



Flyin Ryan makes Adventure Scholar Award to Griffin Larson



Griffin Larson is the latest recipient of the Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation's Adventure Scholarship. Griffins' Core Values are: 1. Be dedicated to what you're passionate about; 2. Pursue your goals; 3. Always have fun; 4. Make smart choices; 5. Explore new things; 6. Take advantage of opportunities; 7. Listen to others; 8. Don't be embarrassed to ask for help; 9. Create positive energy; 10. Encourage others to try new things.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Flyin Ryan is proud to announce the addition of a new Adventure Scholarship recipient to their Adventure Scholar family!

Griffin Larson is a 17-year-old freeskiier from Smugglers' Notch, VT. Last year, he was honored with a Flyin' Ryan scholarship for his trip to the Junior Freeride World Championships in Austria.

The Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation was formed in 2011 to extend the impact of the life

of Ryan Hawks who, at the age of 25, tragically died while competing on the freeride world ski tour. Before he died, Ryan composed his 14 Principles for Living. The Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation has focused its mission around the concept that "core values matter." Over the last three years, the Foundation has developed a five-step program called Flyin Ryan Decisions. The program was pioneered at South Burlington High School, where over 1200 students have deliberately taken ownership of their lives by composing and communicating the core values which arise from within, and using their core values as a basis for increased self-respect and future decision making. The Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation is currently introducing this same program to other schools around the state.

Griffin began skiing at Smuggs when he was 3, joined the SNSC freeski team at 8, and has been competing ever since. He has traveled across North America and into Europe for freeskiing events. This year, he's excited to be a freeski coach for the Smugglers' Notch Freeski Team, and is looking forward to sharing the joy of skiing with the younger generation. In the summer he transitions into a competitive cyclist, racing on both mountain and road bikes. He is also a mountain bike coach at the Catamount Outdoor Center, where he guides kids aged 6-14 on how to become better mountain bikers. He is using this second award to travel to Europe to compete at the Junior Freeride World Championships.

The Flyin Ryan Adventure Scholarship Program exists to provide monetary awards to assist adventurers of all kinds, from all around the world, in pursuing their passions. Applicants must come up with their own set of Core Values and demonstrate character, passion for their goal, and financial need. To date we have given out over 120 awards. Learn more and apply at www.FlyinRyanHawks.org/Adventure-Scholarship-Program/.

Wind damage, roads, power outages, and patience: Jericho

By John Abbott, Jericho Town Administrator

Last night (Tuesday, January 9) we experienced one of the most serious wind, heavy snow and rain events in recent history — and there could be another coming Friday into Saturday (January 12-13). Aside from widespread power outages, property damage, and a number of now resolved road closures, we are fortunate. UJFD has reported no injuries or serious EMS activity. 1200 Jericho residents have been waiting for power to return. As of 2:00 PM on Wednesday, January 10, these were the updates from the utilities providing power to our community. If/when able, please visit these sites for restoration updates:

- 16 incidents reported, 909 homes without power, 100% of subscribers affected —<https://outages.vermontelectric.coop/>

- 13 incidents reported, 331 homes without power, 17% of subscribers affected —<https://greenmountainpower.com/outages/town/jericho/>

We will provide another update tomorrow morning, both on the Join in Jericho website and via FPF post. If you, family members of neighbors have any concern re: staying warm don't hesitate to contact the American Red Cross.

I want to give a big shout of gratitude to the Town of Jericho Road Crew, who started at 3:00 AM during the height of heavy wind — did an incredible job plowing, assessing downed trees



for triage and removal — and had all affected roads passable by midday. Thank you for all of your hard work. Only Barber Farm Road and Skunk Hollow are still waiting to reopen — downed power lines have resulted from larger tree fall. Stay safe and don't hesitate to seek help if needed...

(From the Editor: we know this is out of date by this edition's publication, but wanted to acknowledge the seriousness of this event. The photo above was taken on Governor Peck Road Wednesday morning, January 10 — what the previous night's extreme high wind event did to a pole-mounted, fixed rack of solar panels.)

PHOTO BY SARA RILEY

Lamoille FiberNet looks back at 2023, builds momentum in 2024

By Lisa Nolen Birmingham, Interim Director, Lamoille FiberNet CUD

Lamoille FiberNet Communications Union District (CUD) had a very productive 2023 and is poised to make great progress in 2024. Our 2023 efforts and our 2024 priorities are summarized below and on our website, but first I want to thank our remarkable Governing Board for their leadership.

These individuals leverage their professional skills and community knowledge and give considerable personal time to bringing broadband to our unserved communities. If you know them, thank them. If you have questions, ask them. Belvidere: Carol Caldwell-Edmonds; Cambridge: Sam Lotto, Matt McCabe; Eden: Carey Earle; Elmore: Randy Tomlin; Hyde Park: Michael Rooney, Carol Fano; Johnson: Paul Warden, Jeffrey Bickford; Morristown: Jane Campbell, John Meyer; Stowe: Stephen Friedman; Waterville: Jeff Tilton (Chair), Scott Johnson; Wolcott: Andrew Ross (Vice Chair), Bradley Horstman.

I also want to thank the Lamoille County Planning Commission, the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation, and the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) and their talented staff. Their guidance and expertise

helped us navigate the complexities of state and federal funding and build capacity.

Finally, I want to thank our Lamoille County legislative delegation and our federal delegation, particularly Senator Peter Welch's office, for their unwavering support. Their collective leadership has helped bring universal broadband within reach.

So, let's take a quick look at our 2023 milestones:

- Developed a two-phase Universal Service Plan to bring high speed fiber broadband internet to all unserved and underserved addresses in Lamoille County, and successfully applied for \$15.6 million in Vermont Community Broadband Board funding to build Phase 1 of the two-phase plan. Phase 1 reaches 86% or 4,170 of Lamoille County's unserved and underserved addresses. Because our partner Consolidated Communications (CCI) is investing almost \$10 million, Phase 1 is fully funded and can begin this spring!

- Thanks to widespread community support, Lamoille FiberNet also raised \$225,800 in local ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) pledges to support construction costs in Belvidere, Cambridge, Eden, Hyde Park, Johnson,

Wolcott, and Waterville! The VCBB approved a 1:1 match, doubling the investments in these seven communities!

- We negotiated a 20-year partnership with Consolidated Communications (CCI) to operate and maintain the new fiber network with service quality, network performance and consumer protection commitments. This includes building a future-ready, 10G network designed for growth and commitments to keep our network current — offering the same products here as the rest of northern New England and keeping prices competitive and affordable. For current information on Fidium products and pricing visit <https://www.fidiumfiber.com/fiber-internet>.

- We also continued to build organizational capacity to oversee the implementation of the universal service plan and to remain accountable to our communities. Towards that end, in 2023, we recruited several new board members, launched a new website, and completed audits for 2021 and 2022.

Turning to 2024, we have four major objectives:

- Complete construction of Phase 1 which includes all unserved and underserved areas in Belvidere, Eden, Johnson, and Waterville,

all of Lamoille FiberNet's footprint in Elmore and Wolcott, most of Hyde Park, except the northeast corner, and all of Morristown, except a few addresses on VT Rt. 15 east near the Wolcott border. We plan to build roughly two-thirds of Cambridge and Stowe, building to the ends of line in Sterling Valley and Nebraska Valley in Stowe, and North Cambridge to Fletcher in Cambridge. We will be sharing our construction plans with each community and publishing town-by-town details when they become available.

- Develop a program, funded by the local ARPA grants, to subsidize installation or extraordinary construction costs for some premises.

- Design and fund Phase 2, which will complete the universal service plan, ideally by December 2025.

- Draft a long-term sustainability and governance plan, to ensure that our grant commitments are fulfilled and our communities continue to benefit from digital equity initiatives.

Our 2024 plan is a manageable challenge. With the continued support and leadership from our Governing Board, our communities, and legislative leaders, I am confident we will be

NEWS BRIEFS

Varnam Library offers help to residents without power

Just a reminder to all who are still without power, The Varnum Library in Jeffersonville is open and available to all who need to charge devices, use computers/printers, warm-up, or grab a snack and cup of something hot to drink.

The internet is accessible from the road 24/7, and there is a protected outlet on the porch next to the book-drop that can be used even if the Library is closed.

Please use whatever resources you need, we love our community and are here for you.

Jericho prepares for the Presidential Primary March 5

By Jessica R. Alexander, Jericho Town Clerk
The Presidential Primary is upon us. Presidential Primary Ballots are available now at the Jericho Town Clerk's Office.

There will be two ballots for the Presidential Primary: Democratic and Republican. At the polling place or when requesting an early/absentee ballot, voters MUST declare which ballot they want. This preference for a particular party ballot is recorded on the voter checklist for the Presidential Primary Election. This is the

only time (every four years) in Vermont when the voter must declare a preference for which ballot that they wish to vote. We do not register by party in Vermont, but this Vermont law was created so that Vermont can participate in the national party primary for President. (17 V.S.A. section 2704)

You can request an early ballot by phone, 802-899-4936 x 100, in person at the Town Clerk's Office, by filling out an early/absentee ballot request form at Town Hall, or from our website or through <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>.

In person voting will be available 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM on Tuesday, March 5 at Mount Mansfield Union High School, 211 Browns

Trace, Jericho.

If you are interested in working at the polling place on election day March 5, 2024, you must be a registered Jericho voter or a youth 16 or older residing in Jericho. Contact Jessica at jerichovermont@yahoo.com to find out more about volunteering as an election official.

MMCTV seeking board member

Mount Mansfield Community Television (MMCTV) is looking to fill an open seat on

News briefs continued on page 2

MOUNTAIN GAZETTE RATE SHEET 2024

6558 VT RTE 116, STARKSBORO, VT 05487

802-453-6354 mtngazette@gmavt.net

www.mountaingazetteofvermont.com

The *Mountain Gazette* is the hometown newspaper
for Bolton, Cambridge, Jeffersonville, Jericho, Underhill and Westford, Vermont.

We store deliver copies of the paper in Bolton, Cambridge, Jeffersonville, Jericho, Underhill, Westford, Hinesburg,
Huntington, Richmond, Fairfax, Essex and Essex Junction.

Total regular circulation 3500

OPEN RATE

\$8.25 COLUMN INCH

Column width 1 7/16"

Listings below are measured width x height

Business card - \$33.00

3 1/4" x 2"

1/16 page - \$49.50

3 1/4" x 3"

1/12 page - \$66.00

3 1/4" x 4"

1/8 page

3 1/4" x 6" or 5" x 4 - \$99.00

1/4 page - \$170.00

3 1/4" x 12"

5" x 8"

6 1/2" x 6"

1/2 page - \$290.00

10 1/4" x 8" or 5" x 15 1/2"

Full page - \$390.00

10 1/4" x 15 1/2"

Business directory ads: \$18 each, must buy 5 consecutive issues (\$90.00 pre-paid)
No changes. Size 3 1/4" x 1 1/2"

Classified ads: \$6.50 for 25 words, 10 cents for each additional word

Prepaid contracts available - Save up to 20%.

Purchase six ads of any size and run within 12 months.

Call Brenda Boutin, advertising manager at 802-453-6354 for details

Subscriptions \$35.00 per year - 24 issues

Inserts 1-4 pages, 8 1/2" x 11" Cost \$45.00 prepaid per 1000

Must purchase full circulation

Publication: First and Third Thursday/Month

Deadlines: Thursday before publication

Copy - 12:00 Noon

Advertising 5:00 PM

The *Mountain Gazette*, 6558 VT RTE 116, Starksboro, VT 05487

Phone: 802-453-6354 mtngazette@gmavt.net

www.mountaingazetteofvermont.com

ART / MUSIC / THEATER

The Sixty Four Project, a dynamic art installation and exhibit celebrating women's beauty, diversity, and strength while promoting realistic body imagery, is on display Thursday-Saturday, January 18-20 at Hilton Burlington Lake Champlain, Lake Champlain Room, 60 Battery St., Burlington (enter via the parking garage, as the hotel lobby is under renovation), in conjunction with the Vermont Burlesque Festival. Conceived and engineered by Fairfax resident Mark Hitchcox, the project features photographs and testimonials of 64 women, including breast cancer survivors. The group reflects a diverse range of ages, ethnicities, and body types. The centerpiece of the exhibit is an installation of rotating cubes, each featuring a photograph of a volunteer model's breast. As the cubes randomly turn, different right and left breasts are displayed, highlighting the beautiful diversity of women's bodies. "Scars don't define me, my age doesn't define me, how my body looks doesn't define me, I'm still an attractive person worthy of love and affection," said Moxie Blue, a breast cancer thriver, burlesque performer, and producer from Seattle, WA. "We need to help the younger generations know that all bodies are unique and beautiful," said participant Jamie, age 45. Mark's grandmother, mother, and sister were all treated for breast cancer. His goal with this exhibit is to honor them by raising funds for breast cancer research while promoting breast cancer awareness. Admission to the exhibit and the opening reception is free. Proceeds from donations and a basket raffle will go to the University of Vermont Cancer Center. The opening reception with light snacks and cash bar, sponsored in part with gratitude by the Grace Family of Fairfax, is from 5:00 – 7:00 PM on Thursday, January 18, with a short presentation at 6:00 PM. Specific dates and times: Thursday, Jan. 18, 5:00 – 8:00 PM; Friday and Saturday, 11:00 AM – 8:00 PM.

Artist Development Grants: application deadline January 30, 2024, 1:00 PM; apply at <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/find-a-grant/artists/artist-development/>. Grants support artists at all stages of their careers, and can fund activities that enhance mastery of an artist's craft or skills or that increase the viability of an artist's business. Funding may also support aspects of the creation of new work when the activity allows the grantee to accept a rare and important opportunity. For Artist Development Grants, you may apply for any amount up to \$2000. We strongly encourage applicants to apply for the *least* amount of funding necessary for their request. Money is limited, and we want to be able to support as many artists as possible. While we will do all that we can to fully fund as many projects as possible, some proposals may be partially funded. Grant amounts are dependent upon federal, state, and private funding and are subject to change. Eligible expenses for such activities include, but are not limited to: advanced study of technique or practice with a mentor; attending a professional conference to build business or artistic skills or knowledge; contracting professional services including photographic documentation of work, contract preparation or business incorporation, creation of accounting systems, developing e-commerce on a website, creation of marketing materials, etc.; marketing, planning, purchasing some materials, or renting studio space (outside of your home) to create new exhibitions or performances; travel within the United States.

The Underhill Arts Council is committed to inspiring the community by highlighting local art and craft. Our goal is to bring forward all forms of creative expression. All ages are welcome! Have something you'd like to share? Please contact John Connell, jc6greenmont@gmail.com, or Mary Hill, maryhillstudios@gmail.com.

Also, the Underhill Arts Council is looking for help painting and decorating the large hearts that are hung around town. This is a fun project. No special artistic talent is required. If you have a desire to help or have questions, please contact the council via jc6greenmont@gmail.com or 802-881-5974.

Monthly Essex Art League meeting on the first Thursdays — Artists and art lovers are welcome to join Essex Art League (EAL) and participate in our year-round, weekly en Plein Air gatherings. We meet each Thursday to paint in a different and beautiful location in the area. Joining EAL also avails you of opportunities for field trips to shows and galleries as well as participating in workshops. The Essex Art League has been open to artists and art lovers throughout Vermont for 50+ years. We meet the first Thursday of each month from September-June.

The Jericho Energy Task Force (JETF) will present the movie *Nuclear Now* at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, River Road, Jericho on Thursday, January 25, at 7:00 PM. Produced by famed director Oliver Stone, the movie explores the possibility of meeting the existential challenge of climate change through nuclear power. Stone conducted interviews with people involved in the nuclear industry in the United States, France, and Russia. He argues that fear of nuclear energy was sown, in part, by coal and oil interests. Please note that the JETF is presenting this film to show a variety of viewpoints and does not take a position on the viability of nuclear energy. Light refreshments will be served but this is a waste-free event so please bring your own plates and mugs. For more information contact lblamb@hotmail.com.

Weekly Literature Group Meeting on Tuesdays Via Zoom: Michael Sevy of Jericho co-leads a weekly virtual book group, the Burlington Literature Group, and would welcome new committed readers to our sessions. The group originally met in person, but since Covid has changed to online Zoom sessions every Tuesday at 6:30 PM. We break down interesting, challenging books into weekly segments of 60-100 pages, and discuss form, content, and our impressions in a friendly online forum. Details can be found at <https://nereadersandwriters.com/> or by emailing info@nereadersandwriters.com. Our current author Roberto Bolaño, born in Santiago, Chile in 1953. He grew up in Chile and Mexico City, where he was a founder of the Infrarealist poetry movement. His first full-length novel, *The Savage Detectives*, received the Herralde Prize and the Rómulo Gallegos Prize when it appeared in 1998. Bolaño died in Blanes, Spain at the age of 50. We will read the novel *Distant Star*: January 23: beginning through Chapter 5; January 30: chapter 6 to end. Other authors in our schedule include Toni Morrison, László Krasznahorkai, Patrick Modiano, Iris Murdoch, David Foster Wallace, Colum McCann, Saul Bellow and Thomas Pynchon.

SongFarmers, a community music jam — a place for friends and neighbors to play music just for the fun of it. SongFarmers meets on every third Wednesday of the month (January 17, February 21), 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the Jericho Community Center, Browns Trace, Jericho Center. For people of all ages who want to play folk, Americana, blues, bluegrass, Celtic, and more on acoustic instruments: guitars, banjos, mandolins, fiddles, ukuleles, bass, keyboard. No electronics except keyboard and bass. It's a circle gathering where everyone who wants to will have a chance to lead songs. Common tunes with simple chord progressions are encouraged so that everyone can play along. If you plan to lead, please choose a song that you can play at a steady rhythm and bring a chord chart for your song. Both songs and instrumentals are great. Please note this is not a performance, open mic, or lesson. Folks who want to sing, or just come and enjoy the gathering, are welcome too. Bring snacks and drinks if you like, but no alcohol. Free. Registration is appreciated; contact CommunityJamJUVT@gmail.com.

Weekly Community Choir — If you love to sing (or want to join in on the piano to help folks learn parts and play accompaniment), come join *Mountainsong!* We are a volunteer-run community singing group that harmonizes together in four parts on the second and fourth Thursdays (during the winter) of the month (January 25; February 8, 22), 6:30 – 8:00 PM at the



The Westford Music Series will feature Paul Asbell in January at the Westford Common Hall. Paul will be playing his acoustic guitar and laying down intricate, pianistic patterns, as the consummate professional in blues, early jazz, and "old-timey" music genre which has placed him among the nation's most revered guitarist at the top level in his field. "Few pickers work from as broad a stylistic palette as Paul Asbell," according to Guitar Player Magazine. From his early years playing blues on Chicago's South Side to his present multi-faceted career based out of northern Vermont, Paul has earned an underground reputation as a true "musicians' musician." He has played and recorded with Muddy Waters, Paul Butterfield, Otis Rush, Earl Hooker, and other celebrities. He was known in Vermont as leader of the widely popular Kilimanjaro band before breaking out as an acclaimed solo performer. To hear Paul is to become a fan. Sunday, January 21, 4:00 PM at the Westford Common Hall, 21 Brookside, Westford. Free will donation. As always, a pie raffle surprise adds to the fun. Call 802-363-0930 for more information.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 195 VT Rt. 15, Jericho (across from Packard Road). Whether you sing in the shower, sing Karaoke, or just like to sing in harmony with others, bring your voice and join us! Do you learn by ear or read music? Either way, you'll be comfortable here. Our aim is to sing for the joy of singing (no performances except for one short one for family and friends at the end of the season). Come as often as you are able. Cost: \$1 a week toward space rental. We also ask for a contribution to purchase music for the group of \$7 per semester (fall and spring). Questions about the group? Questions about the group? Contact Lynne Robbins, 802-899-2436 or lar.2436@gmail.com, or Doug Varney, 802-343-4513 or vt hockeyman@gmail.com, or just show up!

The Westford Music Series concerts will be held once a month on a Sunday, from 4:00 – 5:00 PM at the Westford Common Hall, 21 Brookside Rd., Westford. The lineup for the 2023-2024 season continues on January 21, *FREVO*; February 25: *Will Patton Ensemble*; March 24, *Dale and Darcy Trio*; April 7: *Heliand*; May 5, *Howling Waters*.

Bryan Gallery, 180 Main St., Jeffersonville; open Wednesday-Sunday, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM or Monday-Tuesday by appointment. For more information contact Stephen Gothard, 802-644-5100 or info@bryangallery.org.

SCHOOL NEWS



VT Chess State Championships for grades K-12, March 23

The 37th Annual Vermont State Scholastic Chess Championships will be held on Saturday, March 23 at Craftsbury Academy, 1422 N. Craftsbury Rd., Craftsbury Common, VT 05827.

This is the selection tournament for Vermont's nominees to the national Denker, Haring, Barber and Rockefeller Invitationals. This tournament is open to Vermont students in grades K-12. Participants must be VT residents or be enrolled in a VT public or private school. VT resident home school students are eligible.

Chessboards, pieces, and clocks will be provided. No prior tournament experience is necessary. High School and 8th Grade sections will be USCF rated. K-7th Grade sections will be unrated. Individual and team prizes will be awarded.

All players must pre-register for the event; no walk-ins will be allowed. Registration closes on Sunday, March 17. Registration may close prior to March 17 due to space limitations. If



registration is still open, the entry fee after March 1 will increase to \$25. Online registration only — no entries will be accepted via mail or email.

Complete rules and registration information can be found at <https://vermontchess.org/>.

Poker Hill School Book Club February 8

Did you know Poker Hill School (PHS) has a book club?! We read books (or listen to podcasts) related to caregiving for young children and get together to talk about it and how it might impact us and the kiddos we're responsible for.

For our next book club book we'll be reading a classic: *Children: The Challenge* by Ruddolf Dreikurs and Vicki Soltz.

Antigravity

By Kimberly Madura

Hope, faith, love —
the unexplained forces
lifting us up
to float above this
earth-bound place,
separating angels
in rarefied air
from mere mortals.
Watch over us
from the heavens above,
on paradise lost below.
To be good, does anyone
even aim for that
anymore?
Perhaps a return to
innocence
is the prayer we all
need.

This book may have been published nearly six decades ago, but it apparently still holds true for modern parenting/child rearing. Let's read it and find out! Podcast interview option will be announced soon (need to do some digging as podcasts weren't a thing back then).

PHS is extending the invitation to interested community members! If you're interested in the book and want to talk about it with others, please join us! Parents, teachers, grandparents, caregivers of all kinds are welcome.

We'll meet Thursday, February 8, 7:00 – 8:00 PM, Poker Hill School, Poker Hill Rd., Underhill to discuss. Please join! You can direct any questions to Emily Piazza at piazza.emily@gmail.com.

Mountain Gazette 2024 deadlines and publication dates

The Mountain Gazette publishes on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month. The deadline for receiving copy is Thursday, a week before publication, at 12:00 PM; the advertising deadline is Thursday, a week before publication, at 5:00 PM.

(Note exceptions, below, due to Monday holidays before publication dates.)

DEADLINE DATES:

THURSDAY

December 26 - note Tuesday deadline

January 9 – note Tuesday deadline

January 25

February 8

February 29

March 14

March 28

April 11

April 25

May 9

May 30

June 13

June 27

July 11

July 25

August 8

August 27 - note Tuesday deadline

September 12

September 26

October 8 - note Tuesday deadline

October 31

November 14

November 28

December 12

PUBLICATION DATES:

THURSDAY

January 4 - early deadline (New Year)

January 18 - early deadline (MLK Day)

February 1

*February 15

*March 7

March 21

April 4

April 18

May 2

*May 16

*June 6

June 20

July 4

July 18

August 1

*August 15

*September 5 - early deadline (Labor Day)

September 19

October 3

*October 17

- early deadline (Indigenous People Day)

*November 7

November 21

December 5

December 19

Please note: there are 3 weeks, not 2, between the *indicated publication dates. Note early deadlines: Tuesday, December 26, due to New Year's Day on Monday, January 2; Tuesday, January 9, due to Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday, January 15; Tuesday, August 27, due to Labor Day on Monday, September 2; and Tuesday, October 8, due to Indigenous Peoples Day on Monday, October 14.

mtngazette@gmavt.net • www.mountaingazetteofvermont.com

For information: Brenda Boutin • 802-453-6354

We have room for your ad.

Call Brenda Boutin at 802-453-6354

for more information or email mtngazette@gmavt.net.

SPORTS NEWS



Ice fishing safety for inconsistent ice conditions

From VT Fish and Wildlife Department

Friday, January 5

Ice conditions across Vermont are inconsistent due to warm and variable weather, and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is urging anglers to put safety first if they venture out ice fishing.

“Check the ice as you go, avoid areas where currents can create weaker ice, and if you are not sure the ice is safe find a different waterbody,” cautioned fisheries biologist Shawn Good. “With good judgment ice fishing is a safe and fun way to get outside in winter. But that means making cautious, smart decisions and changing plans if conditions are not what you hoped for.”

Ice conditions are currently variable across Vermont. At higher elevations and in the Northeast Kingdom many lakes and ponds have frozen over completely and have fishable ice. But in southern Vermont and the Champlain Valley, many lakes and ponds are not yet safe for ice fishing.

“Three to four inches of clear black ice is the minimum for safe ice fishing,” said Good. “For the kind of gray or opaque ice we get after repeated freezing, thawing, and re-freezing we recommend anglers look for at least six inches of ice where they plan to fish.”

Even on a single waterbody it is important to know that ice thickness is not always uniform. Areas around pressure cracks or near stream or river inlets can be thinner and weaker than surrounding ice.

The department says anglers should always carry a spud bar to test the ice as they go and should have a set of personal ice picks for self-rescue. Anglers should avoid fishing alone and should let someone know where they will be fishing and when they plan on returning home.

But despite poor or non-existent early season ice conditions in some areas of Vermont, eager anglers can still find safe ice fishing opportunities this month.

“While we wait for colder weather to freeze up waterbodies statewide, I recommend anglers focus on planning and getting their gear in top shape—or that they hit the road and explore the higher elevation waters or northern waters where there is already good ice,” said Good. “Fishing somewhere other than your home waters can be part of the adventure and allure of ice fishing, and is a great way to explore Vermont.”

To learn more about ice fishing safety, tips for beginners, and places to fish visit Vermont Fish and Wildlife’s Ice Fishing Basics (<https://vtfishandwildlife.com/vermonts-ice-fishing-opportunities/ice-fishing-basics>) and Ice Fishing Opportunities (<https://vtfishandwildlife.com/fish/fishing-opportunities/vermonts-ice-fishing-opportunities>) webpages.

SENIOR NEWS

Bolton Age Well Grab’n’Go meals

Bolton will now have Age Well Grab’n’Go meals delivered to the Bolton Fire Station on the second Wednesday of each month — February 14, March 13 — pick up times between 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Age Well provides services to individuals 60+ and their spouse or caregivers, and a disabled person(s) living with the senior, regardless of financial status.

To order a meal, please contact Robin Pecor-Brunell, 802-434-3042 or rpecor@hotmail.com, by the Friday before the meal is to be delivered.

Online health aid presentations

High Blood Pressure Management, Thursdays through February 8, 2:00 – 3:30 PM, online. Presented by My Healthy Vermont and North Country Hospital. Learn the basics of controlling your high blood pressure through eating healthier, becoming more active, and more. Register online at https://www.myhealthylvt.org/workshop_dates/online-or-in-person-high-blood-pressure-3/.

Vision and Aging Well Videos, online at <https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/outreach-resources/vision-and-aging-resources/vision-and-aging-videos>. The National Eye Institute’s videos explain dilated eye exams and age-related eye conditions and promote eye health. Remember to wear sunglasses to avoid cataract-producing damage caused by the sun!

MyMobility Plan, online (as a PDF) at https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/pdf/older_adult_drivers/CDC-MyMobilityTool.pdf. The MyMobility planning guide from the CDC is a tool to help us plan for mobility changes as we age and take action now. Plan today; stay independent tomorrow.

Caring Conversations, online, with more information at <https://www.mcgill.ca/dementia/support-groups/caring-conversations>. The McGill Dementia Education Program provides virtual support to care partners — with social worker Lucy Barylak and educator Joanne Besner. Season 2, Ep.1, Hygiene and Dementia: what care partners can do when the person they support refuses daily hygiene care; Season 2, Ep.2, Dementia and Sexually Inappropriate Behaviors: how care partners can manage inappropriate behaviors.

Stay Safe During a Winter Storm, information from the CDC presented online at <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/duringstorm/indoorsafety.html>. Winter storms can be dangerous, with cold temperatures, power failures, loss of communication services, and icy roads. The CDC offers suggestions for staying safe indoors and outdoors on this webpage.

Fitness classes at Jericho Community Center

Join your friends and neighbors for an hour of movement, fun and laughter as you discover your best body and calm mind. Whether you are an elite athlete or just beginning, we are all the same when it comes to having fun and learning to find our best personal fitness practices.

Trish Densham, long time fitness professional, certified personal trainer and advocate of all things in motion, is offering the *Your Best Body Movement Class*, at the Jericho Community Center on Browns Trace in Jericho Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 – 7:00 PM. The classes began Tuesday, January 9. A six-class punch pass is \$48, or a 12-class punch pass for \$80; drop-in classes are \$10 each. Punch passes are good through Tuesday, April 30.

This class melds core concentrations for stability and safe movement with muscular strength and endurance gains that ease joint pain and enhance all your indoor and outdoor fun and games.

To cap off the session, we will introduce and practice Pilates and Yoga techniques that stretch your muscles and soothe your mind.

To sign up or to find out more, contact Trish at tdmover@gmail.com or 802-999-1265.

Pickleball at Cambridge Community Center

By Russ Weis, Cambridge Community Center

We appreciate your patience as we have worked to get back to normal operations at the Cambridge Community Center.

Here are our updated pickleball offerings. All are \$5 per session, or free with membership.

Monday and Wednesday mornings, 8:15 – 9:00 AM: Learn to play Pickleball.

First Sunday of the month, 12:00 – 2:00 PM: beginner pickleball session.

Monday and Wednesday, 9:00 – 11:00 AM: pickup. Two courts dedicated to beginner players, and two (hopefully three soon) for intermediate to advanced. This session will have instructor around to help answer questions and guide beginners.

Wednesdays, 6:30 – 9:00 PM and Fridays, 9:00 – 11:00 AM: pickup pickleball. (No instruction, set up for players comfortable with the rules and game play.)

For beginner classes we have some paddles available. Remember — clean indoor shoes required.

Browns River Little League 2024 registration open

Registration is now open for the 2024 Browns River Little League season for both boys and girls in Jericho and Underhill, aged 4-12, including both Baseball and Softball!

Register online only, at www.brownsriverlittleleague.com. Registration is open through Wednesday, January 31 for 9- to 12-year-old Baseball and Softball minor and major league players, and through Thursday, February 15 for 4- to 8-year-old farm league baseball players (this includes both girls and boys).

Early registration is important for league planning so don’t delay.

We also need lots of help from you all to make this season a success! If you’re interested in being part of our great youth sports program, please reach out to brownsriverll@gmail.com, or send league president Casey Knudsen an email at caseyknudsen@gmail.com.

GOTRVT announces coach recruitment for spring 2024

Girls on the Run Vermont (GOTRVT), a nonprofit organization (<https://www.gotrvt.org/>) that uses a research and physical activity-based curriculum to inspire girls in grades 3-8 to be joyful, healthy, and confident, is excited to announce that coach registration for GOTRVT’s 25th anniversary spring season is now open statewide. Utilizing a fully updated and refreshed curriculum, GOTRVT coaches will empower participants to develop critical life skills, build confidence, cultivate positive connections with peers, and stand up for themselves and others.

The ten-week season begins March 18, with teams meeting twice a week for 90 minutes. The 20-lesson curriculum covers topics such as positive self-talk, friendship, managing emotions, and more, all created to nourish participants’ social, emotional, and physical well-being. The program culminates with teams participating in one of two non-competitive, celebratory 5K events — one on June 1 at the Champlain Valley Expo in Essex Junction, and the other on June 8 at the Manchester Recreation Fields — bringing together family, friends, and community members to celebrate the participants’ growth throughout the season.

All coaches will be trained in-person and will receive the materials and resources necessary to facilitate lessons for the season. Coaches do not need to be runners but are required to be a minimum of 18 years old. Students in high school may register to be a Junior Coach. All volunteer coaches must complete a background check and online training modules prior to in-person training. Coach trainings are offered at three locations statewide: Saturday, February 3 in Brattleboro; Sunday, February 4 in Castleton; and Saturday, February 10 in Essex. GOTRVT needs over 500 volunteer coaches to host teams in 2024.

GOTRVT Vermont has inspired and impacted the lives of c.38,000 girls in Vermont over 24 years. This season, GOTRVT celebrates its 25th anniversary and will be offered at over 110 locations across Vermont starting the week of March 18.

To learn more or to register to be a coach mentor, visit <https://www.gotrvt.org/>.

Young skiers in Vermont get a break

Numerous ski resorts across the state offer complimentary skiing experiences for children. Dive into the (partial) list below to discover where kids can hit the slopes for free or at significantly discounted rates. For the full list, see <https://skivermont.com/kid-deals>.

It’s all about fostering the next generation of skiing enthusiasts: Bolton Valley (<https://skivermont.com/bolton-valley>) Children 5 and under: free day ticket, but requires an RFID card like everyone else to pass through automatic gates (\$5 for the initial card). General information about lift tickets and prices at <https://www.boltonvalley.com/winter/tickets-passes/lift-tickets/>.

Burke Mountain Resort (<https://skivermont.com/burke-mountain-resort>) Kids 5 and under ski free; all midweek skiers (Monday-Friday during non-holiday periods; cannot be combined with any other ticket deal or promotion) ski for \$45. For more details, see <https://www.skiburke.com/skiing-and-riding/tickets-and-passes/day-tickets/>.

Cochran’s Ski Area (<https://skivermont.com/cochrans-ski-area>) Kids 5 and under ski free with an adult; youths 6-17 also receive deals on tickets. For more details on all ticket times and categories, see <https://cochranskiarea.com/tickets-passes/tickets/>.

Jay Peak (<https://skivermont.com/jay-peak>) A toddler pass is FREE when purchased at the same time as an Adult pass in the same category. One free Toddler pass per Adult pass purchase.

Smugglers’ Notch Resort (<https://skivermont.com/smugglers-notch-resort>) Kids 5 and under ski free. Youth 6-18 get lift ticket deals throughout the season, as well as deals on season passes (youth 6-18 and young adult 19-26). For more details, see <https://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/skiride/lift-ticket-rates.php>.

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Toward food resiliency: review of 2023 and plans for 2024

By Transition Town Jericho (TTJ)

While national and international news is distressing, Jericho residents have the opportunity to work together to become as self-sufficient as possible. Rather than worry about *what if...* we could concentrate on what we CAN do.

Food and clean water are what all of us need every day. Transition Town Jericho meetings and projects have included relevant aspects of providing these important daily needs.

Plans for 2024

To begin the 2024 new year, we will show a movie entitled *First We Eat*, a documentary by filmmaker Suzanne Crocker about eating only locally-grown foods around Dawson City, Yukon, in Canada's North, for one year. It will be shown early this year.

Prior to watching the movie, there will be opportunities to discuss our local food system through seminars, panel discussions, and a community dinner. Watch for details of these events in the *Mountain Gazette* and the TTJ blog.

Summary of 2023 projects:

Early in 2023, TTJ initiated discussions concerning the possibility of a food hub in Jericho. First we invited Jon Ramsey, executive director of the Center for Agricultural Economy (CAE) in Hardwick, to explain the services and structure of the Food Hub there. At the Jericho Town Meeting last year, TTJ proposed the development of a Jericho Food Hub and the Select Board decided that a Food Hub Task Force should be formed to study the idea.

One important aspect of becoming self-sufficient is learning to grow, harvest, and preserve food. To that end, TTJ presented workshops, seminars, and programs on the following topics:

- Seed starting: Laura Oliver, Bolton resident, illustrated methods to start your own seeds.
- Composting methods: Natasha Duarte of the Composting Association of Vermont (CAV) gave an informative presentation about composting methods at the Jericho Town Library.
- Kids Garden Contest: sponsored by TTJ and Jericho Selectboard, *Eat Your Weeds*, an engaging presentation by Jericho resident Chris Sims illustrating how many common weeds can be used as medicines and food... quite tasty when prepared by Chris, who has a lifetime of experience with foraging.
- Tree Celebration: organized by the Jericho Town Librarian Catherine Bass and Sabina Ernst, the celebration included



Children who participated in the Kids' Garden Project were extremely proud of the flowers and vegetables they were able to grow, in a project sponsored by Transition Town Jericho.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



Volunteers work the soil to prepare garden beds for the Edible Landscape Project, sponsored by Transition Town Jericho.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

integration of composting into the family routine.

• Eating local foods: Bill McKibben spoke about his experience eating only local foods from within 100 miles for roughly a year. Though he embarked on this journey nearly two decades ago, it is perhaps even more relevant today.

Ongoing projects:

• Edible Landscape Project: Begun in 2019, this is an experiment to understand the challenges of rehabilitating a neglected field overrun with invasive grasses. Garden spaces have been made, many species of wildflowers have been planted as well as tree seedlings and berries. Species include blueberry, elderberry, black walnut seedlings, and two blight-resistant chestnuts trees.

• Kid's Garden Project: In order to encourage families to try gardening at home, TTJ and the Jericho Selectboard have been supplying interested families with raised beds in which they grow vegetables and flowers.

If you would like to join our efforts toward food self-sufficiency, please come to our meetings or contact us with questions.

TTJ Blog: TTJ blog: www.transitiontownjericho.net

TTJ email: TTJericho.VT@gmail.com

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Pave Westford roads?

To the Editor,

I, for one, like Westford's roads dirt, and I hope they stay that way. With all of the development happening in Chittenden County (necessary though it may be to expand housing and create more jobs), it comforts me to know that pretty much every road in Westford is still dirt.

Our dirt roads are also a lot cheaper than paved roads, which, would probably have to be repaved or touched up at least every five years, causing cumbersome detours and driving delays. Furthermore, the dirt makes driving more interesting and exciting, and prevents excessive speeding and reckless driving (can you dodge all 100 potholes on Cambridge Road? Can you make the turn at the bottom of a freshly graded Osgood Hill?).

The dirt also makes us better drivers. Who would we be to stop future Westfordites from learning how to make it up a steep icy hill in February, or through the Woods Hollow mudpit in April?

Lastly, our high concentration of dirt roads makes for awesome gravel biking and has made Westford a little bit of a gravel biking destination, which helps support the local store.

So, for my own sake as a gravel biker, and also for the sake of the town, I hope the roads stay dirt forever.

Charlie Cobb
Westford

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