

The REPORTER

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

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\$1



PEACEFUL PROTESTORS LINE Route 7 in Brandon's Central Park last Saturday. Between 500 and 750 people participated locally in this nationwide event.

Photos by Steven Jupiter

'Hands Off' protest draws hundreds to Brandon

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Despite a cold, blustery day, hundreds of people turned out for the local "Hands Off" protest along Route 7 in

downtown Brandon on Saturday afternoon. The protest was organized by Indivisible Brandon, a nonpartisan local chapter of a national organization that was

founded in response to President Trump's first term. Many such rallies were held around the country on Saturday.

According to Indivisible's

website, the organization seeks "to rebuild our democracy."

Saturday's "Hands Off" protest was specifically in response to recent actions by President

Trump and Elon Musk that the organization calls an "illegal billionaire power grab." These actions include unprecedented cuts

(See Hands Off, Page 8)

Brandon Fire Department's new truck arrives

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—Brandon Fire Department (BFD) took delivery of its new fire truck on Tuesday, April 1. The new truck is a rescue pumper from E-ONE manufacturers. The truck was manufactured partly in Florida and partly in upstate New York. It will be BFD's main fire-response vehicle, capable of holding 6 firefighters in its cab and pumping 2,000 gallons of water per minute. It also has three times the storage capacity of the 2015 vehicle

it replaced, which was sold in October of 2022.

Moreover, Chief Kilpeck said

just 4 trucks. He'd like to see BFD begin replacing trucks on a more regular basis, as some of the department's current fleet dates to the 1990s and is nearing the end of its useful life. In fact, the next vehicle the department will try to get rid of, now that it has the new truck, is a 1990s ladder truck.

The total, all-in cost of the new truck was \$746,933, which was roughly \$22K less than the original contract, according to Chief Kilpeck. Kilpeck and other BFD officers worked with E-ONE to

(See New fire truck, Page 14)



CHIEF KILPECK SHOWING off the fire department's new truck.

Photos by Steven Jupiter

the new truck is part of a long-term plan to consolidate BFD's fleet to

officers worked

Hundreds of VT schools and child care facilities do not meet herd immunity threshold for measles

BY ERIN PETENKO/
VTDIGGER

The United States is in the midst of a surge in measles cases driven by unvaccinated children.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has re-

ported 483 measles cases so far in 2025. If the current pace of spread were to continue, it would make this year the worst for measles in the 21st century.

About 97% of cases have been

(See Measles cases, Page 11)

Chef Barral attacked and stabbed in Café Provence

BY GEORGE FJELD

BRANDON—Chef Robert Barral was attacked and stabbed in his restaurant, Café Provence on Saturday, April 5th at 4:30 in the afternoon. Fellow restaurateur, Matt Lewis, and restaurant patrons de-

livered immediate first aid before

(See Chef Barral attacked, Page 14)



The eighth in a series on Brandon's historic buildings

Cardinal House was home to two prominent Brandon builders

BY JAMES PECK

The red brick house at 14 Franklin Street, just a couple houses past the library, doesn't really stand out as you pass it. However, this was the home to two of the most important builders in Brandon's historic past.

DAVID WARREN

According to one account, the first prominent builder, David Warren, actually built the house back around 1850. Recent further research of the deeds puts the date closer to 1834, when Warren likely built it for a man named Dexter Whitcomb who had bought the lot in 1833 for \$100.

David Warren was 43 when the 2 1/2-story brick house was built, but he was already Brandon's preeminent builder. He'd just completed both the Congregational Church overlooking Central Park in 1832 and the Baptist Church overlooking Conant Square in 1833. Warren had started as a carpenter and joiner in Brandon in the 1820s then became a master builder/contractor for both residences and businesses.

If you look closely at the front of the Congregational Church, you will see the small marble diamonds above each window, and he put the same marble diamond above the triangular attic window on 14 Franklin.



THE BRANDON CONGREGATIONAL Church, also built by Warren, has the marble diamond above its windows.

A plaque dedicated to David Warren and his wife, Adeline, is still on a wall of the church sanctuary.

Dexter Whitcomb would live at 14 Franklin only five years, selling "my brick house + shop, barn etc." for \$1,100 in 1838 to Ezra Capron. Interestingly, that deed was witnessed by the famous Thomas Davenport, who

had invented the electric motor in Forest Dale only four years before.

David Warren would next buy the house in 1842 and live

which replaced it.

Ozro and Mary Meacham raised their five children at 14 Franklin, including youngest daughter Sara or "Sadie," as

she was known. Sadie recalled later that "when the style came in to paint the brick houses of Brandon, the Meacham girls wanted ours painted, but Ozro

Meacham balked at that and the bricks were never painted."

Ozro died of a heart attack at 73 in 1904 in his pew at St. Thomas's Episcopal Church.

TOM ROGERS

After Ozro's death, the house was sold to Thomas and Eva Rogers, Meacham's son-in-law and daughter. Tom and Eva had been married in the house in January of 1900 and already lived there.

Tom Warren Rogers was 52 when he bought the house for \$2,437.50. He was by then a rising star builder and contractor, having completed many buildings not only in Brandon, but throughout the state, including Eaton Hospital in Montpelier, the Waterbury Asylum, the Brattleboro Town Hall, significant renovations to the Brandon Inn and even the renovation of the Brandon Congregational Church and chapel (following in the footsteps of David Warren).

Tom and Eva Rogers would live at 14 Franklin until Tom's passing in 1923. During that time, Tom Rogers was exceedingly prolific as a builder/contractor/architect. The following is a partial list of the buildings he erected:

In Brandon, many residences, plus Brandon High School (1916), expansion of the dining room at the Brandon Inn (1917), the Bank Block (1918), the Prime Block (1919) and the Prime Movie Theater (1921).

At Middlebury College, Pearson's Hall (1911), Chemistry Building (1913). Mead Memorial Chapel (1916) and Hepburn Hall (1916).

Throughout the state: renovation of St. Paul's church in Burlington (1910), Lothrop School in Pittsford (1912), the Industrial School in Vergennes (1913), Vermont Marble Store in Proctor (1914), Ilsley Library in Middlebury (died while under construction in 1923).

Tom Rogers was described as follows: "He was universally recognized as among the leading builders in Vermont, if indeed he was not at the head of the list. The list of large important public buildings which stand as monuments to his genius is a striking one and is believed to be unrivalled by any builder in Vermont."

Amidst all his work activities, Tom Rogers managed to remodel and enlarge 14 Franklin, adding the piazza (porch) on the left side in 1910, significantly



BUILDER DAVID WARREN'S signature marble diamond circled in this picture of the Cardinal House on Franklin Street.

Photos by Steven Jupiter

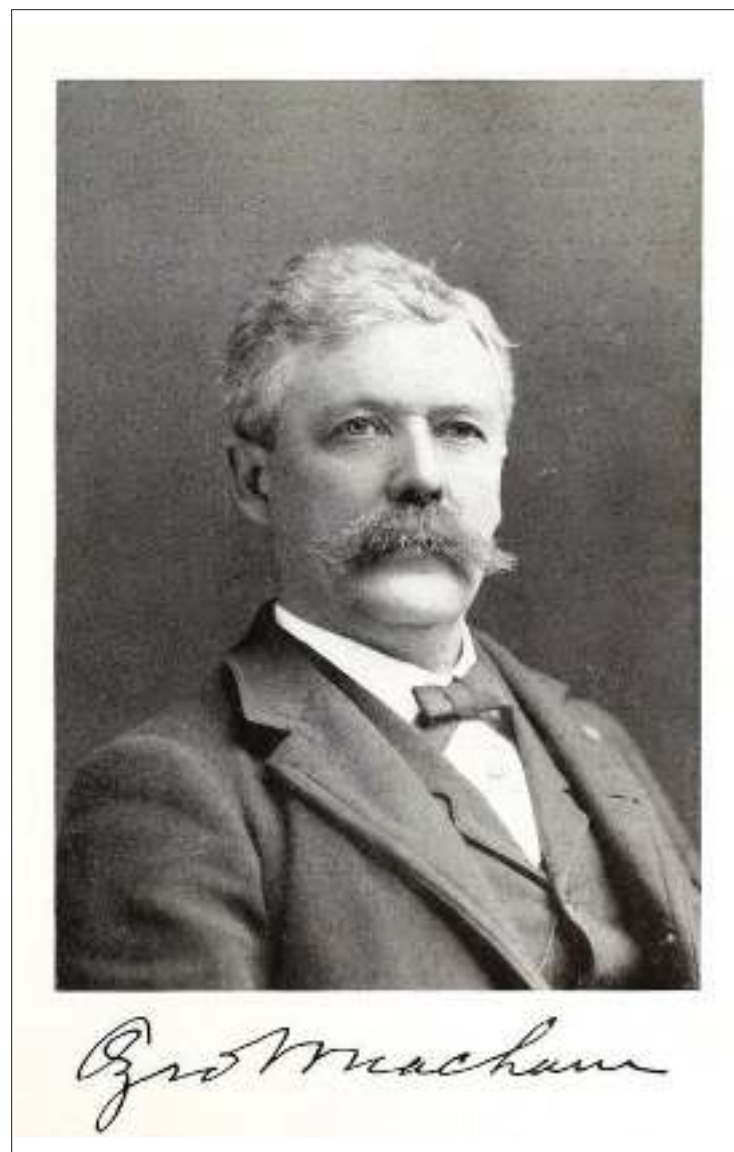
there until 1853. He had by then started the Brandon Iron & Car Wheel Company, for which he designed and built iron wheels for railroad cars and built the company's many buildings along both sides of Center Street in 1850 (now gone).

He continued to oversee the erection of many buildings in town as well, including the chapel next to the Congregational Church in 1860 (now Fellowship Hall). In 1861, he was a close supervisor of the building of the Town Hall. According to Warren's obituary in 1869, "he mastered the science of architecture" and "excelled as a builder of private residences and public edifices."

OZRO MEACHAM

In 1863, 31-year-old Ozro Meacham, a young successful Brandon merchant and Civil War veteran, bought the house at 14 Franklin for \$1,500 and moved in with his wife, Mary, and four children. The Meachams would live there for 42 years until 1905, prompting many in town to call it the "Ozro Meacham House" for much of the 1900s.

Meacham ran a popular men's clothing store, first in the Simonds Block on the west side of Center Street and then, after an 1889 fire destroyed that building, in the Smith Block



OZRO MEACHAM.



GARDENING CORNER

Parrot tulips contributed mightily to ‘tulip mania’

BY LYN DESMARAIS
In lieu of a poem I am including this list of ten famous tulip paintings by master artists and then, because it didn’t include the one that I know, I urge you to google an eleventh painting by Balthasar van der Est, Tulip with Lizard, 1625. Here’s the list:
<https://www.artst.org/tulip->

paintings/
I could not get a lot more information on parrot tulips than that they are brightly colored, so I had to take a deeper dive. They not only experienced the Dutch tulip mania of the 1630s, but were also chief contributors to it. Plant historians think, although I’m sure someone has done their DNA

by now, that they were a hybrid between single late tulips and a variety called Triumph. They grow one to two feet tall and have ruffled or fringed edges and smears of color or bright rings of color. Because they bloom a bit later than the non-parrot variety, adding them to your garden can extend your tulip season.

When viruses were desirable
So, here’s a weird fact. There is a tulip virus that can be spread by insects, aphids, humans, hands, and tools. It can be spread at the petal, leaf, and bulb level. So, no mystery here, as tulips were propagated at a fever level in Holland in the 1630s, with no knowledge of germs, they propagated and valued unhealthy but very pretty tulips, infected with the virus. How do we know this? Because The Tulip Mosaic Virus causes tulips to develop a mosaic of colors other than the color they genetically are. So, flames, streaks, and stripes of other colors would appear on healthy tulip petals in a healthy tulip bed. These unique-ish flowers became prized, were handled often, and propagated as rare, thus helping the virus spread as well. So, who cares, right? Sounds kind of cool that you’d get these unique color combinations with a mottling of colors on each side of the petal, each different from another and even different on each side of the petal. Maybe you’d even feel as if you are creating a new type of tulip with no effort. But the other name for the same virus is the

“tulip breaking” virus. The virus affects the whole plant, withering its leaves, making the stems too weak to hold up the flower and making the bulbs break easily into much smaller plants. Some varieties have completely died out due to the virus. Other varieties, as you know, “peter out” in your garden. Now look again at Van der Est’s painting. He painted a parrot tulip with a lizard, and the parrot tulip has the mosaic virus.
I do know that Renaissance Farm and other flower farms in the area carry parrot tulips—virus free, of course. You can’t

miss the parrot tulips in a bouquet. As red and black pop in my garden I’m always looking at varieties with those colors in them. Here are some gorgeous varieties that I’ve seen. Gay presto or ‘Estella Rijnveld’ tulip, is a variation of red and white, with yellow green veins. Bright Parrot is mainly red with yellow tipped petals as if you dipped the tops in paint. Apricot Parrot has apricot-pink petals with green-and-white stripes. Dee Jay is a white parrot tulip with a thick band of true red. Black Parrot is a deep purple which is fragrant! If you
(See Gardening corner, Page 11)



Spotlight On Business PINE GROVE ORGANICS



Pine Grove Organics is a locally owned and operated cannabis dispensary dedicated to providing high-quality, responsibly sourced cannabis products in a welcoming and educational environment. Committed to ethical business practices, they strive to support the local economy, collaborate with small businesses, and contribute positively to the town



of Brandon. Pending final approval by the state Cannabis Control Board, the team expects to begin sales at the new 16 Park St. location after the 4/20 Holiday.



CHEF ROBERT LEAVING the hospital. Photo by George Fjeld

Community Forums
Join us in a welcome home
for Chef Robert Barral as
we hold Chef in love!
Saturday, April 19th, at noon

A group sing, a gift card frenzy and an online video card will help the staff at Cafe Provence to know they are loved!
Meet at Central Park on Saturday, April 19 at noon for a group sing. We'll walk (probably in the rain so bring an umbrella and candle!) and we'll sing. Lisa Peluso will have a link to lyrics online, and we'll have sheets printed. We'll carol outside and then go to Brandon Idol.

In the meantime, the Cafe Provence Gift Card Frenzy begins now! Cards are available at www.cafeprovincevt.com, or at the restaurant.
And please make a video card and send it to Cafe Provence Facebook page!
This was a horrible thing to happen. We can't change it, but we can share our concern and care in a positive way.



It's getting too hot down here
THIS WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW was seen while migrating to northern Canada.
Photo by Sue Wetmore

Community Forums continued
Southwestern Vermont Council on
Aging announces virtual Powerful Tools
for Caregivers classes starting April 24th

RUTLAND—The Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging (SVCOA) is pleased to announce the launch of a new series of Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC) classes, set to begin on Thursday, April 24th. This six-week program is designed to provide unpaid family care providers with the skills and confidence needed to manage their own health while caring for a loved one and is nationally recognized for its effective approach to caregiving. SVCOA is proud to offer these weekly sessions every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. These classes are aimed at helping unpaid family care providers learn and use tools to effectively cope with the emotional challenges and physical demands of care-

giving. Through this program, participants will learn to reduce personal stress, communicate effectively with family and healthcare providers, and navigate the complex emotions associated with caregiving.
Event Details:
• Start Date: Thursday, April 24th, 2025
• Duration: 6 weeks, every Thursday
• Time: 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
• Location: Virtual (Online)
• Cost: Free
Registration is required, and space is limited to ensure an intimate and productive environment for all participants. Interested individuals can sign up by calling the SVCOA Helpline at 1-800-642-5119.
SVCOA is committed to supporting unpaid family care

providers across Southwestern Vermont by providing them with necessary resources and education. "Caregivers provide invaluable support to their loved ones, often putting their own needs second," said Aaron Brush, SVCOA Family Caregiver Support Specialist. "Through the PTC classes, we aim to empower caregivers with the tools they need to thrive, not just survive, in their caregiving roles." For additional information about the Powerful Tools for Caregivers classes or to learn more about other services offered by the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, please visit www.svcoa.org.

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Letters to the Editor

Our elections have been secure, here in Brandon, and across the United States

As the Town Clerk of Brandon, I've seen firsthand that voter turnout in local elections consistently hovers between 25–30%. Even during presidential election years, we typically see about 70% of registered voters cast ballots — and this pattern has held true for decades. While mailing local ballots has slightly increased turnout, these numbers remain consistent not just in Brandon, but across the country.

That's why I was flummoxed when the 2020 presidential election was labeled fraudulent by so many. If there had truly been widespread fraud, wouldn't we have seen turnout spike to 80%, 90%, or even 95%? The fact is our elections are secure. Numerous lawsuits following the 2020 election found no evidence of fraud.

In September 2022, I was contacted by someone work-

ing for Mike Lindell — “the Pillow Guy” — who requested scanned copies of every ballot and voter-signed early ballot envelope from our elections to “prove” fraud. After three weeks of review, they called back to confirm that everything matched the published results exactly. That should have put the matter to rest.

Yet on Tuesday, March 25 of this year, President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order (EO) on “Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections.” While the EO is being challenged in court, a bill circulating in Congress — the SAVE Act — mirrors many of its provisions. And while protecting voter integrity is important, several elements of the EO and the SAVE Act raise serious concerns for Vermonters and for democracy as a whole.

The EO and SAVE Act would require every Vermonter to verify their citizenship in person at their town clerk's office, using a U.S. passport or a REAL ID. This creates unnecessary barriers — especially for rural residents and low-income individuals who may not have easy access to these documents. Other valid forms of ID, such as a birth certificate or a driver's license, are inexplicably excluded. The result? A significant number of eligible voters could be disenfranchised.

These proposals also create complications for people who have changed their names — for example, after marriage or divorce — by requiring additional certified documents like marriage licenses or divorce decrees. For many, this is a burdensome and unnecessary requirement.

Even more troubling is the

directive for the Department of Homeland Security to review state-managed voter registration records and list maintenance activities. This level of federal overreach, combined with recent efforts to defund and dismantle the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) — the very body charged with protecting our election infrastructure — raises serious alarms. How can we expect DHS to safeguard our elections when its tools and teams have been so severely weakened?

Perhaps most concerning is how measures like these continue to erode public trust in our democratic institutions. This administration has repeatedly cast doubt on the press, our elections, and the very systems that uphold our democracy. The EO and SAVE Act are not about protecting elections

— they're part of a broader campaign to sow distrust, suppress votes, and centralize control. This is how democracy erodes, and authoritarianism takes root.

When people lose faith that their voices matter or that their votes count, democracy itself is in danger. The real threat lies not just in the policies being proposed today, but in the long-term damage to public confidence and civic engagement.

We must stand firm in protecting every Vermonter's right to vote — without unnecessary hurdles, intimidation, or fear. The integrity of our democracy depends on it.

*Susan Gage, Town Clerk
Brandon*

Hands off DOGE

As of March 2025, the United States' total federal debt stands at approximately \$36.21 trillion. As of early 2025, the United States is incurring approximately \$3 billion in interest expenses on its national debt each day.

Hands off the federal debt! Hands off bureaucracy! Hands off border closures, let everybody in, American people can afford to support everybody. Hands off countries making all our steel necessary for our defense, making our automobiles and other vital merchandise.

Altogether, Chief Pentagon Spokesman Sean Parnell said, the full set of initial findings of DOGE reveals about \$80 million in wasteful spending that could be better spent on lethality and readiness.

Hands off that waste!

From the DOGE site: “DOGE is starting by posting all of the grant payments issued from the Program Support Center, which disperses ~\$215B in grant payments per year. This will be expanded to all payment systems over time. This is in beta and we will quickly fix any mistakes made.

Previously, payments were often made without descriptions, receipts, or invoices; starting soon, a now-mandatory “brief, written justification ... submitted by the agency employee who approved the payment” will be posted here. The payments listed here have been approved by the applicable agency and funds have been disbursed; DOGE has not approved nor disapproved any of these payments.”

Hands off the new payment system! We are good without description receipts, or invoices! Estimated savings \$140B, amount saved per taxpayer \$869.57.

We don't need that!

The Social Security Administration's (SSA) latest projections indicate that the combined trust funds for Social Security are expected to be depleted by 2035. At that point, the program would only be able to pay approximately 83% of scheduled benefits, based on incoming revenue.

Hands off social security!

*Aida Nielsen
Brandon*



ROBIN DOUGLAS ON the left, and Cara Boudreau on the right.

Town of Brandon welcomes two new employees!

The Town of Brandon recently welcomed two Brandon residents to the Town's professional staff. Robin Douglas has come aboard as the recreation department assistant, and Cara Boudreau has started in her role as operator-in-training at our wastewater

treatment facility. They have both hit the ground running, and we look forward to the good work they will do for our community!

Submitted by Brandon Town Manager
Seth Hopkins

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

Obituaries

Gary Edward Holsten, 85, Brandon

Gary Edward Holsten, age 85, passed away on Monday, March 31, 2025, at Rutland Regional Medical Center.

Gary was born in Point Pleasant, N.J. on July 9, 1939. He was the son of Thomas and Josephine (Holsten) Larsen. He grew up in Woodbridge, where he received his early education and graduated from Woodbridge High School, class of 1957. He began his working career as a welder and pipe fitter in New Jersey. He moved with his family to Stockbridge, Vt. in 1970 and continued working in his chosen career with Ashline Plumbing and Heating in Randolph. He later worked for the Vermont Department of Forestry and Parks, from which he retired in 2005 following more than 25 years of service. He was an amazing artist and man of many talents. He was a veteran of the United States Army, having served with the 82nd Airborne Division. He was a member of the Brandon



GARY EDWARD HOLSTEN

American Legion Post #55.

He is survived by his beloved son, Scott Holsten, and daughter-in-law, Joyce, of Wolcott; his brother, Warren Larsen, and sister-in-law, Joanne, of Woodbridge, N.J.; Nieces and nephews Leah and Lena Holsten of Salem, Ore., and Lars and Robert Larsen of Woodbridge,

N.J. He was predeceased by his loving wife of more than 54 years, Enes Holsten; brother, Tim Holsten; and sister-in-law Louella of Ore. He also leaves behind lifelong best friend Chuck Clark and the memories of his late friends, Lenny Miller and Bobby Trout. Special thanks to Jeannine and Carrie of Brandon, Vt., for their compassionate care.

The memorial service "In Celebration of His Life" will take place on April 12, 2025 at 11 a.m. at the Brandon Congregational Church. Braden Etcheson of Neighborhood Church will officiate. The graveside committal service and burial with Military Honors will follow in the family lot at Pine Hill Cemetery. Following the committal service, the family will receive friends at Brandon American Legion for a time of remembrance.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

Brandon Fire District discusses past merger and new truck delivery

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The Prudential Committee convened for its regular meeting on Thursday, April 3.

The Committee heard from Jan Coolidge and Jeff Cohen on behalf of former customers of Brandon Fire District #2 (BFD2), which had served the 58 homes in the Forrestbrook subdivision in Forest Dale before BFD2's merger with Brandon Fire District #1 (BFD1) in 2023.

At issue was an account balance of \$19,000 that BFD2 had signed over to BFD1 as part of the merger

of the two districts. BFD2 held that BFD1 was obligated to return the \$19K to the former customers of BFD2 under the 2023 merger agreement between the districts.

BFD1 had received \$125,000 from the town of Brandon's COVID-era ARPA allocation to cover the costs of the merger. Those costs, according to BFD1, ultimately reached \$126K, exceeding the ARPA grant by only \$1,000. Ms. Coolidge and Mr. Cohen, residents of Forrestbrook and former officers of the defunct BFD2, asked BFD1 to return the remaining portion

of the \$19K to former customers of BFD2 by dividing the amount equally among the 58 homes of the former BFD2 and crediting each home on its water bill from BFD1.

BFD2 relied on language from the merger agreement for its claims. The agreement, dated November 9, 2023, states that BFD2's funds would be used "to offset connection fees or related costs associated with the merger or discontinuance of BFD2 and/or the future water service fees assessed by BFD1 to BFD2's former customers, with (See Brandon Fire District, Page 19)



Legislative Report

BY TODD NIELSEN

Many bills moving through the House in Montpelier

March 28, 2025 Governor Phil Scott issued an executive order to extend eligibility for families with children and medically vulnerable individuals scheduled to exit the General Assistance program on April 1. These individuals will remain housed in the program through June 30, 2025.

This action will remain sheltered, uprooted in the school year and are the most med-to remain housed partment for Chil-lies works with the future. This compromise pro-Scott offered, islatute declined Budget Adjust-

"I believe responsibility to vulnerable. While posed to the Hotel because it doesn't the program well, clear that we have protect children ers who are most Governor Phil ecutive order does out unwinding progress we've

"I believe we all have a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable. While I've been opposed to the Hotel Motel program because it doesn't serve those in the program well, I have also been clear that we have an obligation to protect children and Vermonters who are most vulnerable."

— Governor Phil Scott

The traditional summer weather General Assistance program will continue, as designed last legislative session, and work towards the expansion of additional family and individual shelter capacity across the state remains a priority for the Agency of Human Services.

Details on the specific eligibility requirements are outlined in the Governor's Executive Order.

ON THE HOUSE FLOOR

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives: That the General Assembly recognizes March 2025 as National Athletic Training Month in Vermont, and be it further.

A lot of Bills Passed in the House: Few of them: H. 401 House bill, entitled An act relating to exemptions for food manufacturing establishments H. 481 House bill, entitled An act relating to stormwater management. H. 167 House bill, entitled An act relating to establishing the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters Grant at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. H.237 House bill, entitled An act relating to prescribing by doctoral-level psychologists.H. 479 House bill, entitled An act relating to housing. H. 488 House bill, entitled An act relating to the fiscal year 2026 Transportation Program and miscellaneous changes to laws related to transportation.H. 491 House bill, entitled An act relating to setting the homestead property tax yields and the nonhomestead property tax rate. Major bill is H. 493 House bill, entitled An act relating to making appropriations for the support of the government. This bill may be referred to as the "BIG BILL – Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations Act". And another important bill H. 91 House bill, entitled An act relating to the Emergency Temporary Shelter Program. The goal of H.91: "It is the intent of the General Assembly that unsheltered homelessness be eliminated and that homelessness in Vermont be rare, brief, and nonrecurring." "In fiscal year 2026, \$10,000,000.00 of one-time funding is appropriated from the General Fund" to transition planning.

On April 4, Governor Scott returned without signature and vetoed H.489, An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments and sent the following letter to the General Assembly:

"Dear Ms. Wrask: Pursuant to Chapter II, Section 11 of the Vermont Constitution, I'm returning H.489, An act relating to fiscal year 2025 budget adjustments, without my signature.

It's clear, we're at an impasse on a non-budget adjustment-related policy, (See Legislative report, Page 19)

BARNARD FUNERAL HOME INC.

3186 U.S. Route 7 Pittsford • www.barnardfuneralhome.com

(802) 483-2811

Christopher Book/Director

For five generations the Barnard family has assisted families in Pittsford, Proctor, Chittenden and the surrounding area getting through one of life's most difficult times.

Also operating the Birch Grove Crematory

Cardinal House

(Continued from Page 2)
cantly renovating the interior in 1915 and adding the brick garage in 1916.

In 1916, Tom rewarded himself by buying the top-of-the-line Cadillac car with a V8 engine that could go up to 65 miles per house, drove it back from Detroit and parked it in his new garage. Brandon residents often saw him buzzing through town on his way to a work site.

In 1923, Tom Rogers died at age 73 of a heart attack, ironically while tending the lawn by his own gravestone at Pine Hill Cemetery in Brandon. In his will, he left a legacy of \$1,000 to the Congregational Church and specified that his house at 14 Franklin would go to the Brandon Free Public Library Association “on condition the library be known as the Rogers-Meacham Free Public Library and be always used for library purposes.” After two other legacies of \$1,400, he left the remainder of his property, including the Prime Block on Park Street to the west of the Brandon Inn and the block between the alley and the bank corner, to the library.

Eva Rogers’ will was consistent with her husband’s and the library would have gotten the house except after Tom died,



OLD ADVERTISEMENT FOR rooms to let at the Cardinal House when it was run by Sadie Meacham as a B&B from the 1930s to the 1950s.

Eva changed her will giving the house to her sister, the aforementioned Sadie Meacham, Ozro’s fifth child.

Meanwhile, Eva continued to live at 14 Franklin, dying there in 1931. It took a while, but her estate and Tom’s were finally settled in 1932. Sadie Meacham got the house. The library got the business blocks and sold them immediately to David Shapiro, who would run his department store there for over 50 years. The proceeds gave a significant boost to the library.

SADIE MEACHAM AND CARDINAL HOUSE

Sadie Meacham was 63 when she was awarded the house in 1932. She grew up there and had lived at home until her late 20s then became a teacher in

Cambridge, Mass. and in Brandon. In 1914, she was trained as a nurse in Manhattan and then enlisted in 1917 and served in WWI in the Army Nurse Corps in New Jersey. After the war, she continued as a private nurse there until her sister’s death.

In 1934, Sadie retired from nursing and opened a bed-and-breakfast at 14 Franklin catering to summer tourists and year-round boarders. She named it Cardinal House for the color of the 100-year-old bricks on the house. She would operate it for almost 20 years until only a of couple years before her death in 1955 at age 86.

In 1957, the house was sold out of Sadie’s estate to Kenneth and Katherine Belden. Ken operated a small-engine

and lawnmower repair shop on Center Street then moved it to his garage. In the 1960s, he became head custodian at Otter Valley. After his death in 1968, the house was sold.

In 1986, it was bought by Anna and Michael Golden who owned it 34 years, selling in 2020 to current owner Deborah

Liebson.

Today, as it approaches its bicentennial, the old brick house at 14 Franklin Street sits as a reminder of Brandon’s two most prominent builders and of the many buildings in Brandon and the state that they built.

**Tire changover, mount and balance your tires—
\$89 cars up to 16", trucks and vehicles over 16" \$99.95**

New tires for sale!

**\$225.00 Spring detailing special—
Clean + shampoo interior, wash + wax exterior
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'Hands Off'

(Continued from Page 1)
to scientific research, education, veteran services, and foreign aid. Beyond funding, the administration's policies toward immigrants and marginalized communities also fueled significant dissent among the protestors.

Estimates of the number of participants ranged from 500 to 750. Indivisible Brandon organizer Greg Smela was happy with the size of the crowd.

"We are extremely grateful for the turnout today," he wrote in a text after the event. "It is more than a little awe inspiring to know so many people are involved in keeping our democracy."

Though Brandonites made up a significant percentage of the attendees, people came from all over Addison and Rutland Counties to attend the rally, since Brandon's was the only "Hands Off" even in the area. Aside from Brandon, there were folks from Sudbury, Leicester, Pittsford, Proctor, Rutland, Goshen, Rip-ton, Cornwall, New Haven, and Middlebury. Some said they'd come from as far as Maine and Pennsylvania to join friends and family protesting in Brandon.

A group of students from Middlebury College said they'd come to the rally in order to feel empowered.

"It's hard to feel helpless," said one of the young women.

An attendee from Ripton added, "Our country is being blown apart by a terrorist and his cronies."

Not everyone at the rally was there to oppose President Trump, however. A small contingent of his local supporters also showed up with flags and banners.

"They have the right to protest him, and we have the right

to support him," said one of the pro-Trump attendees. Another pro-Trump attendee could be heard debating immigration policy with one of the anti-Trump protestors.

And though the vast majority of those driving by expressed support for the rally, there were passers-by who made clear their disdain for the event. Several pickup trucks made a point of driving by with Trump flags planted in their beds.

And yet, despite the anxiety expressed by many, the mood at the rally often approached something like jubilation, with most participants seeming to enjoy the camaraderie with other Americans concerned about the state of American democracy.



LOTS OF CREATIVE signs were seen Saturday at the Hands Off protest.



MANY OPINIONS WERE expressed with the signs. Another nationwide event is planned for April 19th.

OUR CREATIVE KIDS

STUDENT: Levi Whitney
GRADE: 7
SCHOOL: Otter Valley Union Middle School
TITLE: Untitled
MEDIUM: Watercolor
TEACHER: Tiffiny St. Michaud

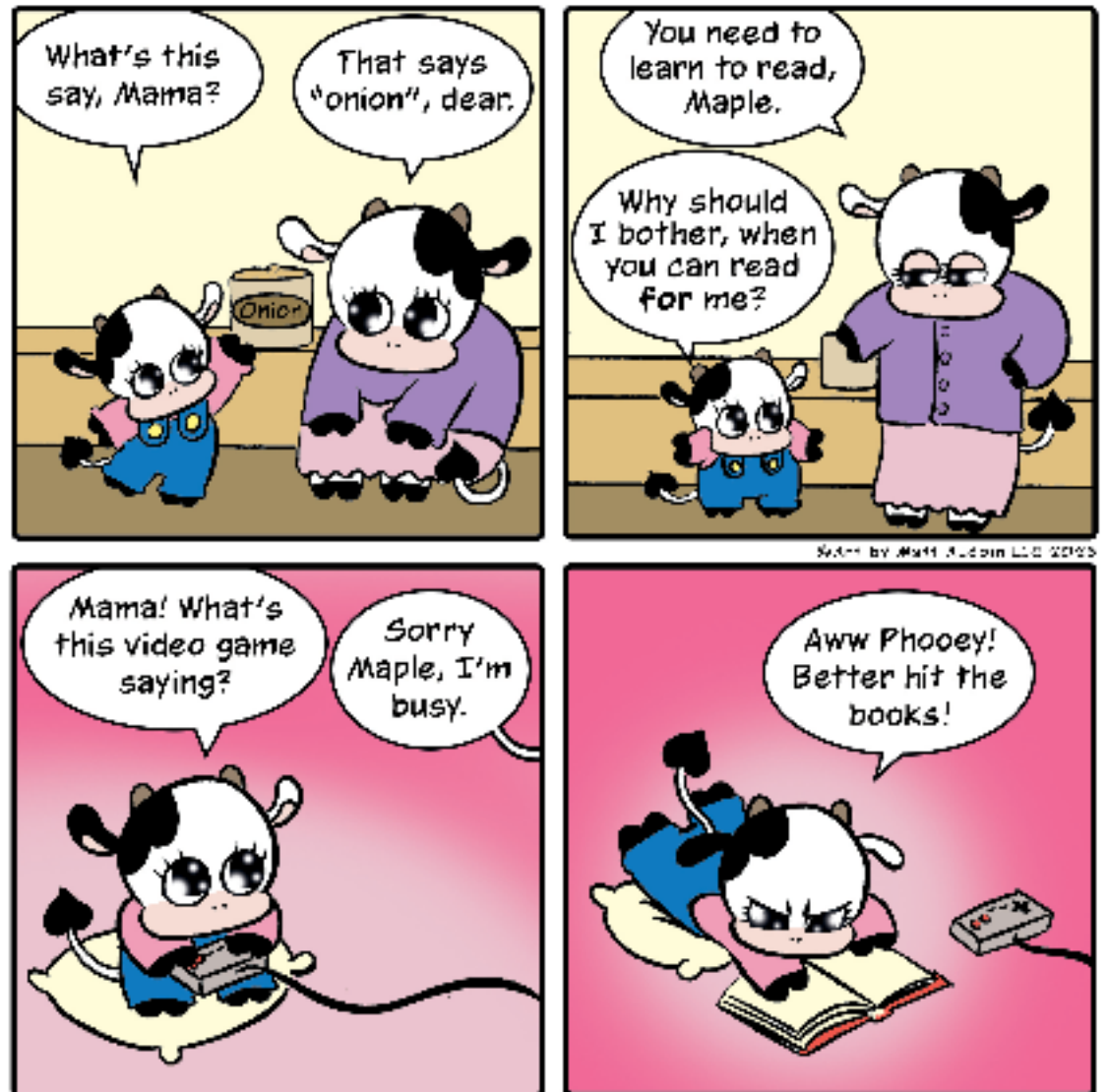


STATEMENT FROM MS. ST. MICHAUD:
During a unit titled “Monochromatic Choice Landscapes,” students were asked to practice their knowledge of value. As a class we discussed how artists can create the illusion of depth when playing with the value scale of their piece (i.e., atmospheric perspective in a landscape). Students were challenged to only use only one color in their piece but expected to create 5 values with said color (allowing

the use of black and/white to create the scale). Levi chose to create a landscape using watercolor. He chose the color orange, and successfully created 5 values (adding water to dilute far away items and black to darken items viewed up close). During the process he accidentally spilled his cup of water, but quickly realized he could use a sponge to create some texture on his tree while mopping up the excess water.



MAPLE the COW by Matt Aucoin



Gardening corner

(Continued from Page 3)

want a yellow tulip, with lots of red, there's Flaming Parrot, a yellow tulip with thick flames of red throughout.

I am sure you can put these varieties in large drifts, but the colors are powerful. I'm not sure I would be able to control for that, but I've seen gardens that have been designed well and can. The time to start planning what you want to grow is now, so you can order them soon, and have them delivered in the autumn for next

year's show. Most companies deliver them based on the USDA hardiness zone. Meanwhile figure out where you'll plant them and avoid the clay! Get those beds ready, plant them 6-8 inches deep and 4-6 inches apart. Folks recommend you fertilize in the fall after planting the bulbs and again in the spring after the stems have emerged. Be gentle and use gentle fertilizer. I'm sure I don't need to say this but I will anyway, remember to plant with the tip facing up!

Measles cases

(Continued from Page 1)

in unvaccinated people or people with unknown vaccine status, the CDC reported. Three-quarters of cases have been in people under the age of 20. Seventy people have been hospitalized, and one school-aged child has died in Texas. Another death is under investigation.

Cases have been highest in Texas and New Mexico, according to the CDC. Vermont has been mostly spared thus far, with only one travel-related case reported by

the state Department of Health.

But health officials here are worried about one key statistic: The state's measles vaccination rate for incoming kindergarteners has been below 95%, the critical "herd immunity" threshold that can prevent individual cases from becoming outbreaks.

For the 2023-24 school year, the most recent year available, 93% of kindergarteners in public or private schools were up-to-date on (See Measles cases, Page 18)

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Inner Healing and Emotional Wholeness

This course explains how inner damage happens and how you can know God's healing love for yourself and for those you may be called to help. An opportunity will be given during the course for you to meet with one of the six team members from the Ellel Ministry to pray to receive healing.

AUGUST 15TH AND 16TH

at the Forest Dale Christian Fellowship,
1895 Forest Dale Rd., Brandon, VT
Friday, check in 5:45 p.m.,
start time 6:15 – 9:00 p.m.
Saturday, check in 8:45 a.m.,
start time 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

You must register to attend.

Registration includes lunch and dinner on Saturday and will be confirmed with the receipt of a check for \$20 made out to the "Forest Dale Christian Fellowship" sent to Susan Hibbard, 20 Maple Street, Brandon, VT 05733 or register online. This event is best suited for those 18 years of age and older. No childcare is provided.



Calendar of events

April

Mondays

Brandon Rec offers Aikido classes

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

Maclure Library Yoga -

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

Tuesdays

Maclure Library Story Time Playgroup

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

Friends Zone

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

For more information contact pastor Vicki Disorda (vquee-noftheearth@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
5–7 pm

Pins & Needles Craft Club at the Brandon Free Public Library
Drop in from 5:30–7:00 pm, and bring your projects to work on.

Free Drop-In Tech Support at the Brandon Free Public Library
5–6 pm

Wednesdays

Ping Pong

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

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

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

have some fun playing a great game of "Pong!"

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

Crafternoons

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

Free Drop-In Tech Support at the Brandon Free Public Library
5–6 pm

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 student will be given weekly (while supplies last) thanks to our partners at Rutland Free Library. Adult must accompany children under age 4. Must pre-register by Wednesday each week.

Instructor: Lori Sullivan; Minimum 3.

Brandon Senior Center Game Day
Come join us every Friday at 2:00 p.m. Cards, darts, puzzles, board games, coloring.

Corn Hole at the Godnick Adult Center

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

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.

Sundays

Brandon Town Hall Painting with Crystal

Crystal Ketcham leads an all ages painting event! Yes, you CAN paint! More info, contact Crystal at ceast-

Saint Thomas & Church upco

Palm Sunday, April 13, 10 a.m.
Procession with palms and Eucharist.

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 6 p.m.,
Eucharist followed by the stripping of

Good Friday, April 18, 10:30 a.m.
Good Friday service, Noon - join Chri
for Walk of The Cross from center of t
Church. Easter Vigil.

Saturday, April 19, 8 p.m.
Easter at St. Stephen's Church, Middl

Sunday, April 20, 10 a.m.
Join us in festive celebration of the Ri

Upcoming events in Brandon

April 18

Wildlife Encounters at the Brandon Town Hall! Come and learn about exotic animals, see them up close, learn about our environment and the ecology of the world!

6:30 p.m. \$5 per person, children under 2 are free! Snacks available! All are welcome!

May 2 & 3

Halfoween in Brandon, Vt.! Brandon celebrates Halfoween along with its sister city Salem, Mass!

May 2

Beginning with a Witches Walk down Park Street at 6 p.m. We

encourage everyone to dress up and join in! Vehicles welcome! Party following the parade behind the Inn with live music and bou houses by Whirlies World! Horror movies at Barn Opera from 5 p on, and a haunted house at 6:3 the Brandon Town Haunted Ha Haunted Hall is \$10.

May 3

Mystical Market at Central Park Brandon - Vendors of handcraft tarot readings, psychics, metaphysical items, crystals and more 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Haunted Town H at 6:30, \$10. Masquerade Ball a p.m., Brandon Inn, \$25 per per

man88@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

The Brandon Museum appraiser" Antiqu

April

Bring your treasured antiques or vintage objects to the Brandon Museum, 4 Grove Street, to discuss, identify, and appraise. We will talk about their history and give ideas on current market value. Greg Hamilton

is the Antiqu past p Antiqu Mike V and se and ha

from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All experience levels are welcome. Free and open to adults 21 and older only.

Wednesday 9th

NXT Rockumentary Film Series: The Velvet Underground (2021) — Next Stage Arts

Grace Episcopal



There's a good reason nobody made a Velvet Underground documentary before Todd Haynes came along and did it in 2021: Archival footage of the group is extremely minimal, especially from the period after 1968 when they stopped working with Andy Warhol and the attention he brought to their work largely vanished. But Haynes wasn't interested in preparing a Behind

the Music-style documentary that traced their saga in a traditional fashion. Instead, he wanted to immerse viewers in the New York avant-garde scene that made the band possible, and create an impressionistic portrait of their art.

The voices of Lou Reed and Sterling Campbell are present via old footage; surviving members John Cale and Maureen Tucker are the primary narrators. They bring a different perspective to the story since Reed's version of V.U. history was dominant for so long, even if it means the brilliant post-Cale albums don't get nearly enough screen time. But the overall effect is mesmerizing, giving you an incredible sense of where this band came from, why they mattered and why they were destined to inevitably, gloriously flame out. - Rolling Stone. 2h 1m. 7-9: p.m. at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, Putney. \$8.

Thursday 10th

No Other Land — Dana Auditorium Middlebury College The Hirschfield International Film Series presents this year's Oscar-winning documentary co-directed by Palestinian activist Basel Adra and Israeli journalist Yuval Abraham. For half a decade, Adra filmed his community of Masafer Yatta being destroyed by Israeli occupation as he built an unlikely alliance with Abraham. As part of a filmmaking collective, they created one of the most intense films of last year. Viewers are welcome to arrive early for pizza and popcorn at 6:30 p.m. Free.

Museum Presents "Ask an antique

Discussion and Appraisal

13, from 1–2:30 p.m. owner of Stone Block in Vergennes and resident of the Vermont Dealers Association. Wilson has been buying and selling antiques for 55 years and has lived in Goshen for most

of those years. He spent many years as an auction manager and appraiser. Parking is available in the church parking lot behind the Museum. Contact info@brandomuseum.org for more information.

Hearts All Whole: Creating a Compassionate Community workshops at the Chaffee Art Center

Workshops at the Chaffee with Robert Black will be held on four Thursdays in April (April 3, 10, 17, 24) Noon to 1:30 p.m. Each week's class will be two 45-minute sessions. Session 1 (Noon- 12:45 p.m.) to be a lecture discussion with a guest speaker. Session 2 (12:45-1:30 p.m.) will be a simple, hands-on activity ("workshop") to explore the topic presented in Session 1. Some products of Session 2 work will become part of an on-going art display at the Chaffee during the month of April. Fee: \$25 per workshop if attending both sessions; \$20 for one session; Discount for all 4 workshops \$95. Min: 5 attendees per workshop MUST PRE-REGISTER by noon Wednesday before the workshop.

This week's workshop on Apr. 10: Why Art?? Session 1: Robert Black will present a brief overview of the inspiring Public Art — Murals & Sculptures — in Downtown Rutland and their effect on the Rutland Community. Featured Speaker: Fran Bull/Artist. Award-winning sculptor, painter, printmaker and performance artist Fran Bull has been exhibiting her work worldwide for over 40 years. Her art is included in numerous museum and university collections, ranging from the Museum of Modern Art in New York, to the Guilin Museum in China. She makes her art in Brandon, Vermont and Barcelona, Spain. Bull's early Photorealist art brought her international acclaim, but in the mid 1980s this more identifiable approach

evolved toward art that could be understood as a visualization of the unseen. Today Bull's work seeks to connect ordinary life to larger mythic and historical motifs, themes and narratives. Session 2: Imagining Public Art. Pretend that you just received a major arts grant from the State and the Rutland Downtown Partnership to create the next Public Art in Rutland. What is your vision for this special Artwork that would speak to the larger community of people to inspire them to become more accepting and compassionate towards their fellow citizens. Write a simple statement of your intention and make a rough sketch of your idea. See 2 remaining workshop details at www.chaffeeartcenter.org

Monday 21st

Blueberry Hill Outdoor Center (BHOC) An afternoon of danceable live music by The Grift to support the Blueberry Hill Outdoor Center! Join us in Goshen and spend the afternoon surrounded by nature, community, and music by local favorites, The Grift. Whether dancing in the field or relaxing in the shade, you'll support our mission of keeping our trails and building well-maintained and open to all. Arrive early to enjoy a scenic hike, walk, or run on the trails before the music kicks off. We'll have delicious snacks and refreshing cold drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) to keep you refreshed, including local beer from our friends at Red

Friday 11th

Free Talk on "The Color Palette in Art, Design & Life!" — Chaffee Art Center Join us at the Chaffee Art Center for a "Color-Full" evening! Free talk on "The Color Palette in Art, Design & Life!" New exhibit opens The Vermont Palette: Vermont Pastel Society Members' Exhibition with Chaffee Artist Members work showcased in our 2nd Floor Galleries and in the Gallery Shoppe. Featured Speaker: Jason Bemis, Local and Native Vermont Artist, Head Lecturer for the AICCE Academy (The American Institute for Color and The Environment). Dive into the captivating world of color with our esteemed speaker, a leading expert in the field. Discover the profound influence that color exerts over our eyes, minds, and bodies, and its psychological and physiological impacts. Learn how this influence seamlessly integrates into the realms of design and art, shaping our experiences and perceptions. Light refreshments. Doors open at 5 p.m. Speaker 5:30-7:30 p.m. Limited seats available. Reserve yours today! 802-775-0356 or info@chaffeeartcenter.org.

Clover Ale. Please leave personal alcohol at home for this event. Donation + Tickets: Like access to our trails, this event is by donation only. Upon arrival, you'll have the opportunity to donate. We suggest \$30 per adult, but pay what you are able. Please bring cash though Venmo + checks are an option too. From 3:00 - 6:00 p.m., "doors" open at 2:00 p.m. Please sign up in advance to help us plan food and parking. https://www.blueberryhilltrails.com/fundraisergrift

Thursday 24th

Spring Cleaning: Organizing and Decluttering — Brandon Free Public Library Professional home organizer Kris Harmelink will guide workshop participants through helpful tips and systems for a successful spring clean. 5-6 p.m.

Saturday 26th

The Vermont Pastel Society Presents: The Vermont Palette Members' Exhibition The Chaffee Art Center and The Vermont Pastel Society are thrilled to announce The Vermont Palette: VPS Members' Exhibition, an inspiring showcase of creativity that runs from April 11 to May 22, 2025, at the renowned Chaffee Art Center in Rutland. This exhibition invites participating artists from the Vermont Pastel Society to challenge themselves and transcend their artistic comfort zones. The exhibition highlights the rich and diverse palette Vermont offers, serving as a muse for artists to embrace experimentation and innovative expressions in pastel. Each piece in the exhibition tells a unique story of artistic exploration, inviting viewers to experience the creative journey alongside the artists. Opening reception the 26th, from 2 to 4 p.m. For more information about the exhibition and the Vermont Pastel Society, visit http://www.vermontpastelsociety.org.

Free Medical Care at Rutland County Health Partners

Wednesdays in April from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. A free walk-in 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 April from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at our offices at 204 North Main Street, Rutland, Vt. No appointment is necessary. Clinics (with recommended appointments) will also be held April 3 (9 a.m.-12 p.m.), April 15 (1-4 p.m.) and April 21 (3-7 p.m. with the last patient seen at 6 p.m.). For appointments or any questions, call 802-774-1082.



Goings on around town

Chef Barral attacked

(Continued from Page 1)
the ambulance arrived. Barral was transported to Rutland Regional Medical Center and subsequently transferred to The University of Vermont Medical Center for further evaluation. He was released in stable condition on Sunday to recuperate at home.

According to eye witnesses, a former Café employee Jozef Eller of Hancock, entered the restaurant Saturday and began to take alcohol off the shelves. Eller is under a no-tresspass order prohibiting him from entering Café Provence or the Center Street Bar. Chef Robert asked him to leave and Eller charged him, knife in hand. Barral defended himself and his patrons

against Eller who holds a black belt in the martial arts. Barral tried to trip Eller and threw a chair at him before Barral was stabbed repeatedly, thrown to the ground, and kicked in the chest. Eller broke his knife in his attempt to stab Barral in the head. He then fled to his truck, breaking the windshield of a parked car on his way out of the restaurant. Eller was seen buying alcohol in another downtown establishment in the hours prior to the incident. Witnesses describe him as a very dirty man with long unkempt hair and a full beard.

Eller was apprehended at 10:10 Saturday evening in Rochester, Vermont without further incident. He was jailed without bail

on charges of attempted second degree murder and violating the no-tresspassing order. Eller was arraigned in Windsor Court on Monday, pled not guilty to his charges and is being held without bail. He inexplicably said “I love you” as he was taken from the courtroom. Last summer Eller was charged with aggravated domestic violence after he caused injury to a household member. A former high school honors student, Eller is a graduate of the New England Culinary Institute. He has worked in a number of restaurants in Vermont.

Café Provence employees are being offered counselling and plan to reopen the restaurant on Wednesday

Leicester News

Dogs were due to be licensed by April 1. If residents have not yet registered their dogs, and to avoid fines and/or penalties, register your dogs as soon as possible.



The Leicester Historical Society will be sponsoring Prize Bingo on Sat., Apr 12, at 1:00 p.m. at the Senior Center, the white building at the Four Corners. Refreshments served and all are welcome.



Green Up Day is Sat, May 3. Green Up Bags and gloves will be available at the Town Office, between the two doors, beginning April 24. As usual, there will be a free lunch for Green Up volunteers, from 11:30 to 1:00, in the loop between the historic buildings at the Four Corners. Your lunch ticket will double as a raffle ticket.



Raffle prizes include maple syrup, restaurant gift cards, a variety of items. Tickets will be available at the town shed, next to the trailer there to collect bags. The committee is hoping for a third straight year of 100% of roadside cleaning.

For more information, or to volunteer, contact Diane Benware at 247-3786.

Restaurant guide



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://cafeprovencevt.com>
or call (802) 247-9997

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THE NEW FIRE truck has state of the art equipment and monitoring systems.

New fire truck

(Continued from Page 1)
customize the truck in such a way that the department's needs were met while minimizing cost. While BFD opted for certain upgrades—a stainless steel shell instead of aluminum to withstand harsh Vermont winters, for example—it also downgraded certain features that it deemed expensive and unnecessary, ultimately coming in under budget.

The sale of the 2015 truck in 2022

for \$325,000 provided much of the \$385K down payment on the new vehicle. The balance of the cost was provided by capital funds that BFD already had, said Kilpeck. The purchase of the new vehicle had generated significant controversy when it was announced in 2022, as some in the community felt it was unnecessary to spend such a large sum to replace a relatively young truck. But, according to Chief Kilpeck, that 2015 truck had been a “demonstra-

tion model” which the department had purchased at a discount and which soon turned out to be inadequate to the department's needs.

“We didn't need to ask taxpayers for any additional funds for this,” Kilpeck.

The new truck must still undergo some final adjustments before it's ready for use, but Chief Kilpeck predicts it will be part of the department's regular fleet by May.



Hard Tellin'

BY DAVE PRAAMSMA

Reclaiming the Kids from the Pied Piper of Covid

BY DAVE PRAAMSMA

After 25 years of teaching, it's hard not to become a merciless grader of just about everything. The inner red pen is hard to put down. Call it an occupational hazard. Monday mornings are generally a C-. Traffic on Route 7 today was an unequivocal F. (The apple fritter one bloke sold me this morning was so bad I think I'll be calling his parents.)

But if there's something else you should know about teachers, it's that we also see through the lens of attendance. Like it or not, our inner classroom teacher can't help but tabulate who showed up and who didn't. Empty chairs get our attention. (And not just because we're tired.) Public Educators are the nation's shepherds—we corral the wandering herds into the pasture. It's what we do.

So, when we hear again reports of sagging academic numbers on our national report card on the 5-year Pandemic anniversary, it's hard to not also consider the vacant furniture: almost 30% of our herd is rather routinely—chronically actually—absent from class.

Interestingly, as a parent of five, I hear no shortage of jokes on this subject. "Five kids! How do you keep track of them all?!" With my best deadpan I usually tell them that me and the wife aim for "nothing

less than 80%" back after family trips. In terms of national numbers, I guess we'd still be ahead of the curve. But truth be told, even the humor in this line seems to be absent nowadays.

As far as problems go, however, this one seems especially thorny. Or, in the words of the New York Times, "intractable." Their reporting on this growing post-Covid national affliction included one desperate Michigan school that resorted to Pajama Day to get the kids back in the building. (Yea, who is without bad decisions because of supreme frustration may cast the first stone.) The article went on to quote Duke University professor Katie Rosanbalm, who summed up the problem quite succinctly: "Our relationship with school has become optional." That we live in a time of compulsory education seems to have been lost on this generation.

Bat this around a bit longer and inevitably you hear the word "Truant Officer," which is also an interesting topic. And also a bit of an absence in the American landscape. It's on poorly attended Mondays that I typically imagine one riding out of the 20th century like some chivalrous Mounted Police. Perhaps scooping up the wayward children and delivering them to the school steps with a gallant wave of his hat.

The sobering reality for anyone

who looks at these numbers, however, might also consider the well-known data concerning mental health. They are indeed our "anxious generation." If Absenteeism is upstream of poor academic scores, Mental Health might certainly be upstream of Absenteeism.

Of course, I'm practicing psychology here without a license, but one has to wonder if maybe we're witnessing a new kind of bunker mentality. Somewhere along the line, our Pandemic safety retreat that was meant to be temporary seems to have gotten entrenched. And if we're honest with ourselves, the issue might afflict more than just our youth. The return to work even for parents has been a slow—and perhaps concerning—process. Agoraphobia—it would seem—is no longer an involuntary condition; it is a cultivated one.

But if there is yet another lens us literature teachers look through, it has to be stories. (In the absence of solutions, English teachers have stories.) So, you might be surprised to know that one of literature's most famous figures is actually an absentee character.

Boo Radley, you may recall, was the reclusive phantom of Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird" (circa 1930, Monroeville, Alabama). I say phantom because Boo's character (See *Reclaiming kids*, Page 19)



Nifty at Fifty

Brandon's beloved Nifty Thrifty turns Fifty this year! This display is a whimsical reminder of the milestone, with some vintage items, including a dress and some Newsweek magazines, and even some trivia about that year. A more detailed article about Nifty at Fifty will appear in an upcoming issue. But in the meantime, stop by the shop and sign the card!

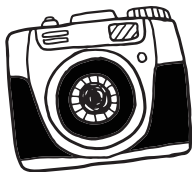
It's MUD Season!





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



Maridon Gibson, Maryann Philipsen, and Sue Wetmore recognized Bette Moffett (left) and Dottie Kline (right) in this photo from either the late 70s or early 80s. Ms. Wetmore noted, "Dottie taught many in Brandon piano, and Bette was a choir member at Brandon Congregational Church, plus involved in many Brandon functions." Ms. Gibson remarked that these two women were "movers and shakers" in the 60s and 70s.

E-mail
kate@brandonreporter.com
if you can identify someone in these photos.
Or call us at 247-8080



Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Garden tool
- 5. A way to preserve
- 11. Gratitude
- 14. Domestic sheep
- 15. Simplifier
- 18. Cavities containing liquid
- 19. Large fish-eating bird
- 21. Ocular protection index
- 23. Phil ___, former CIA
- 24. Icelandic poems
- 28. Pop
- 29. Device
- 30. Actor Rudd
- 32. A pituitary hormone
- 33. Focus on an object
- 35. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 36. Young women's association
- 39. Not shallow
- 41. Doctor
- 42. Furniture
- 44. Hindu male religious teacher
- 46. Highly spiced stew
- 47. A way to communicate
- 49. Almost last
- 52. Astronomer Carl
- 56. Small horses
- 58. A slender tower with balconies
- 60. A disrespectful quality
- 62. Fully shaded inner regions
- 63. Short convulsive intake of breath

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Popular Sunday dinner option
- 2. Oil cartel
- 3. Agile
- 4. Greek goddess of discord
- 5. Genetically distinct variety
- 6. Indicates badly
- 7. Popular Mr. T character
- 8. Consumed
- 9. Chinese dynasty
- 10. NFL great Randy
- 12. Within
- 13. Palm trees
- 16. Fungal disease
- 17. Tall, slender-leaved plants
- 20. Affirmative! (slang)
- 22. A passport is one
- 25. Two outs in baseball (abbr.)
- 26. Swiss river
- 27. Differential
- 29. Where a bachelor lives
- 31. Portable computer screen material
- 34. A crying noise of a bird
- 36. Sticky, amorphous substance
- 37. Starchy dish of dried tubers
- 38. Type of acid
- 40. Partner to "Ma"
- 43. 16 ounces
- 45. The Bay State
- 48. A well-defined track or path
- 50. Substitution
- 51. Defined period
- 53. Group of toughs
- 54. Region
- 55. Famed Scottish Loch
- 57. Blood relation
- 58. Not around
- 59. Recipe measurement
- 61. Father to Junior

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10									
11					12								13						
14									15					16	17				
	18									19								20	
					21		22						23						
						24		25	26	27			28						
					29			30				31		32					
					33		34		35										
36	37	38			39			40		41									
42				43		44			45										
46									47		48								
49					50	51				52		53	54	55					
	56						57		58									59	
					60				61										
					62								63						

Sudoku

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

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

Level: Intermediate

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

d	s	v	g	e	v	r	b	w	u
s	s	e	n	e	a	i	s	i	e
t	e	r	v	n	i	w	s	e	i
n	v	d	v	s		t	l	n	e
			t	s	v				d
			i	w	v	m	s	d	w
			d	w	d	e	e	d	v
			c	b	r		w	i	v
h	s	t	t	l	v	p	c	p	
v	o	o	s	s	v	d			
e	o	s				i	d		
a	e	r	d	s	o		s	t	a
			i	s	v	e	s	o	n
			n	o	i	t	i	c	e
			m	t	v	b	w	e	s

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

RCHS is Moving . . . But When?

Many of you have been asking about our big move to a new shelter, and we're thrilled to share our progress! While this isn't happening overnight, we're moving in the right direction, and every step gets us closer to a new home for the animals. Here's our plan!
2025: Finalizing all necessary permits and purchasing the property
2026–2027: Launching a capital campaign to fund renovations
2028: Construction begins to transform the space
Early 2029: We move into our new home at 218 Jones Drive in Brandon!
This isn't happening overnight, but we are making exciting progress in the right direction. We can't wait to bring you along on this journey to create a better future for the animals in our care! Stay tuned for updates!

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



MEET MAIZY *FOSTER-TO-ADOPT - 3 ½-YEAR-OLD. FEMALE. GREAT

PYRENEES. WHITE. Meet Maizy! This sweet girl arrived as a stray on 3/24, nervous and in need of some TLC. Since then she's been warming up to the shelter staff and is ready to bond with her new family! Maizy has a charming mix of curiosity and devotion—she'll explore her surroundings before dashing back for a cuddle, then quickly resume keeping watch. Because she was a stray, we don't have any history of how she does with dogs, cats, or kids, so a meet-and-greet with the whole family (including any dogs) will be important. Maizy is currently heartworm positive and will be a foster-to-adopt until she completes her treatment. She can't wait to settle into a loving home. Stop by the Adoption Center Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., to meet her and see if she's the perfect fit for you!

MEET ODIN *FOSTER-TO-ADOPT- 3-YEAR-OLD. MALE. ROTTWEILER. BLACK/TAN.

Odin is a goofy boy who wants all the love! He is a very smart boy who is eager to learn. He loves treats and is very motivated by them. Odin is a strong boy who loves to explore the outside world! When he's not exploring the world around him, he wants to be cuddled up in your lap. We have no known history of how he will do with other dogs, cats, or kids. However, he may do better with older children, as he does get very excited and may knock a small child down. Odin is available as a foster to adopt as he is awaiting his neuter appointment. If this handsome boy sounds like the right fit for you, please stop by and visit with him! The Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.



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



The following large print books were donated by Brenda Whittaker

Lethal Prey
 by John Sandford,
 donated in memory
 of John Trimmer

Twenty years later, her sister Doris's murder has gone unsolved, Lara has been diagnosed with cancer. Confronted with the possibility of her own death, she's determined to find Doris's killer. Taking matters into her own hands, she dumps the entire investigative file on every true-crime site in the world and offers a \$5 million reward for information leading to the killer's arrest. Dozens of bloggers show up and when one of them locates the murder weapon, Lucas Davenport and Virgil Flowers are called in and begin to uncover vital details about the killer's identity.

Fight or Flight
 by Fern Michaels,
 donated in memory
 of Marie Butterfield

From the comfort of her beautiful mountaintop retreat, Katherine Winston creates her bestselling young adult series. No one in the nearby small town has any idea of her true identity. She mostly interacts with people online through reader fan pages. Now one of those fans is in danger, and Katherine wants to help. But that means moving beyond her isolated world. More and more, Katherine can't shake the feeling that someone is watching her, she's sure of it,

and they're getting closer all the time.

Nobody's Fool
 by Harlan Coben,
 donated in memory
 of Tish Holmes Washburn Morris

Sami Kierce, a young college grad backpacking in Spain with friends, wakes up one morning, covered in blood. There's a knife in his hand. Beside him, the body of his girlfriend. Anna. Dead. He doesn't know what happened. His screams drown out his thoughts—and then he runs. Years later, Kierce is now a private investigator teaching wannabe sleuths in New York City. One evening, he recognizes a familiar face at the back of the classroom. It's unmistakably Anna. As soon as Kierce makes eye contact with her, she bolts. He's left with no choice but to find her and solve the impossible mystery that has haunted his every waking moment.

Beach Vibes
 by Susan Mallery,
 donated in memory
 of Yvonne Churchill

While Beth is proud of her Malibu beach shop, she's even prouder of her charismatic brother Rick, who rose from foster care through surgical residency. She makes subs, he saves lives. Life takes a turn for the happy after she finds out Rick is dating her new best friend, Jana. Then Jana's handsome brother adds even more sparkle to Beth's days . . . and nights. But when she catches Rick with another woman, her visions of an idyllic family future

DID YOU KNOW?

Professional home organizer Kris Harmelink will guide workshop participants through helpful tips and systems for a successful spring clean on April 24th, 6 p.m.

disappear in one awful instant. Either she betrays her brother, or risks losing the man she loves and her best friend.

New DVDs

Companion (rated R)

A remote weekend getaway with friends turns to chaos as it's revealed one of them is not what they seem.

Lost on a Mountain in Maine (rated PG)

The true story of a young boy lost during a fast-moving storm in the backwoods of Maine for 9 days.

Call the Midwife

Seasons 11-13.

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.

March 31

- Dispatched to Walgreens for a report of a suspicious man who was making threats toward the business, saying he would “burn it down.” The area was checked, but the man was not located.
- Received a complaint about a student from OVUHS driving recklessly on his way to and from school. Follow up to be conducted.

April 1

- Responded to a panic alarm activation at the Neshobe Family Practice on Court Drive. It was later determined that the office was testing their alarm and that no emergency had occurred.
- Responded to a domestic disturbance on Pine Tree Drive. Upon further investigation it was determined that the altercation

was verbal in nature and that no physical assault had taken place.

- Received a report of vehicle that was vandalized on Mulcahy Drive.

April 2

- Assisted Brandon Area Rescue Squad with a medical call at the Brandon Town Hall in which an individual fainted and required a lift assist. The man later regained consciousness and was subsequently transported to the hospital.
- Took fingerprints for employment.
- Received an after-hours call regarding two suspicious men on the complainant's property on Old Brandon Road whom the complainant had observed on her security camera while away from home. The VSP responded to the home but did not observe any suspicious activity. It was later determined that the two individuals were contractors.

April 3

- Responded to a non-reportable crash at the intersection of Franklin Street and Park Street.
- Received a report of a larceny of building materials from a barn on Arnold District Road. (See Police report, Page 20)

Measles cases

(Continued from Page 11)
 their MMR vaccines, which provide protection against measles, mumps and rubella, according to health department data. Adults are also recommended to receive the MMR vaccine if they do not have evidence of vaccination or immunity.

Even fewer, 91%, were fully immunized with all the required childhood vaccinations, which also include protection against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, chickenpox, polio and hepatitis B. “If we have 95% of people vac-

cinated, it would stop the spread,” said Merideth Plumpton, the department's immunization program director. “Right now in Vermont, we're below that.”

The measles vaccination rate for kindergarteners in Vermont is similar to the nationwide one, according to a research paper from the CDC. But the state has the second-lowest measles rate in New England, above only New Hampshire. It's also lower than neighboring New York state.

While 93% may sound close to (See Measles cases, Page 23)

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



stick to what your intuition is telling you and you will come out just fine in the end.

LEO July 23-Aug. 23

Leo, you might be called upon to be a mediator for friends or loved ones who need a fresh set of eyes. Keep a cool demeanor and a level head and you can lead them to a resolution.

VIRGO Aug. 24-Sept. 22

Virgo, you are drawn to creative projects, but avoid using them to put off other endeavors. These distractions will only delay the inevitable and then you'll be pressed for time.

LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23

Libra, carefully schedule your time this week, as you cannot afford to get behind on your assignments at work or in school. You also have many important appointments on the calendar.

SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22

Scorpio, someone comes to you for advice this week and wants you to keep their situation private. You need to help them without betraying their request for confidentiality.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21

It is possible your mind will wander this week, Sagittarius. You might not be able

to focus on the tasks at hand, and will need to focus extra hard to limit distractions.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20

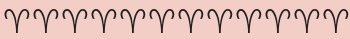
Capricorn, pay attention to detail in all things that you do. Be mindful of this when tending to professional and personal matters.

AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18

Aquarius, the simplest resolution is often the best one. Keep this in mind when tackling a perplexing problem in the days ahead.

PISCES Feb. 19-March 20

Pisces, you are eager to sail through your to-do list, and certain tasks need to be postponed to address those that are high-priority. Rearrange things accordingly.



FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- April 11 Mary White Ovington, journalist, co-founder of the NAACP (d)
- April 12 Herbie Hancock, musician (84)
- April 13 Seamus Heaney, poet (d)
- April 14 Adrien Brody, actor (52)
- April 15 Emma Thompson, actor (66)
- April 16 Alek Wek, model (47)
- April 17 Nick Hornby, author & editor (68)

Daughters of the American Revolution present awards in Rutland County

BY CINDY COHEN

RUTLAND—On Thursday, March 20, an awards ceremony was held at the Rutland Country Club to honor the 2024-2025 recipients of the Daughters of the American Revolution's (DAR) annual Good Citizen Contest and American History Essay Contest. The award ceremony was hosted by the Ann Story Chapter of DAR.

This year, three Good Citizen winners and three Essay Contest winners, representing students from schools in the Rutland Area were honored. Members of their families and their teachers also attended.

leadership, and patriotism in their homes, schools, and communities. These students are selected by their teachers and peers because they demonstrate these qualities to an outstanding degree. Only one student per year may be honored as a school's DAR Good Citizen.

Once a student is chosen as their school's DAR Good Citizen, the student is invited to participate in the scholarship portion of the program. This consists of a personal statement and an essay. Student participation in the scholarship portion of the program is optional. Scholarships are awarded to

for the ceremony).

The DAR American History Committee promotes American history by honoring significant historical people, places, dates, and events. It does this through sponsoring two essay contests.

The American History Essay Contest for grades 5-8, and the Patriots of the American Revolution High School Essay Contest for grades 9-12. These contests are for students in a public, private, or parochial school, and those who are homeschooled are also eligible. It is conducted without regard to race, religion, sex, or national origin.

The topic of each year's essay contest and rules are decided on by the DAR's National American History Committee in Washington.

The topic of the American History Essay Contest, for students in grades 5-8, was "Enjoying a new kind of Tea Party!"

Question: In the 1770's there was a movement of protest from the Colonists against the British due to taxes and laws. Along the eastern coast a growing number of patriots held "tea" parties. The Boston Tea Party was on December 16, 1773, and the Charlestown, SC Tea Party and the Chester Town Tea Party followed in 1774. In October 1774, 51 women in Edenton, North Carolina, decided to refuse to buy tea from the British because of their high taxes and

laws. In 1775, women in Wilmington, North Carolina, burned their tea for the same reasons. Imagine you are one of these women boldly participating in one of these Tea Parties in North Carolina. Give details of either the Edenton Tea Party or Wilmington Tea Party, describe the tea party, and why you would choose to join them.

(See DAR awards, Page 20)



THE ANN STORY Statue in Rutland, Vermont.

Cindy Roberts, the Regent of the Ann Story Chapter, presented the awards.

The DAR Good Citizens program and Scholarship Contest, created in 1934, is intended to encourage and reward the qualities of good citizenship in our students. This award recognizes and rewards high-school seniors who possess the qualities of dependability, service,

essay winners at the chapter, state, division and national levels.

This year, the Ann Story Chapter presented Good Citizen awards to Maura Whitman from Mount St. Joseph Academy in Rutland, Noah Bruttomesso from Rutland High School and Lucas Jensen from Mill River Union High School in N. Clarendon (not present

Brandon Fire District

(Continued from Page 6)

the funds to be applied evenly to each property formerly served by BFD2."

For its part, the Prudential Committee of BFD1 had argued that the \$19K should be used to offset the costs of the merger, including connection fees for each of the 58 homes, effectively viewing each one as a new customer connecting to the BFD1 system, and for the time spent by BFD1 employees on the actual physical work of the merger.

But BFD2 insisted that BFD1's employees were salaried and the work was simply part of their regular jobs. Plus, they said, the 58 homes in BFD2 were already connected to a water-distribution system to which BFD1 needed to make only one connection, not 58.

Ultimately, the Prudential Committee agreed to a \$35.70 credit for each of the 58 former customers of BFD2, after subtracting the costs of connection fees that the Committee continued to maintain were not covered by the ARPA grant. At Mr. Cohen's request, the Committee also tasked BFD1 Water Superintendent Ray Counter with drafting a letter

explaining the credit to the former customers of BFD2.

Ms. Coolidge and Mr. Cohen expressed relief that the issue had finally been resolved after months of impasse between the Committee and the representatives of BFD2, even though the final credit was significantly less than BFD2 believed it was owed under the terms of the merger agreement.

The Committee also asked Brandon Fire Department ("the Department") Chief Tom Kilpeck for an update on the new truck that the Department had taken delivery of that week.

Of particular concern to Committee member Dennis Reisenweaver were the numerous differences between the build specs originally approved by the Committee and the final product as delivered. Mr. Reisenweaver asked for a complete list of change orders so that the Committee would have accurate knowledge of the truck as delivered rather than as originally ordered. Chief Kilpeck agreed to provide the list.

Please see this week's article about the new fire truck for more details.

Legislative report

(Continued from Page 6)

which has once again, been included in the latest budget adjustment bill. However, nothing prevents us from moving forward with a traditional bill, where we agree on the majority of the mid-year financial true ups.

I'm hopeful, the Legislature will stop sending me bills they know I will veto and instead send me a

clean budget adjustment bill without controversial policy, so we can move forward with the many challenges we face."

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

Reclaiming kids

(Continued from Page 15)

acter is essentially housebound. For 432 pages, he remains a silent observer beyond dark and opaque windows. But his shadow never really leaves the storyline. While the book certainly tells a larger tale about racism in America, there is an equally curious (and quite prescient) substory: How do we get Boo Radley to leave his house? Like our withdrawn post-Covid generation, Boo's mysterious self-imprisonment hovers like a riddle.

It is certainly a touching tale. (And granted, it is fiction.) But if there is a point not to be missed, it is that despite the tragic death of one man, some redemption is found in the bringing to life of another: Boo Radley—thanks to the kids—finally

exits. And not only just to feel the sun on his face, but to join the human race. Boo reclaims his humanity. (Spoiler alert to those absent that day.)

If there is another interesting point not to be missed, however, it is that Boo's exit has nothing to do with waiting for a safer and more pleasant world. If anything, Boo's exit brings him to a rather anxious and messy community still reeling from an explosive racist episode. But he comes out anyway.

"It is a dangerous business, Frodo, going out of your door," says Bilbo famously in the story of Lord of the Rings. It's an adventure with no guarantees. But it's an adventure nonetheless.

Police report

(Continued from Page 18)
Investigation ongoing.

- Received a call from an individual reporting what he believed was criminal activity occurring in the Town of Brandon. The information was determined to be unfounded.

April 4

- Received a report of a hit and run vehicle crash on Park Street. The incident was documented

for insurance purposes.

- Received a report of a theft of a brush hog and hay wagon on North Street. It was later determined that the items had not been stolen but rather put up for sale.

April 5

- Received a report of a mailbox that was struck by a vehicle on Wood Lane. Investigation ongoing.

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What a spot for your new business - in the center of the thriving village of Brandon and overlooking the waterfall on the Neshobe River! The property has been a family run barbershop since 1931. Being sold "as-is" without the equipment, although the seller would consider selling the equipment to someone seeking to reopen the shop. Upstairs is a permitted apartment for additional rental income or in-town living. \$125,000



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DAR awards

(Continued from Page 19)
Then explain if you think it was a good decision.

This year there are two 6th grade winners. Sisters Gabriella and Ganika Harchind from Rutland Town School.

The Patriots of the American Revolution High School Essay Contest, grades 9-12, is focused on figures of the American Revolution, in preparation for the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding.

The student's task is to select a figure from the era of the American Revolution (1773-1783). Discuss how he or she influenced the course of the American Revolution, who he or she was and his/her contribution to the founding of a new nation. Figures may be any person, whether a well-known figure or an everyday man, woman, or child who supported the American Revolution in ways large or small. The students are encouraged to use primary sources (i.e., immediate, first-hand accounts such as letters, diaries, speeches, or newspaper reports) for their research. Lesser well-known figures are acceptable, but subjects must have been actual participants, i.e. not fictionalized.

tionalized.

This year's winner is Sophia Cavalieri, from Mount Saint Joseph Academy in Rutland.

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to promote Historic Preservation, Education, and Patriotism across the United States.

DAR is a non-profit, non-political volunteer women's service organization. It is dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and securing America's future through better education for children.

DAR members volunteer millions of service hours annually in their local communities including supporting active-duty military personnel and assisting veteran patients, awarding thousands of dollars in scholarships and financial aid each year to students, and supporting schools for underserved children.

dren with annual donations exceeding one million dollars.

As one of the most inclusive genealogical societies in the country, DAR boasts 190,000 members in 3,000 chapters across the United States and internationally. Any woman 18 years or older-regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background-who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution, is eligible for membership.

The DAR Good Citizens program and Scholarship Contest, created in 1934, is intended to encourage and reward the qualities of good citizenship in our students.

DAR's volunteer work is accomplished by the grassroots efforts of chapters on the local level which focus on the mission areas of DAR by encouraging members to become involved in these initiatives in their local communities.

Ann Story is the local chapter in the Rutland area. Ann Story was a regionally renowned heroine during the American Revolutionary War in the area that would later become the state of Vermont.

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Premium AWD, Auto, Loaded, Only 86k miles!
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\$16,995



2017 TOYOTA COROLLA
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\$13,995



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Brandon's Independence Day – A look ahead and a look back, Part 2

BY JANET MONDLAK THE LOOK AHEAD

I'm starting this article with a look ahead and then I'll continue with last month's Independence Day reminiscing. Why the look ahead? Well quite frankly, the future of Brandon's tremendous long-standing and much-loved Independence Day celebration is in jeopardy. The group of volunteers who are putting together the day's events is a small list and one of the lead organizers is stepping down this year. Who will take up the slack?

So, here's the plea—whether you are brand new to town or have lived here all your life, you can help. There are tasks small and large that can fit your schedule, skill set, and availability. Bill Moore, Brandon's Deputy Town Manager / Recreation Director is ready to talk to you, so please reach out and help keep the tradition going. His contact info is at the end of this article.

NOW THE LOOK BACK

Last month I wrote an article in this paper about the evolution of Brandon's Independence Day celebration in its current format, which seemed to have started to celebrate the nation's bicentennial in 1976. A few weeks later, Brandon Town Clerk Sue Gage discovered an article from the Brandon Union from 1876 outlining the town's planned events for the nation's centennial celebration in 1876. The Reporter printed that article a few weeks ago but I'll summarize it here, in case you missed it.

Brandon celebrated the nation's Centennial in a grand way on July 4, 1876, with lots of music, guns and salutes, prayers, singing, a “monster picnic,” a “parade of the invincibles,” bell ringing and “the most elaborate and expensive displays of fireworks Vermont has ever witnessed.”

One of the things that amazed me was that even 150 years ago, Brandon was jazzed on fireworks. The 1876 news clipping did not mention where the fireworks were being held, although it did mention the display was from the “Laboratory of Mr. C.E. Masten of Boston, Mass.” I am going to conjecture that the event was held at the old Race Track, which was behind what is now the Brandon Yoga Center. Old photos

from the Brandon Museum show parade floats mustering there so we know the space was used for celebrations.

Until the Segment 6/Route 7 project and COVID forced

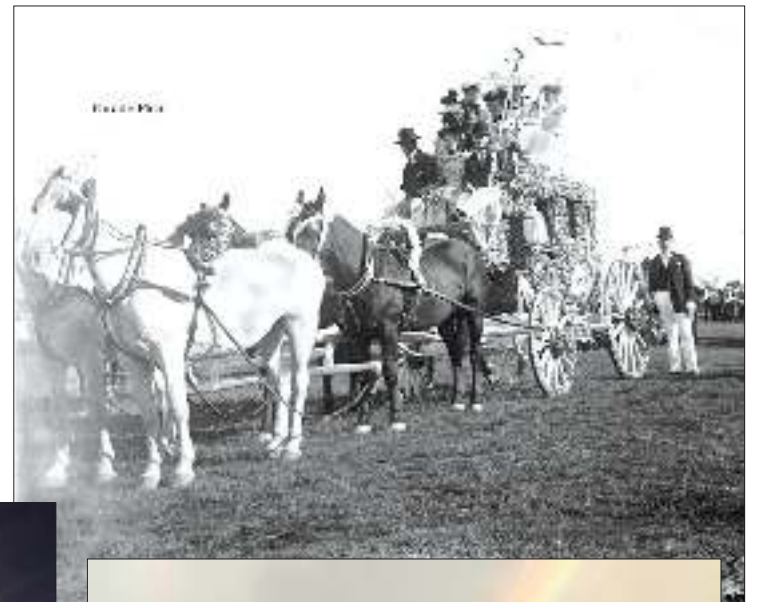
erally thousands have danced to DJ Cram's (Jam Man Entertainment) tunes over the years. And unless it's thunder and lightning, the dance must go on. Rain—no problem. Rain-

rain on the parade! Maybe it's something for today's great committee to keep in mind—let's plan for a sunny day and break the rain spell.

FUNDRAISING

As we all know, events like these can't be produced without costing some bucks. In 1991, the committee started the Great Ball Race. Numbered

fall for the “owner” of the ball. In subsequent years, the balls became ducks. Faithful readers of The Reporter will remember the drama of Winky, Malibu, Anchovy, and Canyon from last year's competition. “Buying” a duck gives you an opportunity to walk away with some fun money and helps fund this enormous undertaking. So



BRANDON'S PARADE AND fireworks have been going on for many decades.



more recent changes, the fireworks had been held at least since 1976 on the grounds at the old Brandon Training School. Some folks would probably prefer the fireworks return to the sprawling grounds north of downtown, but most people appreciate watching from town; spread out, more care-free, and beautifully majestic with the colors and designs floating over our downtown. And the extra bonus of the show being downtown is that we avoid the legendary long wait to get out of the BTS parking area!

STREET DANCE

Research shows the much-beloved Street Dance was added in 2010 (maybe revived at that time, it's unclear). Lit-

bow—bonus!

RAIN RAIN GO AWAY

One thread I found over and over perusing the stories and photos from different years is that there have been way more gray-day rain-threatening parade days than not. In 1990, there was even a great declaration post-parade in a Dateline article expressing how it didn't

small plastic balls were “sold” for a nominal amount at the parade and community events for months leading up to July 4th. Each number was recorded as belonging to the purchaser. After the parade, the balls were all tossed into the Neshobe River in one fell swoop and the first ball to make it over the finish line created a financial wind-

please buy a duck or two when you see the ducky committee members.

One of the financial casualties of the fireworks moving from up north into downtown has been the loss of the “boot drop” fundraiser that used to be held. Long-time parade coordinator Joan Thomas reports that (See Independence Day, Page 23)

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Measles cases

(Continued from Page 18)
95%, that gap makes a real difference when it comes to herd immunity, Plumpton said. The 95% threshold is effectively a tipping point where vaccinated people act as a buffer, keeping the 5% of the community from coming into contact with each other.

“It just means that if we have a case, the likelihood that it’s going to spread is pretty high, especially if the child goes to school or child care during their infectious period,” she said.

Among all school-aged children, the rate of vaccination was higher, about 96% for the MMR

vaccine. But facility-level data, which VTDigger obtained from the health department, shows that the statewide vaccination average was only part of the picture — in reality, many schools are far below the average.

About 26% of K-12 schools and 23% of child care facilities did not

meet the 95% vaccination threshold for measles, the department data showed. In three counties — Lamoille, Orleans and Washington — the percent of facilities that do not meet herd immunity rose above 33%.

Vermont requires children entering child care facilities or K-12 schools to receive five vaccines that protect against nine potential childhood illnesses. Students at residential schools, also known as boarding schools, and incoming residential university students are also required to receive the vaccine against meningitis.

But children can be exempted from those requirements for three reasons: provisional admittance for children with upcoming vaccination appointments, a medical exemption approved by a health provider or a religious exemption where parents attest to “holding religious beliefs opposed to immunization.”

For the 2023-24 school year, only 0.2% of children were medically exempted, 3% were provisionally admitted and 3% were exempted for religious reasons, according to the health department. (See Measles cases, Page 24)

Senior spotlight A chat with Jeanette Atwood Devino

Jeanette Atwood Devino was born in Middlebury, Vermont in January of 1953. Her father, Kenneth Atwood, worked for the Vermont Dept. of Agriculture, while her mother, Kathryn Wetmore, was a homemaker and musician extraordinaire. She grew up with a brother, Steven, who sadly passed away in 2020, and a sister, Brenda Atwood Haskel. Jeanette received her education first at Orwell Elementary School, graduating from Fair Haven Union High School and going on to Rutland Business College. Upon graduation, she became a secretary for Bernard Webster at the First Brandon National Bank, moved on to a home day-care provider for 10 years and then was a full-time mom; then back to the bank and when it merged with Lake Sunapee, she moved on to the Residences at Otter Creek in Middlebury, where she retired in 2017. She met and was married to Rollie Devino until he passed away in 1998. They had two children, Kelly Devino, who lives in Brandon, and Shawn, who lives in Forest Dale. When asked what the best thing that ever happened to her, her response was marrying Rollie and having her children. The most embarrassing thing that ever happened to her was when she was working at the Rutland Police station. She mixed up the names on a phone call from “Lafountain and Spoon” and wrote down “Lafoon”! Her hobbies and interests include

playing the piano (she’s been in the Brandon Talent Show several times and used to play the piano at the Senior Center every meal), walking, and visiting Maine. We asked what her favorite thing to do is and she said enthusiastically “hang out with my three grandchildren, Jadyne & Carson Devino and Zaidyn McGraw and of course, going to Maine.” The most exciting experience that she was willing to share was when she and her husband took a trip to Montana. She said it was so beautiful out there and they had a good time.

Profile and photo courtesy of the Brandon Senior Center in Forest Dale.



**Brandon Senior Center’s “Spotlighted Senior”
Jeanette Atwood Devino**

Independence Day

(Continued from Page 21)
a lot of money was made with the captive audience waiting to get in and out of the parking area. Accordingly, today’s organizers have added another “chance” fundraiser—50/50 tickets. The pot grows quite large in the days leading up to the event and you’ll see volunteers out and about all day on July 5th this year. Please help support the fun!

The last fundraiser I’ll touch on here is the Silent Auction. A

year’s worth of work goes into collecting, cataloging, and displaying the quality items and gift certificates donated by area businesses and individuals. The silent auction is always held during the day’s events at Fellowship Hall, right next to the Congregational Church. Make sure you check it out and if you have something cool to donate, please get in touch with us.

This year is the nation’s 249th birthday. There is already

a committee in place to help plan something spectacular for 2026 for the nation’s 250th—referred to as a sesquicentennial, a bisesquicentennial, sesquicentennial, or quarter millennial.

And in the meantime, to help out this year, contact Bill Moore at the Brandon Town Office at bmoore@townofbrandon.com or by calling 802-247-3635 ext 213.

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BENEFIT SALE

SALE TABLE AND Basket Raffle Event - April 12, 2025 at Otter Valley High School to benefit the Class of 2026. To reserve a vendor space for \$20.00, please email cwaldie@mesu.org.



April showers indeed

THIS FLOODED FIELD is off West Creek looking East toward Pittsford.

Photo by Dale Christie

Measles cases

(Continued from Page 23)

ment. Plumpton said the lowest vaccination rates tend to be found in the state’s most rural areas. “It could be a combination of lack of access and attitudes towards vaccines,” she said.

Independent schools, which includes private and religious schools, also tend to have lower vaccination rates than public schools, according to the department data.

Vaccination hesitancy has been bolstered in recent years by anti-vaccine sentiment connected to the Covid-19 vaccine, Plumpton said. The Trump administration has also placed the longtime anti-vaccine activist Robert F. Kennedy in charge of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, one of the most powerful public health roles in the nation.

Plumpton emphasized that most Vermont families still choose to have their children vaccinated. But it’s natural for parents to have questions about the vaccines they’re giving their children, she said.

“As a parent, I want to make the best decision that I can for my child, and I can only make that decision based on the information

that I have,” she said. “And we’re in an age where there’s information everywhere, so it’s really hard to know what the correct information is or where to go to get good, solid, sound, scientific information.”

She encouraged parents to check out reputable websites like Vaccinate Your Family and VaccineInformation.org, which both have thorough FAQs about the safety and efficacy of each vaccine.

She also encouraged them to discuss their child’s vaccine schedule with their primary care provider or pediatrician. Vermont provides recommended vaccine doses for children and adults at no cost to health care providers.

But her message to Vermont parents was clear: Measles is a highly contagious virus that can lead to severe illness and death, and “vaccines are the best defense against the illnesses that you’re getting vaccinated against.”

“They’re not going to prevent 100% of the diseases,” she said. “That’s not the way vaccines work. But they’re really highly effective at preventing hospitalization and really serious illness. And there’s a reason that we have these vaccines.”

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