

The REPORTER

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

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\$1

Shelly Sawyer closes in on 25 years at Brandon's Lilac Inn

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—2026 will mark 25 years since Shelly and Doug Sawyer bought Brandon's iconic Lilac Inn on Park Street. Thousands of guests. Hundreds of weddings. Innumerable memories.

"I've never lived anywhere else so long," said Shelly in a recent conversation on the front porch behind the elegant arcade that gave the place its original name of "The Arches" when it was built as a summer home by the wealthy Farr family in 1909. "But 25 years as an innkeeper is a long time. I'll still have to have Vermont in my life, but I'm ready for a new adventure."

For the past few years, since Doug's passing in 2020, Shelly has been running the inn with the assistance of her adult children, Ashley and Tyson, and a loyal staff. But at 76, it's time to move

on. The Lilac Inn is officially on the market.

"In 2001, Doug and I were living a corporate life in Connecticut," recalled Shelly. "We'd moved a lot. We even lived in England for a bit. But we were always someone's employees. We thought it would be nice to have our own business."

When their kids were in college, they decided to ditch the rat race and enter the hospitality industry. The Sawyers had no experience running an inn, but Doug had his MBA and Shelly loved to cook and entertain. They jumped right in.

"I'm not really a winter person," said Shelly. "I had wanted to go south to somewhere like Savannah, GA or Charleston, SC. But Doug was from New Hampshire and wanted to look in New



SHELLY SAWYER WILL celebrate 25 years at the Lilac Inn next year.

Instead of a quaint little Southern guesthouse, they ended up purchasing an 11,000-square-foot mansion in Vermont.

"It ticked all the boxes for me," she said.

The complex had been owned by Michael and Melanie Shane, who had done extensive renovations and changed the name from The Arches to The Lilac Inn.

"The Shanes had done a lot of work on the place," said Shelly. "They were a contractor and an architect. They put in a new kitchen, new stairs, and filled in a swimming pool that used to be in the rear courtyard. They're the ones who really made it a wedding venue."

Shelly had wanted to do weddings, but the Sawyers also tried establishing a high-end restaurant at the Inn as well. Café Provence

(See Lilac Inn, Page 14)

Brandon SB holds first budget workshop for FY2027

BY STEVEN JUPITER

BRANDON—The Brandon Selectboard convened on Monday night for the first of several public workshops in its budget-crafting process for Fiscal Year 2026-2027, which will begin on July 1, 2026. Town Manager Seth Hopkins and Deputy Town Manager Bill Moore were also in attendance.

There will be no official Budget Committee to advise the Selectboard this year, as it was discovered recently that the town's process for appointing members to the Committee was not in keeping with current Vermont law.

Under current statutes, voters must decide whether to have an advisory Budget Committee. If they vote yes, they must then vote whether to allow

(See Brandon SB, Page 20)



Baby turtles receive a helping hand

SHELBY GLASER OF Brandon (pictured right) noticed a momma snapping turtle laying eggs in the lawn in front of her apartment on Park Street last June. She immediately set up a milk crate and chicken wire to protect the nest, with a sign notifying passersby that the babies were due in a few months. Last weekend, they arrived by the dozen. Mother turtles lay their eggs near streams and lakes, but the marsh that this momma had counted on for her young had dried up since she made the nest. So, Glaser lent a helping hand, searching for the tiny critters in the grass and transporting them to the closest waterway (just behind a neighbor's house). A turtle always relies on the kindness of strangers...



Coming to America, No.8: Kasimir and Rozalia (Błachowicz) Porebski

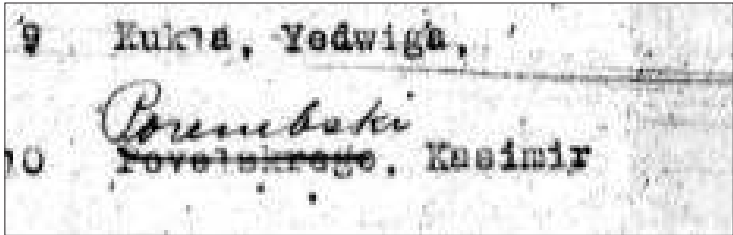
BY MICHAEL F. DWYER
Kasimir Porebski's journey to the United States began on July 4, 1911 in Hamburg, Germany, when the twenty-eight-year-old laborer, along with almost 3,000 steerage passengers, boarded the S.S. Grant, a ship of the Hamburg-America Line. Born in Bochnia, Austrian Poland, on March 1, 1883, eldest son of Adalbert and Marianna Jagla Porebski, he received a primary-school education there. [Note that the spelling went from Porebski i to Poremski, because the ę character is pronounced in Polish with a slight m or n sound, thus adding the m to the name made it easier to pronounce in English. No names were changed at Ellis

Island!]. As a means of earning money to pay for his passage, he left his native village and moved to the city of Oskrow, then under the jurisdiction of Germany. Kasimir's grandson Alphonse "Sonny" Poremski recalls that his grandfather worked on the estate of a German nobleman, doing a variety of jobs and eventually becoming a horse trainer, and chauffeur to the family. Married only a year before his emigration, he may not have known as he left Hamburg that his wife Rozalia Blachowicz was pregnant with their first child. Like so many other immigrants, he would never again see his parents and siblings. A mistake in the spelling

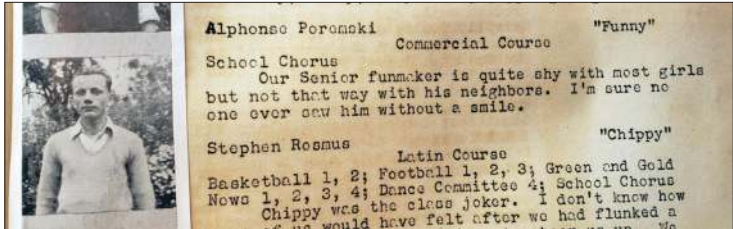
of Kasimir's last name on the ship's manifest caused him to be detained at Ellis Island for three days after landing. The record indicated his sponsor was a cousin in West Rutland, Wladyslav Firlet. Wladyslav did not stay in West Rutland, but his brother Jan and his wife Maria served as godparents to Kasimir's firstborn son. The Firlet [spelled later as Firlit] family came from the adjoining village in Poland—how exactly the two families were related has not been learned. Once Kasimir arrived in West Rutland, he immediately went to work at the Vermont Marble Company, where he toiled for the next twenty-five years. He worked 60 hours a week for a wage of six dollars.

In the meantime, Rozalia Porebska [feminine version of the surname] and their eight-month-old daughter Jagwiga [anglicized to Hedwig] departed from Hamburg on March 6, 1913 aboard the Kaiserin Augusta Victoria, and after stops in Cherbourg, France and Southampton, England arrived in New York on March 15. Tragedy stalked the family during those early years in Vermont. Baby Hedwig died in May 1913, age one-and-a-half. The parents would suffer the loss of two other infants: Bronislava "Bernice" in May 1916, and Valentine, age eight months, a casualty of the influenza epidemic in October 1918. That left two surviving sons, Bernard "Red" Poremski

(See *Coming to America*, Page 8)



THE MISPELLING ON the ship manifest that led to Casimir's detention at Ellis Island.



SNIP FROM 1934 West Rutland High School yearbook for Alphonse "Al" Poremski.



KASIMIR AND ROZALIA (Błachowicz) Porebski around the time of their marriage in 1910.



COMPOSITE FAMILY PHOTO, circa 1920, with Rozalia, Casimir, an aunt, "Coicia," in Polish, and sons, Bernard "Red," and Alphonse Frank, "Al." Note the hand-coloring and additions to Rozalia's dress and the bows for the boys.



ROZALIA, CASIMIR, AND chickens outside the farmhouse, circa 1940.

My cancer journey, part five: And in the end...

BY CAROLYN VAN VLECK

Well, my journey after the fifth and sixth infusions were cumulative...sigh. Indeed, I spent four days in bed, tired beyond belief. Very weak and wobbly. My heart also started pounding every time I did something, no matter how small. Anxiety or side effect? Or the two mixed? Perhaps. Neuropathy kicked in, as well. My toes on both feet feel as though I've a small case of frostbite affecting them. Numb, I guess. Could also be contributing to my wobbliness. It's rather odd to be walking along and suddenly your leg starts to collapse! But it will all go away, apparently, so...

Reading back on my journaling, I realize that I have made it sound somewhat facile at times...even easy. The journey has been very tough at times—make no mistake about that! However, I've made it through and appreciate so much: the people involved in the hospital and out; the medicines that have saved my life; the fact that I was able to conquer the illness with the help of others; the awareness of what was going on; learning to ask for and accept help; learning all about cancer.

I did ask how long the port has to stay in. Apparently, I will get a PET/CT scan within a few weeks now that the infusions are all over and, if all is well, the port will be removed and I won't have to have any more blood tests (well, every three months again, per my surgeon's order).

A lot of people keep journals during their trials and tribulations. I started to but couldn't really stick with it. I was having a hard enough time just trying to keep up with paying my bills!

What are my suggestions if you're diagnosed with cancer?

First: Initially, you will freak out. That's a given with any serious medical diagnosis! Have a good cry! It's scary! Hit the couch with the pillows as hard as you can! Tell your best friends—they need to know that there will be big changes in your life for a while!

Second: After the freaking out, realize that you have a tremendous chance of continuing life. Don't let it keep you down! The medical world continues to do research on cancer and how to get rid of it.

Third: Advocate for yourself! Be pushy! Assertive! It's your life and your health, and you know yourself best! Write down and ask every question that you

need to! Get a second opinion, if necessary. Doctors are not gods and couldn't possibly know everything there is to know about every illness. A lot of times, they have to go one step at a time... but if you know that something is wrong, insist on a test. Please!

Fourth: Google everything but read only the reputable sites! These would be the Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, Johns Hopkins, CDC, Duke, Stanford, Harvard, etc. Any site that ends with .org, .edu or .gov.

Fifth: Accept that you will have to have serious meds that will cause you serious pain. It's part of the process, and, hopefully, it will work for you.

Six: Accept help. It's okay to ask for and accept help when you're really ill. People will give you gifts that they think you need which are totally unnecessary...suck it up and accept them with grace.

Seven: Your life is going to change, so accept that, as well. You won't be partying for a while! You will be tired, very tired. It's hard to accept that you can't live your "normal" life for months. You will be sleeping a lot, with both radiation and chemo. Your body is being slammed with alien chemicals that aren't particularly good for it. The first time is the very worst, at least in my case. It leaves your body within 48 hours, leaving behind little working bits. You may have long-term effects afterwards. No telling what they'll be.

Eight: People will look at you when you tell them that you have cancer—yes, tell them—and not know what to say or do. That's okay. You can walk around bald or not; it's up to you!

Nine: There are alternative ways to dealing with cancer. I didn't even consider them, even though I knew that the chemo would be a tough road. My paternal grandmother had spinal cancer for many years, and I remember once seeing her and her husband cutting up cherry pits to get to the center for consumption (I believe it was cyanide on the inside). It didn't work, sadly, and she was in a lot of pain for many years, but her chemo didn't work, so she was working with what she had way back in the late '70s.

Ten: Appreciate your life, whether you're ill or not. We tend to just live day to day without realizing how good we have it. Then—whammo!—we're sidetracked by a catastrophe! It's only then that we become

aware of our bodies and how they work and what can go wrong. No one really knows what causes cancer...there are different schools of thought and proofs of environmental pollution, food additives, smoking, genetics, stress, and many more potential reasons. I don't see us "curing" ourselves of cancer, any more than I do of us curing the common cold. The body's cells are a tough-working group, but things can go wrong!

I had always anticipated getting cancer at some point, oddly enough. My father and both his parents died from an assortment of cancers, but not until they were in their 80s, and here I am a young 70! So, I was quite surprised when I was diagnosed.

I had to recently call out a high school friend, who is a doctor of osteopathy, about his attitude/suggestions towards me and my illness. He went on and on about changing the diet and that chemo probably doesn't work. I had to remind him that I'm the patient and that he had no idea what I was going through physically, mentally, or emotionally. (He did apologize.) Any major illness is a journey that you take alone, no matter how many people are there to help. I also think that we become ill no matter what we eat. I do eat a lot of organic, but obviously that didn't help at all.

Thus, I am in remission. Will the cancer return? Possibly. No longer gynecological, though, as all those bits and pieces are gone! But one hidden cancer cell can stay hidden until it's ready to bloom again, which is what happened to me (cyst connection to bowel). I'm very lucky, and I know it!

I am a little worried about long-term effects. Apparently, the heart is what has the most problems. Princess Kate of England has recently said that the comeback from cancer takes longer than she had anticipated. Oh, dear...

So, for any of you who are traveling this path or may have to travel it in the future, I hope that my sharing of my experience with cancer has helped. Know that you are not alone—there are many of us on this planet who are battling cancer—and many of us who win the battle! Stay positive! Pray! Connect with nature (avoid ticks)! Appreciate what you have!

Life is a challenge, and we continue to battle on!

Come help chart the future for The REPORTER

A community supported newspaper

7 pm in the downstairs meeting
room at the Brandon town hall

As the paper transitions from its
current form it needs YOU to help
come up with it's next iteration.

Spotlight On Business JUDITH REILLY GALLERY



My Gallery, in our charming
200-year-old downtown

Brandon home, features my
whimsical fabric artwork originals
as well as print reproductions,
cards, hooked pillows and rugs I
designed, ornaments, papier
mâché creatures, and other items
featuring my artwork including



Judith Reilly in her gallery
tote bags, mugs and pouches.
We welcome visitors by appoint-
ment or by chance. If we're home,
we're happy to open. Hope to see
you soon!

2ND ANNUAL OPEN FARM DAY AT WILLIS TOWNE FARM SEPTEMBER 27TH 11AM — 4P.M.

NEW THIS YEAR

- ♥ LIVE MUSIC
- ♥ FREE KIDS CRAFT
- ♥ \$5 MAKE & TAKE LAVENDER SACHET,
FREE FOR THE FIRST 50 PEOPLE
- ♥ 2 NEW FOOD VENDORS
- ♥ SWEET TREATS
- ♥ FARM RAISED LAMB
- ♥ HAY RIDES
- ♥ NATURE WALKS W/
COME ALIVE OUTSIDE
- ♥ HANDMADE QUILT RAFFLE
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LIZ WILLIS & JOSH TOWNE
7797 WHIPPLE HOLLOW RD
FLORENCE, VT 05444



Vermonters asked to report dry wells, water shortages, and other impacts of drought

With drought conditions existing throughout Vermont, state officials are asking Vermonters to report drought impacts. This includes wells or water supplies running out or tasting different, damage to crops and other farm losses, low water levels in lakes, rivers, or recreational areas, and any health issues related to water quality or availability. Vermonters should also consider voluntary water conservation efforts at home.

Reporting drought impacts helps the state assess the severity of the drought, understand where Vermonters may need assistance, and develop plans to address drought impacts. Drought reporting is also vital to the accurate depiction of drought severity on the U.S. Drought Monitor, which triggers key United States Department of Agriculture and Internal Revenue Service programming that can help support Vermonters who may be experiencing significant impacts.

All of Vermont is currently in at least moderate drought. As of September 4, 2025, the U.S. Drought Monitor reports that 65.7% of the state is in moderate drought (the second category of severity), with another 34.4% of Vermont in severe drought (the third stage). While last weekend's rains were beneficial, particularly across northern Vermont, pronounced drought conditions persist across the central and southern parts of the state.

"The effects of drought have become very noticeable in the last 3-4 weeks and include stunted crops, dry soils, brown lawns, a high wildfire danger, and record low stream-flow and groundwater levels," said State Climatologist Dr. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, a professor of

Geography at the University of Vermont and the Chair of the Vermont Drought Task Force.

Some areas have seen about eight inches less rain than usual in the last four months. Moisture in the soil is 60-80% below average for this point in September. Without any tropical rain on the horizon, an occasional rain shower or thunderstorm won't be enough to reverse current conditions.

The Drought Task Force, comprising state, federal and other institutional partners, is meeting regularly to monitor the situation, promote public awareness of the severity of these dry conditions, and develop recommendations for any state response.

Learn more about reporting drought impacts at ANR's Drought Resources web page or drought.vermont.gov, as well as the Conditions Monitoring Observer Reports.

REPORT DROUGHT IMPACTS

Low or Dry Drinking Water Sources: If your private well or spring is low or dry, submit a drought report to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) using the online Drought Reporter.

If a public drinking water system is experiencing problems due to the drought, contact the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division at 802-828-1535.

Wastewater Treatment Impacts: If a wastewater treatment facility is experiencing problems due to the drought, contact the Wastewater Division at 802-828-1115.

Agricultural Issues: If your farm is experiencing drought impacts, contact the Vermont Agency (See Drought impacts, Page 15)



I'm only pretending to have a stinger

THIS GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER likes the dense growth underneath power lines for nesting. Its song is a "bee buzz buzz."

Photo by Sue Wetmore

Community Forums

Hymn sing and concert at the Pittsford Congregational Church on Sun., Sept. 21

The Pittsford Congregational Church is sponsoring a benefit hymn sing and concert on Sunday, September 21, at 3 p.m. Proceeds of the freewill offering will be shared with the Pittsford Food Shelf and Rutland Neighbors, formerly known as Companions in Wholeness. Last year, Rutland Neighbors served 55,855 meals. Its mission states no one in the

community should go hungry or feel forgotten. Both organizations have suffered Federal SNAP finding cuts.

Pastor Michael Dwyer will lead the hymn sing. Composer, pianist, and organist, Dr. Alastair Stout will perform three "anniversary" pieces. The first selection, *Pari Intervallo*, honors Es- (See Hymn sing, Page 21)



Otter Valley to host open house showcasing new welding lab

Otter Valley Union Middle & High School invites students, families, alumni, community members, and local partners to attend an upcoming Open House in the school's shop on Thursday, September 25, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The event will highlight hands-on learning opportunities available to students in the school's Tech Ed program, including the unveiling of a brand-new welding lab, which was built with training funds from the Vermont Department of Labor. The

modernized space is designed to give students valuable experience with industry-standard equipment and safety features, preparing them for futures at our partner institutions, Stafford and Hannaford Career Centers, or in (See Welding lab, Page 15)

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

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Letter to the Editor

We are at a turning point

In an environment where mainstream media is “ongoing election campaign,” or as Governor Cox of Utah described social media, “a cancer,” every word or action we spread carries weight. Every post, every chant, every sign—it all matters.

We all hold different views. That is the beauty of a free people. But the real test is not whether we have views—it is how we defend them. Do we defend our views by coming to the table with an open heart, a willingness to listen, and a spirit of forgiveness, as Charlie Kirk was preaching? Or do we hand a little girl a sign with words like “F Trump”

or promote discount codes like “TuckFrump”? Are we willing to have open, peaceful debate, or do we silence speakers with making noise? One of many examples is event at the statehouse on March 12.

Governor Cox said, “Every single one of us gets to choose right now if this is a turning point for us.”

So today, I bow my head—not in defeat, but in respect. Respect for Charlie Kirk, who dared to speak his truth with courage, peace, and an open heart.

Aida Nielsen
Brandon

Community Forums Continued Vermont’s archery deer season starts Wednesday, Oct. 1

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department says hunters are looking forward to Vermont’s upcoming October 1-November 14 and December 1-15 archery deer hunting season.

Deer hunting regulation changes made earlier this year will not go into effect until 2026.

A hunter may take up to four

deer in Vermont’s two-part archery season if they do not shoot any deer in the other deer seasons. The purchase of an archery deer license and tag is required for each deer. No more than one of the deer taken during archery season may be a legal buck if no buck is taken in the other deer seasons. Antlerless deer hunting

is allowed during archery season statewide this year.

In WMUs C, D1, D2, E1, E2, G, I, L, M, P, and Q a legal buck is any deer with at least one antler three inches or more in length. In WMUs A, B, F1, F2, H, J1, J2, K, N, and O a legal buck is any deer with at least one antler with
(See Archery season, Page 23)

Community Forums Continued Vermont Adult Learning announces Rutland County 2025 graduation ceremony

Vermont Adult Learning (VAL) will be honoring its Rutland County learners with a graduation and recognition ceremony on Wednesday, September 24, at Rutland Free Library’s upstairs Fox Room. The event will begin at 5:30 p.m. and will recognize students who have achieved a GED or high school diploma.

“In partnership with West

Rutland School, the Rutland Learning Center staff is especially excited to include among this year’s graduates, our first student to complete Vermont’s new Adult Diploma Program,” said Dave Kieffner, VAL’s new Regional Director for Rutland County. “This offering will help make the dream of earning an actual high school diploma a reality for many non-

traditional learners.”

The ceremony is free and open to the public. Families, friends, and community members are warmly invited to attend and celebrate the hard work and dedication of Vermont Adult Learning’s Rutland County students. Light refreshments follow the ceremony.

Cast Off 8’s brings square dancing back to Pittsford — No partner or experience needed

Whether you’re looking for a fun way to get moving, meet new people, or try something entirely different this fall, the Cast Off 8’s Square Dance Club has you covered.

The club has launched a new season of beginner-friendly square dancing sessions, the first of which

was September 10. There is one more free class on Sept. 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lothrop Elementary School Gym. Held weekly on Wednesday evenings through the fall, the program offers a friendly, no-pressure introduction to modern square dancing—and the first two

sessions are completely free.

No partner or experience is necessary. All you need is a pair of comfortable shoes and a willingness to have fun.

“We welcome dancers of all ages and backgrounds,” says organizer
(See Cast Off 8’s, Page 23)

Aleshire Gallery to open in the Granary in Brandon on Sunday, Sept. 21

Aleshire Gallery, a new photography darkroom, digital lab, and fine art gallery, will hold a grand opening Sunday, Sept. 21, from 5 to 8 p.m. Located in the Granary building at 29 Union Street, Aleshire Gallery is the latest edition to a historic building that already houses the art studios of Warren Kimble and Fran Bull, among others.

The gallery will be showing cyanotypes and silver prints by Creative Director Benjamin Aleshire and member artist Zach Hoffman. Aleshire, born and raised in Rutland County, has been selected for residencies at the BCA Center and the Generator in Burlington, Tulane University’s Studio in the Woods, and Shakespeare &

Company in Paris, and his photographs have been published in Seven Days and exhibited at the New Orleans Prospect 3 biennial.

Hoffman, who directs the PhotoPlace Gallery in Middlebury, is a photographer, educator, and advocate for the arts. He graduated from Mon-
(See Aleshire Gallery, Page 15)

Coming to Orwell Free Library: “Serving your community— What does it take to be a Vermont State Representative?”

What is it like to be a state legislator? At the Orwell Free Library on Tuesday, September 30, starting at 7 p.m., panelists Robin Scheu, Joe Andriano and Peter Conlon will talk about their own experiences in the state legislature. They will discuss what the job entails, from the initial decision to run as a member of a political party or as an Independent, to questions of time, salary and support, and getting along with the other legislators.

The goal of the meeting is to bring together people who want to know more about how

to run for the office, and those who want to understand what the experience is like for our legislators. Robin Scheu, from Middlebury, has been a State Representative since 2017. Peter Conlon, who lives in Cornwall, is State Rep. for the Addison-2 district. Joe Andriano, an Orwell resident, served as the Representative for the Addison-Rutland district. The audience will have opportunities to ask questions and give comments.

A similar event held in Shoreham, back in August, was
(See State Representatives, Page 19)

Fall plants are here!

Mums 3 for \$27 • Asters 3 for \$33
Many house plants and herbs to choose from.

Fall decor:

beautiful ornamental cabbage & kale • colorful millet • graceful grasses • blooming fall perennials

Specials:

20% off select trees, bushes & perennials

Corn & veggies from local farms

Many new items in our vintage area!

New fall hours

12-5 weekdays & Sundays
10-5 Saturdays

Virgil AND Constance

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Tim and Mary Shields, owners

Obituaries

Carole Lee Griffin, 76, Benson

Carole Lee Griffin, age 76, passed peacefully with family by her side on August 29, 2025, at her home in Benson.

Carole was born in Middlebury on December 23, 1948. She was the daughter of John and Ruby (Fuller) Quinn. She grew up in Forest Dale, where she received her early education and graduated from Otter Valley Union High School. She began her working career at Brandon Training School and later worked for several years at Leicester Central School. She had retired from Pleasant Manor Nursing Home following more than 17 years of service.

Carole enjoyed cooking and loved spending time with Dale;



CAROLE LEE GRIFFIN

two daughters, Rebecca L. Griffin and Stacey L. Kirkpatrick and her husband Kris; two granddaughters, Kayleigh Kirkpatrick and Victoria

Kirkpatrick-Mantos and her husband Tony Matos. Several nieces, nephews, & cousins also survive her. She was predeceased by her parents and three brothers.

The graveside committal service and burial will take place on September 20, 2025, at 3 p.m., at Pine Hill Cemetery in Brandon. Pastor Michael Vincent will officiate.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

In last week's Reporter, the photo caption accompanying this obituary was incorrect. We are very sorry for the error.

Mary Carol (Harmon) Devino, 88, Castleton

Mary Carol (Harmon) Devino "Granny," age 88, passed peacefully with family at her side on September 2, 2025, at the home of her daughter in Castleton.

Mary was born in West Orange, N.J. on December 23, 1936. She was the daughter of Edwin and Margaret (Rosensteel) Harmon. She graduated from Rockaway, N.J. High School, class of 1954. Mary had been a Vermont resident since 1971, moving here from Denville, N.J. She began her working career selling Avon. She had worked in food service and later as a Cardiac Tech. at the Rutland Regional Medical Center. She was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Brandon. Family was most important to Mary. She will be remembered



MARY CAROL DEVINO

for her beautiful gardens, love for animals, and her natural ability for art.

She is survived by four daughters: Christine Grimes and husband (See Mary Carol Devino, Page 9)

Gary Don Williams, 86, Vero Beach, Fla. (Brandon)

Gary Don Williams, 86, passed away peacefully on July 18, 2025, in Vero Beach, Florida, following a courageous battle with atypical chronic myeloid leukemia (aCML). His beloved daughters were by his side in his final moments, just days before his 87th birthday.

Born in Rutland, Vermont, Gary was the son of John and Ruth (Bulris) Williams. He graduated from Brandon High School in Brandon, Vermont, and went on to serve his country with pride in the United States Air Force from 1956 to 1966. His military service took him from basic training in Texas to assignments in Colorado, Omaha, Nebraska—where he met his future wife, Yvonne, and welcomed his first daughter, Lori Ann—and Zaragoza, Spain, where his second daughter, Teresa Lynn, was born.

After his military service, Gary pursued studies in electrical engineering at a vocational



GARY DON WILLIAMS

school in Miami, Florida. In 1967, he joined IBM at Cape Canaveral, where he contributed to the historic Apollo 11 mission. IBM played a vital role in the moon landing, and Gary was proud to be part of that extraordinary moment in history.

Later, he transferred to IBM's

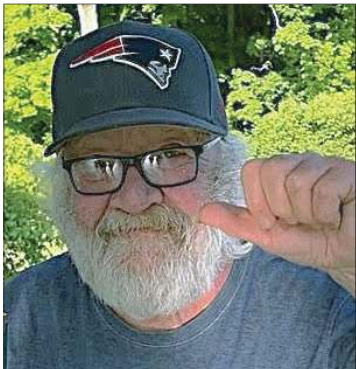
Microelectronics facility in Burlington, Vermont, returning close to his roots and where his third daughter, Wendy Marie, was born. Missing the Florida warmth, Gary moved his family back south in 1981 and continued his career at the IBM Boca Raton Innovation Campus—home of the original IBM personal computer. He retired in 1993 as Chief Engineer, turning his focus to managing a successful portfolio of residential rental properties.

Gary is survived by his three daughters: Lori Williams Decker (Mark Deeg), Teresa Eisenhower, and Wendy McClish (David); his former wife and friend, Yvonne Viani Williams; his brother, Phil Williams (Penny); his stepsister, Judi Needham; nine nieces and nephews; eight grandchildren; and thirteen great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his parents, his stepmother Frances Needham Williams, his sister (See Gary Williams, Page 11)

John Stephen Rynne, 75, Brandon

John Stephen Rynne, age 75, passed away on September 13, 2025, at his home in Brandon.

John was born in Waltham, Mass., on June 16, 1950. He was the son of John and Mary Rynne. He received his early education at Saint Mary's in Lynn, Mass. Following his high school graduation, he earned his degree from Salem State University. John began his working career with the Social Security Administration in the Boston area. He and his family moved to Vermont in 1989. He continued working at the Rutland and Burlington Social Security offices. He also served as the union president for the New England area. He retired in 2010 as the regional manager for the Social Security Administration, following 35 years of



JOHN STEPHEN RYNNE

service.

John enjoyed spending his days out on the porch with his dog, Nugget, watching the birds. He always looked forward to Sunday dinners with the family. He also (See John Rynne, Page 9)

Christopher Robert Barnhardt, 62, Brandon

Christopher (Chris) Robert Barnhardt of Brandon, Vermont was born on October 28, 1962 in Bennington, Vermont. Chris passed away peacefully September 14, 2025. He was 62 years old.

Chris' tenacity for sports could be seen at a very young age when he played Little League. He played with the same intensity during his baseball and wrestling days. After high school, Chris played in the minor leagues and challenged himself on the golf course, pursuing that hole in one. Chris was always fun loving, making his family smile and laugh. Family values were extremely important to him. We spent many holidays, summers and vacations together. Chris had a passion for life and the great outdoors, grab-

bing every bit of gusto he could. His annual hunting and fishing trips were a highlight, and nothing made him happier than being out on the lake with his trusty Bass Tracker, sun on his face, and a fishing rod in hand. Chris loved those peaceful moments saying it was the best therapy a man could ask for. Now the fish can finally rest easy knowing Chris won't be around to catch and release them anymore.

On his daughter Alyssa's last trip home, she proudly caught her biggest fish ever with Chris right there, offering his trademark "dad advice" and coaching her all the way into the net. His spirit and those memories will always ripple across the water he loved so much. (See Christopher Barnhardt, Page 9)

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The Reporter has received word of the untimely passing of David Atherton, formerly of Brandon. Mr. Atherton was Brandon Town Manager for many years and, before that, a member of the Brandon Selectboard. His expert stewardship of complex projects like Segment 6 left a lasting legacy for our community. Mr. Atherton was town manager in Pittsford after he left Brandon. Our deepest sympathies go to his wife, Heather, his children, Benjamin and Elizabeth, and to the rest of his friends and family.

GARDENING CORNER



The story of how Baird Farm turned to maple sugaring

BY LYN DESMARAIS

Another young family of farmers that I love to visit is Jenna Baird and Jacob Powsner of Baird Farm Maple Syrup in the next ‘valley’ over in North Chittenden, high above Brandon east/southeast of town—if you could get there from here. Jenna and her partner Jacob came back to her family farm in 2017, after working the WWOOFing (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) program out West and living in Eugene, Oregon for a year. The farm has been in the family since 1918. Jenna’s parents Bob and Bonnie Baird originally ran the farm as a dairy farm but built sugaring into part of their business model as well. When Jenna and Jacob returned to Vermont, they worked for Jenna’s parents and realized they enjoyed the work and wanted to further build out the maple business. Today they tap 14,500 trees and have a growing agritourism and online e-commerce business.

Over the last few years, they have steadily been adding value-added products like their line of infused syrups,

maple granulated sugar, and maple ketchup—which pairs well with the Hamilton Cattle

Company beef they sell in their store freezer. After transitioning away from livestock on

the farm, the family has collaborated with a young local farmer, Jamie Hamilton, who now grazes his Devon beef cattle on their farm from early spring to late summer to keep their pastures open and in use. [See the 9/03/25 issue of The Reporter for more on the Hamilton Cattle Company.]

Jenna and Jacob have worked hard to grow their markets and increase the foot traffic at their farm. They offer guided tours of the farm by appointment which brings in a lot of out-of-state foot traffic. These tours offer families and individuals a unique experience of maple and farming in Vermont. Their growing online audience has also helped to increase their brand awareness. Their social marketing, which is so professional it must take many hours of hard work daily, is exemplary. “We try to keep our customers interested in what we do,” Jenna said.

Funny videos, storytelling, and a commitment to customer engagement are three of their main focuses when it comes to their social media marketing.

In addition to their daily happenings, the couple hosts different events and gatherings throughout the year, including Maple Open House Weekend, The Annual Great North American Maple Pie Contest, and a Fall Woods Walk to Bob’s old, abandoned sugarhouse.

They are always looking to do more and continue their creativity on their farm. On their dream list for the upcoming years is having a farmstay experience, a creamery truck, holiday events in their (soon to be ready) ‘cut your own Christmas Tree’ field, music nights, movie nights, and many other creative ideas to keep the farm community centered.

Check out their social media @bairdfarm on Facebook and Instagram or sign up for their monthly newsletter through their website to stay in touch.



JACOB POWSNER AND Jenna Baird on their family farm.

Coming to America

(Continued from Page 2)
(1914–2002) and Alphonse “Al” Poremski (1916–2003). An aunt from Poland, only remembered as “Coicia” lived with the family until her death.

As the Vermont Marble Company strikes ripped apart West Rutland and Proctor, Kasimir and Rozalia transacted a mortgage of \$4,000 to purchase initially six parcels of land along Whipple Hollow Road in Florence. At their largest extent, the family owned 365 acres and raised dairy cattle. Kasimir had two teams of draft horses. His two favorites, massive strawberry roans, were named King and Queen—so well trained that Sonny Poremeski and his sisters used to ride them while Kasimir raked the hay. The family settled into a rhythm of farm life that kept them close to home with Sunday trips to St. Stanislaus in

West Rutland to attend Polish Mass. Rozalia died suddenly of a heart attack on April 7, 1947, age 64.

Throughout his long life, Kasimir maintained a Polish-language correspondence with his younger brother Frank in Poland. Frank reportedly lived to the age of 102, tending his garden and chickens to the end of his life. We’ll never know what was in those letters, but certainly Kasimir had to have known of the Nazi-inflicted brutality during World War II in his native Bochnia, where they murdered Jews and Poles alike. Indeed, at least four members of the Porębski family perished in the concentration camp Auschwitz [Oświęcim in Polish].

Kasimir’s and Rozalia’s sons ultimately went in different directions. Red initially trained to be a barber in Albany, New

York but returned to West Rutland, where he married Valerie Taranovich. After operating a dairy farm for two decades, he and his wife purchased a hotel on Lake Bomoseen which became the Edgewater Resort and Trak-Inn Restaurant.

Al graduated from West Rutland High School and Rutland Business College, no mean feat during the Depression. After marrying Stella Markowski in 1940, he continued to help his father run the farm. [The Markowski family will be the subject of the next Coming to America installment]. Al became the mainstay of his father in his old age. In 1950, he, Stella, and their three children, Louise, Barbara, and Sonny moved from the original farmhouse to the tenant’s cottage. As Sonny worked alongside his grandfather, he



THE POREMSKI FAMILY in 1987: Sonny, Shelley, with Courtney, Hilary, and Thad.




VIEW OF THE Poremski farm, circa 1940, with unpaved Whipple Hollow Road in the distance.



SONNY POREMSKI AND his sisters Louise and Barbara, circa 1949.

learned Polish because Kasimir spoke as little English as possible. Kasimir died in 1966, age 84.

Keeping Vermont farms in the family has been an insurmountable challenge for some, but the Poremskis have persevered. When Sonny Poremski joined the Marines in 1964, his father Al sold the dairy herd. Unable to keep farming because of a lack of help, he went to work as a carpenter for the John Russell Corporation. In February 1971, Sonny married Michele “Shelley” Bird at St. Theresa’s Chapel in Florence, now closed. Their three children—Courtney, Hilary, and Thad—were all my students at Otter Valley. As Sonny’s parents aged, they asked him and Shelley to buy their farmhouse so they could continue to live there, and ultimately, “die in their own beds.” They did indeed live there until their deaths, Al at 84, and Stella, at 94. Today, Sonny continues to hay the meadows with help from his son Thad and (See Coming to America, Page 11)



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Christopher Barnhardt

(Continued from Page 6)

Chris' love for adventure was just as important as his dedication and the love he had for his family. Chris was the son of Shirley Ann (Farnum) Barnhardt and the late Robert (Buster) Arthur Barnhardt of Bennington, Vermont. His mother would say how proud she was of him. He was always there when she needed help, fixing things, sharing lunch, or just making her laugh. Every Memorial Day, he brought flowers to hang on her front porch, a tradition the neighbors came to look forward to year after year. She would say how he had a sweet tooth too—every day he'd stop by the candy bowl, insisting he didn't eat candy.... as he grabbed a piece with a big grin. Those little moments showed his humor and his big heart. Before he left us, his final words to his mother were, "see you later," and she likes to believe he meant in heaven, where Grandma Farnum was waiting to welcome him. His mom loved him dearly, and we know he loved her. Her heart will miss him always, but she will carry his kindness, laughter, and love with her forever.

Chris graduated from Mount Anthony Union High School. After high school, Chris started his family and had three wonderful children: Christopher Barnhardt Jr. of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Alyssa (Barnhardt) Charles of San Diego, California and Jeffrey & (Jay) Barnhardt of San Diego, California. He has one grandson, Brody Barnhardt who lives in Bennington, Vermont.

Chris always worked hard at everything that he did. He had a work ethic beyond comparison. On the coldest of days and the hottest of days and everything in between, you would find him working on roofs for Vermont Roofing. He then gained valuable experience and construction skills working with the Freeman family.

Because of these opportunities, Chris started his own business, Barnhardt Construction. He took pride in his work and wanted to give joy to homeowners. Chris would also lend a helping hand and provide his expertise to friends and neighbors.

Chris married Alexandria (Alex) Pinizzotto on March 10, 2009. Their

love story began when Chris was working on a water leak in Alex's house. Chris would come home and tell us about "the stewardess" all the time. We knew it was just a matter of time before they would fall in love. Together they built a life they both cherished, sharing their love of travel, adventure and fishing. You know it is pure love when your husband is excited to give you not one, but two stuffed fish you caught as a surprise birthday gift. Chris and Alex have two sons:

Hunter Brandon Barnhardt and Ryan John Barnhardt. All of Chris' children were his pride and joy and he loved watching them grow up. Chris was the ultimate Kool-Aid Dad, Mr. Mom and grill master. He was always doing something with his family. He was very proud of them and was dedicated to making their lives better. Hunter deeply loved his dad and was always there for him—whether it was giving rides to school, heading to practices and games, hunting, fishing, swimming, or building the famous Barnhardt ice rink every year. He admired how his dad was always early and never late, a trait that left a lasting impression on him. Hunter took great care of his dad and did everything his dad ever asked of him, always with love and respect. He is grateful for all the "dad advice" shared over the years and promises to carry those lessons forward, giving 100% in his dad's honor.

Many wonderful memories are shared with his three sisters and (brother-in-laws): Kimberly Waite & (Don) of Benton, Maine; Deborah Santostefano & (Louis) of Middletown, Connecticut; Darcy Lindamood & (Scott) of Honolulu, Hawaii. Memories include roaming the woods and mountain streams around our John Street home and playing with the neighborhood kids at my Grandmother Farnum's house on Rollin Street. Even though Chris was younger, he always kept up. We played football in the snow, baseball, kickball, kick the can, and hide and seek. He was so popular that when we built a clubhouse, the password was Critchit, his beloved nickname. Some older memories include helping Chris by driving him to the Mount Anthony Country Club so he could run for hours so he

could make weight for his wrestling team and to teach him how to drive and to be his biggest fans during his sporting events and just being there for him because he was our brother. We will miss our chatty Kathy chats and the comfort he always gave us. All us sisters love our brother dearly and we are also proud of the amazing father he was. We will always cherish our childhood memories.

Adored by their Uncle Chris, Ericka and Joshua Waite, Sarah Jassman, and Lilly Lindamood loved spending time with him. He was always a great talker. He would listen without judgment and offered sage advice. Their hearts are full of loving memories and the love he had for each of them. Chris was also Great Uncle to Abbie and Stella Donahue-Beard; Everleigh Waite; Claire, Dylan, Blake and Wyatt Jassman.

His knowledge and life experience made him cherished by the whole family. The outpouring of love from people who knew him is a testament to how he lived his life.

Chris had two sisters-in-law: Leslie Pinizzotto of Denver, Colorado and Prudence Adams of Gainesville, Texas. Chris had another brother-in-law: the late John Pinizzotto of Fort Worth, Texas as well as his mother-in-law Diane and father-in-law Stephen Pinizzotto of Los Angeles, California. Chris also leaves behind a daughter, Kirsten Atkins of Burlington, Vermont.

A celebration of Chris' life will be held at Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon, Vermont on September 22 at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

In lieu of flowers, and in honor of the love Chris shared with so many, the family welcomes your favorite memories of him. For those who wish, donations in Chris's memory may also be made to the family.

Chris lived his life to the fullest and wanted us to follow his example. We will miss you dearly Chris. Until we meet again, we hope there is a stocked lake in heaven, and you are spending your days fishing with a coffee.

Love you with all our hearts. Written in loving memory by Chris' family.

Deer regulations do not take effect until 2026

MONTPELIER—The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department reminds hunters that the new deer regulations approved by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Board this year do not take effect until 2026.

The department has received questions from hunting outfitters and sporting groups about a specific part of the new regulations: the change that will allow hunters to use antlerless permits during the regular November season starting next year. The department issued antlerless permits for 2025 earlier this week, prompting questions from the hunting community about what seasons those permits may be used for this year.

Under the current regulations, antlerless permits can only be used during the state's muzzleloader ant-

lerless season, this year taking place from October 30–November 2 and from December 6–December 14.

"Put simply, it is still 2025 so the 2025 deer hunting regulations apply," said Game Warden Col. Justin Stedman. "The changes to deer regulations that the board approved for 2026, including the use of antlerless permits during the regular November season, do not take effect until next year."

All regulations in effect for the current year are published online and in the department's annual hunting lawbook. Free print copies of the 2025 lawbook are available at many outdoor suppliers, at highway rest areas and at the department's Montpelier and Springfield offices, and can also be downloaded as a PDF from the department's website.

Mary Carol Devino

(Continued from Page 6)

band Phil; Lois Stella; Donna Towle and fiancée Ward Mann; and Carol McKenna and wife Linda. She is also survived by daughter-in-law Lori Stella, sister Rita Grund, five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her husband, Merton Devino, her son James T. Stella, and a sister Joan King.

A Memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at

10 a.m. at Our Lady of Good Help Catholic Church (St. Mary's) in Brandon. Rev. Maurice Moreau, pastor, will be the celebrant. The graveside committal service and burial will follow the Mass at St. Mary's Cemetery, Brandon.

In lieu of flowers, Mary asked that we continue to donate in memory of Mert to The Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, Kansas 66675-8516.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

John Rynne

(Continued from Page 6)

loved watching his Boston sports teams (especially the Patriots) and was an avid fan of classic rock music.

Surviving is his wife, Kristine D. Rynne, whom he married on June 26, 1987; four sons, Mat-

thew, Stephen, Timothy and Sean; a brother, Richard Rynne; and a sister, Maureen Rynne of Saugus, Mass.

A private graveside committal service and burial will take place at a later date in Pine Hill Cemetery.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made in his memory to Brandon Area Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 232, Brandon, Vt. 05733.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home of Brandon, Vt.



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OUR CREATIVE KIDS

STUDENTS: Reagan Clement
GRADE: 5
SCHOOL: Neshobe
TITLE: Untitled
TEACHER: John Brodowski

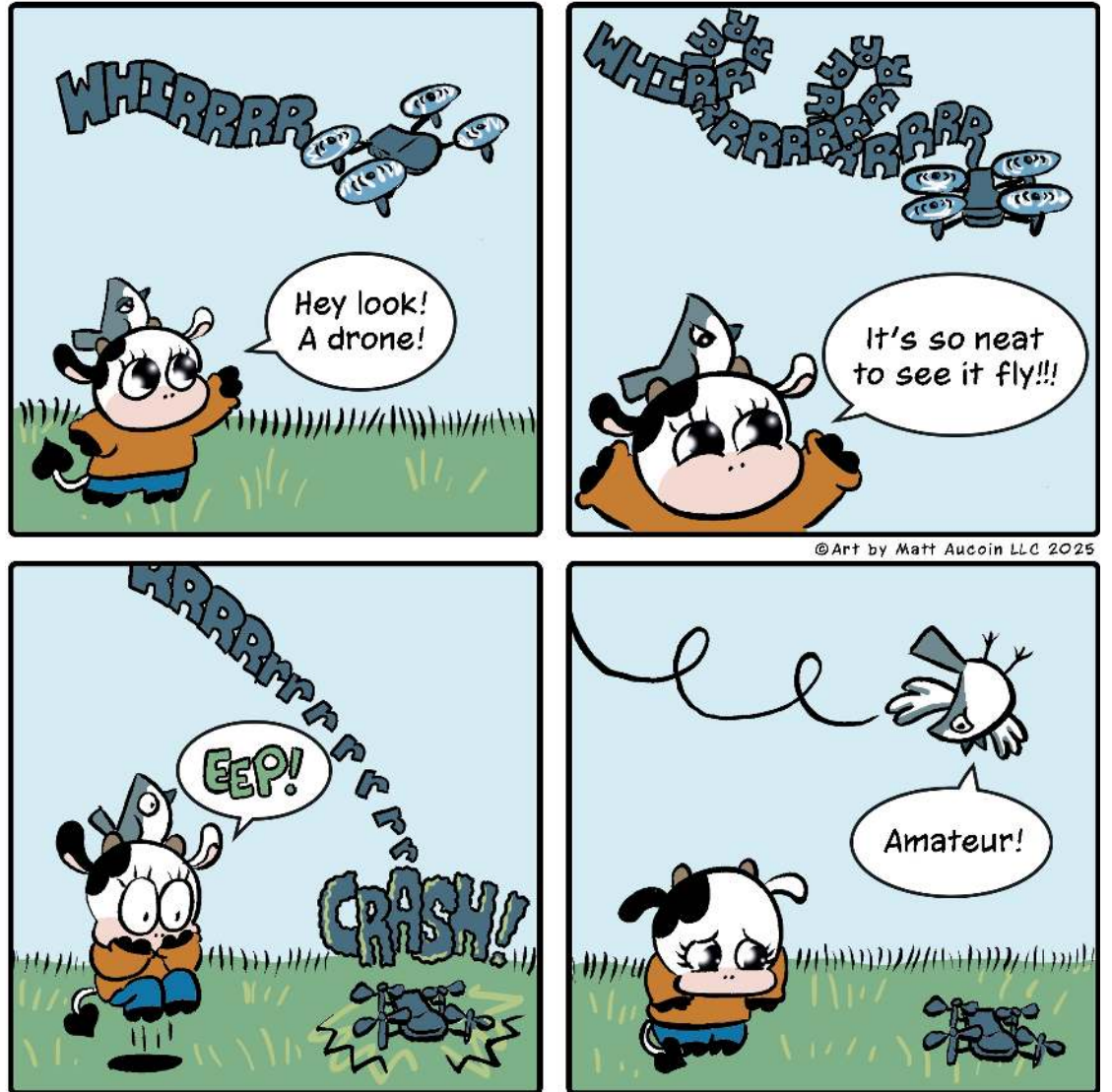
STATEMENT FROM REAGAN:
I thought that birds going over the sunset would look cool and I like to make sunsets. I feel proud of making this sunset.

STATEMENT FROM MR. B:
Reagan is a great student who worked very carefully on this painting. She put thought into every detail, including how many birds and where to place them, trying several different variations. Little details like these can make a big difference!





the MAPLE COW® by Matt Aucoin



COMING FULL CIRCLE: Thirty years after American Studies class, Hilary Poremski-Beitzel shares her writing with the author.

Coming to America

(Continued from Page 8)

grandsons, thus keeping the land open for future generations. 270 acres of the original holdings remain with the family.

Hilary Poremski-Beitzel lives on the farm with her husband Chris and their children, Beau and Grace. She graciously loaned me her Middlebury College Senior Honors Thesis, completed in April 2000. Its title “Land Claims: A Family History of Place” does just that—it presents a kaleidoscope of memories and experiences of her family’s deep connection to the farm in Whipple Hollow. Hilary wrote a series of poems therein titled, “Sugaring Days,” an excerpt of which will conclude this family study:

Reaping the rewards of
Kasimir’s first seeds,
Ritualizing our ties
To one another and
Our vast, shared landscape,
My family harvested trees with
Native patience and fervor
Preserving indigenous ways as
We tended pristine earth.

Drinking maples,
Condensing land into food,
Every day
We drew Florence
Deeper and deeper into our
bellies,
Our bodies,
Our land-bound
American histories.

[Acknowledgments: Sonny and Shelley Poremski, Hilary Poremski-Beitzel, and Olivia Boughton]

Gary Williams

(Continued from Page 6)

Marsha Duell (Rufus), and his stepbrother Charlie Needham.

Gary had a zest for life and a quick wit. He was a big kid at heart who loved playing practical jokes and making people laugh. In his later years, he found joy in visiting Disney World and Universal Studios, making wine, exploring photography, and meticulously keeping his cars spotless and gleaming. He had a deep love for music, especially country music, and kept an impressive record collection. He also restored vintage jukeboxes (he had five) and even built and played his own organ.

A proud member of the May-

flower Society, Gary traced his heritage back to a passenger on the Mayflower that arrived in Plymouth in 1620—a legacy he held dear.

Gary was laid to rest with military honors at Cape Canaveral National Cemetery on July 31, 2025.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that memorial contributions be made to Vietnam Veterans of America, 8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, or online at vva.org/donate, in honor of his memory and service.

Arrangements were by Thomas S. Lowther Funeral Home & Crematory, Vero Beach, Fla.



Sharpen your mind with our puzzles.

See page 17

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2019 TOYOTA RAV4
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2020 KIA SPORTAGE
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2010 HONDA CIVIC
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\$10,995



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Calendar of events

September

Mondays

Brandon Rec offers Aikido classes

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!

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



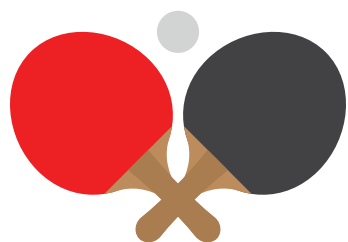
Wednesdays

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.

Friends Zone

Need a safe space to socialize? Come join us at the Friends Zone. Open Wednesdays 2–5 p.m. 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 at vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com or 802 345-4125.

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 Conscientious, 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.

The Climb-To

Friday, Oct. 3 from

The Climb honors pregnant women struggling or recovering from challenges: postpartum depression, difficulties. The adjustment. Imagine: it is crisp and sunny, leave early from work or pick up or care. You head to Pine Hill for other Climbers—parents with postpartum depression, and in a small hike, representing when parents struggle to get around childbirth or pick up some resources and home in time for dinner! Join to 5:30 p.m. at Pine Hill Park.

We Climb with each other. We Climb FOR each other. We hope you will join us.

Register at: <https://give.postpartum.net/team/636614>

8th Annual Vermont Fairy Tale Festival

Saturday, September 20, 2025 10am to 4pm

Sherburne Memorial Library

2998 River Road, Killington, VT

A Celebration of Vermont Public Libraries

Food Trucks

Fairy Tale Booths

Vendors, Vikings

Photo Opportunities

Costumed Characters

Dragon Eggs

Games

Free Admission with a non-perishable for the humane society or the food bank



B

The Br
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Many i

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 ceastman88@gmail.com

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

Chess

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

Wednesday 17th

Free Square Dance Night with Cast Off 8's

New dancer session beginning with Cast Off 8's Square Dance Club. Sept. 17 is a free night to check out square dancing to see if you have enough fun to sign up for the class beginning 9/24 (we think you will!). This is not your grade school square dance; dance to modern music with fun people. Get your exercise, flex

your brain, and socialize! For more info <http://www.castoff8s.com> or lauren.castoff8s@gmail.com. Lothrop School, Route 7, Pittsford, Vt.

Song Circle — Godnick Adult Center

Acoustic instrument players and singers go around a circle sharing songs. All levels are welcome to share music, taking turns around a circle. Acoustic instruments. Free. Just register with the Godnick Center when you attend. From 7 p.m.-9:15 p.m. at Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland.

Thursday 18th

SVCOA Community Health Day — Pittsford

Join us for a free Community Health Day from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pittsford Recreation Area at 223 Recreation Area Road, Pittsford, Vt. This event, hosted by the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging in partnership with Pittsford Rec and other community resource partners, offers a valuable opportunity for older adult community members to access a range of health screenings, self-advocacy resources, support for caregivers and wellness information. Attendees

will benefit from expert advice, and resources from local organizations, including Tai Chi Vermont, the Vermont Department of Health and the Vermont Food Bank. In addition to receiving health screenings and vaging resources, participants can take advantage of free demos and consultations that focus on promoting healthy living. Whether you're interested in learning more about managing your health, seeking guidance on specific health issues and caregiver support, or simply looking to connect with local health resources such as 3 Squares VT, vCommunity Health Day is an event you won't want to miss.

Friday 19th

Ordinary Elephant and Lizzy Mandell & Colin McCaffrey — Next Stage Arts

Mesmerizing folk duo Ordinary Elephant has spent nearly a decade on an endless tour, earning widespread acclaim and winning fans including legends like Tom Paxton and Mary Gauthier. Married couple Crystal and Pete Damore first captured the spotlight in 2017 when they took home the International Folk Music Award for Artist of the Year, propelled by their breakthrough album *Before I Go*. Their latest release showcases the breathtaking power of the couple's harmonies and intricate guitar work. Rooted in timeless, character-driven storytelling, the songs are elevated by the delicate interplay of banjo, guitar, and octave mandolin.

Two southern Vermont natives, Colin McCaffrey and Lizzy Mandell, have been musical collaborators for more than 15 years. Colin is a multi-instrumentalist, singer, award-winning songwriter, recording engineer, and producer. Over the past two decades, he has engineered, produced, or performed on more than 200 Vermont albums, many considered among the state's finest. Captivated by Lizzy's voice and songwriting, Colin produced her debut solo album, *Made for Flying* (2012), which won Best Album and Best Songwriter of the Year.

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

Saturday 20th

Genticorum — Hubbard Hall, Center for the Arts and Education

Experience the award-winning Québécois Celtic trio Genticorum, known for their thrilling energy, expert musicianship, and magnetic stage presence. With over two decades of international performances and accolades including Canadian Folk Music Awards and Juno nominations, they blend traditional fiddle, flute, accordion, and foot percussion with vibrant vocals. This dynamic group has delighted audiences worldwide, bringing the rich musical heritage of Québec to life in a fresh, exhilarating style.

Tickets: Advance: \$25
Adults / \$15 Students

(21 and under); Day of: \$30 Adults / \$20 Students. 7 p.m.

Thursday 25th

Annual Service of Remembrance — Brandon Congregational Church

The annual Service of Remembrance will be held in the Brandon Congregational Church Sanctuary on September 25 at 7 p.m. The service is non-denominational in structure and offers a candle for a loved one who has passed in previous years.

Candles will be provided. All are welcome. Light refreshments will be served after the service.

Tuesday, 30th

What does it take to be a Vermont State Legislator? — Orwell Free Library

Discuss what it's like to be a Vermont State legislator. Robin Scheu (Middlebury), Peter Conlon (Cornwall) and Joe Andriano (Orwell) will talk about their experiences, what qualifications are most helpful, and how rewarding public service can be. Public meeting open to all, with time for audience questions and comments.

Event starts at 7 p.m.; refreshments and handouts provided. Meeting organized by Orwell Democrats and Whiting Democratic Town Committee.

Vermont Progressive Party Goshen Town Caucus
6 p.m. at the Goshen Town Hall, 50 Carlisle Hill Road, Goshen. RSVP at progressiveparty.org. All attendees must be registered voters of Goshen and may not participate in more than one political party membership committee.

Free Medical Care for Adults

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 September from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at our offices at 204 North Main Street, Rutland, Vt. No appointment is necessary. For appointments or any questions, call 802-774-1082.



Goings on around town

Brandon Congregational art show

Thursday, October 11, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Brandon Congregational Creatives group is holding their autumn art show in the Fellowship Hall (next to Walgreens) on Saturday, October 11. There will be a diverse selection of fine arts and crafts: oil, watercolor and pastel paintings, reverse painting on glass, photography, mixed media sculpture, woodwork, theater posters, dolls and fabric sculpture, and more! Items will be for sale. Admission is free!

MACLURE LIBRARY

BOOK SALE WEEKEND

SEPTEMBER 27TH & 28TH

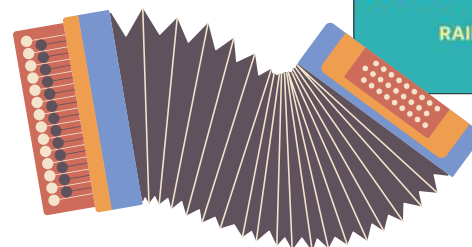
9AM-3PM

PURCHASE BY DONATION

RAIN DATES: OCTOBER 4TH & 5TH

NO EARLY BIRDS

PLEASE!



UVM Health Network, the parent company of the state's largest hospital, is "physically and spiritually distant" from its mission and from Vermonters' needs, said the chair of the Green Mountain Care Board.

Vermont regulator sets hospital budgets for coming year, targeting largest cuts at UVM Medical Center

BY OLIVIA GIEGER/
VTDIGGER

The state's main health care regulator approved budgets for all 14 of Vermont's community hospitals during two hearings convened last week. The Green Mountain Care Board forced a reduction of almost \$95 million to the revenue that hospitals can receive next year from commercial insurers, with the large majority cut from the budget of the University of Vermont Medical Center, the state's largest hospital, based in the Burlington area.

The care board annually reviews the hospitals' budgets for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1. The process gives the board a way to place caps on what the hospitals can charge commercial insurers for services and how much revenue they can bring in as a result of those charges.

This year, the board approved the proposed budgets from eight of the state's hospitals without any changes. UVM Medical Center's allowed charges to commercial insurers were cut by roughly \$88.5 million — from a proposed \$1.16 billion net revenue from commercial insurers to the approved \$1.07 billion.

UVM Medical Center's initial budget proposal already included a significant rate reduction of 7.9%. That percentage reduction took into account the requirements of new legislation as well as a care board enforcement action, which required lowered future costs to commercial insurers to compensate for the hospital receiving more revenue than the care board approved for fiscal year 2023. However, without those adjustments, the hospital's request was for a 2.4% increase in commercial revenue. The board's approved commercial revenue cap amounts to a 6.4% cut in general and a total of 16.7% decrease when the im-

pact of the enforcement and new legislation is included.

Relatively minor cuts were sustained by the other two Vermont members of the University of Vermont Health Network: Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin and Porter Hospital in Middlebury. The board also cut the budgets submitted by Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, Copley Hospital in Morrisville and Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington more substantially as a percentage of their size.

While the total dollar amount of budget reductions came in lower than what was cut during the same process last year, the review comes as curbing hospital and commercial insurance prices has become a matter of intense focus by the Legislature and the administration of Gov. Phil Scott. As a result of those efforts, which included a cap on hospital charges for outpatient injectable drugs, hospitals were already projecting smaller cost increases than in recent years.

Recently, the state's Department of Financial Regulation, an appointed independent liaison and Scott himself have pushed to bring health care costs in line with what's affordable for Vermonters.

"The fact is, like in education, well-intentioned policies Vermonters were promised would make things better and more affordable are not working as intended, and many have become counterproductive," Gov. Scott wrote in a Sept. 4 press release. "The status quo has allowed unacceptable amounts of administrative cost growth, unbearable pricing strategies, and perverse financial incentives and executive bonuses paid for by skyrocketing premiums," he went on.

The letter served as a signal to some longtime observers that this year's decisions might have even more riding on them.

"I've never seen anything remotely that incisive, quite frankly," Sam Peisch, a policy analyst at the health care advocate's office, said in an interview with VTDigger.

FOCUS ON UVM HEALTH NETWORK

The board spent most of its discussion on Friday narrowing in on the imbalance in costs between UVM Medical Center, which provides direct patient care, and its parent company. The UVM Health Network owns two other Vermont hospitals — Central Vermont Medical Center and Porter Medical Center — and three in eastern New York state.

Board chair Owen Foster did not mince words at Friday's meeting.

"University of Vermont Health Network does not provide health care," Foster said. "It's essentially an expensive and ineffective layer of overpriced and unnecessary corporate bureaucracy that has proven itself both physically and spiritually distant and unconnected from the mission of our flagship academic medical center and the needs of Vermonters."

Foster outlined what he called the "corporate shell game" of cash flow from the medical center to the network and the network's three New York hospitals. That cost shift results in the medical center's profit margins and cash reserves appearing smaller than they should be, he said.

During Friday's hearing, Foster became particularly animated when citing the service cuts UVM Health Network made last year: He explained that while the network shuttered dialysis programs and clinics in the Mad River Valley, it also moved \$10 million from UVM Medical Center to its New York hospitals.

Under the network's management (See *Hospital budgets*, Page 21)



Lilac Inn

(Continued from Page 1)
wouldn't open in town for another few years at that point and the idea of fine dining in Brandon seemed promising.

"The chef we hired started on 9/11," she said. That date may have been an omen, as the restaurant didn't take off and the Sawyers eventually closed it to focus on weddings and other events, in addition to the usual weekend guests they love to entertain.

"We had to be a team to run the Inn," said Shelly, noting that the pressures of hospitality sometimes strained their relationship. "There were days we fought, but we sorted out our strengths and worked it out."

The Sawyers got into the swing of things and made the place their own.

"We got more and more comfortable being ourselves with our guests and sharing our own story," she said. "Guests were always very curious about the history of the house, but we started becoming more comfortable answering their questions about ourselves."

The Sawyers recognized that they themselves were a central part of their guests' experience.

"Doug used to say that people booked their weddings with us just because of me," she laughed.

The Inn has a lot of repeat guests, and couples who married there often come back for anniversaries, birthdays, or just weekends away.

"A couple who got married here last year just had their baby shower here," Shelly said with pride.

The Sawyers became friendly with other innkeepers in the area—there used to be 40 such properties—but it was Louis Patis at the Brandon Inn and Tony Clark at the Blueberry Hill Inn who really took Doug under their wings and showed him the ropes.

"There was a camaraderie among us," Shelly said. The different establishments would often coordinate when one was full

and more rooms were needed. This continued when Judy Bunde moved to Brandon and opened the Inn on Park Street in the former Moffett house just a few doors away from the Lilac. The Inn on Park Street is now owned by Barbara and Scott Scribner.

Both Shelly and Doug were diagnosed with cancer in 2010. Though Shelly conquered hers, Doug's returned in 2017. He ended up passing in 2020, adding personal tragedy to the already brutal realities of COVID in the hospitality industry.

"It was hard," said Shelly. "A lot of businesses like ours didn't make it. We lost so many bookings and weddings. And when things opened up again, events were very small for a long while." But things eventually turned around. The last few years have been busy for the Lilac, though the business is unpredictable by nature.

"We had three couples cancel their weddings this year because they broke up," said Shelly. "That's never happened to us before."

But she's booked several other weddings, even into next year. And for Shelly, weddings are really where she has an opportunity to shine.

"I love being creative. I love when the couple wants to try new things. Young people are so much more knowledgeable about food now. I love to customize menus. I want it to be memorable. We had a couple recently who wanted us to do vegan Southern comfort food. We made it work and it was great. Another couple wanted their cake topper to be a pair of coyotes because they 'mate for life.' All I was able to find was two coyote Beanie Babies. The bride loved them."

But running an inn also means having to deal with guests' emergencies.

"One guest had been here on a (See *Lilac Inn*, Page 15)

Lilac Inn

(Continued from Page 14)

bicycle tour of Vermont and came downstairs complaining of indigestion," recalled Shelly. "I ended up driving him to Porter Hospital and it turned out he was having a heart attack. A woman was 5 months pregnant and went into la-

bor here. I drove her and her wife to Rutland Hospital and then all the way up to UVM in Burlington. She ended up losing the baby. I picked them up in Burlington in the morning. That kind of personal connection is what makes an inn different than a hotel."

And wedding celebrations often produce drunken guests.

"We have found vomit in some

pretty strange places," Shelly laughed. "One time a bunch of male guests were in one of the downstairs men's rooms and somehow broke the urinal. Water ended up pouring out, all over everything. I didn't know how to shut it off. Fortunately, we got it cleaned up."

The Sawyers put a lot of themselves into the place and Shelly is

hoping to find a new owner willing to do the same.

"I'm happy to help a new owner get settled," she said.

"I do consider Brandon my home," Shelly added. "I love seeing how it's grown and changed.

Our guests say, 'What a little treasure this town is.' I don't know how many little towns like Brandon are still around."

Aleshire Gallery

(Continued from Page 5)

tana State University in 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts in Film and Photography, followed by a Master's degree in Photographic Arts from Lesley University in 2014. Since then, Zach has devoted his career to practicing and teaching analog photography, bridging artistic expression with education.

Aleshire Gallery is a 1200 sq. ft space equipped with a darkroom for processing and printing film, a portrait studio, classroom space, and scanners for digitalizing negatives. In the coming months, the gallery will be offering intro classes in black & white photography and alternative processes, as well as film screenings on the last Sunday of every month, beginning with Bertolucci's *Stealing Beauty* (1996) on Oct. 26 at 7 p.m.

Details:

Aleshire Gallery Grand Opening
29 Union Street, Brandon Vt.



(The Granary building) 5-8 p.m.
Free
Food and refreshments provided
Contact:

Benjamin Aleshire, Creative Director 802.353.6169 benaleshire@gmail.com
www.aleshiredgallery.com

Drought impacts

(Continued from Page 4)

of Agriculture and Food Markets to report dry fields, water supply issues, shortage of winter feed, crop loss or other impacts, call 802-828-2430 or email AGR.Helpdesk@vermont.gov.

Other Impacts: Use the Conditions Monitoring Observer Reports tool to report all photos and impacts of wildland fires, dry lakes, ponds and streams, stressed vegetation, irrigation, wastewater, recreation challenges, and algae blooms. These reports assist farmers with obtaining USDA assistance and other technical assistance programs that rely on widespread reporting of drought impacts.

RESOURCES FOR DRY WELLS OR WATER SHORTAGES

Homeowners: If your private well or spring is low or dry, visit the Health Department's Drought and Your Well web page for short- and long term solutions, or call the

Health Department at 802-489-7339.

If supplemental drilling is needed, DEC can provide permitting guidance and may be able to provide loans through the Onsite Loan Program that can help pay for a new well.

Droughts can also affect water quality in many ways. The Health Department recommends testing your private well or spring if you notice changes in your water, like cloudiness, color or smell. Order the Vermont Homeowner Testing Package online or call 800-660-9997.

Farmers: If farms are experiencing a critical shortage of water, they can reach out to these businesses for help hauling water. If the drought persists, financial assistance may be available from USDA in the future.

Public Water System: If a public drinking water system is experiencing problems due to drought,

contact the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division at 802-828-1535 to discuss technical and financial support.

VOLUNTARY WATER CONSERVATION

The task force recommends the following simple steps to reduce water consumption at home:

Avoid washing your car or watering your lawn or garden.

Repair leaking faucets, pipes, or other fixtures as soon as possible.

Run the dishwasher or laundry machine with full loads.

Consider installing simple, cost-effective tools that decrease household water consumption. Aerators for kitchen sink faucets only cost several dollars and are simple to install, and low-flow showerheads can make a drastic difference in water consumption.

Find more resources from the EPA's WaterSense program.

Welding lab

(Continued from Page 4)

a post-secondary program.

Visitors will have the chance to tour the updated facilities, meet the instructor, and learn more about the school's Design and Technology Education Program. An opportunity will also be available for alumni to share memories of their time in the OV Tech Ed program, and the impact it has had on their lives and careers.

The Open House is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be provided. For more information, please contact Devon Karpak at dkarpak@mesu.org

Restaurant guide



From Provence to You
De la Provence à Vous



Wednesday - Saturday:
11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

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

11 Center Street, Brandon, VT



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



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

25 North Street, Proctor ☎ 802-459-3320

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



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!



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

Or call us at 247-8080

Recognized



Cindy Thomas recognized Lisa Beck Thomas in this photo. Ms. Beck owned a shop in Brandon and is the daughter-in-law of Ed and Cindy Thomas.

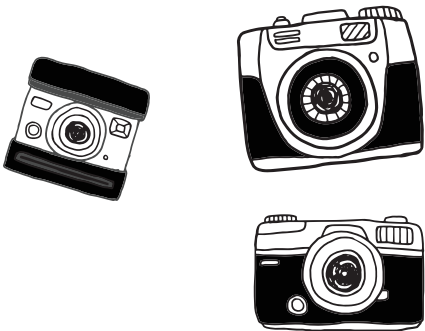


Terry Ferson, Maryann Philipsen and Sue Wetmore recognized twin sisters Alice and Alma Farmer in the center of this photo. Ms. Wetmore noted, "They worked for my uncle, Newton Smith, at the Williams Insurance Agency that is now occupied by the bakery." Mr. Ferson added that Alice and Alma lived in an apartment above what is now Bar Harbor Bank and were known colloquially as "the Farmer twins." Ms. Philipsen explained that at one point Alice was also a business manager for Gibson Brothers, which became Brandon Lumber & Millwork, and they moved into a neighboring house, which is now owned by Kevin and Maureen Thornton. Ms. Philipsen's parents purchased the house directly across the street in 1971.



Terry Ferson, Brian Fillioe, Maryann Philipsen and Sue Wetmore recognized Bonnie Miller Johnson in this photo. Mr. Ferson explained that Ms. Johnson was the only daughter of Frank Miller, who operated Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home.

Ms. Wetmore believes the woman pictured on the left is Norma Naylor and the man furthest to the right, with just half of his face visible, is John Trimmer. Mr. Trimmer and his wife Doreen owned the Brandon Motel.



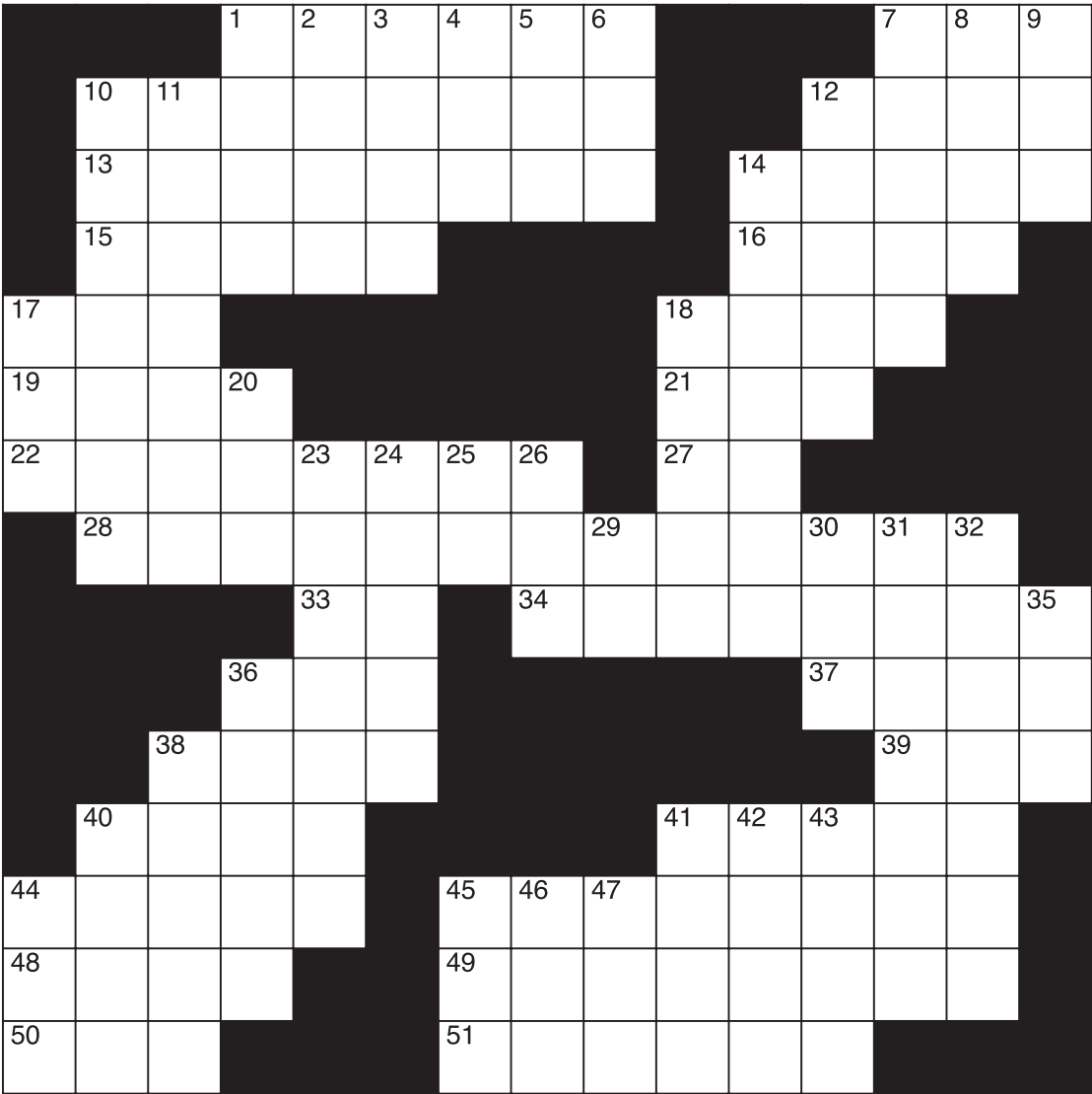
Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Carved into
- 7. ___ Rogers, cowboy
- 10. Unruly locale
- 12. Edible mushroom
- 13. Influential noblemen
- 14. Rattling breaths
- 15. David ___ George, Brit. P.M.
- 16. Musician Clapton
- 17. Small Eurasian deer
- 18. Invests in little enterprises
- 19. Perimeter
- 21. Chicago ballplayer
- 22. Animal body part
- 27. It's everywhere these days
- 28. Fictional ad exec
- 33. Mr. T character Baracus
- 34. Against the current
- 36. Subway rodent
- 37. Armor plate
- 38. Hair on the head
- 39. Strong insect
- 40. Swollen lymph node
- 41. A way to lessen
- 44. Walter White poison
- 45. Sleeveless garment
- 48. Long accompanied song
- 49. Without features
- 50. Yankee great Mattingly
- 51. Removes from record

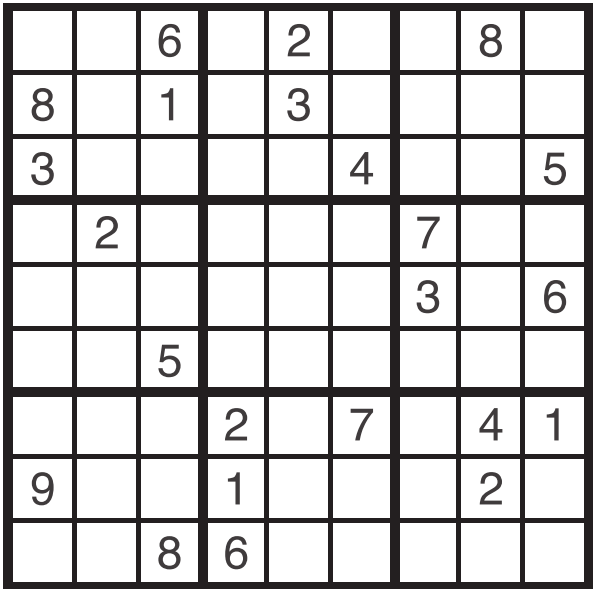
CLUES DOWN

- 1. Root of taro plant
- 2. Those ones
- 3. Appliances have one
- 4. A way to sing
- 5. Midway between east and southeast
- 6. Animal dwelling
- 7. An object that as survived from the past
- 8. Oil cartel
- 9. Affirmative
- 10. Foul smell
- 11. Brisk tempo
- 12. S. American indigenous person
- 14. Restored
- 17. Official
- 18. Skin lesions
- 20. Electroencephalograph
- 23. Middle Eastern country
- 24. Extremely angry
- 25. Title used before a woman's name
- 26. British thermal unit
- 29. By the way (abbr.)
- 30. Anger
- 31. Nullifies
- 32. Ones who acquire
- 35. Time zone
- 36. Arabic name
- 38. Protein in mucus
- 40. Ballpoint pen
- 41. Mimics
- 42. Humans have a lot of it
- 43. Expressions of good wishes
- 44. Cool!
- 45. One point east of due south
- 46. City of Angels football team (abbr.)
- 47. A way to save for retirement



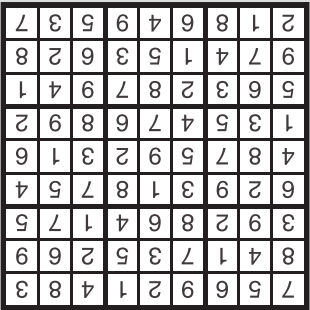
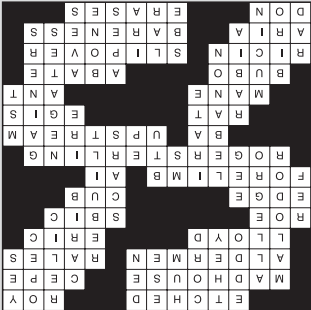
Sudoku

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



Level: Intermediate

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



Adopt A Working Cat!

Not every cat enjoys being a lap cat. Some are happiest outdoors, with space to roam and a job to do. The Rutland County Humane Society's Working Cat Program finds safe homes, such as barns, garages, or warehouses, for cats who aren't suited for traditional adoption but still deserve a second chance. All working cats from RCHS are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and healthy. They simply prefer independence, minimal handling, or have backgrounds that make them better workers than house pets. By adopting, you provide food, water, shelter, and care, and they'll help keep rodents under control naturally. We currently have several working cats who are not only looking for a place to call home, but also a job. They need to get settled into their new home before the weather gets cold. Can you help? To learn more about this program, please call the Adoption Center at 802-483-6700.

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



MEET COOKIE - 3-YEAR-OLD. SPAYED FEMALE. DOMESTIC LONGHAIR. TORTI.

Cookie is a stunning, large, long-haired calico with a personality as vibrant as her coat. She'll happily greet you at the door with lots of meows and affectionate rubs. She loves attention and isn't afraid to ask for it! She's okay with being picked up, though she prefers her cuddles in short bursts. Cookie would thrive in a home with another cat to keep her company. While we're not sure how she feels about dogs or children yet, she'd likely do well with a calm dog and respectful kids. Cookie is a sweet, social girl who's ready to bring love, beauty, and a bit of sass into her forever home. Stop by the Adoption Center Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. to meet her!

MEET TITAN - 3 1/2-YEAR-OLD. NEUTERED MALE. PIT BULL MIX. BRINDLE WITH WHITE.

Titan is a big personality packed into a smaller frame. This sweet boy may have had a rough start in life and needs a slow introduction. Titan loves playing ball! He knows the "drop it" command and will politely wait for you to pick up the ball. He's neutral toward other dogs and strangers, and while he's good-natured, he's still working on his jumping when he meets new people. Titan is a sweet, happy boy who just wants to please. He's looking for a loving home where he can continue to build trust and confidence. If you're looking for a loyal companion with a heart of gold, Titan might be your perfect match.



RUTLAND COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

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



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

OFF THE SHELF

NEW BOOKS AND NEWS





BRANDON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Large-Print books
donated by
Brenda Whittaker**

**Smuggler's Cove
by Fern Michaels,
donated in memory
of Florence LaRock**

Siblings Madison and Lincoln are now the new co-owners of a marina at Smuggler's Cove on the Navesink river.

Instead of a fabulous, Hamptons-style property, Smuggler's Cove offers little beyond a dilapidated dock, a few gas pumps, and a handful of clam boats. Madison's plan to sell the property goes awry when a dead body is found floating under their dock and transforms their new inheritance into a crime scene.

**North Woods
by Daniel Mason,
donated in memory
of Madelyn C. Neumann**

When two young lovers abscond from a Puritan colony, little do they know that their humble cabin in the woods will become the home of an extraordinary succession of human and nonhuman characters alike.

An English soldier destined for glory. A pair of spinster twins navigating war and famine, envy and desire. A crime reporter who unearths an ancient mass grave. A lovelorn painter, a sinister con man, a stalking panther, a lusty beetle: As the inhabitants confront the wonder and mystery around them, they begin to realize that the dark, raucous, beautiful past is very much alive.

**The Thursday Murder
Club by Richard Osman,
donated in memory of
Doris S. Whittaker**

In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends

meet weekly in the Jigsaw Room to discuss unsolved crimes; together, they call themselves the Thursday Murder Club. When a local developer is found dead with a mysterious photograph left next to the body, the Thursday Murder Club suddenly find themselves in the middle of their first live case.

**The Bullet that Missed
by Richard Osman,
donated in memory
of Zula B. Sawyer**

Trouble is never far away where the Thursday Murder Club is concerned. A decade-old cold case—their favorite kind—leads them to a local news legend and a murder with no body and no answers.

Then a new foe pays Elizabeth a visit. Her mission? Kill or be killed. Suddenly the cold case has become red hot.

New adult fiction

**The Maiden and her
Monster
by Maddie Martinez**

The forest eats the girls who wander out after dark. As the healer's daughter, Malka has seen how the wood's curse has plagued her village, but the Ozmini Church only comes to collect its tithe, not to protect heretics with false stories of monsters in the trees. So when a clergy girl wanders too close to the forest and Malka's mother is accused of her murder, Malka strikes an impossible bargain with a zealot Ozmini priest. If she brings the monster out, he will spare her mother from execution. When she ventures into the shadowed woods, Malka finds a monster, though not the one she expects: an inscrutable, disgraced golem who agrees to implicate herself, but only if Malka helps her fulfill a promise first and free the imprisoned rabbi

DID YOU KNOW?

Our plant swap and sale is coming up on Saturday, September 20th! Swap from 1–2, for sale by donation from 2–3 pm.

who created her. But a deal easily made is not easily kept.

And their bargain begins to unravel a much more sinister threat.

**The Mysterious Case
of the Missing Crime
Writer
by Ragnar Jonasson**

One winter evening, bestselling crime author Elín S. Jónsdóttir goes missing. There are no clues to her disappearance, and it is up to young detective Helgi to crack the case before it's leaked to the press. As Helgi interviews the people closest to her—a publisher, an accountant, a retired judge—he realizes that Elín's life wasn't what it seemed. In fact, her past is even stranger than the fiction she wrote.

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 p.m./6 p.m. until 8 a.m., 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.

September 8

- Responded to a juvenile problem on Neshobe Circle involving a student who had walked off from the Neshobe Elementary School. The child was located on North Street and was returned to the school without issue.

- Received a call from Valley View Drive regarding a domestic disturbance at a residence. Upon investigation it was determined that no crime had taken place and that the two individuals at the house had just been arguing.

- Responded to Hannaford Supermarket for a report of multiple 911 hang-up calls coming from a cell phone. The area was checked, but there were no signs that any emergencies were taking place at the store.

September 9

- Conducted preliminary background investigations for potential police officer applicants.

- Took fingerprints for employment.

- Responded to Union Street for a report of an elderly woman who was walking in the roadway and appeared disoriented. It was determined that the woman, who had severe hand injuries and appeared to be in very poor health, was suffering from Dementia. Brandon Area Rescue Squad (BARS) responded to the scene and transported the woman to the hospital for treatment.

September 10


- Took fingerprints for employment.

- Received information about a suspicious vehicle, described as a silver Honda Civic with a smashed front end and bearing New Hampshire license plates, that has been seen multiple times in the area of Old Brandon Road.

September 11

- Took fingerprints for employment.

(See Police report, Page 23)



WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

If people are outgoing and boisterous, follow suit.

LEO July 23-Aug. 23
Maintain a positive outlook in regard everything you encounter this week, Leo. A positive perspective can make all the difference when a lot is on your plate.

ARIES March 21-April 20
Attention to detail is very important this week, Aries. Be sure not to lose your focus as things you do will be highly scrutinized by others. Ask a third party to check your work.

GEMINI May 22-June 21
Gemini, reminisce about those people with whom you had strong connections. If you lost touch, this can be a great time to rekindle relationships and move forward.

CANCER June 22-July 22
Feel out the crowd and make adjustments to the way you interact with others based on the vibe you're getting, Cancer.

may have to go with your gut and your heart.

CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 20
This is a week to sit back and slow down. Channel summer vibes even if it's not quite summer any longer, Capricorn. If you didn't have a chance to get away, do so this week.

VIRGO Aug. 24-Sept. 22
Virgo, a quest to discover something new about yourself could prove fruitful. Take an introspective approach to the next few days and be ready to learn something new.

LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 23
This could be an extremely creative week for you, Libra. Afford time for artsy pursuits and you may be surprised at what you can create. You may discover a new passion.

SCORPIO Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Scorpio, you're not typically one who excels with last-minute details. Therefore, start planning on an upcoming event and make sure you have all of your ducks in a row.

SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21
Listen to your emotions, Sagittarius. While you tend to deal with situations by acting rationally, this time around you

AQUARIUS Jan. 21-Feb. 18
Your nurturing instincts are on alert, Aquarius. This is an excellent time to tell someone you care about that you're always available for him or her. Reach out soon.

PISCES Feb. 19-March 20
Good times are ahead, Pisces. Keep an open mind and embrace any opportunity to do something good for others.

♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

SEPT. 17 – Shaun King, writer (42)
SEPT. 18 – Jason Sudeikis, actor (46)
SEPT. 19 – Sunita Williams, astronaut (56)
SEPT. 20 – Malcolm Nance, writer (60)
SEPT. 21 – Leonard Cohen, singer-songwriter (d)
SEPT. 22 – Sue Perkins, comedian (52)



Mim's Photos

Like all things vintage?
are on page 24!

State Representatives

(Continued from Page 5)
well attended and generated lively and upbeat discussions among panelists and members of the audience. “Our event in Shoreham showed that people are really interested in what it’s really like to be a legislator. It was a lot of fun to put politics aside for an evening and talk about how someone becomes a legislator and what the day-to-day work of the job is really like,” comments Joe Andriano. Joe is looking forward to his

hometown’s hosting of the September 30 event.
The meeting is for anyone curious about the job and the process. It is open to all, though the emphasis will be on the Addison-Rutland district (Orwell, Sudbury, Shoreham, Whiting, Hubbardton). During the last two elections, there was only one candidate on the ballot for the Addison-Rutland district: only a Democrat in 2022, only a Republican in 2024, and no Independents. Ensuring that

people have a choice on election day is one of the basics of our democracy.
The Orwell Democrats, together with the Whiting Democratic Town Committee, are organizing this meeting, with the hope that it will spark interest and discussion around the opportunity to serve as a state legislator. Informative handouts and refreshments will be provided.



L TO R: Rep. Peter Conlon, Rep. Robin Scheu, and former Rep. Joe Andriano

Kevin Sandwich - 10am to 3pm Weekdays

A graphic for MUD RADIO. It features a stylized guitar with the text "101.5 FM" on the body. The word "MUD" is in large, bold, black letters, and "RADIO" is in even larger, bold, black letters with a white star in the "O". Below this, it says "The Roots of American Music". The background has blue and red brushstrokes.

Brandon SB

(Continued from Page 1)

the Selectboard to appoint the committee members or to vote for the members themselves. Brandon voters will make these choices at Town Meeting in March 2026. In previous years, the Selectboard appointed five members to the Committee without authorization from voters.

This initial workshop was intended to give the Selectboard a chance to review the FY2025 budget, which ended on June 30, and to begin discussions with town department heads about the budgetary needs of their respective departments before the Board begins discussing specific dollar allocations.

On Monday, the Board heard from Police Chief David Kachajian, Highway Chief Jeremy Disorda, and Rec Department Director and Community Development Officer Bill Moore.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Kachajian gave a brief overview of the Brandon Police Department (BPD), noting that the department began FY25 fully staffed with 7 officers but 5 of those officers resigned by January. BPD now has two full-time officers (including the Chief) and one part-time officer, a new hire named Mikayla Cochrane (previously Fontana). Cochrane is a Level II officer, which limits the severity of cases she is permitted to investigate. But Cochrane plans to attend the Police Academy to receive her Level III certification, which will allow her to complete all police duties.

Kachajian also noted that recruitment of new officers has been a slow process because the pool of applicants has diminished in recent years.

“People just don’t want to do this job anymore,” he said. He added that he preferred to wait for quality candidates than simply to fill positions. In response to questions about hiring incentives like sign-on bonuses, Kachajian stated that he hasn’t seen those tactics achieve much success in other departments and he’d prefer not to spend that money on uncertain outcomes. Moreover, Brandon’s

pay scale is now among the highest in Rutland County.

The Chief said that he did not anticipate needing any increases in his department’s budget for FY27, especially since the department was operating with fewer officers.

Board member Brian Coolidge noted that the overtime expenses for FY25 (which ended on June 30) had gone significantly over budget because of a failed attempt to provide 24/7 on-duty coverage with 7 officers.

Chief Kachajian replied that the amount of the overage was on track with what would have been spent on on-call coverage for the whole year.

“Law enforcement is expensive everywhere,” he said.

Finally, the Chief noted that the Vermont State Police, which has been providing coverage at night and on weekends during BPD’s staffing shortage, had been excellent.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Highway Chief Jeremy Disorda told the Board that FY24 and FY25 had been good for his department. They had been fully staffed, having filled positions when they became vacant. He also noted that the department had handled projects on Union Street, North Street, Town Farm Road, Carver Street, Birch Hill Road, Country Club Road, and Long Swamp Road.

He told the Board that the department would need to budget for a new tandem truck, a new barn, and a paving project on Wheeler Road in the upcoming fiscal year.

“We should be in good shape,” he said. “We may need to call in backup if we get a lot of snow this winter, but otherwise we’re in good shape.”

Board member Jeff Haylon asked if the new arrangement with Goshen was working out. Brandon’s Highway Department recently agreed to loan certain equipment and personnel to Goshen for projects for which Goshen lacked capacity, such as grading.

Mr. Disorda said the arrangement had been going well and had not caused undue strain on Brandon. He added that his

department had spent about 20 hours on grading in Goshen and would need to do one more round in October or November.

Town Manager Seth Hopkins initiated a discussion

Town Manager Seth Hopkins noted that the town finished FY25 with a 3% surplus, which he stated was not the result of the loss of police personnel but rather the efficiency of town employees. “We have employees who care a lot about what they spend,” he said. “It’s not just me being cheap.”

REC DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Deputy Town Manager Bill Moore donned his Rec Department and Community Development hats to offer the Board overviews of those departments, which he also supervises.

Mr. Moore noted that the Rec Department lost its Assistant Rec Director, Colleen Wright, in the last fiscal year. However, the Department and Ms. Wright, who now runs her own events company, have worked out an “amicable” arrangement as to who is responsible for which public events going forward.

The Rec Department has hired a new part-time employee, who is handling a greater share of the department’s workload, according to Mr. Moore.

Mr. Moore noted as well that the expansion of the Rec Department to include supervision of town parks that host programming (Estabrook & Seminary Hill, for example) will affect the budget for FY27. He also stated that the playground

equipment on Seminary Hill might need to be replaced soon, as it approaches 20 years of use.

In response to questions from Board member Ralph Ethier, Mr. Moore stated that the Rec

Department does charge non-residents extra for programs but if the Board would like to seek appropriations from other towns, it would be best for those requests to come from directly from the Brandon Selectboard itself.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

Town Manager Seth Hopkins noted that the town finished FY25

with a 3% surplus, which he stated was not the result of the loss of police personnel but rather the efficiency of town employees.

“We have employees who care a lot about what they spend,” he said. “It’s not just me being cheap.”

This surplus comes after a year or two of vocal discontent in Brandon over budget hikes and tax increases.

“We’re stable and in a good position,” said Hopkins.

FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

In response to ongoing pressure from town residents, Mr. Hopkins prepared a draft of a “Capital Program” and “FY27-FY31 Capital Plan.” The purpose of the document was to give the Selectboard, and town residents, a longer-term view of capital needs and expenditures for the next five years.

The document is available in the Selectboard materials for 9/15 on the town website.

Mr. Hopkins called the creation of the document “a good exercise” and stated that it will help the Board “make priorities” when deciding how to

budget for upcoming expenses.

He noted that the final payment on the town’s bond for Segment 6 will be paid at the end of 2026 (during FY27) and that the town could then borrow money for the construction of a new barn for the highway department without increasing residents’ tax burdens if the payments remained consistent with the bond for Segment 6.

If the Board chooses to propose this new borrowing to the town, it will do so at Town Meeting in March 2026.

POTENTIAL PURCHASE OF EV FOR BRANDON POLICE

Mr. Hopkins asked the Board to consider waiving the town’s purchasing policy to allow him to investigate the potential purchase of an electric Ford F150 to replace the Brandon Police’s current gas-powered F150.

The Department currently has 4 vehicles: a 2016 Ford Explorer, a 2020 Ford F150, a 2022 Ford Explorer SUV, and a 2023 Dodge Charger. The Charger is a recent purchase and will replace the 2016 Explorer, which is slated to be sold at auction.

The proposed purchase of an electric vehicle for the Police Department sparked controversy two years ago, but Mr. Hopkins asked the Board to consider it again. The money that the Department had budgeted for payroll could be used for the purchase, as would the proceeds from the sale of the 2016 Explorer. Additionally, there are rebates available from the federal and state governments for the purchase.

Board members Brian Coolidge and Ralph Ethier expressed skepticism about the plan, but the Board authorized Mr. Hopkins to investigate and present options for consideration at the Board’s next regular meeting on Monday, Sept. 22. The Board would have to decide at that meeting whether to go ahead with the purchase in order to qualify for the federal rebate of \$7,500.

The next public budget workshop will be held at 7 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room at the Brandon Town Hall.



SPREAD THE WORD!

Have an upcoming event that you'd like to have added to our calendar?

LET US KNOW BY EMAIL AT NEWS@BRANDONREPORTER.COM

Hospital budgets

(Continued from Page 14)

agement, Vermont's hospitals have seen "unrelenting expense growth far exceeding inflationary metrics," Foster said, while the quality of care has deteriorated and the gap between executive compensation and the network's lowest-paid workers has widened.

Foster cited "excessive charges" for life-saving medications and medical imaging, and a waitlist of more than 3,000 patients for a colonoscopy, all while the network invests in its lobbying and external-relations arm. He worried about the impact of losing services like birthing centers or primary care clinics all across

the state while individuals, families and insurers all struggle to keep up with the high cost of health care.

The budget the care board approved purposely left no margin for the UVM Medical Center to add to its reserves, citing the fact that the hospital's reserves go to the health network. Allocating more reserves to the medical center would go against the care board's mission, Foster said, "given [the Network's] use of Vermont money to cover its inability to sustainably operate New York hospitals that it owns," Foster said.

Earlier in the week, Foster floated a proposed budget

condition that would restrict the flow of funds from UVM Medical Center to the health network or to its New York hospitals. However, the health network's general counsel Eric Miller filed a letter stating that the care board's attempt to do so went beyond its mandate and violated the Constitution:

"Seeking to regulate that interaction, at the eleventh hour of the budget-setting process, without taking any testimony, providing any opportunity for hearing, or setting any standards on the topic would be arbitrary and capricious and lead to unintended consequences that will inhibit hospitals and insurers from working together

to reform the way health care is reimbursed," Miller wrote.

During the public comment period at Friday's hearing, Stephen Leffler, UVM Medical Center's president, responded to the board's frustration with the structure of the health network saying, "I agree with many comments about how we have to be better and work better with you, but I do caution not to throw everything about the Network away."

He cited the good he sees coming from the network, like the flow of pa-

tients across both sides of the border with one electronic medical record system so that scans and tests done in one state can be used by a specialist in the other. Also, the relationship allows for the network to increase specialty services in different regions while also lightening the overall load on UVM Medical Center, Leffler said.

The UVM Medical Center's board of trustees is committed to making improvements to quality and meeting the care (See Hospital budgets, Page 23)

"University of Vermont Medical Center's problem is not with the care board or Vermont's inability to give it money. It's with its own corporate parent that has drained its assets and forced it to pay for an unnecessary layer of corporate bureaucracy."

— Board chair, Owen Foster

Senior spotlight A chat with Jim and Marie Hayes

We have something new... a couple! They are Jim and Marie (Fasano) Hayes. Jim was born in Goshen, Vt. in November of 1941, while Marie was born in Long Branch, N.J., in July of 1945. Jim's father's name was Edward Seymour Hayes, and he was a millwright. Marie's father's name was Maurice Fasano, and he owned a hardware store. Jim's mother's name was Marion Hayes, and she was a seamstress and homemaker, while Marie's mother, Inez Henderson Fasano, was a homemaker. Now it gets interesting... Jim's brothers' and sisters' names are Phyllis, Edward, John, George, and Naomi. All are deceased except for John. Marie's brothers' and sisters' names are Muriel, Edith, Johnny. Only Muriel is deceased. Jim attended school in Goshen and Brandon, while Marie attended Long Branch Elementary & High School, and attended Jersey City Medical Center for her RN nursing degree. Jim's jobs included farmworker, US Navy, and general construction for life. Marie was a visiting nurse in N.J., worked in nursing homes, TB Clinic in Hoboken, N.J., Brandon Training School Infirmary, and Rutland Mental Health, until she retired. Their combined families, Edward, Jason (his), Jennifer (hers) and Marci (theirs) kept them busy. When asked what was the best thing that ever happened to them, Jim said "Marie" and Marie said "Jim." The most embarrassing thing that ever happened to Jim was an incident with an Admiral on board ship where he landed on his butt, but he didn't know it was him,

all's well that ends well. Marie stated that she has nothing that she was ever embarrassed about! Hobbies and interests—Jim: flying, although he hasn't been lately. By the way, he stated that he has a pilot's license. He also likes to scuba dive and loves old cars. He has a 1953 Mercury Monterey, a 1936 Packard, and a 1990 Lincoln Town car. Marie laughed and said her hobbies include keeping up with Jim, going for walks, and feeding the birds. Jim's favorite thing to do is eat, work, cook and then eat again. Jim likes doing things around the house with Marie. Marie's favorite thing to do is going to the ocean, road trips and exploring new places. When asked what was the most exciting experience that they were willing to share, their response was the same... when they went parasailing over the ocean off the Jersey shore together. WHEW!

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



Brandon Senior Center's "Spotlighted Seniors"
Jim and Marie (Fasano) Hayes

Hymn sing

(Continued from Page 4)

tonian composer Arvo Pärt who celebrated his 90th birthday on September 11. On the fiftieth anniversary of film composer Bernard Herman's death, Stout will perform the theme from "Taxi

Driver." The concert concludes with Sonata in A Minor by Domenico Scarlatti, a contemporary of Bach and Handel, born in 1685. We rely on the audience to fill the church with song!

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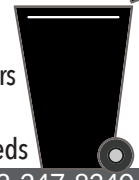
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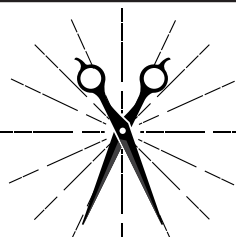
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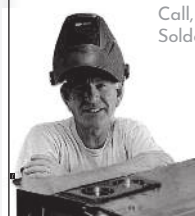


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Hospital budgets

(Continued from Page 21)
board's budget requirements, said the hospital trustee chair Jesse Bridges, during Friday's public comment period. "Our volunteer boards are working hard to do their best to make sure that we are pulling and pushing in the right direction," Bridges added.

The care board also approved a budget condition that it says gives the hospital flexibility to lower prices for outpatient care as part of negotiation with insurers.

Following the board decisions, UVM Health Network spokesperson Annie Mackin expressed the group's desire to move forward with what the

care board handed down.

In a statement, she wrote: "University of Vermont Health Network is proud to provide health care to more than a million people in Vermont and northern New York. We have committed to collaborating as a strong partner in reducing expenses, limiting growth of hospital costs, and providing high-quality, sustainable care to the communities we serve."

She said that the network will review the written budget orders when they are published on Sept. 30. "Much work remains, and we and our partners will need to continue taking steps to improve affordability not just in this budget cycle,

but in the months and years ahead," she added.

In his Friday comments, Foster expressed gratitude for the providers and work of the hospitals themselves, despite high costs: "University of Vermont Medical Center's problem is not with the care board or Vermont's inability to give it money. It's with its own corporate parent that has drained its assets and forced it to pay for an unnecessary layer of corporate bureaucracy. The Health Network has proven to be an irresponsible steward of Vermont's limited health care dollars," he said.

Cast Off 8's

(Continued from Page 5)
Lauren Norford, who has been involved with the Cast Off 8's for years. "Our goal is to create a space that's inclusive, lively, and joyful—where people can laugh, move, and connect with each other."

Not Your Grandparents' Square Dancing

Forget the stereotypes. Today's square dancing combines upbeat music, mental challenge, and social connection. It's choreographed, cooperative, and great exercise, all wrapped into one.

Sessions are taught in 10-week segments, with simple moves introduced gradually. Dancers learn patterns called out by a "caller," and by the end of the segment, participants will be able to confidently complete full square dances.

"It's movement with purpose," says Norford. "And people are always surprised by how much fun they have."

In addition to offering the first two classes free, the program costs just \$7 per session after that, with discounts available for youth and full 10-week signups. Participants

are encouraged to wear whatever they're comfortable dancing in—jeans and sneakers are perfectly welcome.



Benefits Beyond the Dance Floor
Beyond the social connection and fun, square dancing is a low-impact cardiovascular workout that improves coordination, balance, and memory. It's also one of the few physical activities that easily spans generations.

"It's common for us to have young people dancing next to retirees," Norford says. "There aren't many spaces where that happens naturally anymore."

The Cast Off 8's have been a

fixture in the community for years, offering both newcomers and seasoned dancers a chance to connect, move, and enjoy the rhythm of a traditional American art form—updated for today, with lively music and casual clothing.

Event Details:

- What: Beginner Square Dance Sessions
- When: Wednesdays, 6:30–8 p.m., continuing Sept. 17
- Where: Lothrop Elementary School Gym, Pittsford, Vt.
- Who: All ages welcome; no experience or partner required
- Cost: Next session

FREE; \$7/session afterward (discounts available)

- More Info & Signup: www.castoff8s.com

- Contact: lauren.castoff8s@gmail.com | 860-202-4341

Whether you're looking for an upbeat new hobby or a new way to get active, Cast Off 8's invites you to join the circle. You just might discover your new favorite weekly tradition.

Archery Season

(Continued from Page 5)
two or more antler points one inch in length or longer.

Hunters must have a standard hunting license in order to purchase an add-on archery deer hunting license, except that non-residents may purchase an "archery only deer license" costing \$75. Licenses may be quickly

and easily purchased on Fish and Wildlife's website.

Hunters planning a Vermont archery deer hunting trip will find it helpful to download a copy of the 2024 Deer Harvest Report from Fish and Wildlife's website. It has the number of deer taken in each town in last year's deer hunting seasons.

For more information and a summary of regulations, download the 2025 Deer Seasons Guide from Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website, or pick up a free copy of the 2025 Hunting & Trapping Guide from any license agent or highway rest area.

Police report

(Continued from Page 18)

• Participated in the 9/11 Memorial Event at the Brandon Police Department with members of the American Legion and the Brandon Fire Department.

• Assisted VSP-New Haven Barracks with a missing person in Goshen who had reportedly been hiking in the area of the Brandon Gap. Officers were later notified that the individual had returned to his residence safe and sound.

• Took fingerprints for employment.

• Served a citation on an individual on Mulcahy Drive on behalf of the Middlebury Police Department.

• Took fingerprints for employment.

• Took fingerprints for em-

ployment.

• Received a report of a noise disturbance on Charberry Lane.

• An off-duty officer assisted BARS with a medical incident that occurred at Otter Valley.

September 12

• Received a call from a concerned parent about her young daughter being harassed by her ex-boyfriend. The complainant was advised as to her legal options, including applying for a restraining order on behalf of her daughter, to address the problem.

September 14

• Received a call concerning on-line harassment from the caller's ex-girlfriend.

Classified

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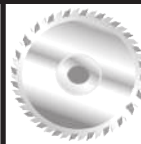
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Cookbook Corner with the Maclure Cookbook Club

An Irish celebration (and mourning) for *The Reporter*

My mother's family comes from Ireland, where there is an enduring tradition of the "wake" when people gather to mourn (and celebrate) the deceased. Stories abound as to the possible origins of the wake, ranging from assuring that the person wasn't buried alive to guarding the deceased from evil spirits. These tales are fascinating to read; an internet search will keep you busy for quite a while.

What every wake has in common is an abundance of food and drink to comfort the mourners. I thought it appropriate to offer my version of an Irish "Wake Cake" to mark the passing of our Brandon Reporter. It has been an absolute pleasure to write this column. Wishing you all the best; happy cooking!

INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup unsalted butter
1 cup granulated sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract
2 eggs
3 oz cream cheese
1 3/4 cups flour, sifted
1 1/4 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp salt
1 cup dried fruit(currants, raisins, or cranberries)
1 TBL zested citrus peel
2/3 cup buttermilk
1/2 cup powdered sugar

2 TBL Irish whiskey or 2 tsp lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat your oven to 325 F degrees.
- Cream butter, sugar, and vanilla together.
- Add eggs one at a time, then add the cream cheese. Mix until completely smooth.
- Add the dry ingredients (flour, baking powder, and salt) and mix until incorporated
- Add the buttermilk a bit at a time and mix until the batter is smooth; then fold in the fruit and citrus zest. *See note below
- Pour the batter into a greased 9-inch loaf pan. (I always line my pans with parchment paper as well.)
- Bake for approximately 1 hour and 25 minutes or until a knife/ cake probe comes out completely clean.

Let the cake cool for 15 minutes, then remove from the loaf pan.

Combine the powdered sugar with the lemon juice OR whiskey, then drizzle over the top of the cake while it is still warm.

Cool the cake completely, slice, and serve.

This is an extremely moist cake and keeps well. It has a "next day" quality that is wonderful. It should be stored in the refrigerator

*Dusting the dried fruit in a tablespoon of flour before adding them to the mix will keep them from sinking to the bottom. As you can see, I forgot to do that this time, but it still tasted good!



Eric Mallory, Shop Owner • Chuck Havens, Technician

Undercoating

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