix Poro (1843–1867). Note that Jock was the only son who lived past middle age.

A monument, with its orb missing, in St. Mary’s Cemetery in Brandon memorialized the Civil War service of Frank Shoro in the Fifth Vermont Infantry. He was born as François Charron on August 7, 1833 in St. Hyacinthe, son of Hyacinthe Charron dit Ducharme and Marie Mousette. You guessed it—some in this family went by the dit name Ducharme. Other descendants spelled it as Shorey, Shore, and Sharrow. Frank came to Brandon in the early 1850s; he married Rosella Beaulieu, her name recorded as Bolio. [See Lost Names #33.] Frank’s enlistment record in 1861 gives his birthplace as Moscow, previously explained in past articles as an earlier name for St. Hyacinthe. He was captured at Savage Station, Virginia, then paroled and hospitalized with a heart condition which earned him a disability pension. In spite of illness, Frank lived to the age of 85. His detailed obituary was published in the Brandon Union.

With these surname variations, I wondered about the ancestry of longtime Otter Valley teacher and administrator, Robert “Bob” Sharrow (1931–2000), who kept ties to OV long after his three retirements. I knew him as man with a wicked sense of humor! Born in Malone, New York, Bob returned with his family to Rutland by 1940. His parents, Earl and Irene, and his grandparents, John and Lydia, were married at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Rutland, where their surname was recorded as Charron. Bob’s great-grandfather Alexis Charron, also known as Eli Sharrow came from Napierville, Québec.

Lastly, we have another prolific family in the area, the Gallipos. Ancestor of the Pittsford and Proctor branch of this family, Henry Gallipo was baptized

(See Name lost, Page 11)



ROBERT SHARROW, PHOTO from the Otter Valley 1965 year-book.

B | 5 | Vt.

Frank, Shoro.

Co. B, 5 Reg't Vermont Inf.

Appears on  
Regimental Descriptive Book  
of the regiment named above.

DESCRIPTION.

Age 28 years; height 5 feet 8 1/2 inches.  
Complexion dark.  
Eyes black; hair black.  
Where born Moscow, Canada  
Occupation Farmer.

ENLISTMENT.

When Oct 3, 1861.  
Where Montreal.

FRANK SHORO CIVIL War enlistment.

cart or boat to Vermont telling their friends back home that labor was needed here.

Grave markers for Ambrose Poro and his second wife Sophia lie at the edge of the car path in Pittsford’s St. Alphonse Cemetery. As inscribed on the stone, 1794, Ambrose’s year of birth, suggests that he lived to the age of 98. Pittsford town records claim he was 102! In fact, he was born as Ambroise Porreau in St. Hyacinthe on June 10, 1807, thus he was 87 at the time of his

to Québec, in a civil wedding on December 29, 1852. Three months later, the marriage was blessed by a priest from St. Joseph’s Church in Burlington. Five children were born to them, their three sons all dying in infancy. They moved back to Québec for about a decade before returning to Pittsford by 1870. The penury of their last years found them housed on Rutland’s town farm. Their dismissal was described in the Rutland Daily Herald on February 25, 1888.

Rutland Daily Herald  
Mon, Mar 18, 1918 -Page 8

**Death of R. Gallipo.**  
R. Gallipo, who has been confined to the house since December, died at his home Saturday forenoon. Mr. Gallipo was 78 years old and was born in Pittsford. He came here about 44 years ago and had been employed by the Vermont Marble company until a few years ago when he was retired and put on the pension list. Besides his wife he leaves four sons, Nelson, Henry Joseph and Archie Gallipo, and one daughter, Mrs. E. Brown, all residing in this village. The funeral will be held at 3 o'clock this morning in St. Dominic's church and burial will be in the cemetery on South street.

R[EMI] GALLIPO OBITUARY from Rutland Herald, March 1918.

# Large turnout at OVUU annual meeting rejects proposal to transfer land for "Valley Community Center"

BY MITCHELL PEARL

In past years, Otter Valley Unified Union (OVUU) District annual school meetings have rarely seen more than a few attendees. This year was different, with about 400 voters in attendance and more participating on Zoom. There was a traffic jam getting into the driveway at Otter Valley Union High School, and parking was hard to find. It was a "Standing Room Only" crowd in the auditorium. The draw was the agenda item to potentially convey property for a proposed community center. OVUU's attorneys had determined that this item could not be voted by Australian ballot, but rather needed to be voted on the floor of the meeting. The issue was advertised in this paper, in Chamber of Commerce newsletters, and received significant attention on Front Porch Forum. People showed up.

Our local town clerks and assistants anticipated a crowd and were well-prepared to check in voters efficiently. Folks were asked to move over in their seats and pick up their coats to

allow maximum seating. Despite the crowds, the meeting started only a few minutes late with Bill Moore from Brandon elected as moderator. The "Valley Community Center" (VCC) issue was listed as item seven on the agenda, but a motion was made and passed to take up that issue first.

OVUU School Board Chair Laurie Bertrand started the matter with a brief introduction. The VCC committee had approached the OV Board about the project last October. The VCC would provide indoor recreation space to all the towns that feed into the school district. According to the plan, these seven communities—Brandon, Pittsford, Sudbury, Leicester, Whiting, Goshen, and Chittenden—would share an indoor recreation and exercise complex that would provide residents with recreational opportunities that the area cur-

rently lacks. The VCC committee believed the best centrally located site would be on the Otter Valley campus, on land granted by the district. The facility would be managed by a nonprofit created specifically for the purpose, whose board would comprise members from each participating town. As Ms. Bertrand explained, the land in question is a 10-acre parcel along the western side of Route 7 on the southern end of the OV campus, past the last driveway into the OV parking lot. Ms. Bertrand believed that the parcel did not have any real value to OV but that it was not the Board's to give away and this was an issue that the voters of the district should decide.

Alia Dick spoke as a member of the VCC committee to give further background. She said the mission of the VCC vol-

unteer group was to "develop a concept for a community center that serves all ages and income levels and enhances the fabric of the community by providing a gathering space for community functions that are not otherwise

available." Also, Ms. Dick stated that the concept must be feasible to as many people in the community as possible. The first step, according to the VCC committee, was to determine the location. Issues of design, cost, and funding could not be addressed meaningfully until the location was identified.

Answering questions from voters in the audience, Tanner Romano, a member of the VCC, clarified that the VCC was not yet a legal entity and that initially the VCC was simply looking for a pledge from OVUUSD for the land so they could continue with a feasibility study. Brenda Fleming, OVUU's business manager, stated that pledging land was essentially the same as conveying and that therefore the current vote was needed. In answer to many questions about the details of the facility, Mr. Romano explained that most

details had not yet been worked out, and that they were only at the beginning stages of doing a feasibility study, so he was unprepared to answer specific question regarding things like water supply, septic, and curb cuts.

A number of individuals commented that perhaps the proposal was not well-enough developed to bring to the voters. One voter stated colorfully, "Perhaps we are getting ahead of our skis." Other voters believed that the wording of the article was too vague. Recognizing that the conveyance of land was contingent on obtaining funding, there was not a specification in the article as to how much funding was needed, nor a mechanism to decide when the contingency was met.

Some audience members questioned the need for such a facility, while others spoke forcefully in support of the need. But many focused on whether there was enough information for voters to make a decision, since the details of the facility, its cost, and how it would be run had not yet been determined.

One issue that had been raised on social media—that membership in the facility would be limited to a small number and that mandatory fees would be prohibitive to some in the community—was vehemently denied by the VCC volunteers. Someone had taken information from a "slide" out of context: membership would not be limited, and no decisions had been made on what type of fees might be charged. One voter in attendance accused the VCC of "lying to us," which the moderator ruled out of order.

After about an hour, a motion to end debate was made and passed. There had also been a vote to decide the question by paper ballot. The town clerks had anticipated this and were ready. In orderly fashion, voters traipsed back out to the lobby, traded their paper voting cards for ballots, and deposited them in ballot boxes. The clerks carried the ballot boxes to the stage and proceeded to count ballots while the audience watched. The article failed, with 260 "no" votes to 121 "yes" votes.

The meeting reconvened at about 8:00 to consider the re-

(See OVUU meeting, Page 18)

## Spotlight On Business VERMONT SPORTS MEDICINE CENTER



At VSMC our philosophy is to provide the highest level of patient care! We're committed to achieving optimal patient outcomes by employing highly trained therapists, utilizing evidence-based medicine treatments and offering extensive patient education in injury prevention. Each therapist takes a personal approach to patient care. We keep our programs focused on the individual needs of our patients, with clear and timely communication with your physician.

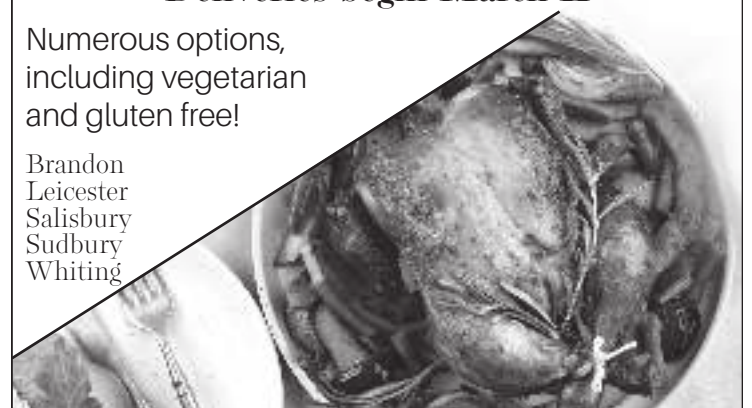
Makenzie Williams, DPT,  
Dennis Ryan, PTA,  
Gina Pezzetti Carlstrom, Clinical Director, PT

### 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!  
theevensfarmstead@gmail.com  
Deliveries begin March 11

Numerous options, including vegetarian and gluten free!

Brandon  
Leicester  
Salisbury  
Sudbury  
Whiting



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# Brandon Selectboard

(Continued from Page 1)  
was 932 (not every ballot contained a vote for this seat)

“I’m feeling good,” said Ethier after the vote had been tabulated. “I want to continue the progress the Board has made over the last 8 months.”

Ms. Reniche-Smith and Mr. Haylon won 1-year seats, with Reniche-Smith receiving 600 votes and Haylon receiving 565. They will fill seats being vacated by Heather Nelson, who did not run for re-election, and by Mr. Ethier, who left his 1-year seat to pursue the 3-year seat he ultimately won.

The other candidates for these two seats, Vicki Disorda and Ray Marcoux, received 323 votes and 188 votes, respectively. There were 4 write-in votes.

Ms. Reniche-Smith served a year on the Selectboard in the 2023-2024 session and did not

run for re-election when that term was over. This was Mr. Haylon’s first campaign for Selectboard.

“I’m pleased and honored,” said Reniche-Smith. “I’m looking forward to working with the Board again and for the town. I want to keep things moving forward at a pace that’s good for everyone.”

“I’m extremely humbled and pleased to be the newbie on the Board,” said Haylon. “I want to thank all the voters who came out and all the other candidates for keeping things respectful and positive.”

Other election results: Bill Moore was elected Town Moderator, Courtney Satz was elected to a 3-year term as a Trustee of Public Funds, and Mat Clouser was elected to a 2-year term as Trustee of the Brandon Free Public Library.

**Otter Valley Unified Union budget results were not available before press time. Please visit [brandonreporter.com](http://brandonreporter.com) for the results when they become available.**

**Correction**  
In last week’s Town Meeting Preview, we included incorrect figures for Pittsford’s proposed budget. The correct figures are in this week’s recap of Pittsford’s Town Meeting on page 1. The incorrect figures were drawn from the Pittsford Town Report, which contained an error. We apologize for any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused.

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**You can’t fool me, you’re not a hen**  
MOOSE BOG IS the place to find the uncommon Spruce Grouse. The bird’s plumage provides great camouflage. (Often called a “Fool’s hen.”)  
Photo by Sue Wetmore

## Community Forums Training course offered for new hunter education instructors

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is offering a New Instructor Training Course for people interested in volunteering to teach Hunter Education courses in Vermont.

The training will take place Saturday, April 5, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Milton Fire Station, 47 Bombardier Rd, Milton, VT 05468

Registration for the course is available online at Event - New Instructor Training - April 5, 2025 in Milton, VT

All applicants must complete their instructor paperwork and on-line homework before attending

the course. Instructor application paperwork can be found at: [www.tinyurl.com/2pfi7c44](http://www.tinyurl.com/2pfi7c44) or call 802-828-1193 prior to the course date.

Policies and procedures, field techniques and teaching methods will be covered to give instructors the tools to teach future hunters how to have a safe and enjoyable experience. Lunch will be provided. Be prepared to be outside for at least part of the day.

Applicants are required to pass a background check with a Vermont State Game Warden and apprentice-teach with a chief instructor before they will receive their full State of Vermont Hunter

Education Instructor certification.

“Our hunter education instructors are all volunteers, donating their time to pass on a cherished Vermont tradition,” said Hunter Education Training Coordinator Nathan Lafont. “The hours our instructors put in will leverage federal dollars that enable the Hunter Education Program to function.”

Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities are available for free upon request. Requests should be made as early as possible. Please call the office staff at 802-828-1193 (voice) or 1-800-253-0191 (TTY).

# Brandon Town Meeting

(Continued from Page 1)

goals and then reviewed the budget painstakingly line by line. The budget was reviewed publicly in a pre-Town Meeting presentation in January.

Nelson went on to define the difference between the operating budget and appropriations. The operating budget encompasses all the ongoing needs of the town, including road maintenance, recreation, police, and buildings and grounds etc. Appropriations are the one-time funding requests made by the town or non-governmental organizations. The Board decided to start a capital fund as an appropriation this year to begin to save for major expenditures so as to reduce the need in the future for borrowing money to pay for such.

Chair Bailey presented the budget using two tools: percentages and actual dollars. He endeavored to relate the budget changes to the average home value in Brandon (\$187,000). The town budget was up 2.5% but the bottom line, the additional taxes to be raised, was only up 1.4%. This increase amounts to \$1.78 per month or \$22 per year for the average Brandon home. The police budget is the highest ever in this town at \$937,000. Some town depart-

ments, e.g., recreation and highway departments, receive revenue to reduce their impact on the budget. Recreation department revenues reduce their budget by about 50%.

Bailey went on to describe the non-budget funding of town activities which include ARPA funds, the 1% local option tax, and department revenue. All of our ARPA funds have been spent or committed to projects, including a new roof for the Town Hall. According to Guiles, the roof will be a legacy expenditure expected to last 20-30 years or more. The local option tax in Brandon goes 100% to capital improvements. The last quarter receipts were approximately \$80,000 and average \$250,000 per year. Paving projects this year will come from the 1% local options tax to reduce the stress on the budget.

Brandon's unrestricted reserve fund is presently low, at just under 15% of the budget. State guidelines suggest that it be between 15% and 30%. For Brandon with a \$3.3 million budget, this amounts to between \$495,000 and \$990,000. The selectboard expects that they will be in range next year given the presented budget.

A question-and-answer period

followed. Devon Fuller asked about the impact of health insurance to the budget. This year's increase will be 11% according to Hopkins. With only 2 insurers to choose from, it is difficult to control these increases. Fuller asked the taxpayers to lobby their representative in Montpelier to address this crisis. Cecil Reniche-Smith commented that the appropriation requests from groups including the Brandon Free Public Library and the Brandon Area Rescue Squad will not increase the taxes on the average home because they were in last year's taxes also.

Next, the meeting addressed Article 2, the continuing tax exemption for the Brandon Senior Center. This was the only actionable article during the meeting. The Center has been receiving the exemption for as long as anyone can remember. The taxes would be about \$2,000 if assessed. Local CPA Sharon Stearns strongly encouraged a positive vote. Bailey also spoke for the exemption. The measure passed with one nay vote.

Under other business, Stearns thanked the Board and the Budget Advisory Committee for their hard work this past year. Brandon's state representative, Todd Nielsen, read a short statement.

Nielsen is on the House Committee on Human Services, where they are reviewing H.91, a bill to replace the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program with the Emergency Temporary Shelter Program and H.46, to establish The Rare Disease Advisory Council. Also being examined is H.218 to appropriate funds from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund to be used in Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Bill H.13 was voted out of committee and passed the floor vote in the house. It requires the Secretary of Human Services to determine reasonable and ade-

quate Medicaid payment rates for home and community base services. The committee is also listening to agency reports and discussing the 2026 budget. Nielsen did not elaborate on how he voted on these bills or whether he stood in support of or against each bill.

The meeting recessed at 8:08 p.m., to be continued on Tuesday, March 4 at the Brandon American Legion, where Brandon residents would vote on the budget and on three open seats on the Select-board.

## Community Forums continued “State of the Lake Fisheries” public meeting to address lake trout, sea lamprey, walleye and more

MONTPELIER—The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department will join partners from the Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative—a working group of fisheries professionals from Vermont as well as the New York Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—to host a State of the Lake Fisheries meeting on Saturday, March 15.

The public meeting is open to anglers and anyone interested in Lake Champlain's fisheries. It will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Robert Miller Community & Recreation Center at 130 Gosse Court, in Burlington, Vermont. Registration is not required.

The State of the Lake Fisher-

ies meeting is an opportunity for agency staff and others to provide updates on the status and trends of the fisheries in Lake Champlain and to hear directly from anglers. Information will be provided on restoration, research, assessment, and other accomplishments in the past year, as well as work planned for the coming year, with time provided for questions from attendees. Species to be discussed include lake trout, landlocked Atlantic salmon, sea lamprey and walleye.

Recorded presentations will be available approximately one month following the meeting on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's YouTube channel.

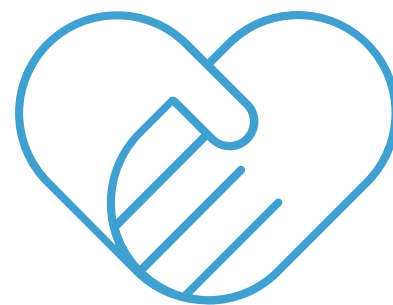
## Leicester News

### Dog registration and bingo are on deck

Town Clerk Julie Delphia reminds dog owners of the need to register dogs by Tuesday, April 1. A rabies clinic will be held at the Town Office on Tuesday, March 11, from 5-7 p.m. Cost \$20.00. It is important to register your dogs; it is also the law. To avoid penalties and possible fines, register your dog before April 1.



The Leicester Historical Society will sponsor Prize Bingo on Sat., April 12, at 1 p.m. at the Senior Center at the Four Corners. Refreshments served and all are welcome. Plan to spend an afternoon with friends and neighbors and possibly win a special prize.



## Indivisible Brandon

Our democracy is under threat.

Local Indivisible groups build and wield power in ways that individuals can't. To create change, you need the collective constituent power that comes with working together, as Indivisibles.

We are creating a local Indivisible group to help fight against the taking of the federal government. Autocrats and fascists depend on you believing you're alone and powerless. But when individuals come together, we create real power. To participate, visit:

[IndivisibleBrandon.org](https://IndivisibleBrandon.org)

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OR WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

# Obituary

## David Lacy, Pittsford



DAVID LACY

David Lacy, dedicated archaeologist, husband, father, grandfather, and brother died Friday, February 21, 2025, at his home in Pittsford.

Born in 1951 in Needham, Mass. to John Willoughby Lacy and Barbara Muther Lacy, David attended Needham High School and later earned a BA from Boston University and a Master's from UMass, both in Anthropology.

He and his wife, Barbara, married in 1977 and moved to Vermont in 1990. They raised their two boys, Jake and Mack, in Pittsford. He served as the archaeologist for the Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forest for 30 years, acting as a steward of their cultural resources from prehistory through the mid-20th century. His work often included public outreach, working with volunteers on a variety of projects, and coordinating with indige-

nous communities. He was also a kind, encouraging, generous mentor to students and younger colleagues alike.

It is hard to put into words the fullness of David's spirit and the effect he had on those around him. He was kind. And he was patient. He was fun and funny. And he was infinitely curious about the world and the people around him. He could talk to anyone, loved to learn and share, and left an impression everywhere he went. His interest in others was genuine and he had a way of making you feel seen. He was a "glass-half-full" optimist. And he believed in treating everyone with dignity and respect. But most importantly, he led by example.

David was a drummer as well as a lifelong tennis and basketball player. He loved cheering on the Red Sox, Celtics, and Patriots. He coached

Little League, was on the school board, was quick to lend a helping hand in his many communities and was proud to serve on the VT Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. He was a voracious reader, and he and Barbara traveled to many countries in their re-

tirement. He passed on his love for art, books, travel, poetry and the outdoors to his sons and grandsons. He believed in lucky rocks and parking karma. He gave good hugs and great advice. He sent postcards from anywhere and everywhere, just to let you know he was thinking of you. He touched so many lives and has left fond memories with so many. He was a vibrant force of joy and love. He will be desperately missed.

David is predeceased by his parents, Barbara's parents, Dick and Pat Griffin and a nephew, Chris Griffin. He is survived by his wife Barbara, sons Jake and Mack, daughters-in-law Lauren and Missy, and grandsons Townes and Duke. He leaves behind his sister, Ginger, his brother Roger and his wife, Joyce, as well as Barbara's siblings Dave Griffin and his wife Cathy, Ned Griffin and his wife Elaine, Pam

Predmore and her husband Read, Jim Griffin and Sonya Eldridge, and Carolyn Osgood and her husband Kevin. He also leaves behind his nieces and nephews Mike (Erin), Jon, Ben (Claire), Vera (Travis), Marie, Marjeena (Tony), Kate (Glenn), Sean (Maude), Jennifer, Alex, Ben (Sara) and Will, and a close family member, Caroline Korejko & her family, as well as many great-nephews and nieces, all of whom will miss "Uncle David's 20 questions."

The family will organize a celebration of life later in the year. In lieu of flowers, if you'd like to make a donation, please consider the Vermont Archaeological Society (<https://vtarchaeology.org/support/>), Vermont Public (<https://www.vermontpublic.org>) or a charity of your choosing.

Arrangements handled by Aldous Funeral Home of Rutland.

## Pittsford Town Meeting

(Continued from Page 1)

for town officials (Selectboard members, for example) by Australian ballot on the Tuesday after Town Meeting.

Mr. Spensley noted the dedication of the 2023-2024 Town Report to Joseph Jerome Keith, Jr., better known to Pittsford residents as Mike or Chico. Mr. Keith ran Keith's Trading Post and passed away at the end of 2024.

The first article on the agenda was to hear the reports of the Town Officers. Selectboard Chair Alicia Malay (who is also

Pittsford's representative in Montpelier) remarked that the Board had worked hard to prepare a budget that kept increases to a minimum while continuing to provide the services the town counts on. She stated that the proposed budget for FY26 saw only a 1.4% increase over the current year's budget.

Ms. Malay also noted that longtime Selectboard member Joe Gagnon had stepped down from the Board the previous year and had been replaced by Dan Adams. She also encouraged residents to reach out to Interim

Town Manager Ann Reed to place items on the agenda at the Selectboard's meetings if they had concerns they wished the Board to address.

Selectboard Vice-Chair David Mills discussed the work of the town highway crew over the previous year. He noted that Pittsford had avoided much of the flooding that had plagued the rest of the state because of mitigation infrastructure like culverts that the highway crew had installed. He also noted that the heavy snow this winter had pushed the town over budget on road salt.

Voters then approved all the spending proposed on the warning with nary an opposing vote.

Article 2 proposed general-fund expenditures of \$1,827,883, with \$1,404,123 to be raised by property taxes and \$423,760 to be raised by non-tax revenues (e.g., permit fees, speeding tickets, grants, etc.). It was passed unanimously.

Article 2 also provided one of the few moments of confusion in an otherwise smooth meeting: the figures on the official warning did not match the figures printed in the Town Report. It was determined after on-the-spot discussion that the figures on the warning were correct. Interim

Town Manager Ann Reed stated in a later e-mail to The Reporter that the incorrect figures in the Town Report were an erroneous reprint of the previous year's numbers.

Article 3 proposed highway expenditures of \$1,213,555, with \$1,065,205 to be raised by taxes and \$142,350 to be raised by non-tax revenues. Again, the figures on the official warning did not match the figures in the Town Report. It was determined that the figures on the warning were correct. Article 3 passed unanimously.

Voters unanimously approved \$17,000 for the Village District, which covers expenses, such as streetlights, specifically in Pittsford's downtown area.

Voters unanimously approved August 15, September 15, and November 17, 2025 as the dates on which property taxes would be due to the town. In previous years, this condensed payment timeline had been criticized by voters at Town Meeting but was not challenged on Monday.

Voters approved the following appropriations:

- \$2,500 to the Wonderfeet Kids' Museum in Rutland. The Museum's Family Liaison Jen Rose Brittenham was on hand to encourage voters to support the

organization.

- \$7,500 for the Pittsford Historical Society
- \$5,000 for "The Bus" run by the Marble Valley Regional Transportation District
- \$1,000 for the Pittsford Cemetery Association
- \$1,500 for the Bowen-Walker Fund, which is administered by members of local churches and assists local residents experiencing hardship. This was the only appropriation that was not passed unanimously, with a single nay vote against it.
- \$2,000 for the Pittsford Food Shelf
- \$11,964 for the Regional Ambulance Service
- \$3,600 for the Rutland County Restorative Justice Center
- \$4,931 for the Visiting Nurses Association and Hospice of the Southwest Region
- \$125,000 for the Maclure Library
- \$1,400 for ARC Rutland Area
- \$427 for RSVP/VC
- \$1,100 for the Southern Vermont Council on Aging
- \$200 for Green-Up Day
- \$1,000 for the Rutland County Humane Society

These appropriations will be added to the total to be raised by (See Pittsford Town Meeting, Page 14)

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Jim & Liz McRae

# Vermont House bill would ban baiting for coyotes and other furbearers

BY OLIVIA GIEGER/  
VTDIGGER

Stark differences in opinion about using bait to hunt coyotes emerged during a hearing Wednesday over a House bill that would ban the practice for all smaller fur-bearing animals.

Rep. Larry Labor, R-Morgan, told the other members of the House Environment Committee on Feb. 26 about an experience he had baiting for coyotes. “The bait was dead cats,” he said. “So, I took it, and I wrapped a chain around the legs so the coyotes couldn’t drag it away. Then I drove a stake into the ground a substantial distance.”

He waited and watched for days, he said. When a coyote finally came, “it made two circles around the bait and bugged out before I could even chamber a round,” he described. It was a “0% kill” day for him, he said, and he suggested he’s not alone in that effort of attempting to kill a wiley creature. “We’re not talking about a defenseless animal. This animal is brilliant.”

“I cannot support this bill,” he concluded.

Earlier, committee chair Amy Sheldon, D-Middlebury, queried leaders of the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife about why they oppose H.132, when they don’t actually know how common baiting furbearers is. The department had just testified it did not monitor or track the practice.

Though the bill would apply to the broad category of furbearers — including foxes, bobcats or other smaller mammals — the discussion surrounding it has focused primarily on baiting for coyotes, an animal that hunters say is near impossible to harvest without leaving out food specifically to attract them. And while advocates for the ban cite concerns that the practice unnecessarily harms productive members of an ecosystem, the measure prods longstanding cultural tensions between the hunting community and wildlife advocates. It also continues an ongoing debate about the role of the Legislature in wildlife management.

Mike Covey, the executive director of the Vermont Traditions Coalition, was blunt about his take. “H.132 seems to be driven by activism, not any other biological imperative,” he told the committee on Feb. 19.

The Fish & Wildlife interim commissioner, Andrea Short-

sleeve, summarized the department’s position in her testimony:

“We are not aware of any population issues with furbearers in the state. We are not aware of any disease transmission of scavenging on carcasses, which occurs naturally on the landscape,” she said. “H.132 is trying to address a social values issue. This bill does not address any biological or conservation issues and is not based in science or wildlife management.”

On several facts, the bill’s supporters do see eye-to-eye with the wildlife department.

“It has been well-documented that coyotes do not compete with hunters for deer, and that killing coyotes does not significantly affect their population size,” Rep. Larry Satcowitz, D-Randolph, who sponsored the bill, wrote in an email.

In her Feb. 19 testimony, Sarah Gorsline, a local representative from the conservation group Project Coyote, explained to the committee that the animals are “critical ecosystem engineers,” who can regulate the environment through eating prey species and spreading seeds in their scat.

“Their numbers do not need to be managed by hunting,” Gorsline said.

The Fish & Wildlife Department agrees with some of that, the department’s spokesperson Josh Morse wrote in an email. “Coyotes are a beneficial part of Vermont’s wildlife community and are in balance with the available habitat and with other species,” he wrote.

The department’s goal is to maintain a healthy coyote population in Vermont. Hunting has not had a significant impact on the population of the quickly reproducing animals, Morse said.

Some hunters have argued that hunting coyotes is important for an abundant deer population — a population the department believes is too big now to maintain a healthy herd. But Morse said that is not the case.

“Even with healthy populations of both bobcats and coyotes, the level of predation they exert on deer is not significant enough to reduce Vermont’s deer herd in the regions where deer are overabundant for the available habitat,” he wrote. “The size of Vermont’s deer herd and hunting furbearers over bait are not related, even though they seem like they could be at first glance.”

“The hardest animal to hunt” Satcowitz stressed the bill does not prohibit or limit the killing of coyotes — which currently is allowed every day of the year. The bill addresses baiting for all furbearers and would not affect trapping or other methods of hunting the animals.

The bill’s definition of bait — as something placed with the intention of attracting wild-

the unintentional consequences of baiting.

Allowing some legal baiting could lure bears even if it’s been set for coyotes during their hunting season, Brenna Galdenzi, the executive director of Protect Our Wildlife, said in her testimony on Feb. 19. Covey said that he’s open to banning baiting during bear season, in response to that concern, but otherwise strongly

pheasants is a particular risk for transmission of the virus to wildlife populations, Galdenzi said.

Also, baiting may actually increase coyote prevalence in human areas.

“Bait creates incentives for animals to return to the area, and invites new animals to enter the area even after animals have been removed,” said Gorsline of Project Coyote. “It



life — protects people’s abilities to cull a nuisance animal that’s discovered an unintentional food source like backyard chickens or a silage pit, Michael O’Grady, deputy chief of the Office of Legislative Counsel, told the committee on Feb. 19.

The issue for hunters is that intentional baiting is one of the few ways to kill a coyote, bill opponents said in testimony.

“Hunting coyote is very, very challenging. Many consider it to be the hardest animal to hunt,” Chris Bradley, the president of the Vermont Federation of Sportsmen told the committee on Feb. 19. “(Baiting) is a necessary tool in our toolbox to stop an apex predator,” one that can become a danger to humans and farm animals, Bradley said.

Furbearers do not follow the same regular patterns that deer or other big game follow, which make them easier to hunt. “A bobcat here today could be 15 miles away tomorrow,” said Covey. “We can’t hunt them the same way that we hunt other species. They move more erratically.”

Wildlife advocates pointed to

opposes the bill.

Baiting may facilitate the spread of disease, said Galdenzi. The practice attracts many animals from across species to one shared location where saliva and bodily fluids can linger. As avian influenza remains a concern in the state, the practice of baiting with chickens or

is the opposite of wildlife wariness; instead it habituates wildlife to a particular area, ensuring their return.”

In other circumstances, the department advises people against feeding and baiting other kinds of wildlife.

“I’m not sure how we recon-

(See *Baiting ban*, Page 8)



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**Leicester** Town Office\*

**Tues. March 11**, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

(\*Both **Brandon** and **Goshen** town clerks on site for registrations)

**Salisbury** Town Office

**Weds. March 12**, 5:00 - 6:00 PM

**Orwell** Town Office

**Fri. March 28**, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

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# Baiting ban

(Continued from Page 7)

cile your position on this, with your position on other people feeding wildlife and attracting them to their houses,” said Sheldon, the committee chair.

“It’s a fair question,” the department’s wildlife director John Austin said in response. The state prohibits the feeding and baiting of bears, turkeys, deer and waterfowl.

“We do that for a variety of reasons. For deer it’s largely because of the risk of disease transmission” — the same is true for birds, he added. “In the case of furbearers, part of the issue we’ve had is that the carcasses still exist on the landscape.”

## ‘THE WORD ‘FAIR’

Behind the scientific arguments back and forth lurked the question of whether baiting animals to hunt them was fair practice.

Chris Huston, a hunter from Waltham, Vt., testified to the House Environment Committee on Feb. 19 that he believes that the practice of baiting falls outside the hunting ethic of pursuit and fair chase. The practice also puts the hunting community out of line with the general public, which he sees as largely against the practice.

Covey expressed that the legislature’s consideration of the ethics of baiting “not an appropriate way to make law,”

as he said. “The word ‘fair’ has no place in a meaningful conversation about wildlife conservation or hunting.”

Finding a shared consensus on what a community finds to be fair is exactly the purpose of the law, Sheldon later responded.

As it stands, if the bill were to become law, it would go into effect July 1, 2025, banning the practice of baiting furbearers.

Failing to follow the ban would result in a 10-point violation,

*The size of Vermont’s deer herd and hunting furbearers over bait are not related, even though they could be at first glance*

which equates to a year’s suspension from a hunting license, according to Fish and Wildlife’s point scale. The bill lists no specific penalty, so violations would default to a \$1,000 fine, according to legislative

counsel O’Grady.

While the Fish and Wildlife Board holds rulemaking abili-

ties when it comes to hunting questions such as this one, the board declined to take a lead on the issue of baiting, Satcowitz said over email, which is in line with its record over the last few years. It was the Legislature that ultimately passed bans on wanton waste (which exempts coyotes) and a ban on coyote killing contests, he pointed out.

Among the debate was also a more general point: “If I live on 100 acres and I want to shoot out my back door, what business is it of anybody’s?” Rep. Michael Tagliavia, R-Corinth, asked the committee Wednesday.

# Brandon PD

(Continued from Page 1)

erage when Brandon PD is unable to.

Mr. Hopkins stated that the town is in negotiations with the Police Union to develop a plan for recruitment and retention, though the specifics of those discussions are not yet available to the public. Mr. Hopkins added that much of the substance of the negotiations relates to increased compensation and other incentives.

“We are not contemplating any move away from on-call and on-duty because we can’t afford 24/7 on-duty,” said Mr. Hopkins. “We’re learning from the Union Representative what has been working in other towns for recruiting and retention and we are looking to apply those successful tactics/best practices to Brandon.”

“On-duty” vs. “on-call” service has been the subject of much discussion in Brandon over the last several months. “On-call” service is an arrangement in which officers return home after a regular shift but may be called back into service if required, even in the middle of the night. By contrast, “on-duty” service allows officers to establish regular hours without worry that they will be called back to Brandon after their shifts are done.

Brandon PD has been func-

tioning with on-call service for years, though the Brandon Selectboard has investigated the possibility of moving to 24/7 on-duty coverage. However, Chief Kachajian has estimated that such coverage would require 9 or 10 full-time officers and would cost the town upwards of \$1.2 million per year.

An attempt last summer to provide 24/7 coverage with 6 full-time officers plus the Chief quickly proved unsustainable because of extreme overtime costs, which depleted the Department’s annual overtime budget within a single quarter.

Though some members of the advisory Budget Committee, some community members, and the heads of the Brandon Fire Department and Rescue Squad advocated for 24/7 coverage to ensure safety and to improve working conditions for Brandon PD officers, the Selectboard did not feel comfortable asking taxpayers to absorb the substantial cost, especially after this year’s proposed budget failed twice at the ballot box last spring.

The Selectboard ultimately proposed increasing the FY2025-2026 budget for Brandon PD by 9.41%, from \$856,000 to \$937,000, though even this significant increase would not be sufficient to provide 24/7 on-duty coverage.

Two members of the Board, Tim Guiles and Brian Coolidge, had proposed reducing the police budget and the size of the Department’s crew, stating that a town of Brandon’s size could manage with a smaller force.

Four other Brandon PD officers have left Brandon PD since December. Three officers joined Rutland City Police Department and one officer joined Middlebury. The officer who went to Middlebury, Aidan Alnwick, was also the handler assigned to K-9 officer Guinness, whom Alnwick took with him. Middlebury has agreed to compensate Brandon for the expense the town incurred in acquiring and training Guinness.

Though none of these five officers have stated publicly that they were dissatisfied with the management of the Department, and Corporal Van-Schleusingen praised Chief Kachajian and the town explicitly, Selectboard member Brian Coolidge suggested in January that the Board meet with the officers away from their direct managers in order to determine whether there were issues other than hours and wages driving the departures that the officers didn’t feel comfortable discussing with the Chief or the Town Manager. No such meetings have taken place.

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# An evening of short plays comes to Otter Valley this weekend

BY MITCHELL PEARL

This coming weekend, Otter Valley Union High School welcomes Walking Stick Theatre Company's annual production of short plays (also known as "The One-Acts"). Jeffrey Hull, Otter Valley's theatre director, started these productions 25 years ago to let students learn the art of directing. Over the years, Otter Valley's Walking Stick Theatre group has presented a program of short plays directed by, and often written by, the students. This is the fifth year that the student directors all wrote their own plays, a practice that started during the pandemic. Seeing the student-written plays provides a good reflection of the students' world views, their interests, and what they find entertaining.

Five student-written and -directed plays will be presented. "Mildly Brunette" is written and directed by Jordan Bertrand and Kaylee Maloy. It is a parody of "Legally Blonde"—the musical was presented by Otter Valley's Walking Stick Theatre some years ago—that contains original music. "Backstage Magic: The Tech Crew Chronicles" is a backstage comedy written and directed by Andrew Easter. "Helen Keller & the Infinity Series" is an "incorrect" history of Helen Keller written and directed by Calvin Ladd, Brendan McLoughlin, and Ian Miner. "Unlucky Break," written and directed by Emil Dardozi and Oliver Lavelle, follows the antics of three "unlucky" prisoners trying to break jail. Finally, "The Real Lives of Maple Leaf Theatre" is a reality TV show take on high school theatre. It is a funny, dramatic comedy written and directed by Sophie Moore and Elyse Singh.

The only play to be presented that is not written by a student is the festival piece, to be presented at Vermont's regional drama festival, and directed by theatre director Jeffrey Hull. This year, the festival piece will be "Queens," a play by acclaimed playwright Kristen Doherty. Like the Broadway musical "Six," this play presents a fictionalized approach to the story of the six wives of Henry VIII, but from the wives' point of view. In "Queens," King Henry VIII is trapped in purgatory, bound to his throne, and forced to relive the sins he committed against his queens.

Director Hull notes that this play calls for strong acting: "It is dramatic, fantastical, emotional, and visual." The six queens are played by Jordan Bertrand, Sophie Moore, Elyse Singh, Dani Polli, Kaylee Maloy, and Alyssa Raymond. In "Queens," Henry



**KAYLEE MALLOY (KATHRINE Howard), Jordan Bertrand (Catherine of Aragon) and Alyssa Raymond (Katherine Parr).**



**CALVIN LADD AS Henry VIII in the dream sequence.**



**THEATER DIRECTOR JEFFREY Hull instructs the cast. Dani Polli (Anne of Cleves) on the right.**



**SOPHIE MOORE AS Anne Boleyn.**

VIII also has an important role, played in purgatory by Brendan McLaughlin and in the dream sequences by Calvin Ladd. The period costumes are fantastic.

"An Evening of Short Plays" will be presented on the Otter Valley stage on Friday, March 7 and Saturday, March 8 at 7 p.m., and on Sunday, March 9 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are five dollars and are available at the door, or in advance at <https://www.onthestage.tickets/show/otter-valley-union-high-school-rnesu>.

Otter Valley's festival piece will also be shown on March 25 at the regional drama festival, this year at Mill River Union High School. The regional festivals offer the opportunity for OV's students to meet like-minded students from other schools, see their productions, and compete for a chance to go on to larger festivals. In some years, Otter Valley's Walking Stick

(See Short plays, Page 19)



**ELYSE SINGH AS Jane Seymore.**

STUDENT: Rozzylynn Manfredi

GRADE: 5

SCHOOL: Lothrop Elementary

MEDIUM: Paint on Paper

TEACHER: Matt Aucoin

# OUR CREATIVE KIDS

**COMMENT FROM ROZZYLYNN MANFREDI:**

“I am very proud of this piece, and worked very hard on it. This piece was inspired by what my mother used to call me as a baby: ‘Ladybug.’ I used pencil, sharpie, acrylic paint and paint markers, along with a compass to create my circles.”



# MAPLE the COW™ by Matt Aucoin



Name	Age	Sex	Color	Birthplace
Joseph Galipeau	28	m	White	Canada
Sophia	22	f	White	"
Joseph	2	m	White	"
Alphonse	18	m	White	"
Julie	17	m	White	"
Henry	11	m	White	"
Alphonse	10	f	White	"
Alphonse	10	m	White	"
Henry	11	m	White	"
Alphonse	3	m	White	"
Sophia	21	f	White	"
Alphonse	2	f	White	"

1850 CENSUS OF Holden, MA, for the Gallipo family. Note the age difference between Joseph and his fourth wife Sophia. Also remi, the only child born in Vermont

## Names lost

(Continued from Page 2)

as Irenée Galipeau in St. Hyacinthe on May 3, 1834, son of Joseph Galipeau and his fourth wife, Sophie Rémi. [Note Irenée, French for St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, a second century theologian]. This family

family worked for the Vermont Marble Company. Their ancestor from France, Antoine Galipeau (ca. 1646–1722) married at Pointe-aux-Trembles, Québec, in 1688. From the Old French, galippe, “galley,” was the nickname of a seaman.



experienced a complex migration path as revealed in the 1850 census when counted in Holden, Massachusetts, where most of the men were employed in factories. In Pittsford, Henry married Delia Poro, granddaughter of Ambrose Poro. Henry’s brother, Remi, born in Pittsford in 1840, bore his mother’s surname, Remi, eventually settled in Proctor, where he and two generations of his

**FRANK SHORO**

died at his home in Forestdale, January 31, aged 85 years. He had been ill from a complication of diseases due mainly to his advanced years.

Mr. Shoro was a life-long resident of Forestdale and enlisted from this town in Company H., 5th Vt., with which he served his country in the civil war. He was a member of C. J. Oamsbee Post, a delegation from which was in attendance at his funeral. The funeral was held from St. Mary's church, Rev. Father Cray officiating. The bearers were five sons and a son-in-law, Mr. Edward Loomis. He is survived by nine children, five sons, Frank and Lewis of Forestdale, John and Edward of North Hampton, Herbert of Greenfalls N. Y. and four daughters, Mrs. Rose Miles of Forestdale, Mrs. Hattie Major of Northampton, Mass., Mrs. Mary Surprise of Springfield, Mass., and Mrs. Edward Loomis of Rutland. He is also survived by twenty-nine grandchildren and fourteen great grand children. The burial was in the Catholic cemetery in Brandon.



ABOVE: PORO MARKERS at St. Alphonsus Cemetery, Brandon.

RIGHT: FRANK SHORO obituary from the Brandon Union

FAR RIGHT TOP: Frank Shoro monument, St. Mary's Cemetery, Brandon

FAR RIGHT BOTTOM: Ambrose Poro, Pittsford's 1850 census, with garbled names

Name	Age	Sex	Color	Birthplace
Ambrose Poro	44	m	White	Canada
Mary	28	f	White	"
Alphonse	17	m	White	"
Henry	11	m	White	"
Alphonse	10	f	White	"
Henry	11	m	White	"
Alphonse	3	m	White	"
Sophia	21	f	White	"
Alphonse	2	f	White	"

# Calendar of events

## March

### Mondays

#### Brandon Rec offers Aikido classes

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

#### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

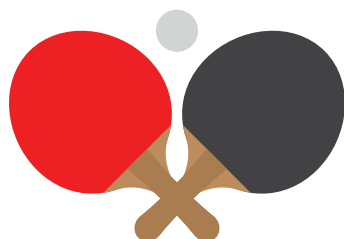
#### Free Drop-In Tech Support at the Brandon Free Public Library

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](http://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.

### 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!

#### Storytime at the Brandon Free Public Library

Starts at 10:30 a.m. Join us for stories and bubbles!

### Fridays

Chaffee Art Center All About the Arts Free Class for kids

3–5

From 11am–Noon...FREE! Students will have fun creating and doing activities with art, music, literature, and more!

One free book per (while supplies last) Rutland Free Library. children under age Wednesday each Instructor: Lori Sul-



student will be given weekly thanks to our partners at Adult must accompany 4. Must pre-register by week. livan; 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

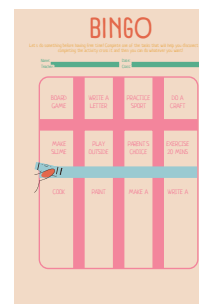
By request, we will have drop-in cornhole in the Rec Hall on Fridays from 2–4 p.m.

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

### Saturdays

#### Bingo at the Brandon Senior Center

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



#### Storytime at the Brandon Free Public Library

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

### Sundays

#### Brandon Town Hall Painting with Crystal

Crystal Ketcham leads an all ages painting event!

Yes, you CAN paint! More info, contact Crystal at [ceastman88@gmail.com](mailto:ceastman88@gmail.com)

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

#### Chess

Join us at The Greenhouse Dispensary on Conant Square in Brandon for a few casual games of chess on Sunday mornings from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All experience levels are welcome. Free and open to adults 21 and older only.

### Wednesday 5th

#### Free Online Medicare Informational Class Hosted by SVCOA

Presented by Soren Bouchard, SVCOA's State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) Coordinator, these sessions are perfect for those approaching Medicare eligibility or who simply want to better understand their Medicare options. The classes will provide a detailed breakdown of Medicare Parts A, B and D and explain the differences between Medicare Supplements and Advantage Plans.



The SVCOA prides itself on offering a non-biased environment where participants can ask questions and receive clear, informative answers. As a non-profit organization, SVCOA does not offer health plans for purchase. Instead, their mission is to help participants make informed decisions that are best suited to

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question



their individual needs. To register for one or both of these classes, please call 1-800-642-5119 and ask to speak with SHIP Program Coordinator Soren Bouchard. Don't miss this opportunity to get your Medicare questions answered in a supportive and informative setting. 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

## Friday 7th

### Love For Olivia Basket Auction and Raffle — Grace Congregational UCC

Olivia is a 5-year-old girl who attends Little Lambs Academy at Grace and has been part of our Little Lambs Family since she was 3 years old. Olivia is the sweetest, strongest, Bluey-loving 5-year-old we know. She is loved by all of her classmates which can be seen and heard every morning by the excitement from her friends when she walks into the room, and the disappointment when she is not at school. Olivia sometimes misses school due to doctors' appointments because she was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) in 2023. She is currently undergoing chemotherapy while keeping her spirits up and responding well to the treatments in hopes to be done in 2025. We are putting together this basket raffle for Olivia and her family, to show them support and love throughout this journey. All profits will be given to Olivia and her family. From 6-8 p.m. at Grace Congregational UCC, 8 Court Street, Rutland.

### Sons of Town Hall and Alice Howe & Freebo — Next Stage Arts

Sons of Town Hall, the transatlantic folk duo of American songwriter/author David Berkeley and British songwriter/producer Ben Parker, is creating an entirely new performance genre. Part live concept album, part performance art, they conjure their timeless mythic universe under the aliases Josiah Chester Jones and George Ulysses Brown, 19th-century vagabonds who travel the world in a hand-built boat to escape troubled pasts and search for adventure and love. Designed as a live companion experience to their gorgeous radio-theater podcast "Madmen Cross the Water," The Sons weave their wild and hilarious stories between their heartbreaking and rousing songs, taking audiences on a deeply imaginative trip every show. Both the Sons of Town Hall concert and the podcast offer escapes from the everyday, temporary relief from the woes of the modern world.

Two uniquely compelling singer/songwriters, Alice Howe & Freebo have performed as a duo since 2017, weaving rock bass legend Freebo's fretless stylings into Alice's soulful, impeccably tuned vocals. Best known for his ten years playing bass with Bonnie Raitt, Freebo has toured and recorded with some of the greatest artists of his generation, including John

Mayall, Ringo Starr, Crosby Stills & Nash, Maria Muldaur, and Dr. John. For the past twenty-five years, he's been writing and performing his own original music. Alice Howe is a lifelong singer and songwriter, who was recently named Best Female Artist at the International Acoustic Music Awards. She recorded her latest album "Circumstance" at iconic FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

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

### An Acoustic Evening with Sage Hatfield, Derek & Kanos, Alexis Pastuhov and Jonah Siegel — The Underground - Listening Room

Hailing from small town Vermont, Sage Hatfield is a multi-instrumentalist recording artist and solo-acoustic performing act whose love of song has landed him on stages from coast to coast. With a bent toward a very emotional and visual form of narrative, Hatfield's songs are collections of, in his words "little vignettes, sort of mosaic-stories in sound." Often observational and reflective lyrically, his songs are almost universally received and described by listeners as "nostalgic."

Derek O'Kanos [pronounced: \*Oh-Kawn-Is\*] is a musician at the heart of the New England music scene. A powerful vocalist and captivating performer, this solo artist is equally at home on-stage or in the studio. O'Kanos' music is best described as a mix of powerpop, folkrock, and alternative. This doesn't come as much of a surprise as Derek draws influence from the work of Nick Lowe, John Prine, Ben Harper, Hank Williams, Thin Lizzy and others. His songs are often upbeat, with lyrics that walk the line between optimism and sardonicism.

Alexis Pastuhov has been writing and performing original music for nearly 20 years. From Portland, Maine to Denver, to NYC, Pastuhov has shared his unique brand of indie-folk on stages large and small. Drawing on influences that range from Elliott Smith to Sam Cooke, Pastuhov has independently released 2 full length albums, 2 EPs, as well as a 2017 album release under the moniker Bad Galaxy.

Jonah Siegel is a songwriter in a sphere of his own, stringing together creations ranging from folky ballads to radio-worthy pop-rock. A once member of Brattleboro's manic bedroom pop group "Beated Rags," Siegel now writes solo and performs sparsely, at times collaborating with long-time friends and musical colleagues Sage Hatfield and Oscar Newton. Jonah's brand of indie is at once recognizable, and unfamiliar; it's tangibly musical, thoughtful and emotionally aware. Exploring an alleyway off a side avenue just a few streets over from the Andy Shauf's and Alex G's of the world, it's music with discernible influence, yet deep roots of its own.

24 Pleasant Street, Randolph. Advance: \$14 (+fees) // Day of show: \$17 (+fees). Doors: 7 p.m. // Show: 7:30 p.m. BYOB (21+). All Ages.

### Future Grooves: A Dance & Multimedia Experience — Town Hall Theater, Middlebury

Come experience Town Hall Theater's Anderson Studio illuminated by eye-popping projections by TVC95 (aka Dan Ribaud), with an all vinyl dance set by t.h.e.o.t.h.e.r. (aka Amit Prakash). Experience music Prakash recently brought back from Paris. Dance or grab a cocktail in the new Jean's Place Lounge and enjoy beats with a friend. Cash bar 21+ with ID. From 8 p.m.-12 a.m. at Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row Fork, Middlebury. \$8-12.

## Saturday 8th

### Learn to Crochet — Green Mountain Yarn and Fiber

This class is for complete newbies to crocheting. Participants will begin a simple crochet project in the class to learn basic stitches, terminology, and pattern reading. The cost is \$25 per person, and you will need a size H hook as well as worsted weight yarn for the class. Preregistration is required; register on our website. From 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Green Mountain Yarn and Fiber, 217 Woodstock Avenue, Rutland.

### Knitting a Custom Sweater — Green Mountain Yarn and Fiber

Join Amanda to gain the skills to knit a sweater with a custom fit, based on the knitter's measurements. The prerequisites for the class are confidence with casting on, knitting, purling, increasing and binding off. We will be knitting a top-down raglan pullover. The skills covered in this class will include: choosing yarn, swatching, increasing for raglan seams, using running stitch markers for multiple purposes, seamless construction, making adjustments for fit, picking up stitches, knitting sleeves and decreases, binding off, finishing and blocking. This will be a 5 session workshop held on the following dates: Mar 8, Mar 15, Mar 22, Apr 5, Apr 19. A 10% discount will be given on yarn purchased for this class. Class will run with no fewer than 4 participants. From 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Green Mountain Yarn and Fiber, 217 Woodstock Avenue, Rutland.

### Adventure Dinner Love Trek — Blueberry Hill Inn

Adventure Dinner's signature winter Love Trek returns for a third year of back-country adventure! Arrive at Blueberry Hill Inn and strap on your cross-country skis or snowshoes, check in at your staggered start time, and set off on a 2-mile adventure in the deep drifts of the woods—does it even get any more Vermont-y than that!?



But you won't be alone! We've scattered four fire-cooked courses—each with a thematic drink pairing—along your trek. Each stop explores the warm love of cold climates from inspirational places around the world. Staggered start times mean you can move through the

trek at your own pace—ending with a final course around a glowing bonfire, looking out across the frozen pond. Bring your gear, bring a loved one, and bring an appetite for adventure!

Tickets are \$175 (plus tax) per person and include: 4 fire-fueled courses, 4 warming sips, and all-day back-country access. Each ticket includes a \$10 donation to Blueberry Hill Outdoor Center. From 11:45 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at Blueberry Hill Inn, 1245 Goshen- Ripton Road, Goshen. \$175.

## Friday 7th Sunday 9th

### OUR TOWN by Thornton Wilder with live covers of Noah Kahan — The Chandler Center for the Arts

The Chandler Center for the Arts presents a Vermont-centric production of Thornton Wilder's OUR TOWN. This isn't just the classic play that millions have watched before—this production weaves two new elements into the OUR TOWN experience: live onstage covers of songs by Vermont's own, Grammy-nominated musical artist Noah Kahan; and in Chandler's art gallery, the traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian

Institution about life in rural American towns. Friday, March 7 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, March 8 at 7 p.m.; Closing Show: Sunday, March 9 at 2 p.m.

# Goings on around town

## Friday 14th

### St. Ambrose Annual Lenten Fish Fry

Join us for "ALL YOU CAN EAT" FISH FRYs. Meal includes Fried or Baked Haddock, French Fries, Coleslaw, Fresh Baked Dinner Roll, Beverage & Dessert.

Serving Times & Dates:

5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Fridays March 14th, March 28th, April 11th. \$: Adults - \$17.00, Children 9 & under - \$9.00, Immediate Family of 5 - \$50.00.

For more info, call St. Ambrose Church in Bristol, VT @ 453-2488.

## Free Medical Care at Rutland County Health Partners

Wednesdays in March from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Free healthcare clinic for uninsured or underinsured adults in Rutland County will be offered by the Rutland County Health Partners (formerly Rutland Free Clinic) every Wednesday in March from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at our offices at 204 North Main Street in Rutland. No appointment is necessary. Clinics (with extended appointments) will also be held March 4 (9-11 a.m.), March 6 (9 a.m.-12 p.m.), March 17 (3-6 p.m.), March 18 (9 a.m.-12 p.m.) and March 31 (3-6 p.m.). For appointments or any questions, call 802-774-1082.



# Pittsford Town Meeting

(Continued from Page 6) in Article 2.

After the raft of appropriations had been considered, the meeting turned to “other non-binding business,” which gives town residents an opportunity to address town management, the Selectboard, and their neighbors.

A representative of the Pittsford Village Farm alerted residents to construction beginning at the site in the coming weeks and reiterated that the Farm’s mission is to enrich the town. She also let residents know that the Farm’s board of directors meets at the Maclure Library on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

A resident noted that the Ver-

mont Historical Society is encouraging Vermonters to begin preparing for the United States’ 250th anniversary in 2026. He asked that residents let the Selectboard know how they would like to celebrate the milestone.

Selectboard member Mark Winslow thanked the town’s employees, committee members, and Fire Department for the “tremendous job” they’d done over the previous year.

An attendee asked Ms. Malay about Governor Scott’s education proposals, as Ms. Malay is also Pittsford’s representative in Montpelier. Malay said not much progress had been made on the proposal and that it had been a “slow session.”

Several attendees commended the town’s highway department for its efforts keeping the town’s roads clear during a very snowy winter.

An attendee praised the Pittsford Police Department for its efforts in slowing down traffic on Route 7 through the town. He even joked that Pittsford might become as notorious for its speed enforcement as Bridgewater, where travelers on Route 4 were regularly pulled over in that town.

A resident expressed dismay that the meeting had not been attended by more people, given the importance of the matters up for floor votes. He wondered what could be done to improve turnout.

A resident who had recently moved to Pittsford asked what could be done about the homestead tax credit, which provides property-tax discounts to residents with incomes below a certain threshold. The resident said that her household income had barely risen above the threshold when her taxes had suddenly skyrocketed to the full amount based on assessed property val-

ue. Alicia Malay responded that not much could be done at the local level, since the program is run by the state government. Malay did note, as well, that the issue is being discussed at the Statehouse.

The meeting was recessed until Tuesday, March 4 at 7 a.m., when residents would vote at the Pittsford Town Office for 2 seats on the Selectboard, as well as for a Town Moderator and a Trustee of Public Funds. Ms. Malay and Mr. Mills were running unopposed to retain their seats.

## Restaurant *guide*



**Robert's**  
*Café Provence*

**From Provence to You**  
*De la Provence à Vous*

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

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

11 Center Street, Brandon, VT



**Franklin's**  
FOOD, FRIENDS & FUN

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

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

**25 North Street, Proctor ☎ 802-459-3320**

Ad design included in pricing  
Call 802 236-4662, or email [george@brandonreporter.com](mailto:george@brandonreporter.com) for more information



### Brandon Bounces the House!

LITTLE COMMUNITY MEMBERS braved the rain and cold for Bounce House Karaoke at the Town Hall, sponsored by Whirlies World, Colleen Wright Events, and Brandon Rec! We all had fun!

Photo by Colleen Wright



# Legislative Report

BY TODD NIELSEN

## Getting to work in Montpelier

### A FEW INTERESTING BILLS

The Vermont Senate Agriculture Committee discussed Act 182 (impending ban on neonicotinoid-treated seeds). The Legislature passed Act 182 by overriding a veto by Gov. Phil Scott. Some committee members said they would like to revisit the ban.

Senator Tanya Vyhovsky moves that the Senate propose to the House that the bill H.141 be amended by adding 10 new sections 1) to reduce for the remainder of fiscal year 2025 and for fiscal year 2026 the salaries of all employees in the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative Branches whose salaries exceed \$100,000.00 and who are not covered by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements to fiscal year 2024 levels; (2) that the estimated \$742,500 in savings in fiscal year 2025 be used for General Assistance Emergency Housing and that the estimated \$6,688,000 in fiscal year 2026 savings be reserved for General Assistance Emergency Housing in fiscal year 2026; (3) that funds appropriated for General Assistance Emergency Housing in fiscal years 2025 and 2026 may be used to convert State buildings to provide shelter or housing for those experiencing homelessness.

Senator Anne Watson (D-

Washington) on Wednesday introduced S.65. This bill proposes to amend the legislative direction to the Public Utility Commission to require the energy efficiency utilities to prioritize greenhouse gas emissions reductions and equitable access for all Vermonters and Vermont businesses. Under S.65, Efficiency Vermont would provide “for the development, implementation, and monitoring of gas and electric energy efficiency, and conservation, electrification, active demand management, and energy storage programs.”

The bill S.26, introduced by Sen. Ginny Lyons. This bill proposes to prohibit the use of certain artificial dyes in competitive food and food and beverages served as part of a school district or an approved independent school’s food programs.

The bill H.26. This bill proposes to establish a 32-hour workweek by requiring employers to pay overtime for hours worked in excess of 32 and making corresponding amendments to other employment statutes.

### IN THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Testimonies and discussion on H.218. This bill proposes to appropriate funds from the Opioid Abatement Special Fund for use

in Fiscal Year 2026.

Testimonies, discussions, and reports on H.91. This bill proposes to establish the Emergency Temporary Shelter Program to replace the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program.

Testimonies to support Bill H.46. This bill proposes to establish the Rare Disease Advisory Council.

### GOVERNOR SCOTT’S FOUR KEY POLICY PROPOSALS EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION PLAN

What’s the Goal? Improve student outcomes while making Vermont’s education system more fair, effective, and financially sustainable.

Key Proposals:

New funding formula to ensure equal resources for students, regardless of where they live.

Streamlined governance by consolidating school districts into regional districts to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

More transparent property tax system with a single statewide education tax rate.

State oversight to improve quality, including setting minimum and maximum class sizes and standardizing graduation requirements.

Why It Matters: This plan modernizes Vermont’s schools to provide high-quality education while controlling costs.

### PUBLIC SAFETY REFORM PLAN

What’s the Goal? Ensure accountability for offenders, and improve mental health and addiction responses.

Key Proposals:

Repeal the Raise the Age law so that 19-year-old offenders are prosecuted as adults.

Tougher bail laws to keep repeat offenders from committing more crimes while awaiting trial.

Allow law enforcement access to criminal records that are otherwise sealed for employment.

Limit judicial discretion for repeat violent offenders to prevent lenient sentences.

Expand pre-trial supervision for repeat offenders and strengthen addiction treatment programs in prisons.

Why It Matters: This plan aims to make Vermont’s communities safer by holding criminals accountable while also providing pathways to rehabilitation.

### PATH HOUSING PLAN

What’s the Goal? Increase affordable housing, revitalize neglected communities, and streamline regulations to speed up home construction.

Key Proposals:

\$50 million investment to increase homeownership opportunities and rental housing.

\$9.1 million Infrastructure Fund to help communities build utilities needed for new housing.

Regulatory reforms to cut red tape and reduce costly appeals that delay housing projects.

Brownfield cleanup funds to turn abandoned properties into housing developments.

Why It Matters: With rising housing costs, this plan ensures Vermont builds more affordable homes while keeping development fair and efficient.

### AFFORDABLE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

What’s the Goal? Ensure Vermont’s climate policies are effective, legally sound, and affordable without raising costs.

Key Proposals:

Reform the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) to remove the provision encouraging lawsuits and instead focus on net-zero emissions by 2035 instead of rigid reduction targets.

Rebalance leadership of climate measures with Administration members who implement them.

Ensure funding for clean energy projects, electric vehicle incentives, and home weatherization without raising new taxes by keeping an incentive instead of a penalty framework.

Change the Renewable Energy Standard to a Clean Energy Standard, allowing nuclear energy to count, which could save up to \$20 million over 10 years.

Why It Matters: This plan prioritizes practical and cost-effective climate action while protecting Vermont’s working lands and economy.

Final Takeaway: Governor Scott’s proposals focus on education reform, public safety, housing, and affordable climate action—all while avoiding unnecessary tax increases and ensuring smarter use of public resources. These plans are designed to make Vermont’s future safer, more sustainable, and more prosperous for all residents.

I am available Sundays, 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the Brandon United Methodist Church food shelf for discussions.

Representative Todd Nielsen  
toddnielsenforvhouse@gmail.com

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



Terry Ferson and Linda and Bob Schmidt recognized several of the people in this photo (from left to right, up the stairs): Emily Nelson, Kim Nelson, Gretchen Kellogg, unknown, Marsha Barrett, Melody Wilson, Leah Scheiwert [our apologies for any misspelling], unknown, unknown, and John Peterson.



Chris Wetmore and Debra Schmidt Kibler recognized Ellen and Jack Schaffer in this photo. The Schaffers owned the Lilac Inn on Park Street in the 90s.



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

Or call us at 247-8080







## Adult fiction

### Emily Wilde's Compendium of Lost Tales by Heather Fawcett

In the final book of the series, Emily and Wendell must find the source of a mysterious plague spreading throughout Wendell's kingdom, destroying the land and creatures it touches.

### The Outcast Mage by Annabel Campbell

In the glass city of Amoria, magic is everything. And Naila, a student at the city's legendary academy, is running out of time to prove she can control hers. If she fails, she'll be forced into exile, relegated to a life of persecution with the other magicless hollows. Or worse, be consumed by her own power. When a tragic incident further threatens her place at the Academy, Naila is saved by Haelius Akana, the most powerful living mage. Naila must dig deep to discover the truth of her powers or watch the city she loves descend into civil war. For there is violence brewing on the wind, and greater powers at work. Ones who could use her powers for good...or destroy everything she's ever known.

### Mona Acts Out by Mischa Berlinski

Celebrated stage actress Mona Zahid wakes up on Thanksgiving morning to the clamor of guests packed into her Manhattan apartment

and to a wave of dread: her in-laws are lurking on the other side of the bedroom door; she's still fighting with her husband; and in just a few weeks she will begin rehearsals as Shakespeare's Cleopatra, the hardest role in theater. In an impulsive burst, Mona bounds out the door with the family dog in tow ("I forgot the parsley!" is her lame excuse) to find her estranged mentor, Milton Katz, who was recently forced out of the legendary theater company he founded amid accusations of sexual misconduct. Mona's escape turns into an overnight adventure that brings her face-to-face with her past, with her creative power and its limitations, and ultimately, with all the people she has ever loved.

### Voice like a Hyacinth by Mallory Pearson

Art student Jo Kozak and her fellow classmates and best friends, Caroline, Finch, Amrita, and Saz, are one another's muses—so close they have their own language and so devoted to the craft that they'll do anything to keep their inspiration alive. Even if it means naively resorting to the occult to unlock their creativity and to curse their esteemed, if notoriously creepy, professor. They soon learn the horrible price to be paid for such a transgressive ritual. In its violent aftermath, things are changing. Jo is feeling unnervingly haunted by something inexplicable. Their paintings, once prodigious and full of life, are growing dark and unhealthy. And their

## DID YOU KNOW?

We have an author talk coming up on March 19th at 6 pm with local author Angel Lee. Her debut novel *Kindling* will be available for purchase.

journey together—as women, students, and artists—is starting to crumble. To right the wrong they've done, these five desperate friends will take their obsession a step too far. When that happens, there may be no turning back.

### The Bones Beneath My Skin by TJ Klune

In the spring of 1995, Nate Cartwright has lost everything: his parents are dead, his only brother wants nothing to do with him, and he's been fired from his job as a journalist in Washington, DC. With nothing left to lose, he returns to his family's summer cabin outside the small mountain town of Roseland, Oregon, to try and find some sense of direction. The cabin should be empty. It's not. Inside is a man named Alex. And with him is an extraordinary ten-year-old girl who calls herself Artemis Darth Vader, and who isn't exactly as she appears. Soon it becomes clear that Nate must make a choice: let himself drown in the memories of his past or fight for a future he never thought possible. Because the girl is special. And forces are descending upon them who want nothing more than to control her.

# 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 26

- Responded to a local residence for a report of an alleged burglary in progress. Upon arrival at the residence it was found that the homeowner had given the individuals on scene consent to enter the dwelling. No criminal activity had occurred.

- Took fingerprints for foster care. **February 27**

- Received a call of a missing/runaway juvenile. It was found that the juvenile had fled to Burlington and was later located by the Burlington Police Department the same night.

- Received a call about an operator driving unsafely in the parking lot of OVUHS.

- Assisted in a voluntary relinquishment of two pet dogs from an apartment on Mulcahy Drive in which the owner was no longer able to care for the animals.

- Received a 911 hang-up call from the Walgreens on Union Street. The call was later determined to have been accidental and there was no emergency.

February 28

- Conducted VIN verification at the BPD.

## March 1

- Assisted the VSP-Rutland with locating a man on Mulcahy Drive who was involved in a domestic assault in Poultney, Vt. Officers located the man, placed him under arrest and transported him to the VSP-Rutland Barracks.

- Received a report of a suspicious vehicle at the post office on North Street. The area was checked, but the truck had left prior to the arrival of the police.

## March 2

- Conducted a patrol on Franklin Street.

- Recovered several debit/credit cards in Brandon from a theft that had occurred in Castleton, Vt. Castleton Police were notified regarding the recovered property.

# OVUU meeting

(Continued from Page 3)

maintaining items on the agenda. While most of the voters in attendance left after the VCC vote, a number stayed—indeed quite a few more than usually attend annual school meetings. After some housekeeping matters, the main issue to take up on the agenda was the budget presentation. School Board Chair Laurie Bertrand gave a detailed presentation of the

budget with visual accompaniment of graphs and charts. The proposed budget for the whole district is \$28,022,999, which is up 4.53% from last year. Student counts are projected to slightly increase from last year, and average per-pupil spending is lower than the state average. A number of positions have been cut.

Members of the school board, Superintendent Rene Sanchez,

and Business Manager Brenda Fleming then fielded a number of questions regarding staffing levels, health insurance, and district-wide data management. Superintendent Sanchez stressed how important it was for the district to standardize and modernize its data management, as the district has outmoded systems that go back to the era before the various schools were consolidated

into one district. This has necessitated adding a data-management position in RNEU's central office. Health-insurance costs are projected to increase 11.9%—which is a smaller increase than last year's 16% increase. The district pays 80% of health insurance costs, which cannot be changed as it is pursuant to an arbitration order.

While the school budget, as

usual, was subjected to close scrutiny from voters, one voter commented that "there is nothing more important than having a strong school system." Thanking the administration and members of the board, he stated, "you are doing everything right."

# 'Kids Code' bill advances in Vermont Senate as lawmakers again look to rein in big tech

BY HABIB SABET/  
VTDIGGER

State lawmakers in the Senate Committee on Institutions advanced a bill Thursday that would put up guard rails for social media platforms designed to keep teens hooked. The bill, S.69 — known as the “Kids Code” by proponents — will land on the Senate floor for a vote once the Legislature reconvenes after the week-long Town Meeting break.

The legislation would require social media companies to adjust algorithms and design codes for users under 18 years old with the aim of making them less addictive and harmful for teens. The bill would also put up guard rails to prevent tech companies from collecting and sharing the personal data of minors.

“This technology is very complicated, obviously,” Sen. Wendy Harrison, D-Windham,

told fellow lawmakers in the Senate Committee on Institutions. “I am very passionate about this legislation because it will benefit both the parents

and the kids who are subject to it.”

Likening social media platforms to slot machines, consumer advocates have argued

that tech companies use targeted algorithms and features like “endless scrolling” to trap users in cycles of compulsive (See ‘Kids Code’, Page 23)

## Brandon budget

(Continued from Page 1)

the appropriations that were requested on the ballot:

- \$50,000 to establish a Capital Fund for future capital expenditures
- \$4,000 for ARC-Rutland
- \$7,000 for the Brandon Independence Day Celebration Committee
- \$25,000 for the Brandon American Legion Post #55
- \$1,000 for the Brandon Area Chamber of Commerce
- \$82,580 for the Brandon Area Rescue Squad
- \$92,000 for the Brandon Free Public Library
- \$5,000 for the Brandon Museum

- \$15,000 for the Brandon Senior Citizens Center
- \$1,000 for the Open Door Clinic, Community Health Services of Addison County
- \$1,500 for the Rutland County Humane Society
- \$2,900 for the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging
- \$10,200 for the VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region
- \$1,000 for Vermont Adult Learning
- \$10,200 for VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region

These appropriations will be added to the amount to be raised by property taxes.



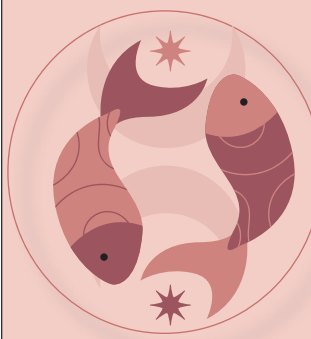
THE FOOLS AND the ladies in waiting.

## Short plays

(Continued from Page 9)

Theatre has gone on to perform at the Vermont State Drama Festival and at the New England Festival. They have also partici-

pated with the American High School Theatre festival at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland.



### WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

values and outlook. Pay attention to signs that may guide you.

**LEO July 23-Aug. 23**  
Now is the perfect time to push forward with creative projects or ideas at work, Leo. You might receive recognition for your efforts, so don't worry about the spotlight if it happens.

**ARIES March 21-April 20**  
Aries, you are in a leadership position this week, whether you realize it or not. Your confidence may inspire others to follow your lead. Just be sure not to micromanage.

**TAURUS April 21-May 21**  
Taurus, stability is important to you. This week you may find yourself craving a deeper connection. Explore the different types of relationships in your life and make a plan.

**GEMINI May 22-June 21**  
This is an excellent week for networking and making new friends, Gemini. Just be careful of overcommitting, as it's easy to fill up your plate with too much to handle.

**CANCER June 22-July 22**  
Cancer, you might be craving an emotional connection this week. You may feel drawn to someone who shares your

fall into place. Prioritize your health and finances this week.

**CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20**  
Capricorn, with so much creativity flowing, you might want to express yourself through hobbies or an art project. Approach challenges in new ways and the solutions will come.

**AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18**  
Aquarius, you might find yourself taking a step back at work to focus on personal matters. This doesn't mean you are slacking off. It just means you need to shift priorities for a bit.

**PISCES Feb. 19-March 20**  
Avoid any miscommunications by expressing yourself clearly and concisely, Pisces. Focus on strengthening your communication and connection with others in the days to come.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

**FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS**

March 7 Bryan Cranston, actor (69)  
March 8 Lester Holt, newscaster (66)  
March 9 Juliette Binoche, actor (61)  
March 10 Jon Hamm, actor (54)  
March 11 Douglas Adams, writer (d)  
March 12 Vaslav Nijinsky, dancer (d)  
March 13 Coco Gauff, tennis player (21)

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# Hard Tellin'

BY DAVE PRAAMSMA

## Vermonters and their dirt roads: an unholy love affair

BY DAVE PRAAMSMA  
 Roundabout early spring, I would say, probably isn't a bad time for Vermonters to remind ourselves again why we like our dirt roads so much. Yes, we have that dubious honor of having the highest percentage of dirt roads in the entire country. But why exactly do we persist in preserving these tire-swallowing, rutted-out, rural routes that show no love in return...especially in springtime?  
 Come to think of it, we might worry less about what we tell ourselves than the explanation we offer to those unfamiliar with our rugged roadways. To the out-of-state visitor who rolls in the driveway, we don't just congratulate him on finding the place, but

also on still having his muffler. It is the wise Vermonter who might have a few ready words of explanation for the lack of pavement around here. A kind of dirt-road apologetics. Understandably this is not an easy item to casually slip into our state's proud list of distinctives: yes, the first to outlaw slavery, the billboard-free state, and...the highest percentage of dirt roads. To the visiting out-of-stater, understand, this has all the warmth and logic of a Floridian talking up the fact that they hold the highest alligator population.  
 What became a personal moment of dirt-road enlightenment, though, after 25 years as a Vermonter, was that folks here don't just tolerate dirt roads, they prefer

them. Far from excusing these stretches as a kind of geographical affliction, we seem to sing their praises. I can only liken this to one newly wedded writer who famously complained that his new wife did not want him just to do the dishes but to actually like doing them as well. The fully actualized Vermonter, it seems, is not just dirt-road compliant—he's actually quite fond of them.  
 Admittedly fondness was not necessarily on my mind when a friend arrived at my dirt road residence for dinner one spring evening not carrying a pie but my recently deposited mailbox. (My badly furrowed road had given him some difficulty with the turn I learned.)

To get a better handle on this phenomenon, I called one Vermont town manager who informed me that even fondness might even be a bit of an understatement. In his 40 years of service, he's seen folks get downright passionate on the subject. One year when rumors of pavement plans reached the ears of some Addison residents, battle lines were quickly drawn. Yes, exactly—in the dirt. If his story sounds like an anomaly, the New York Times once reported on a similar dirt-road uprising back in 1996, when one pavement-

protesting activist in Brookfield threatened to "lie down in front of the bulldozers—with her grandchildren"! If that's not teaching the value of antiquity to the next generation, I don't know what is.  
 While all of this might certainly make the point, I don't think I really rounded the mental corner until I learned that in some parts of the state, folks are actually unpaving their roads.(!) Dust to dust! Try explaining that to the houseguest from Michigan. (I would strongly advise obfuscating with some wonky technobabble about some hydroelectric infrastructure project and then quickly change the subject.) Our status as dirt-road record-holders, it seems, is not accidental—we are active contestants.  
 If nothing else, the dirt-road phenomenon does provide for some interesting fireside chats and theories, perhaps the most popular being that Vermonters simply find these roads charming. Not unlike our covered bridges, postcards present just a little nicer, it seems, when the road looks more like a place you would get lost on and then have no one to ask for directions.  
 But if that visiting houseguest is still unconvinced, another tactical defense I've heard is that Vermonters just like "slowness."

Whether literally or figuratively, the theory that our dirt roads serve as a kind of emblem of Vermont's unhurried state of mind is arguably worth the cost of at least one strut repair. Dirt roads then are the Vermonters' equivalent of a statewide speed bump, a kind of gentle (or not so gentle) reminder that the hurry-sickness of modernity is unacceptable. Sure, the Romans might have had their fancy paved roads 2,000 years ago. But nobody's in a hurry to move armies around here. Dirt roads remind everyone that we're just not in such a yank to join the 21st Century.  
 What has turned out to be a more decidedly conspiratorial theory is the notion that Vermonters are not so concerned about the flow of traffic around the state, but about traffic coming in the state. Those gravelly roads (I'm whispering now) are really a form of population control. We can only speculate.  
 All of which brings me back to a cliché that still holds some proverbial merit: "Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations." Not a bad reminder to those of us with mud splattered rigs outside our windows this spring. And not a bad comeback for that house guest still stewing about his lost hub cap.

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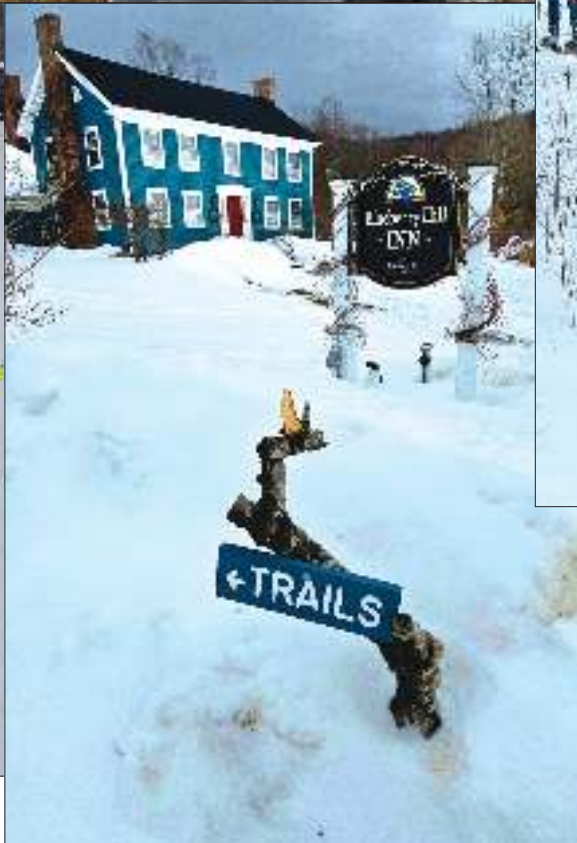


# Annual Blueberry Hill Pig Race was a joyous event

BY GEORGE FJELD

GOSHEN—Blueberry Hill’s annual Pig Race this past Saturday was another resounding success. The race started with a running lap around the field, over a “mountain” of snow, and then across the road to find one’s skis which had been widely dispersed and hidden. Nina Gage found her skis separated in 2 different trees! Then the course proceeded up into the hills with a few hijinks along the way. Ev-

eryone made it back to the ski lodge for a lovely meal of roast pig, rolls, and salad prepared by Shari Brown and her excellent staff at the Inn. About 80 racers participated with some from as far away as New Hampshire. As the event wound down, it started snowing and a quick inch was deposited in Goshen that afternoon. The conditions were excellent and should remain so for some time.



**FUN WAS HAD** by all at the annual Blueberry Hill Pig Race on Saturday. About 80 participants skied over hill and dale and then enjoyed a delicious meal of roast pig!

Photos by Alois Pattis and George Fjeld

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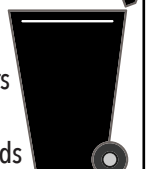
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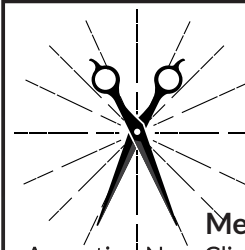
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## Snow Sculptures!

THIS MASTERPIECE WAS on School Street in Proctor.

Photo by Dale CHRISTIE

## 'Kids Code'

*(Continued from Page 19)*

use, which can have dramatic consequences on the mental health and development of adolescents.

"These companies have spent billions to make their products work this way," Laura Marquez-Garrett, an attorney with the Social Media Victims Law Center, said in testimony to lawmakers last week.

"Kids are really vulnerable to these designs and they start losing themselves," she said.

The Kids Code is just one in a constellation of bills lawmakers have taken up this year with the aim of regulating social media companies and strengthening data privacy protections for Vermonters.

That same goal was at the heart of a sweeping data privacy bill lawmakers passed last year, only to have Gov. Phil Scott veto the legislation despite broad support. Drawing on policies already enacted by states like California and Connecticut, the more than 100-page omnibus bill from 2024 patched together a slew of pro-

visions aimed at regulating tech companies, including an earlier version of the Kids Code and statutes providing ground rules for data brokers.

This year, lawmakers are attempting a divide and conquer strategy for the task of reining in big tech.

In addition to S.69, Senate Institution Committee members also last week took up S.71, a bill to establish general ground rules for tech companies that collect, share and sell the data of users in Vermont. That bill would create a private right of action against companies that violate those rules. Meanwhile, S.70, which hasn't yet been discussed in committee, would give users the right to request the removal of their data from data brokers. All three Senate bills have companions introduced in the House.

Rep. Monique Priestley, D-Bradford, who was one of the architects of last year's data legislation and is sponsoring the House bills, said it was "cleaner" to have the legislation broken down into compo-

nent parts this time around.

"Each one of those bills is now a refined version of what has happened with these bills across the country," said Priestley, referencing policies from other states that have served as models.

But legislation regulating big tech, including S.69, could see stumbling blocks on the way to Scott's desk, where it faces the possibility of another veto.

Last year, the omnibus data privacy bill was the subject of intense debate in both chambers before reaching its final form and faced fierce pressure from industry lobbyists who flocked to the Statehouse to argue against the legislation.

Priestley said passing the bills could be a similarly uphill battle this year.

"Because people are losing faith that the federal government will act at this level, everyone realizes that the states are the level that these things are going to get accomplished," she said. "So everyone is piling on."

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**Like all things vintage?**

# Mim's Photos

are on page 16!



**Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.** See page 17

# Senior spotlight A chat with Robert Paul Gearwar

Robert Paul Gearwar was born in Burlington, Vt. on February 1, 1940. His father, John P. Gearwar, worked at the Vermont Marble Quarry, while his mother Imogene Prescott was a matron at the Brandon Training School for many years. He grew up with two brothers and two sisters: Arlene, Theresa, Prescott, and Albert. Bob attended Brandon Elementary School (which burned) and Brandon High School, Class of '59. After graduation, he worked at Pate's Garage as a mechanic, then at Vermont Marble as a machinist. He moved on to Mal-tool & Co. in Rutland, as a machinist and, finally, he drove a school bus for Otter Valley. He married Glenda Haley and they have four children, Robert, Jr., Peter, Kelley, and Marc. When asked what was the best thing that ever happened to him his response was a resounding "getting married and having kids!" However, when asked about the most embarrassing thing that ever happened to him, his answer was a little different. He said, "call me up and I'll tell you about it!" His hobbies and interests include walking, which he often does with his sister; mechanics, and fixing/starting cars. He stated that he was a jack of all trades and master

of none. He also is part of the Color Guard for the American Legion. His favorite thing to do is help out at the American Legion, be in the Color Guard, and do whatever they need done. The most exciting experience that he was willing to share was the fact that his daughter took him to Nashville, Tenn. for his 80th birthday. He had a blast.

*Courtesy of the Brandon Senior Center*



**Brandon Senior Center's "Spotlighted Senior"**  
Paul Gearwar

## A poem by Sanford Rouse of Brandon

*May the sun bring you energy on entering a new day,*

*And the moon softly restore you at night.*

*May the rain wash away your worries,*

*May the breeze blow you new strength and well-being.*

*And may you walk gently through the world,*

*And know beauty all the rest of the days of your life.*

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