

Lila Lamphere garners Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation's Adventure Scholar Award

The Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation is proud to announce the addition of a new Adventure Scholarship recipient! Lila Lamphere has been a skier since the age of two. She started skiing shortly after learning how to walk and fell in love with the sport. She lives in Jericho and has been skiing for Smugglers' Notch Ski Club since the age of eight.

She started off enjoying freeskiing the most, but then after taking a trip to Mount Bachelor she fell in love with going fast down groomed trails. She is now fourteen and part of the U16 race team at Smugglers' Notch. She enjoys competing in friendly freeski competitions with her friends when not at races. She also enjoys playing lacrosse, hockey, field hockey, surfing, and being on the water. She is using her award to help pay for racing and equipment.

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 170 awards. Learn more and apply a www.FlyinRyanHawks.org/Adventure-Scholarship-Program/.

About us: 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. Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation is currently introducing the same program to schools in the state.



Lila's Core Values: 1) Be happy; 2) Pick yourself and others up; 3) Keep up that confidence; 4) Smile! 5) Chill out, live easy; 6) Have strong emotions, but don't let them control you; 7) Keep on moving; 8) Listen to your body, and mind; 9) Don't lose what you love; 10) Surround yourself with people who make you feel like yourself. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

VT Governor Phil Scott's Education Transformation Plan

February 7 press release from Governor Scott's office; for more information: <https://governor.vermont.gov/strongerschools>

Governor Scott's education plan strengthens our public education system by improving quality, creating equity across the state, and building a sustainable funding structure that Vermonters can afford.

Vermonters have identified this as a top priority, and this bold plan lays the groundwork for Vermont to have the best public education system in the nation.

Yet, defenders of the current system — which has declining test scores, massive annual property tax increases, and pays teachers unequally — have misleadingly referred to this proposal as a "voucher system." They are wrong.

The plan eliminates the flow of public dollars to private schools outside of the state and country. The plan also assumes the General Assembly will maintain the current moratorium on new independent schools, and proposes more accountability standards for independent and public schools.

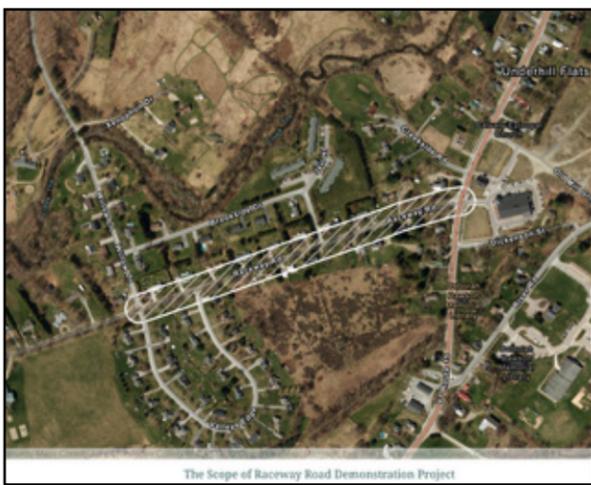
In addition, many have continually advocated for increased pay and resources for teachers. This plan does just that, by increasing and equalizing teacher pay, so teachers have the option of serving in any school, anywhere in the state, without sacrificing pay or benefits.

Governor Scott's plan ensures all our public schools are resourced to provide students with an exceptional education and teachers are supported and well compensated — so we can have the best public system in America, from cradle to career.

This plan is designed to support stronger schools, stronger students, and more vibrant communities.

For more details on the plan, visit <https://governor.vermont.gov/strongerschools>.

NEWS BRIEFS



Jericho to host meetings on trial bike, pedestrian walkway on Raceway

This summer, the Jericho Bike and Pedestrian Connectivity Committee will install a temporary pedestrian walkway along Raceway Road between Willow Road and VT Rt. 15. The path will use temporary, quick-build materials that will protect people who walk, bike, or roll, and reduce speeding.

The Town of Jericho will hold two public meetings about the proposed trial bike and pedestrian walkway along Raceway Road. The first will be on Monday, March 10, 7:00 PM at Jericho Town Hall, VT Rt. 15, Jericho.

The second meeting will be on Saturday, March 22, 1:00 PM at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, River Rd., Jericho, with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Committee and representatives from Local Motion in attendance.

For more information and to respond to a survey request, go online to https://jerichovt.org/bike-pedestrian-committee/news_feed/safe-streets-on-raceway-road-2.

Westford Farmers Market seeking vendors and musicians

By Kristin Leclair, Westford

Are you thinking about Summer yet?

We are excited to announce a new day and time for this year's Westford Farmers Market: Sundays 3:00 – 6:00 PM, every week from June 1-September 28, on the Westford Town Common.

Applications are now open for:
 • vendors, online at <https://forms.gle/uDmoVaw9wRn9ACcE8>;
 • musicians, online at <https://forms.gle/X948CMdRBk5wvsD3A>; and
 • or contact Market organizers Kirsten Tyler and Kristin LeClair, westfordfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com.
 You can find us on Facebook and Instagram, @westfordfarmersmarketvt.

Chittenden-Southeast VT senators virtual Town Hall March 16

By Thomas Chittenden, State Senator
 Chittenden-Southeast Senate District

Please join your Chittenden Southeast Senators Virginia Lyons, Keshia Ram Hinsdale, and Thomas Chittenden for a virtual Town Hall on Sunday, March 16, 5:00 – 6:15 PM. Join your Senators in a conversation about what has been accomplished this legislative session and what still needs to be done.

You can send questions in advance or ask us live. Please send your questions to Erin, estoetznervtdemocrats.org, and to request Q&A with your senators. RSVP required for Zoom link, <https://www.mobilize.us/dashboard/vtdems/event/752140/>.

For Vermonters interested in 3SquaresVT

From the VT Department for Children and Families

Are you interested in 3SquaresVT? It's a federal USDA program that helps you put healthy foods on your table. You may be eligible if your gross household income is equal to or less than 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, or you have children and get the VT Earned Income Tax Credit.

If you are between the ages of 16 and 59, you may need to meet work rules unless you are exempt or excused. To help understand these requirements, DCF has created a new webpage at: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/3SquaresVT/WorkRules>.

There you'll find information on whether these rules apply to you, rules about getting excused, frequently asked questions, and ways to further your career or education.

There's also a link to a 3SquaresVT Work Rules Screener, which is a helpful tool to determine if you must meet the work rule guidelines.

If your application is approved, you'll get money every month you can use to buy food at many stores and farmers' markets.

Good Shepherd Spring Fling concert and a forum to support Haiti

From Rev. Arnold Isidore Thomas, Local Bard of Song

Welcome the coming of spring! Rev. Arnold Isidore Thomas, our regional bard of song, will lead us on another great musical adventure. Green Mountain Celts (Joanne and Terry Ranney, Mike Reynolds, Rev. Arnold Isidore Thomas) will be joined by John Guay, Vonnie Estes, and Nancy Bakemeier (Tenpenny Bit) and Iain MacHarg (Piper). Come, tap your toes and enjoy another entertaining evening of music for all ages at our annual Spring Fling concert on Saturday, March 8, 7:00 PM at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, VT Rt. 15, Jericho (near the intersection with Browns Trace, across from Allegiance Trucks). Free parking; handicapped accessible.

This year we have chosen to use this event to raise much needed funds for Ecolé Vocational Jean Despagne Félix Elementary School in Haiti. Donations will be accepted at the door for Ecolé Vocational Jean Despagne Félix Elementary School in Haiti. Checks may be made out to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and "Haiti" printed on the memo line.

Haitians are suffering a very difficult time in their history. As of now, there is no gasoline, diesel, or propane, and it's getting worse. Shops are running out of food and supplies and people are staying home for safety as protests and armed gangs become more prevalent and unpredictable. It is heartbreaking. We know that educating future generations is the hope for Haiti to recover from this dark time, to become a free and vibrant country.

Ecolé Vocational Jean Despagne Félix Elementary School is located in the southern mountains of Haiti and though they are relatively safe from the current violence, they are negatively affected by the inability to raise the necessary funds to pay teachers and purchase much needed supplies. This school enrolls 370 students in grades 1-9 and employs 18 teachers. It costs \$300 to support one student for a year.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Jericho is committed to helping to keep this school open and available. We have currently scheduled two events. First, the concert described above.

Second, the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Haiti Forum on Sunday, March 16, 10:30 AM, directly after our Sunday morning service. This event is open to anyone wishing to learn more about the school and general situation in Haiti.

Contact person for information: Joanne Ranney, 802-238-5686 or ranney@gmavt.net.

SUMMER CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES



Green Mountain Conservation Camp registration is open — kids age 12-14 (12-16 for advanced sessions) who want to learn about Vermont's wildlife and gain outdoor skills can sign up for one-week camp programs are held at Lake Bomoseen in Castleton and Buck Lake in Woodbury, from June 22-August 22. Tuition is \$250 for the week, including food, lodging and equipment, and financial assistance is available. Information and registration are available at <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/learn-more/gmcc>. For more information, contact FWGMCC@vermont.gov or call 802-522-2925.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Planning ahead: summer 2025 activities for kids

Green Mountain Conservation Camp registration is open — If you are 12-14 years old and want to learn about Vermont's wildlife and gain outdoor skills, consider attending one of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife (VT F&W) Department's Green Mountain Conservation Camps this summer. If you are a GMCC alum, 16 or younger, consider coming back for another summer. The one-week camp programs are held at Lake Bomoseen in Castleton and Buck Lake in Woodbury. Campers participate in hands-on learning about fish and wildlife conservation, ecology, forestry, orienteering, safe firearm and archery techniques, swimming, canoeing, fishing and more. Natural resource professionals come to the camp to share information on their programs and take campers out for field activities. Conservation Camps open June 22 and continue until August 22. Tuition is \$250 for the week, including food, lodging and equipment, and financial assistance is available. Information and registration are available at <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/learn-more/gmcc>. For more information, contact FWGMCC@vermont.gov or call 802-522-2925.

Chittenden County Soccer School 2025 — Registration is open for Chittenden County Soccer School (CCSS) 2025, to be held Monday-Friday, July 14-18, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM at Mills Riverside Park in Jericho. There are half- and full-day camp options; age groups range from 5 to 16+!

All players receive a camp tee and team award. We have a

dedicated and experienced coaching staff returning again this summer to bring the "love of the game" to all our players. Individual ball skills, teamwork, game tactics, full-sided and small-sided games, and goalkeeper training are all part of our daily plan!

Please email Eric Barker of Underhill, barkereric15@gmail.com with any questions, or visit our website at <http://chittendencountysoccerschool.org>.

Saxon Hill School summer camp — Registration is open for summer camp at Saxon Hill School in Jericho. Weekly camps at Saxon Hill provide the ideal experience for children looking to explore the wonders of nature through discovery and adventure. The camps engage children ages 3-6 with art, adventure, creation, construction, nature,

and fun. All weeks of summer camp will include outside play and time for self-guided exploration. At Saxon Hill School, our approach is to follow the lead of children and learn through play. In the spirit of child-led adventure, counselors will aim to focus each week on children's interests and passions as identified on the registration form. Registration is now open! Camps run weekly from June 16-August 22, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. See our website for more information and to register: <https://saxonhillschool.org/summer-camp.html>.

Summer Fairy Camp, Underhill — Registration for Poker Hill Arts summer Fairy Camps is open. These usually fill fast — find information, pictures, videos, and dates at our website <https://www.pokerhillarts.com/magical-fairy-camp>.

Poker Hill Children's Theatre may still have openings for the week of July 28-August 1. This musical theatre camp located in Underhill is for students entering second grade through fifth grade. If your child loves singing, dancing, arts and crafts, and water time, this is the camp for them! Here is the link for more information and to register: <https://bit.ly/410wT5j>.

Canciones y Cuentos: Kids Spanish Camp — Sing songs, read stories, play games, make art, and move your body! All levels, ages 4-9 at the Community Center in Jericho, Browns Trace, Jericho Center. Two Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM sessions: July 28-31 and August 11-14. \$275 per four-day session, or sign up two kids for \$500. Contact Christie Moulton, christiemoulton@gmail.com, to register. Campers should come with a water bottle, morning snack, and lunch.

The lineup of Burlington City Arts' (BCA's) 2025 summer camps is live online at <https://bit.ly/4ZmACP>. At BCA's award-winning camps, students work closely with professional teaching artists for a full week of in-depth studio arts experience. Every camp includes high-quality art materials and a final celebration. Come for a half-day, or pair a morning and afternoon camp together at BCA Studios to make a full-day experience. Camps at the BCA Center run for the full day. Registration for all classes is open and class waitlists are active. Browse the digital guide online at https://issuu.com/btvcityarts/docs/bca_summertime_catalog_2025_mech_single-pages.

Retribe's 2025 summer camps — Registration is open for ReTribe Summer Camps in Underhill. Is your kid ready to unleash their wild side this Summer? Check out our camp options for ages 5-12 at <https://www.retribe.org/day-camp> for both information and a link to registration link. Week-long Day Camps: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Monday-Friday, June 23-27 (Underhill), July 14-18 (Richmond), August 4-8 and 11-15 (Underhill). Week-long Seers, Scouts, Sprites camps: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Monday-Friday, June 16-20, August 18-22, and August 25-29, all in Underhill. Questions? Reach out to Julia Martin at ReTribeTransformation@gmail.com or 609-933-0877

Water Wanderings camp for camping, canoeing — Water Wanderings is entering its ninth summer and we are excited to offer five camps, including an all new Young Adults session and another Grandparents day this season! There are several age groups and two Family Camp sessions offered:

- Youth, ages 9-12: Monday July 7-Friday, July 11 (four nights)
- Teens, ages 13-15: Monday, July 14-Monday, July 21 (seven nights)
- Young Adults, ages 16-18: Wednesday, July 23-Wednesday, July 30 (seven nights)
- Grandparents Day: July 31
- Family Camp I: Monday, August 4-Wednesday, August 6 (two nights). Recommended for families with older campers (ages 7-10)
- Family Camp II: Thursday, August 7-Saturday, August 9 (two nights). Recommended for families with younger campers (ages 1-6)

All camps happen on the Green River Reservoir in Hyde Park, Vermont and have a maximum group size of 12. The youth and teen camps are comprised of three counselors and nine campers while the young adult camp and the family camps have two counselors and ten campers. For more information (including cost and reduced-cost sliding scale), go online to <https://www.waterwanderings.org/register.html>.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Calvary Episcopal Church

Calvary Episcopal is a welcoming, caring, Christian community called to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ, grow our spiritual gifts, and serve our neighbors. Calvary is located at 370 VT Rt. 15 in Jericho. Sunday, March 23, Calvary worships at St. James in Essex at 10:00 AM. The other Sundays, Calvary worships at 9:30 AM at the Jericho church. The next Soup/Supper (held the last Thursday of the month) will be March 27, 5:00 – 7:00 PM. The parish administrator can be reached at calvarychurchjericho@gmail.com or 802-899-0453. The Spirit is stirring in this little church. Come be a part of it!

Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Sunday services at MMUUF are held at 9:30 AM on the second and fourth Sundays (March 9, 23) of each month, September-June. Services are led by members of the fellowship and by invited guest speakers, including visiting UU ministers and leaders of other faiths. Each service explores a different topic. Worship, reflect, and sustain one another, within an inclusive spiritual community, built on values of honoring and affirming the worth of every person, striving for justice, participating in the world community, and respecting the natural web of existence. Services will be held at our Barn, located opposite Packard Road at 195 VT Rt. 15, Jericho, and also over Zoom; please contact info@mmuuf.org or 802-899-2558 for how to join virtually. Learn more at <https://mmuuf.org/> and www.uua.org.

Jericho United Methodist Church

Jericho United Methodist Church welcomes you to grow in Christ with us. We hold dear the United Methodist Church's motto: "Open Doors. Open Hearts. Open Minds." We recognize that our faith journeys are all unique, just as we as individuals are all unique. Know that whoever you are, whatever you do, you are welcome here. We believe that we grow together or not at all. All are welcome! Join us Sundays at 10:00 AM. There will be music, prayer and message from our pastor, Rev. Taeseob Cho. Please contact Rev. Cho at the church phone number, 802-899-4288, or his email, umccho@gmail.com. Located next to the Jericho Town Hall on VT Rt. 15.

United Church of Underhill

The United Church of Underhill is an active, vibrant community. We are young and old; straight and LGBTQIA; singles, couples, and families; believers, questioners, and questioning believers. We are an Open and Affirming and Reconciling church, which means all ARE truly welcome. We are the Old Fashioned Harvest Market Church, the Clutter Barn Church, and a church of fellowship, mission, and service. We gather to worship together virtually and in-person every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM for a traditional but lively service with music, and Sunday School and nursery for the children. We welcome you to join us for worship or just come in, be still, and contemplate your faith. Located at 7 Park St., Underhill. Pastor's office (with voicemail) 802-899-1722; church secretary email secretary@ucu.church. For instructions on joining worship from home, please see <https://united-churchofunderhill.com/joining-worship-from-home/>.

Second Congregational Church, Jeffersonville

The Second Congregational Church in Jeffersonville would like to invite all who feel called to join us for our online church services, Sundays at 10:00 – 11:00 AM, in person or on Zoom. Know that no matter who you are or where you are in life's journey, you are welcome at our church; or in this case, our web-space! <https://www.facebook.com/SecondCongregationalUCC>

Jericho Congregational Church

"An Historic Church Proclaiming an Eternal Message"
On the Green in Jericho Center, VT
Senior Pastor, David Coons and Youth Pastor, Pete Anderson
Sunday School at 8:30 AM for all ages
Fellowship time at 9:30 AM
Worship Service at 10:00 AM
Nursery care provided
Youth group 6:15 PM Sundays in our Sunday school building
802-899-4911; officejcc@comcast.net; www.jcvt.org

All are welcome at Good Shepherd, Jericho

You are invited to worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on VT Rt. 15 at 9:00 AM every Sunday. The building is accessible — all are welcome! There are varied musical styles in worship services, including Folk, Contemporary, Celtic, Latin American, and traditional. Weekday online offerings include Centering Prayer. We are an open-minded Christian community with a focus on social justice issues, where people from different faith traditions, along with those who aren't sure where they belong or what they believe, seek the support of a spiritual home. We welcome you in the name and love of Christ. More information is at www.goodshephrdjericho.org.

St. Thomas Catholic Church

"Worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass"

On Green Street in Underhill Center
Weekend Masses: Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 8:30 AM
Weekday Masses: Wednesday 6:30 PM, Friday 8:00 AM
Pastor: Rev. Domenico Pizzonia; Deacon: Peter Brooks
Religious Ed. Coordinator: Laura Lynch Wells, 802-899-4770
Parish Secretary: Theresa Gingras, 802-899-4632
email: office@stthomasvt.com; website: www.stthomasvt.com

Waterville Union Church

We meet in person at 9:30 AM at the church; masks recommended. Zoom is only available when there is bad weather or illness of a speaker. We do not post our recorded services to Facebook. But information can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/watervilleunionchurch>, watervilleunionchurchvt@gmail.com; 32 Church St., Waterville.

COLLEGE NEWS

Isaac Medina of Underhill, VT has been named to the Fall 2024 Dean's List at Tufts University, Medford, MA. Medina is a member of the class of 2027.

Haleigh Newell-Rentz of Underhill, VT has been named to the Fall 2024 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

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COMING EVENTS

Ongoing Events

It Takes a Village Women's Circle meets on the last Tuesday of the month (March 25), 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the Waterville Town Hall, 544 VT Rt. 109, Waterville. Pot-luck — so if you can please bring something to share; if not, whatever the reason, just bring yourself! Also bring a journal and pen. Donation based; suggested donation \$5 goes to the upkeep of the Waterville Town Hall. But all are welcome, always! <https://www.facebook.com/events/1071704021631117?ref=newsfeed>

Square Dancing — Tuesdays, September-May, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Tuttle Middle School, S. Burlington. Tuttle Middle School, S. Burlington. If you can walk to music, you can learn to square dance! Join the Lake Champlain Squares to exercise bodies and minds through square dancing. All ages and experience levels are welcome.

Burlington Literature Group — a weekly virtual book group that meets weekly, Tuesdays at 6:30 PM, on Zoom. We welcome new committed readers to our sessions. The group has been in existence for years meeting in a physical space but, since the pandemic, has changed to online Zoom sessions. We break down interesting, challenging books into weekly segments of 60 to 100 pages, 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 next book is *Herzog* by Nobel Laureate Saul Bellow. Our schedule: *Herzog* — March 4, section beginning “As he was putting on his shirt he made plans” to “They shook hands.”; March 11, chapter beginning “At last he embraced his daughter” to end.

Mountainsong Community Chorus — Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, at the Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 195 VT Rt. 15, Jericho (across from Packard Road). If you love to sing, come join Mountainsong, a volunteer-run community singing group which harmonizes together in four parts on Thursday evenings! However you like to sing, bring your voice and join us! Whether you learn by ear or read music, you'll be comfortable in our group. You don't have to be a “great” singer — our aim is to sing for the joy of singing. We have almost no performances, except maybe to sing a few songs for a local assisted living facility and one short event for family and friends at the end of the season. We sing most weeks, although you can come as often as you are able, and if you miss the first one or two (or more), no worries! Cost: \$1 a week for using the space. We also ask for a small contribution for purchasing music (to be announced when we have our first meeting). Questions? Contact: Lynne Robbins, 802-899-2436 or lar.2436@gmail.com, or Jean Archibald, 802-899-5219 if you have questions, or just show up on a Thursday evening! We look forward to singing together!

The Underhill-Jericho Walking Club meets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 5:30 PM, at the United Church of Underhill on Park St., Underhill. We walk for 30-45 minutes; we don't walk if it is raining or snowing. Please bring yak tracks and a headlamp. Join us whenever you like!

The Jericho Historical Society meets at the Old Red Mill, VT Rt. 15, Jericho on the second Thursday of each month (February 13) at 6:00 PM. Visit our website for more information or to request a zoom invitation: <https://www.jerichohistoricalsociety.org/events.html>.

The Underhill Historical Society meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM. Meetings are at the Old Schoolhouse, 32 Pleasant Valley Rd., Underhill Center, spring through fall and at the Town Hall in the winter. Visit our website for more information about the Underhill Historical Society: <https://underhillhistoricalsociety.org/>

Craft Group: meets twice a month on Thursdays (March 6, 20), 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, 8 River Rd., Jericho. Open to anyone interested in coming with any craft they like: crocheting, rug hooking, knitting, needlepoint, watercolors, jewelry making, macramé... you name it! If you have any questions please contact Amy Tower, 802-355-9671 or atoverinv@gmail.com, or Julie Hehir, 802-899-3199 or juliehhehir@comcast.net.

Waterville Country Church hosts a Community Meal the first Thursday of each month (March 6). Come enjoy a relaxing homemade meal with neighbors at the church or pick up meal(s) to go. Donations accepted. All donations will be given to a local nonprofit, charity, or community service organization. For information contact Susan Schill or Kim Pitt, watervillecountrychurch@gmail.com. Ask about delivery to shut-ins!

Monday night yoga in Underhill Center, Mondays, March 10-May 26, 6:30 – 7:30 PM, upstairs in the Great Room at the Underhill Town Hall. We will engage the connection between breath, body, and mind to generate heat and build strength and flexibility. *Vinyasa* incorporates a dynamic flow of gradually intensifying postures, with intentional breath, followed by cool down and rest. All levels and abilities are welcome! Bring your own mat and any blocks or props. Cost: \$7 per class or \$30 for 5-class punch card. For more information, go online to <https://www.underhillvt.gov/recreation-committee/page/vinyasa-yoga>

Bone Builders Class: at the Jeffersonville Church (Second Congregational Church of Christ, 16 Church St., Jeffersonville) from 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM on Mondays and Thursdays. It is a drop-in class, but first-timers have a couple of pages to fill out and sign. It is free, but a donation bucket is available for those wishing to reimburse the church for the use of the space. All are welcome. We have a good time — be prepared for some laughter as well as improving your strength and balance. Call Melody Tobin (802-644-2409) to discuss, or just show up.

Bone Builders Class: at St. Thomas Catholic Church, Underhill Center, on Mondays/Wednesdays/most Fridays, 9:00 – 10:15 AM; first Friday of the month, 9:45 AM. Sponsored by the United Way of Northwest VT, RSVP Bone Builders is a free exercise program for men and women, designed to prevent the negative effects of osteoporosis. For more information contact Danielle Schwer, 802-861-7821 or danielle@unitedwaynwvt.org.

RSVP Bone Builders program, Westford Common Hall, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:30 – 11:30 AM. Free! Please wear comfortable clothing and bring water. This program focuses on balance and light weight training to protect against fractures caused by osteoporosis. Per studies by Tufts University published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, those who participated in the program just twice a week, gained muscular strength, balance, and increased bone density. Contact Jocelyn Chauvin, 802-999-6387.

Coming Events

Friday, March 7

Annual St Thomas Baked Fish Dinner, 5:00 – 6:00 PM, St. Thomas Church, Green St., Underhill Center. This annual event is a sit-down dinner in the Parish Hall, buffet style. Menu: baked fresh haddock marinated in a lemon dill glaze, wild mushroom and herb rice pilaf, buttered green beans, coleslaw, roll, and dessert. The adult meal cost is \$15 and is a walk-in — we're setting up and cooking for 120 meals; there is a kids' meal (\$10) of crispy battered fillets, tater tots, green beans, coleslaw, roll, and dessert. We invite you to come, have dinner on this first Friday of Lent, and visit with neighbors and friends. Handicapped accessible.

Friday-Sunday, March 7-9

2025 Vermont Flower Show, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM Friday and Saturday, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM Sunday, Champlain Valley Exposition, Pearl St., Essex Junction. Stroll through the Grand Garden Display *A Story of Gardening* celebrating gardens through the ages. Shop the Marketplace; enjoy seminars, family entertainment, kids' crafts, and more. Buy advance tickets now or at the door. Spring is in the air — come smell the tulips! For more information or to purchase tickets online: <https://vnlavt.org/event/the-vermont-flower-show/>. Tickets are also available at Claussen's Florist, Greenhouse, and Perennial Farm, Colchester and Gardeners' Supply Co. stores.

Saturday, March 8

Finding Family with DNA Testing, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM, on Zoom. At the age of 18, Richard Hill discovered that he was adopted. He eventually succeeded in finding his biological family through his landmark use of DNA testing. Richard recounts his struggles to solve the mystery of his origins in his book *Finding Family*, and this talk will describe that success. He's made it his personal mission to share what he has learned with other adoptees and genealogists. He has done presentations for national and regional conferences, local genealogy groups, libraries, DAR meetings, etc. Class is offered by the VT Genealogy Library; the cost is \$10. Please visit www.vtgenlib.org to register. There is a limit of 100 people for this Zoom class.

Monday, March 10

Researching Your Irish Ancestors, 7:00 PM, VT Genealogy Library, Pinewood Plaza, 57 River Rd., Essex Junction. As part of the 2025 Burlington Irish Heritage Festival, the Vermont Genealogy Library is again hosting this in-person-only presentation (will not be recorded for later viewing) by Ed McGuire, “Researching Your Irish Ancestors.” This talk will provide a brief history of Irish immigration to North America and then cover common problems facing Irish researchers. Ed will also discuss techniques for finding your ancestors' parish and he'll highlight the major record sets in Ireland. Some lesser-known sources and significant new collections will be added this year. A multi-page handout listing key references and links to some helpful online resources will be provided. Free.

Tuesday, March 11

Messiah in the Passover, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Catalyst Church, Raceway Rd., Jericho. Dr. Richard Flashman of Chosen People Ministries will conduct this powerful visual presentation of the traditional Passover Seder table. Dr. Flashman will explain the symbolic meanings of the various items of the Passover feast and highlight their relationship to the Last Supper that Messiah celebrated with His disciples, emphasizing the redemptive significance of the crucifixion. Messiah in the Passover provides the Christian community with insight into Jewish traditions, fostering a deeper understanding of the Jewish roots of Christianity. The experience also serves as a bridge between the Jewish and Christian communities, helping both to appreciate their shared heritage. This event is open to the public, and all are welcome. A love offering will be received during the presentation. <http://catalystvt.org>

Wednesday, March 12

LWV VT talk on US SC decision on bump stocks, 7:00 PM, online. The League of Women Voters of Vermont (LWV VT) and Kellogg-Hubbard Library present William Clark of the Gifford Law Center and Attorney Cabot Teachout, a criminal defense lawyer, who will discuss the U.S. Supreme Court's *Garland v. Cargill* decision on bump stocks. To register for this talk go online to <https://kellogg-hubbard.org/calendar/lwvgarlandvcargill/>. You may send questions in advance to league@lwvofvt.org, or through Chat during the event.

Special Materials Recycling Trivia, 4:00 – 5:00 PM, Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District, 29 Sunset Dr., Morristown. Do you ever wonder what happens to recyclable materials that don't belong in single-stream recycling? From film plastics, to e-waste, to batteries, to clothing + textiles, and others? Join us for a broad overview of why participating in these programs is so important and where materials go when they leave the District. The workshop will wrap up with trivia and Q/A. Snacks and take home educational materials will be provided. To register, email outreach@lrswmd.org or call 802-888-7317 ext. 406.

Friday, March 14

MMU Blood Drive, 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Mount Mansfield Union High School, 211 Browns Trace, Jericho. Go online to <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=COUGAR> to sign up for a spot. One donation of blood can save the lives of three people! Help your community and get free snacks!

Saturday, March 15

Identifying Trees in Winter, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Mills Riverside Park Pavilion, VT Rt. 15, Jericho. The Jericho Underhill Land Trust will host a special winter walk on Bark, Buds, and Branches: the Winter Trees of Mills Riverside Park. When the leaves are on the ground and branches are bare, how do we recognize the familiar trees in the woods around us? Join long-time UVM botanists Cathy Paris and Dave Barrington to ramble the winter woods of the Park and learn to identify a dozen common trees in winter. There will be a brief introduction at the Pavilion, then the ramble around the West Fieldstone Loop. Dress to stay warm and dry and bring a small magnifying glass, if you have one. All ages; is free and open to the public. Dress warmly. Severe weather date: March 22. Questions? Contact 802-899-2693 or julandtrust@gmail.com.

Setting the Stage: Our Families in the pre-Revolutionary Lake Champlain Basin, 1760-1775, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM, on Zoom and in-person at the VT Genealogy Library, Pinewood Plaza, 57 River Rd., Essex Junction. We know our French-Canadian ancestors were in the Lake Champlain Basin early



No More Pits: A New Era of Waste Management on the Long Trail

GMC Field Coordinator Nigel Bates discusses the past, present, and future of waste management on the Long Trail.

Thursday, March 6 | Doors at 6:30 p.m., program at 7 p.m. Meeting Hall at GMC Headquarters, Waterbury Center, Vermont

In fall 2024, the last unpleasant and unsustainable pit privy on the Long Trail System was finally decommissioned, and the decades-long project of converting to composting models completed. How did the Green Mountain Club make it to this point, and what still lies ahead? Join us online or in person on Thursday, March 6, 7:00 PM at the Green Mountain Club's headquarters in Waterbury Center for No More Pits: A New Era of Waste Management on the Long Trail, a look into how backcountry waste management has evolved on the trails over the years. In this presentation, Field Coordinator Nigel Bates will discuss the past, present, and future of waste management on the Long Trail. For those unable to attend in person, this talk will be recorded and posted to GMC's youtube channel afterward. Register online at www.tickettailor.com/events/greenmountainclub/1523677. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

on, and some fought in the American Revolution, but research on those eras has led to the realization that family stories from 1760-1775 are key to unlocking our family histories. Suzanne Blanchard's class will look at the region during this period and how our folks may have been involved in life on the Lake. Cost \$10. Please visit www.vtgenlib.org to register.

Sunday, March 16

Chittenden-Southeast VT senators virtual Town Hall, 5:00 – 6:15 PM, on Zoom. Join Chittenden Southeast Senators Virginia Lyons, Kesha Ram Hinsdale, and Thomas Chittenden to discuss what has been accomplished this legislative session and what still needs to be done. Send questions in advance or ask us live; please send your questions to Erin, estoetznerv@vtDemocrats.org. RSVP required for Zoom link, <https://www.mobilize.us/dashboard/vtdems/event/752140/>.

Winter Soup Bowl Supper, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, Underhill Town Hall, Pleasant Valley Rd., Underhill Center. Please join us for our ninth year of coming together for hot soup and warm fellowship in the midst of the cold and snow. There will be a variety of tasty soups, including a vegan option. Please bring your own bowls, cups, spoons, and beverages, and bread or a dessert to share.

Thursday, March 20

Learn Together Webinar: Immigration, 6:30 – 7:30 PM, on Zoom or 2nd Congregational Church, Church St., Jeffersonville. Presented by staff from Migrant Justice, who have insight into how national policies are affecting migrants here in Vermont. Join us downstairs in the church; or to watch on your own, register online at <https://bit.ly/41kJDTz> (short for <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8028992693>). Questions? Contact pastor, the Rev. Sally May, at revjefucc@gmail.com.

MAKING SWEET MEMORIES SINCE 1986



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The Mountain Gazette

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HEALTH NEWS

MMU blood drive March 14

It's that time of the year again — Friday, March 14, is the MMU Blood Drive, 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Mount Mansfield Union High School, 211 Browns Trace, Jericho.

Go online to <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=COUGAR> to sign up for a spot. One donation of blood can save the lives of three people! Help your community and get free snacks!

Weekly yoga class in Underhill March-May

From the Underhill Recreation Committee

Mondays can be tough. Come recover from your day, and restore to continue your week — Monday night yoga will be offered March 10-May 26, 6:30 – 7:30 PM, upstairs in the Great Room at the Underhill Town Hall in Underhill Center.

In this class we will engage the connection between breath, body, and mind to generate heat and build strength and flexibility. *Vinyasa* incorporates a dynamic flow of gradually intensifying postures, with intentional breath, followed by cool down and rest.

All levels and abilities are welcome! Students need to bring their own mat and any blocks or props they may want or need. The cost is \$7 per class or \$30 for 5-class punch card.

For more information, go online to <https://www.underhillvt.gov/recreation-committee/page/vinyasa-yoga>

Fitness classes at CCJ

Everyone can do it! No matter what your goal, these classes are designed to be fun first. You'll giggle your way to whatever "shape" you'd like to be in.

Come to the Community Center in Jericho (Browns Trace, Jericho Center) Mondays from 9:00 – 10:00 AM, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 – 7:00 PM, for an hour of fun with fat burning moves and exercises that build muscular strength, endurance, and suppleness to make everything you do easier, and finishing with Pilates and yoga relaxation poses to get your perspective back.

Purchase a virtual punch pass that's good for any of the three classes offered throughout the season, now through Tuesday, April 29: six classes for \$48; 12 classes for \$80; and single class drop-in \$10. Use whenever you like through April 29.

The classes are offered by Trish Densham, personal trainer and long-time fitness professional. To sign up or get more information email tdmover@gmail.com or text/call 802-999-1265.

Free radon test for your home

From the Vermont Department of Health

Did you know you can get lung cancer without smoking?

Radon is a radioactive gas that has no color, taste, or smell but may be inside your home. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among people who do not smoke. If you smoke or used to smoke, your risk of getting lung cancer from radon is especially high.

One in seven Vermont homes has elevated levels of radon. Test your home for free by requesting a kit from the VT Health Department at <https://www.HealthVermont.gov/radon> or by calling 800-439-8550.

News and opportunities from Healthy Lamoille Valley

From Jessica Bickford, Healthy Lamoille Valley

New community funding opportunity — the Northeast Vermont Prevention Consortium is pleased to announce an upcoming funding opportunity. Watch for the soon-to-be-released Request for Proposal (RFP) and other important dates related to the RFP addressing substance misuse prevention across all ages throughout our region. Learn more at <https://www.healthylamoillevalley.org/vplo-grants-2025>.

Prevention sponsorships still available — this year we have \$11,000 available to be given out in increments of \$250-500, to be used by June 30, 2025. Regional priorities include reducing underage substance use, reducing adult high risk substance use, and creating a community where youth and adults feel valued, connected, and supported. Who can apply? Schools (including clubs and sports teams), childcares, afterschool programs, libraries, municipalities, community third space organizations, community non-profits (including sports clubs if they have a non-profit status), faith-based organizations, individuals with fiscal sponsors. Learn more online at <https://www.healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-sponsorships>.

Join us at Vermont Prevention Day, Thursday, April 3 at the Capital Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Montpelier — *Prevention Works! VT* is excited to invite you to Vermont Prevention Day 2025. We encourage you to join your prevention colleagues, youth, and community partners at the Capitol Plaza and Vermont Statehouse for this important day. Prevention Day

has a long history in Montpelier, where prevention staff and community partners advocate and raise awareness about the impact of substance misuse prevention on the health and well-being of Vermont youth and communities. Learn more about the schedule of events and activities and register online at <https://preventionworksvermont.org/news-events/>.

Call for Prevention Honors nominations — each year, Healthy Lamoille Valley honors individuals and groups that have made significant contributions in time and effort to supporting a healthy Lamoille Valley community and working towards the reduction of youth substance misuse. Honorees represent the full engagement of the Healthy Lamoille Valley (HLV) coalition across individuals, businesses, organizations, and volunteer collaborations. Do you know a person or organization that deserves recognition for their work supporting a healthy Lamoille Valley and preventing youth substance misuse? Contact HLV Coordinator Jessica Bickford, jessica@healthylamoillevalley.org, to nominate them! Prevention Honors will be awarded during May's Healthy Lamoille Valley Prevention Celebration!

Copley Terrace in Morrisville bought by Evernorth

Evernorth, a Burlington-based nonprofit dedicated to expanding affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents in Northern New England, will purchase Copley Terrace, a 38-unit senior apartment building located at 199 Doctor Tinker St., Morrisville from Copley Health Systems Inc. (CHSI), the umbrella organization of Copley Hospital. CHSI's Board of Trustees voted at its June 2024 Board meeting to approve the sale, which was completed on Monday, February 24.

Built in 1983, Copley Terrace, owned by Lamoille Area Housing Corporation, a subsidiary of CHSI, was part of the larger community-focused footprint in Morrisville. For over two decades CHSI was proud to include housing for low- and moderate-income and elderly individuals, alongside its Critical Access Hospital and ancillary services supporting the healthcare needs of our community. The decision to make Copley Terrace available for sale to Evernorth reflects the Board's refocusing of CHSI's mission to support the healthcare needs of the community and ensuring Copley Hospital is in a stronger position for the future.

Act 167 and the Oliver Wyman report catalyzed a new review of costs to identify areas which could be cut while maintaining affordability and excellent care for the community. Services that have already been identified and closed in 2025 are the sleep study program and the therapy pool. Additional services are under review as part of a holistic, system-wide approach to Copley's long-term sustainability.

"Copley Health Systems and Copley Hospital are deeply engaged in service to our patients and residents of the Hospital's service area," said Kathy Demars, RN, Chair of the Copley Health Systems and Copley Hospital Boards. "Copley's role in the community is first and foremost as a nonprofit Critical Access Hospital. The Board decided to focus resources on its core businesses — Copley Hospital and ancillary clinics. Evernorth is a trusted leader in community development in Northern New England and, in 35 years has built or invested in more than 17,000 affordable homes and apartments for low- and moderate-income people, including in our own community at the Village Apartments on Hutchins Street in Morrisville. The Board takes seriously its longstanding relationship with Copley Terrace and carefully selected Evernorth as its partner. We have full confidence in Evernorth's ability to meet the needs of current and future Copley Terrace residents."

Working with the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Vermont Community Loan Fund, and the Evernorth Loan Fund for the acquisition financing to purchase Copley Terrace, the Department of Housing and Urban Development approved the transfer of the Section 8 rental assistance contract to Evernorth prior to closing. "The residents of Copley Terrace will continue to have their affordable rents," noted Kathy Beyer, Senior Vice President, Real Estate Development for Evernorth. "We have also signed a perpetual affordability covenant, which means Copley Terrace will be a resource for the community for generations to come."

Copley Terrace will be managed by Downstreet Housing & Community Development, a regional affordability housing nonprofit based out of Barre that has recently established a property management office in Morrisville.

About Copley Hospital Copley is greater Lamoille County's nonprofit community hospital. Copley's core services include emergency services, diagnostic imaging, general surgery, orthopaedics, and women and children's services. In addition, Copley provides a variety of specialty care, including cardiology, oncology, pulmonary medicine, neurology, and rehabilitation on its campus in Morrisville, Vermont. Copley has been named a Top 100 Critical Access Hospital and one of the Top 50 hospitals in New England based on patient satisfaction. For more information, visit www.copleyvt.org.

Howard Center news and announcements

Perspectives 2025: Confronting Stigma, Cultivating Compassion — Registration is open for Howard Center's spring conference on Tuesday, May 13, featuring Ashley C. Ford, Anne Lamott, Dr. Damon Tweedy, and others. Join us for a day of diverse perspectives, learning, and connection. Virtual option available. To register: www.howardcenter.org/conference.

Curling Classic — Watch teams take to the ice at the annual Curling Classic on Saturday, March 15 at Cairns Arena in South Burlington from 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM. Join the South Burlington Rotary Club, Howard Center, and the South Burlington Food Shelf in fundraising for great community organizations. Entry is free and spectators are welcome! Learn more at www.howardcenter.org/howard-center-curling-challenge.

Quick Reference Guide: Where to Start — Need help but not sure where to turn? Howard Center's Quick Reference Guide connects you to the right program, whether you or someone you know is experiencing a crisis, needs general support, or wants to reach community or street outreach teams. Find it online at www.howardcenter.org/quick-guide.

Upcoming exhibits — Howard Center Arts Collective invites you to view current exhibitions: *Let the Fabric Speak* (Fleming Museum through Saturday, May 17); *Dreamscapes* (Burlington City Hall through Monday, March 31); and our Feature Artist Shows at Flynndog Gallery (with Isabel & Jody through the end of May).

Howard Center helps people and communities thrive by providing supports and services to address mental health, substance use, and developmental needs. To access services, call 802-488-6000.

Strep throat

Parents have been asking me some painful questions about strep throats and why we need to treat them with antibiotics. Well, I don't want this condition to be sorely missed by anyone so I shall share some important information.

Strep throat, though unusual to see in children less than two years of age, is one of the most common childhood illnesses. When recognized and treated early, strep throat rarely causes a problem.

However, when missed strep throat can cause a type of life-threatening shock, result in kidney disease, or progress to something several weeks after the sore throat that we call rheumatic fever. This is a serious form of heart disease that can also affect the joints, skin, and even neurologic system. Preventing these complications is why we treat all cases of strep throat with antibiotics.

When does a sore throat need medical attention?

A sore throat caused by a virus usually occurs in association with other viral symptoms like a runny nose, cough, hoarseness, red or runny eyes, and/or diarrhea.

Strep throat on the other hand usually may just involve the throat, which will look red with white patches in the back, swollen glands on the sides of the neck, and enlarged tonsils also covered with white patches. There may also be fever, headache, rash, and/or belly pain.

If you have any suspicion that your child's sore throat might be due to the strep bacteria, please have their throat tested for strep. If the test is positive, begin treatment with an antibiotic, usually a type of penicillin.

Your child with strep is contagious until after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and until there has been no fever for at least 12 hours. Please keep this in mind when it comes to deciding whether to take your child to their health care professional or send them back to school.

A full course of antibiotics is still required — for ten days, even if your child is no longer contagious with strep — to ensure its eradication.

Can strep throat be prevented?

There is no vaccine for strep throat. And even if you have it once, you can get it again.

You can reduce the chances of your child being infected by having children not share their food, drinks, or towels with other family or friends, and to sneeze or cough into their elbow and not their hands.

Handwashing, of course, is a great way to minimize the spread of this bacteria.

Hopefully, tips like these will be easy ones to swallow when it comes to knowing the importance of recognizing and then treating strep throat.

Lewis First, MD, is Chief of Pediatrics at The University of Vermont Children's Hospital and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Vermont's Lerner College of Medicine

LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

Chittenden-Southeast senators virtual Town Hall March 16

By Thomas Chittenden, State Senator
Chittenden-Southeast Senate District

Please join your Chittenden Southeast Senators Virginia Lyons, Kesha Ram Hinsdale, and Thomas Chittenden for a virtual Town Hall on Sunday, March 16, 5:00 – 6:15 PM. Join your Senators in a conversation about what has been accomplished this legislative session and what still needs to be done.

You can send questions in advance or ask us live. Please send your questions to Erin, estoetzn@videmocrats.org, and to request Q&A with your senators. RSVP required for Zoom link, <https://www.mobilize.us/dashboard/videms/event/752140/>.

VT House update

By Brenda Steady, Chittenden-25 House District

February 4-7

Dr. Mark Levine announced his retirement last week. Dr. Levine has led the state's public health efforts for eight years and worked tirelessly during the COVID era for Vermonters.

Each committee has been busy hearing testimony as we dive into the FY2026 budget. I am on the Human Services Committee and am surprised by the number of organizations that offer the same services. My concern is the administrative cost, with some directors making six-figure salaries. During testimony, the Deputy Commissioner shared that one family had already used free hotel days from another organization and then received 80 days with the state housing program. Some of these groups are asking for millions of dollars in state funds. One group wants \$500M, with an additional \$1M to hire staff. I imagine other committees are struggling with the same issues. My committee is currently working on H.91 (<https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2026/H.91>).

Another concern I have is that hotels/motels will not offer their

establishments to house the homeless due to the stipulations put on them in this bill. They are capped at \$80 per room by the state, and any payment will be withheld if there are issues with the room, such as leaks. There already isn't enough space for people who have qualified and are most likely sleeping in their vehicles while waiting for a space due to the motels/hotels being full right now with the Cold Weather Exception program. In my opinion, this bill will come at a high cost to taxpayers.

The Education Committee is also continuing to take testimony from the Agency of Education on the Governor's proposal. They are slowly formulating a path forward. The House and Senate Committees on Appropriations held one of two joint public hearings, including one on Thursday, February 20. That hearing will be available to watch live on YouTube at this link: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/streaming/house-appropriations>.

Vermonters have a place to provide feedback, questions, and comments on the Governor's proposed education transformation plan. Please share the email address aoe.edpolicy@vermont.gov

Legislative reports continued on page 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Westford School middle grades consolidated into EMS

To the Editor,

For those interested in the future of our Westford School, I have some disappointing news: Despite our hard work and perseverance, the EWSD Board voted last night to consolidate Westford Middle School into Essex Middle School (EMS). I'm sad for Westford kids, parents, and community.

The savings to consolidate the middle school is LESS than the salary of one school administrator, to put this into perspective.

The EWSD Board also voted to close Summit School, a terrible loss for that community. With the influx of students into Essex, they voted to lease (not buy) modular classrooms (trailers) to manage the increase in students without increasing class sizes too much. We will still have increased class sizes in Essex next year and a half empty building in our town. Transportation for our kids is still not figured out. We can expect over two hours on the middle school bus, and participating in extracurriculars will now cost hours in driving time to and from Essex. Also, our cost per pupil at WES now increases to 34% above the district average (currently, we have average costs per pupil). This puts our little school at risk of closing in the future, with new state legislation on the horizon. We were offered "more programming", which means an extra foreign language, algebra for 8th graders (maybe), and a couple more sports teams. We lose our school events in Westford, our awesome outdoor programming that takes advantage of our 200 acres of Town Lands, our small class sizes, mentorship opportunities for middle schoolers, a five minute drive to school, and our little community feel. They told us that merging with Essex to create a "unified" school district

was a move to "save" WES. It really doesn't seem that way now.

The board members voted to pass the budget, so it's a done deal, and now goes to the voters in April. Our taxes still go up, despite these huge, sweeping changes.

Thank you all so much to those who stood up against this inequitable and risky move. Thanks to our board members who voted to keep our school intact. Our advocacy group heard from over 100 concerned residents (there are 200 kids in our school by the way) who were ready to fight for our kids and our town. We stood up as a community, and put in A LOT of time and effort. It was an honor to work with such passionate community members. Westford rocks.

I'm going to send an email to the Board expressing my disappointment and concern for the future of our school.

R Kirsten Tyler
Westford
(mom of two WES middle schoolers)

EWSD Board February newsletter

To the Editor,

As a parent, I was deeply frustrated by the February school board newsletter. The district needs to cut \$6 million dollars, which has led to incredibly difficult decisions — relocating Westford 6th-8th graders to Essex Middle School, increasing class sizes, and essentially closing Summit Street School. These are massive changes that will directly impact our children's education and well-being.

Yet in the very same newsletter, the board highlights its advocacy for the continuation of Universal School Meals, a program costing \$18.5 million. While I wholeheartedly support ensuring that children in need have access to meals, many families

are more than capable of feeding their own children. I don't know exactly how much of that funding benefits our district, but I do know that most parents would rather see smaller class sizes and stable school communities than have their children relocated or learning in modular trailers.

I understand there are many factors at play, and perhaps I'm in the minority, but the messaging in this newsletter felt completely out of touch. It's frustrating to see the district struggle with painful budget cuts while prioritizing an expensive statewide program that many families don't necessarily need. This isn't about taking meals away from kids who need them — it's about making sure our schools have the resources to provide the best education possible for all students.

Melinda Antonucci
Westford

"Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic.

Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary

trouble." — John Lewis (1940-2020), was Georgia's U.S. House Representative from 1987 until his passing. He grew up in an era of racial segregation; inspired by Martin Luther King Jr., he joined the Civil Rights movement. Lewis was a Freedom Rider, spoke at the 1963 March on Washington, and led the demonstration that became known as "Bloody Sunday."

He was elected to Congress in 1986 and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011.

Legislative reports continued from page 4

with your community and encourage your neighbors to make sure their voices are heard.

February 18-21

Highlight of the Week: The Milton Girls Varsity Soccer team walked through the Capitol doors on Friday, February 21 to be recognized for their second consecutive DII championship title. Representative Morgan introduced them on the House floor. It was wonderful hearing all my fellow legislators applaud our Milton girls. Their coaches, along with Milton's Athletic Director Marcel, accompanied the team. They also had their picture taken with Acting Governor- Lieutenant Governor Rodgers, Senator Mattos, Representative Michael Morgan, Representative Leland Morgan, Representative Chris Taylor, and myself.

Committee work: I serve on the Human Services Committee, where we have been listening to testimony from several non-profit organizations regarding the high costs associated with maintaining the hotel/motel program. The testimony and funding discussions aim to aid our work on the FY26 budget. Committee members are divided into groups to review different budget sections. One group presented the restaurant program proposal, with Anora Horton, Executive Director of Hunger Free Vermont, asking to allow EBT cards to be used at restaurants. While I understand the concept, I'm concerned about individuals and families potentially running out of their monthly benefits and struggling further. There is already a strain on food shelves, and I can imagine that will become worse if the restaurant program is approved. The cost would be approximately \$75K to update restaurant systems and about \$100K for an employee to run the program. I recommend listening to the live stream meeting for more information, which can be accessed at <http://goldendomevt.com>.

Bills on the floor: Over 300 bills have been presented, and more are coming to a vote. This week, we passed the following bills to the Senate:

- H.98: An act relating to confirmatory adoptions;
- H.154: An act designating November as Vermont Month of the Veteran;
- H.13: An act relating to Medicaid payment rates for home and community-based service providers;
- H.44: An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing impaired driving.

Contact Representative Brenda Steady at bsteady@leg.state.vt.us or 802-338-8374.

Legislative update

By Thomas Stevens, Washington-Chittenden House District February 21

We've just wrapped up week 7 of the legislative session, and all of the House Committees are hunkered down in their committees working on their priority bills. The bills have to be finished by Friday, March 14, unless they are money bills, which have to make a Friday, March 21 deadline. Hours of work will increase, and for those of us on the Appropriations Committee, we will stay hunkered down until the 21st, as we have to consider financial implications of any of the bills that will be proposed.

What to do about Education is perhaps the major conversation in the building this week. Here is a quick update of the process so far.

First, remember that much of the anger directed at the Legislature and the government last fall was centered on the incredible increase in property tax rates in about two-thirds of communities across the state. This year's "December Letter" predicted an increase of 5.9%, a substantial decrease from last year but still an increase. The Governor has indicated that he would like to use a substantial part of our budget surplus to "buy down" the property tax rate again. This method of finance is problematic, as it doesn't lower the cost of schools, just the way to pay for it. It is like using a credit card, in that it has to be paid back at some point — perhaps as early as next year — and it gives a false impression that anything has changed. We will know after Town Meeting (where all but a few school budgets will be decided) what the statewide increases or decreases will be, and whether such funds will be necessary for this purpose.

But the Governor wasn't satisfied with just attempting to lower the statewide property tax rate — he wants to reform the whole education along with the education finance system, and he wants it done this year. You may have heard some of his ideas, ranging from forcing school closures, reducing local control, reducing the number of supervisory districts to five, and so

on. The relevant committees, Education and Ways and Means, have continued to take testimony on the ideas presented by the Secretary of Education, and are giving it a lot of thought.

It hasn't gone smoothly yet. The Agency of Education has not provided enough data for the committees to have a complete conversation about the ideas, and much of the data provided by a consulting firm is flawed. And with crossover day just a couple of weeks away, they have not yet (as of this writing) provided the committees with an actual bill outlining their intent with statutory language. This is a huge problem, as either one of the pillars we are talking about — finance or governance — are extremely complex and must be contemplated with bona fide data and testimony.

Needless to say, answers will not come easily, and I fear that if they come quickly, the changes requested will not be constitutionally equitable.

I am not on either committee, but receive updates. I remain hopeful that there may be a path to lighten the financial load, but I have not yet heard that the path has been found. It's frustrating because the lines of communication have been muted a bit, but I know the committees are determined to keep the line open if the Administration wants to come to the table in good faith.

I will be attending each of Huntington's, Bolton's and Waterbury's Town Meetings. Please feel free to reach out, tom@stevensvermont.com.

Update from the VT House

By Theresa Wood, Washington-Chittenden House District February 16

This week at the State House the first bill was signed into law by the Governor — H.78, an act relating to use of the Australian Ballot system in local elections.

Additionally, H.41 was passed unanimously by the House. This bill creates a felony penalty for abuse of a corpse. This bill has connections to the case of Roberta Martin, formerly of Waterbury, who was brutally killed last year.

In committee we spent considerable time taking testimony on H.91 — creating the emergency temporary shelter program, which would replace what is currently known as the General Assistance Hotel/Motel program. We also continued our work on the FY26 budget, focusing on the Health Department.

Lastly, in a real treat one of the devotionals last week was from Vermont's first Youth Poet Laureate — Harwood Union's own Harmony Devoe. Here's a line from the poem she shared:

We are all born human, but we must earn the "e" in humane.

February 21

There is a lot of "stuff" floating around in social media about H.215, which is a bill to set the Governor's and legislators' compensation. I want to dispel any thoughts or concerns that people may have about that bill — it is not going anywhere. Let me explain — any legislator (senator or representative) can introduce any bill, hundreds of them are introduced over the two-year biennium. Only a handful of them ever pass. One legislator introduced this bill, but I can assure you that the bill will not be passed, and probably will not even see any testimony.

Bills we did pass this week include:

- H.13, a bill to consider Medicaid payment rates for home and community-based services for older Vermonters and those with disabilities (this bill came out of my committee);
- H.44, a bill with miscellaneous amendments to the laws governing impaired driving;
- H.98, a bill relating to confirmatory adoption for children born through assisted reproduction;
- H.154, establishing November as Vermont Veterans Month.

There was a public hearing on judicial retention on February 26. Each year several judges are up for a decision on their retention, with an opportunity for the public to weigh in.

Stay safe during the winter storms and as always, you can reach me at twood@leg.state.vt.us.

Senate update: education, climate, budget priorities

By Keshia Ram Hinsdale

State Senator, Chittenden-Southeast Senate District

As we move through this legislative session, I want to take a moment to thank you for staying engaged and sharing your thoughts. Whether it's supporting our schools, ensuring smart

climate policies, or making Vermont more affordable, your input is shaping the work we do in Montpelier. Here's where things stand on some key issues:

Education: balancing quality and affordability — I proudly voted YES on the CVSD school budget and want to acknowledge the strong leadership of our district in providing high-quality education while being mindful of costs. CVSD has been recognized as a model district in the Legislature, demonstrating that efficiency and excellence can go hand in hand.

As we consider the Governor's proposed education reforms — which include district consolidation, governance changes, and a foundation funding formula — we are listening carefully to all perspectives to ensure any changes work for Vermont families, students, and taxpayers.

One concern: The proposed \$13,200 per student (plus weights) would mean a 20% budget cut for CVSD. Making up that shortfall locally would be a major challenge, with no guarantee of significant savings.

At the same time, I recognize that Vermonters are frustrated with rising property taxes and that we need to find ways to fund schools fairly without putting an undue burden on working families.

Some have asked about universal school meals, and I want to be clear: returning to an eligibility-based system would actually cost more due to administrative costs and student meal debt. School meals and school choice expansion are off the table for consideration.

On district consolidation, there is little support for reducing to just five districts statewide. Instead, research shows that districts between 4000-8000 students tend to balance cost savings with maintaining local input and school quality — which could mean somewhere between 10 and 20 districts statewide.

Another key concern is teacher-student ratios, which are proposed at 1:15 for K-3 and 1:25 for grades 4-12. However, most districts do not currently operate at these levels, and any shift would need to be carefully planned.

Finally, Senator Ginny Lyons is leading efforts to address rising healthcare costs, which remain a major factor in education spending and overall cost of living.

These discussions are ongoing, and no major decisions will be made without thorough public input. I encourage you to stay engaged and share your thoughts — your voice matters.

Climate action: practical and balanced solutions — This week, hundreds of Vermonters reached out in support of continuing our progress on climate action while keeping costs manageable for families and businesses. Senate Democrats remain committed to protecting Vermont's environment while ensuring affordability and economic growth.

We are open to discussions on making climate policies more cost-effective, but we will not abandon our commitments to reducing emissions, making energy more affordable, and strengthening Vermont's resilience to climate impacts.

Budget update: supporting housing and legal protections — The Budget Adjustment Act (BAA) is a mid-year correction, and we tried to be mindful of federal uncertainty alongside increased social service pressures. Our work largely aligns with the Governor's proposal, but we worked to ensure key funding remains in place to support Vermont families:

- \$2M to extend motel stays for homeless families and elders through June, helping to keep over 1400 Vermonters, including 446 school-aged children, housed. This is not just about cold weather, it's about preventing school disruption and ensuring stability for vulnerable families. Providing stable motel stays costs \$80 a night, while emergency room beds cost \$1300+ per night, incarceration costs \$260 per night, and temporary congregate shelters cost more to set up while serving fewer people
- New position in the Solicitor General's Office to protect Vermont's social programs and legal rights while ensuring we have the resources to push back against federal policies that may negatively impact our state.

Looking ahead

Vermont is at a turning point, and we have big decisions ahead. I am committed to working toward solutions that balance affordability, sustainability, and strong public services.

As always, I want to hear from you — your input helps shape policy decisions that work for all Vermonters. Thank you for staying engaged, and let's keep moving forward together.

COMMUNITY COLUMNS



Yes, opossums play dead as a survival strategy when threatened. Thanatosis, also known as death feigning or tonic immobility, is a defensive behavior in which animals appear to be dead. — **Bernie Paquette, Jericho, #170, March 1, 2025.** See more of Bernie's Bug-Inspired Comics online at <https://vtbugeyed.blogspot.com/2024/12/single-panel-comics-by-insects-and.html>. PHOTO BY BERNIE PAQUETTE

Today I feel alive

By **Bernie Paquette, Jericho**

It is so easy to repeat the same stories, both in my head and to others, over and over again.

So very refreshing to take time out to listen to others.

And then to step outside in the early morning — discarding the walls, and warmth for the wonder of cold that stills, quiet that awakens, pinkish sky on the eastern horizon, along with pure white faux sun (the moon), earlier than yesterday and the day before, light, birds practicing their spring songs, the white clean-slate land surrounded by grandfather trees (who have been through and will see more history than I have or will) — is to clear the head, open the mind to the beauty and immensity of life. Not just human, but of all life.

Though history is fascinating, and today's challenges are immense, TODAY is when we are most alive.

Today is the best day to find joy, experience laughter, love, and friendship, and feel the earth the cradle of our existence.

Laugh, dream, try, and do good

No Nonsense Gardening show, and call for new producers

By **Angelike A. Contis, MMCTV**

While it may be snowy outside, gardeners can always dream and plan for greener days! Check out the latest episodes of *No Nonsense Gardening* with Richmond's own Mary Houle, online at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLm9TgJr7n7xfAeV-pG75knzK17S6nmRFN>.

Want to make your own video and/or audio series with Mount Mansfield Community Television (MMCTV) on something you happen to know a lot about or are really interested in? Become a community producer like Mary did! It's as easy as meeting with

us do discuss your idea and booking time to come into the studio. Or, we can train you to film/edit it yourself! Just reach out to us at mmctv15@gmail.com or 802-434-2550.

Cambridge Conservation Commission Nature Report

From **Jayne Lukens, Jeffersonville**

The Cambridge Conservation Commission ends its monthly meeting with a nature report. Here's what we've spotted as of lately.

- Tim saw a bald eagle on VT Rt. 104.
- Dede saw a barred owl, and a robin pair eating staghorn sumac berries.
- Justin has seen more turkeys on Lower Pleasant Valley and some deer that appeared to be shorties due to their legs buried in the deep snow.
- Jake took a wildlife tracking certification course and identified flying squirrel tracks and a grey fox that had eaten a cotton-tail rabbit at the Krusch Nature Preserve. Did you know we have both northern and southern flying squirrels in Vermont? Both are nocturnal; however, the northern flying squirrel can be distinguished by its larger size and grey belly.
- Holly's 4-H club dissected owl pellets, so fun!
- Jayne saw a barred owl eating a rabbit, a flock of spruce grouse up in La Malbaie, Québec, lots of goldfinches at her feeder on the coldest mornings, and fisher tracks in the snow.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS



"Vermont also leads all other States in the production of maple sugar and is primarily associated in the minds of many persons with this product, yet the value of the sugar crop in 1935, when the yield was greater and the prices were higher than they had been for several years, was only three per cent of the total value of the State's agricultural products. The most significant development in the maple-sugar industry in recent years has been the swing from sugar to fluid syrup. As late as the beginning of the present century (20th) most of the maple sap gathered was converted into solid sugar; in 1935 only seven per cent of the total output in pounds was in that form. This amazing change is due in part to the extensive use of fluid syrup in the manufacture of cigarettes and in part, apparently, to a change in taste, for the solid sugar form continued to be popular long after it had ceased to be widely used as a substitute for refined cane or beet sugar."

PHOTO AND TEXT FROM [Vermont, a Guide to the Green Mountain State, 1937](#)

Lamoille County Legislative Breakfasts

By **Pat Ripley, Lamoille Economic Development Corporation**

With the start of the 2025 legislative session, Lamoille Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) and Lamoille Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring our 2025 Legislative Breakfast Series, which began on Monday, January 6 in Hyde Park.

The legislative breakfasts offer an opportunity to hear from our Lamoille County representatives and learn about what they are working on at the Statehouse. Attendees will also be allowed a chance to ask questions about the topics on their minds. These breakfasts have proven to be popular with Lamoille County residents and we expect good interest again this year. Be sure to register early!

The breakfast series continues in April (date and location TBA). Each event begins with a light breakfast and coffee from local restaurants, followed by a short briefing by the legislators and an audience Q&A.

Register online at <http://www.lamoilleeconomy.org/breakfast>.

LWV VT to discuss Cargill decision on bump stocks

The League of Women Voters of Vermont (LWV VT), in partnership with Kellogg-Hubbard Library presents the fifth in its 2024-25 Lecture Series on recent Supreme Court decisions. This season we look at potential impacts of five important decisions issued since 2022.

The final program of the season, on Wednesday, March 12 at 7:00 PM, will feature William Clark of the Gifford Law Center and Attorney Cabot Teachout, a criminal defense lawyer, who will discuss the *Garland v. Cargill* decision.

In June 2024, the Court ruled that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives exceeded its statutory authority by issuing a rule that classified a bump stock as a

"machine-gun."

The discussion will cover the case, its historical background, and current legislative action related to gun regulations in Vermont.

This will be a virtual presentation. You may send questions in advance to league@lwvofvt.org, or through Chat during the event.

To register for this talk go online to <https://kelloggghubbard.org/calendar/lwvgarlandvcargill/>.

Jericho Underhill Food Hub updates

From **Jericho Underhill Food Hub**

The Jericho Underhill Food Hub has been quite busy planning more ways to support local foods and agriculture in our community in 2025.

In March and April, the Food Hub will be offering weekly workshops on a variety of topics of interest to gardeners, backyard farmers, and people in our community. Here is what is coming up in March:

- Raising Backyard Chickens with John Connell, Saturday, March 1, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Greenmont Farms, 17 Krug Road, Underhill;
- Cooking to Save on Food Costs with Sandy Wilmot, Saturday, March 8, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, United Church of Underhill, 7 Park St, Underhill;
- Pruning Apple Trees with Ryan Ochs: Saturday, March 15, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Underhill Central School, Irish Settlement Road, Underhill;
- Seed Starting for Your Garden with John Koier, Saturday, March 22, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Chamberlin's Farm, 100 River Road, Underhill;
- Garden Tool Sharpening with John Connell, Saturday, March 29, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Greenmont Farms, 17 Krug Rd, Underhill.

Farmer organizations representing all types and scales of farms across the state have come together to ask the VT Legislature to set up a Farm Security Fund to provide financial assistance to farmers who need to recover from the impacts of extreme weather. Please look at this initiative and consider contacting our representatives with your thoughts. More information is available online at <https://www.nofavt.org/farm-security-fund>.

The Jericho Underhill Food Hub has asked the towns of Underhill and Jericho for support by setting aside a small amount of money to help us set up our programs:

- Jericho has included a total of \$2920 in their proposed FY25-26 budget for the Food Hub;
- in Underhill, there will be an item on the Town Meeting ballot to commit \$2000 for us in FY25-26.

We thank all the members of our community in advance for voting on Tuesday, March 4 to support our mission to promote local agriculture, foods, and products.

Stay tuned as we develop our website and a newsletter that will allow us to share more in-depth information. In the meantime, please visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/909332627617679> or email us at: jufoodhub@gmail.com

Quote of the week: "The health of a nation is directly tied to the health of its food system." — Wendell Berry

Did you grow up in or move to VT?

Did you grow up in Vermont? Did you move to Vermont?

Tell your story to the Vermont Roots Migration Survey. This study on why people stay, leave, return, or move to Vermont is being conducted by Underhill resident Cheryl (Cherie) Morse of the University of Vermont Geography and Geosciences Department (Woodstock Union High School Class of 1985).

The survey is anonymous and takes about 7-8 minutes to complete. It will be available through Monday, March 17. Please pass the link or the website on to others.

Your story matters. Thank you for helping with this research.

The Vermont Roots Migration Survey can be found at https://qualtrics.uvm.edu/jfe/form/SV_895d1QpDAqSkWY6. For more information about the American Roots Migration Project, go online to <https://www.americanrootsmigration.com/>.

Support Empty Arms VT 5K

Empty Arms Vermont's 3rd annual 5K Run & Walk is coming up on Saturday, May 17!

Empty Arms Vermont is a nonprofit organization providing peer support to individuals and families who have experienced pregnancy and infant loss. The annual 5K Run & Walk is our biggest fund-raising event of the year, and a joyous way for the community to join together in support.

After the race, we'll have a Ben & Jerry's truck, *Smokey Newfield Project* playing music, and a magic show by Alyx the Magician for kids and kids-at-heart!

Visit <https://www.emptyarmsvermont.org/5krun> to register for the race or to become a sponsor. Hope to see you there!

United Way volunteer opportunities

CONNECT TO COMMUNITY BY VOLUNTEERING – United Way's Volunteer Connection site is set up to help connect agencies and volunteers. Here is a link for Volunteer Connection — <https://unitedwaynwvt.galaxydigital.com/> — to learn more about these and other opportunities.

CLEAN WATER – Vermont Rural Water Association and the Vermont Drinking Water Week Committee invite volunteers to participate in their Drinking Water Fair. Youth and educators in grades 4-5 will spend the day on Friday, May 9 learning about Vermont's drinking water and the importance of water in our lives. Volunteers will staff multiple stations as students examine the role water plays in their lives, careers in the water industry, and how to help conserve water. Contact Allison Smith, 802-355-4542 or allisonmorse6@gmail.com.

SCORE A HIT! – SCORE Vermont is looking for volunteers to share their business knowledge with local small business owners at workshops given throughout the year. Volunteers create and deliver presentations in their own communities, lead educational seminars and networking events, email and survey workshop registrants, and more. Contact 802-764-51899 or recruiting0284@scorevolunteer.org.

TRANSLATORS NEEDED – Prevent Child Abuse Vermont is seeking volunteers to translate materials into Spanish and French. For information and to apply, contact 802-229-5724 or pcavt@pcavt.org.

ON THE BOARD – Vermont Association for Mental Health and Addiction Recovery (VAMHAR) is looking for new Trustees to join their Board to help promote advocacy for quality, humane, and readily available recovery and mental health supports. The Board meets monthly online on the third Monday of the month at 9:00 AM. Board members who are not on the Executive Committee are also expected to serve on a committee or work group. Desired skills include: general board governance, nonprofit financials, fundraising/development, legal, HR, marketing, communications, advocacy, technology, and more. They are seeking two- and three-year contracts. To learn more, contact havah@starchangeNE.org.

What is VoIP?

By **Lisa Nolen Birmingham**

Interim Director, Lamoille FiberNet CUD Board

Access to broadband gives consumers more service options, including new technologies and service options. We have received a number of questions about VoIP versus landline phone services. While Lamoille FiberNet's mission is broadband access, we are sharing this information to help you get started in your evaluation.

When you switch to fiber internet, you may end up also switching to new equipment and/or to a phone system that uses the fiber lines (VoIP) instead of the old copper phone lines. Here is some information that might be helpful.

VoIP is the acronym for voice-over-internet-protocol. It's a technology that allows you to use a standard phone, such as those used for landline phone connections, to make phone calls (and other voice-based services) using your internet connection. The VoIP type of system may be convenient if you are accustomed to having a traditional landline home or business phone. Having VoIP allows for a traditional phone to be plugged into the piece of equipment that connects your premises to the internet (modem).

LIBRARY NEWS

DEBORAH RAWSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM; Wednesday and Friday 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Saturday 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM; Sunday 1:00 – 4:00 PM.

All programs are held at the library and open to all, unless otherwise noted.

Adults

Thursdays, March 6, 20, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Crafters' Group. Bring a craft you're working on, and join the camaraderie and conversation. For more information, please contact Amy Tower, 802-355-9671 or atowerinv@gmail.com, or Julie Hehir, 802-343-0034 or juliehhehir@comcast.net.

Third Tuesdays (March 18) through April, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Deborah Rawson Memorial Library Fireplace Room: book discussion series on The Anxious Generation, How the Great Rewriting of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness by Jonathan Haidt. ReConnect is a group of families from the Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (MMUUSD) working on the impacts of smartphones and social media on our kids and hosting a four-part discussion series focused on Haidt's book. There will be podcast options as well, so feel free to join even if you don't have time to read the chapters. The remaining meetings are: March 18, part 4 (Collective Action for Healthier Childhood); and April 15, Recap and Looking Ahead: What's next for our community? If you don't have time to read the whole book but would like an overview, here's an interview with the author you can listen to: <https://www.goodinside.com/podcast/7065/the-anxious-generation-with-jonathan-haidt/>.

Youth

Tuesdays, 10:30 AM: Baby Toddler Story Time. For kids ages birth to Pre-K, with a caregiver. Join Mz. Abbey and the other story time regulars for singing, bouncing, finger games, and, of course, stories!

Fridays, 11:00 – 11:45 AM: Stories and Songs with Beth and David London. For kids ages birth to five, with a caregiver. Cozy up with your little ones in our Fireplace Room, while listening to stories, singing songs, and shaking the sillies out. If schools are closed on any Friday, this program is cancelled for that day.

For complete details on these programs and all that the library offers, please visit our website at <https://www.drml.org/>.

Deborah Rawson Memorial Library, 8 River Rd., Jericho. Please visit drml.org or call 802-899-4962 for the most up-to-date information. Contact information: rawsonlibrary@drml.org; www.drml.org; 802-899-4962.

JERICHO TOWN LIBRARY

Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM; Wednesdays, Thursdays, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Fridays 12:00 – 6:00 PM; Saturdays 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM.

We want to remind you about our Home Delivery Program at Jericho Town Library (JTL). Patrons who are unable to physically access the library may sign up for our Home Delivery Service. This is offered on a one-time or recurring basis. Folks can request specific items or complete an interest profile on the JTL website. You can sign up by phone 802-899-4686, or contact Catherine at catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org.

Jericho Town Library is launching a new book/discussion group for adults, starting this spring: the Current Events & Societal Issues Book Club. This group is for adults interested in thinking about and discussing important issues in our local communities and in greater society. Each month, we will center our reading and discussion around a particular topic, with a suggested nonfiction book to help focus our conversation. For those who are interested in participating but cannot commit to reading an entire book, we will also share recommendations for relevant articles, podcasts, and videos. Interested? Please fill out this form to let us know what times and days work best for you, as well as what topics you might like to discuss: <https://forms.gle/eaRTFMdmMHwDRiHXA>, or alternatively, reach out to catherine@jerichotownlibraryvt.org or call us at 802-899-4686.

Weekly events

Mondays, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, through April 21: The Artist's Way Creativity Group. Blocked, stuck, or adrift in your artistic endeavors? Curious about ways to live a more creative lifestyle? Join this journey through The Artist's Way, the landmark book by Julia Cameron about the creative process. Cameron's tried-and-true techniques of daily freewriting and weekly solo "Artist Dates" combined with the readings and exercises in the book will guide us along a path to higher creativity. You will need a copy of The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity by Julia Cameron (often available inexpensively through online used book retailers), a notebook, and an open mind. Register online at <https://forms.gle/ZLH9MPGGX81ZJfW7>. Contact Amy (amy@jerichotownlibraryvt.org) with any questions. Read about the book online at <https://www.npr.org/2023/09/05/1193447515/the-artists-way>.

Tuesdays, 8:00 – 9:00 AM: Gentle Yoga, a donation-based class for adults taught by local instructor Deanna Bartlett. Donations are optional. Second floor.

Tuesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Story Explorers Playgroup, a read aloud and loosely structured playgroup for kids ages 0-5 and their grown-ups. Second floor.

Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Embodied Wisdom Women's Group. Please join Project All Together Now (ATN) and Deanna Bartlett for a weekly multi-generational Women's Yoga Circle! This group is meant to serve women of all ages in building connection with themselves and each other. Gather up your friends, moms, aunts, grandmothers, mentors, and any female-identifying people in your life that could use some more spaciousness in their weeks and explore how restorative yoga can support you in rest and connection. Second floor.

Thursdays, 9:30 – 10:00 AM: Move and Groove, a movement-based storytime for kids ages 0-5 and their grown-ups. We'll sing, play with scarves and shaker eggs, pretend to be animals as we practice some yoga poses, and read a story together before ending with a bubble dance party. First floor.

Fridays, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Restorative Yoga, a donation-based class taught by local instructor Deanna Bartlett. Donations are optional. Second floor.

Saturdays, 9:00 – 9:30 AM: Romp and Rhyme, a storytime for babies, toddlers, and their caregivers. First floor.

Monthly or twice-a-month

Early Release Days in Jericho (usually the second Wednesday of the month): 1:00 – 2:00 PM: Crafternoon, followed by a movie screening. Registration is required due to limited space: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1005405995397?aff=oddtcreator>.

Building accessibility note: We are working hard on a project to make our library accessible to all, but our historic building is not yet fully accessible; a set of steps leads up to our front entrance. Please reach out to discuss accessibility needs; we may be able to offer programs in a hybrid format or move them to an alternate location with advance notice.

Find us on Facebook and Instagram (@[jerichotownlibrary](https://www.facebook.com/jerichotownlibrary)) for regular updates on our programs, services, and collections. 802-899-4686, library@jerichotownlibraryvt.org, www.jerichotownlibraryvt.org.

VARNUM MEMORIAL LIBRARY JEFFERSONVILLE

Hours: Sunday/Monday — closed; Tuesday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Wednesday/Thursday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Friday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM; Saturday 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

Come be a part of your library community as we March into spring! Along with snacks (thank you community members for your generous donations), conversations, and various sparks of inspiration, please join us for this month's engaging opportunities.

As always, programs are free and open to the public.

Programs

Tuesdays 2:00 – 6:00 PM, Wednesdays, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Genealogy Meet-Ups/Drop-In. Come to an informal meet-up with some of our best local genealogists with over 50 years combined experience to find out more about your family's history. Want to know if your family's stories have some truth to them? Stuck on a particular ancestor and don't know where to look next? No registration required.

Thursdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Coffee and Conversations.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00 AM: Story Time.

Tuesdays, 5:00 – 6:00 PM and Fridays, 12:00 – 1:00 PM: come practice American Sign Language. Feel free to come one or both days. All levels are welcome!

Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Crafternoons.

Thursday, March 6, 11:00 AM: Lunch'n'Learn. Legal services for seniors.

Fridays, March 7 and 21, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Homeschoolers Meet-up.

Saturday, March 8, 2:00 – 4:00 PM: Canadian Cultural Diversity

Saturday, March 15, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Make Your Own T-shirt Produce Bags.

Saturday, March 29, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Make Your Own Wrapper Chain Art.

Find program descriptions and more details on our website <http://www.varnumlibrary.org>.

We're always happy to see you at the library! www.varnumlibrary.org, 802-644-2117.

WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Library hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Wednesdays and Fridays 1:00 – 7:00 PM, and Saturdays 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM, no appointments needed.

Patrons of all ages are welcome; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. If you feel you need curbside service, for whatever reason, please email Bree at the library (westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com) and we can work something out. We want nothing to impede you from using the library.

The Westford Food Shelf is now open twice a month, on the first Wednesday of each month (March 5), 4:30 – 5:30 PM, and on the third Saturday (March 15), 8:00 – 9:00 AM. With increased openings, they need more inventory! The Westford Public Library has food collection bins at all curbside pickups from now on. These bins are for non-perishable food and household items.

Tuesdays, 10:30 – 12:00 PM, Coffee and Cards. Meetup with folks at the library for coffee, conversation, and cards — a great opportunity to socialize and keep those card playing skills sharp. Open to anyone, but especially looking to connect with seniors.

Thursdays, 11:25 AM: Early Literacy Storytime. We sing songs, read stories, move, and do crafts! No sign up needed, all ages are welcome. February 20: Teeth; February 27: Polar Bears.

Friday, March 14 (Part 2), 2:00 – 3:00 PM: Shakespeare Group, discussing *As You Like It*. The group will study a Shakespearean play for two months: Part 1, read some of the play out loud, discuss, and maybe watch a portion of a classic performance; Part 2, discuss the entire play and pick then next play to discuss. All materials will be provided. To read or not to read? Come join a new group that is interested in learning and enjoying the written word. No need to be a scholar — the Bard wrote for everyone!

Thursdays, March 13, April 10, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Writer's Group. Meets the second Thursday of each month. Facilitated by J Bruscini. Here you can have the opportunity to share and receive feedback on your writing with a low-stakes and supportive atmosphere. So far, together we have done timed writing exercises, responses to a Robert Frost poem, and free writing to our interests. One member is working on another novel! We hope to see you at our meetings soon to continue bringing to light the many shining voices of Westford.

The Westford Public Library, 1717 VT Rt. 128, Westford; 802-878-5639; www.westfordpubliclibrary.org; westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com, Bree Drapa, Librarian. Find us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/westfordpubliclibrary) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/WestfordVT_pl).

FAIRFAX COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Library hours: Monday-Friday, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM.

Fairfax Community Library, 75 Hunt St., Fairfax; 802-849-2420. For up-to-date info about programs, visit our website www.fairfaxvtlibrary.org, where you can also find a link to the interactive Google calendar.

RICHMOND LIBRARY

Library hours: open for in-person browsing and pick-up at the circulation desk on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Wednesday, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM; and Saturday, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

COVID-19 Tests are available at the circulation desk. We also encourage you to visit <https://covidtests.gov/> to order a set of four free at-home tests through the mail and to check the expiration date on your existing tests. Many tests have an extended shelf life, so check before you throw any away.

Trustee Meetings are on the second Monday of the month (March 10), 6:30 PM at the Library. All meetings are open to the public. Individuals may also join via Zoom.

Seed Library now accepting seeds! If you're a seed saver or are looking for a home for your unused seeds, consider donating them to the library. Seed donations must include the following information: plant type and varietal, harvest date, and location. If you are saving your own seeds, please note that we can only

accept open-pollinated (non-GMO/hybrid) seeds. Email rhegg@richmondvt.gov with any questions. Stop in to "check out" some of our seeds generously donated by High Mowing, FedCo, and Seed Savers Exchange. If possible, plan to save and bring back some of your harvested seeds for next year! Stop in or email rhegg@richmondvt.gov for more information.

Seeking artists and collectors — We are currently scheduling art shows for our walls and display case in 2025. If you have framed pieces (art, photography) and would like to schedule a show, please contact us. No professional experience is necessary, just a willingness to share your talent. We're also seeking interesting collections for our foyer display case. If you are a collector of thimbles, old books, feathers, nut crackers or anything else that would fit in our case that you would be willing to share, we would love to hear from you. Call or email the Library.

Adults

Through Thursday, March 20: Winter Reading Bingo for Adults. Stop in to pick up a bingo card or show us your completed lines and pick up a ticket. Then pop your ticket(s) into one of four buckets for a chance to win a stack of books.

Tuesday mornings through April 8: Tax Help with AARP. Volunteers working with AARP are meeting with seniors to prepare tax returns in the library community room. Call the library to schedule an appointment.

Wednesdays from 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Knitting & Stitching Group. Drop in to knit, embroider, or otherwise needlecraft with your neighbors.

Saturdays, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM: Chess Club. Join us in the Mezzanine Lounge for an all-ages chess club, which will be led by a local chess coach. BYOB (Bring Your Own Board) or use one of ours.

Saturday, March 1, 12:00 PM: Cookbook Club. Join us as we discuss Indian-ish by Priya Krishna. Stop by to check out a copy of the book to register, then pick a recipe to prepare and bring to the meeting. During the meeting, we'll try the dishes and talk about the reading, cooking, and eating experience!

Tuesday, March 11, 6:00 PM: (Mostly) Fiction Book Group. Join us in the Mezzanine Lounge for discussion of Rage Becomes Her: The Power of Women's Anger by Soraya L. Chemaly. Contact Gwen Landis (802-434-5012; gwenie1972@yahoo.com) for information on joining this group.

Children

Weekly/monthly children's programs at the library run from September-May and follow the MMUUSD schedule for vacation days and weather closure days.

Wednesdays, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Playgroup & Storytime. Join us for free play followed by stories and action songs in the Library Community Room. Co-sponsored by the Library and the Lund Center. Kids infant to age 5 and their grownups are invited to join the fun — we will start with Playgroup at 10:00 AM and then finish up the morning with a short storytime at 11:30 AM.

Mondays, 10:30 AM: Baby Laptime. This short, active storytime is for our youngest little book lovers and their grownups. We'll look at picture books, sing simple songs, do some rhyming and bouncing, and sometimes get out the shakers and scarves. Designed for infants and early toddlers.

Contact us at 802-434-3036 (leave a message after hours) or rfl@gmavt.net.

Richmond Free Library, 201 Bridge St., P.O. Box 997, Richmond, VT 05477; 802-434-3036; fax 802-434-3223; <http://richmondfreelibraryvt.org>.

BROWNELL LIBRARY, ESSEX JUNCTION**Ongoing drop-in programs**

Community Puzzle: spend some time working on a puzzle in the library. Puzzles rotate as they are completed.

Community Loom: collaborate on our community loom!

Pattern Swap, Puzzle Swap, Magazine Swap, Coupon Swap
Brownell Library, 6 Lincoln St., Essex Junction. Contact Main Desk 802-878-6955, Youth Desk 802-878-6956, Reference Desk 802-878-6957, or frontdesk@brownelllibrary.org.

ESSEX FREE LIBRARY

Hours: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 AM – 8:00 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Phone: 802-879-0313

All programs are free and open to the public.

Accepting book donations! Two boxes accepted per household per week that are easy for us to carry. Fiction and nonfiction, juvenile and adult, hardcover and paperback, in very good condition that we may put into our collection or sell in our June book sale to benefit the Children's Summer Reading Program. No library discards, textbooks, magazines, VHS, encyclopedias, multi-volume sets, technology or travel books over five years old, mildewed, stained, or smoky items please. Thank you!

New in our Library of Things: refreshed jigsaw puzzle selection!

All ages

Cache Odyssey — Essex Free Library is proud to be Vermont's Cache Odyssey site, a nationwide geocache adventure with a unique letterbox-hybrid cache in every state. Great for families or seasoned explorers. Each cache is fully accessible. See www.cacheodyssey.com for more information.

Children's and teens' area

Saturdays, March 15, 29, 11:00 AM-1:00 PM: Dungeons and Dragons. For grades 9-12. Do you yearn for adventure? And free food? The Essex Free Library wants you to join our program! Every other Saturday.

Thursday, March 20, 4:30 – 6:30 PM: Perler Bead Open Studio. Come and hang out in the community room to make a perler bead creation! No registration needed, ages 7 and up.

Tuesday, March 25, 4:00 – 5:30 PM: Read to Chewy the Therapy Dog! Kids and families can sign up for a 15-minute slot and choose a book to read to Chewy and his human in our community room. If you sign up and cannot attend, please reach out to library staff so we can open the spot to someone else. Sign up on the website.

Weekly activities

Exploration Station: ongoing. Check out the blue table for this week's challenge.

Mondays, 11:00 AM: Musical Mondays with Miss Noreen. Come spend time rockin' and reading!

Wednesdays, 11:00 AM: Storytime with Emily. Stories, songs and activities for young patrons.

Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: LEGO Club. Grades 1-5. Kids in grades 4 and younger need to come with an adult.

Library news continued on page 8

ART / MUSIC / THEATER

WESTFORD MUSIC SERIES
PRESENTS
THE OLEO ROMEOS



Blues, Country, Swing & Americana Roots Music
-free will donation-

4 pm: Westford Common Hall, 21 Brookside Road
Sunday: March 16, 2025

Improvisational theater class this spring, by Nancy Volkens of Westford. Come join us for a six-week improvisational theater workshop! The class is filled with games, skits, and exercises to make you laugh, free your mind, and be in the moment. Safe, non-judgmental environment to spark your imagination and have fun. No experience required. If you attended the previous workshop (in 2023) you are welcome to return! This year the workshop runs on Wednesdays, March 12-April 16, 7:00 – 8:30 PM at the Westford Common Hall (formerly the White Church). To register, please email nancyvolkens@gmail.com by Thursday, March 6. The cost is \$135 for all six weeks (Venmo or PayPal). A minimum enrollment of 10 people is needed for this workshop.

Vermont Youth Dancers (VYD) presents *Oliver Twist, I Will Make It* in three performances Saturday-Sunday, April 12-13 at Mount Mansfield Union High School, Browns Trace, Jericho. VYD will bring their signature blend of hip-hop and lyrical dance to the stage with a dynamic retelling of the classic *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens. With compelling storytelling, current music, and expressive choreography, VYD delivers an unforgettable theatrical experience that blends dance and drama in a way that is both thrilling and moving. This high-energy dance-theater experience is perfect for audiences of all ages. Partial proceeds will go to Spectrum Youth and Family Services. Tickets are now on sale at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/oliver-twist-i-will-make-it-tickets-1246102910349> for the three shows: Saturday, April 12, 1:30 and 6:30 PM, and Sunday, April 13, 1:30 PM. Don't miss this wonderful show!

Underhill Art Show — The Underhill Art Show is up and running. This fine collection of local art is in the grand hall of the Underhill Town Hall, Pleasant Valley Rd., Underhill Center. The show is free and open during Town Hall hours. All Underhill artists are welcome to show their creations. Please contact Julianne Nickerson, jcdnicker@gmail.com, for additional information.

Concert with Paul Orgel – Music of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms on Sunday, March 23, 4:00 – 5:30 PM at the Ohavi Zedek Synagogue, North Prospect St., Burlington. This concert is to benefit Full Circle Preschool. Pianist Paul Orgel has concertized throughout the United States, Europe, and China as a recitalist, soloist with orchestra, and chamber musician. Critics have praised his playing for its “subtlety and attention to nuance” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), “rare pathos” (*New York Times*), “brilliant technique, sense of humor and fantasy” (*Bridgeport Post*), “warmth and beauty of sound” (*Barre-Montpelier Times Argus*), and “power and grace” (*Vermont Times*). A full bio, concert program, and ticket information are available at the event website, <https://ohavizedek.org/event/paul-orgel-music-of-bach-beethoven-and-brahms/>.

Art for DRML Jericho — Deborah Rawson Memorial Library

is once again seeking art for the Library. We love hosting local artists, and have lovely walls for displaying work and a secure display case. Artists can request one or two months; presently March is open, April is taken; the rest of spring and summer are available — feel free to contact Susan Adams, sadams15@comcast.net, with any questions.

Thirty-one artists of the Essex Art League of Essex Junction will participate in a show at the Emile A Gruppe Gallery in Jericho through Sunday, March 16. The Essex Art League, one of the oldest art leagues in the state, was founded in 1971 and over the years has nurtured and enhanced hundreds of artists and art lovers in their pursuit of the creative spirit. For more information: the Emile A Gruppe Gallery, <https://www.emilegruppegallery.com/>, located at 22 Barber Farm Rd. Jericho; open 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Thursday-Sunday, or by appointment by calling 802-899-3211.

Spruce Peak Arts has a wide variety of offerings between now and mid-April. Go online to <https://www.sprucepeakarts.org/events/> for more information about these coming events: Friday, March 7, 7:00 PM — the *Preservation Hall Jazz Band*; Wednesday, March 19 — Tony award musical *A Year with Frog and Toad*; Friday, March 21, 7:00 PM — *Sons of Mystro*; Saturday, March 22, 7:00 PM — Fran Lebowitz in Conversation; Saturday, March 29, 7:00 PM — The Founders Cup: *The Revivalists*; Sunday, March 30, 4:00 PM — *Our Planet Live*; Saturday-Monday, March 29-31 — *Moon Mouse, A Space Odyssey*. These events are held at Spruce Peak Arts Center, 122 Hourglass Dr., Stowe.

Burlington City Arts' Spring 2025 exhibitions at the BCA Center is open. On the first floor, *Bunny Harvey: Worlds Within Worlds* features the landscape paintings of Vermont-based artist Bunny Harvey. Focusing on large-scale oil paintings and more intimately scaled works on paper, the exhibition debuts several new paintings created by the artist over the last year. In the Roth Gallery on the second floor, artist Stéphanie Morissette explores the conflicting relationship between humans, nature, and technology in *Speculative Future*. Using insightful observation and dark humor, the artist imagines a future where biological specimens and mechanical technology have merged to create a new, hybrid species of birds and flying creatures. Morissette's speculative future is not as fantastic as it may appear.

Applications are open for The Vermont Prize, a partnership between five Vermont arts organizations awarded to one artist annually. The winner receives a monetary prize of \$5000, their work is showcased and archived on the Vermont Prize website, and the artists are featured on each organization's social media channels. For more information and to apply, go online to <https://www.vermontprize.org/about>. Submissions are due by March 31.

The 2025 Diane Gabriel Visual Artist Award application period is now live! Established in 2021 by the family of Diane Gabriel (1947-2017), one of Vermont's most celebrated artists and educators, this award is given on an annual basis to emerging Vermont-based artists. The award encourages experimentation and supports an artist's creative development, especially those artists interested in initiating innovative ideas, exploring new media, or better establishing their art-making practice. The award is valued at \$6000 and includes a cash stipend, complimentary class registration, and/or use of the BCA Studios. Apply via <https://burlingtoncityarts.awardsplatform.com/dashboard>; applications close Monday, March 10.

Art from the Heart seeks volunteers to visit patients and family members at UVM Medical Center and Children's Hospital to help make the hospital a more comfortable and creative place through the arts. Volunteers in this program visit patient rooms and waiting areas, working one-on-one and in small groups. A visit with a patient or family members can start as simply as talking about favorite TV shows and music. If interested, please contact Art from the Heart coordinator Rebecca Schwarz, rschwarz@burlingtoncityarts.org.

Call to Artists — Birds and Myth: meanings, metaphors, and guides — from the Birds of Vermont Museum. A myth might be a traditional legend, a widely-held-but-false belief, or a (mis-)representation of something true; and can offer insight into who we are, offer us ways to behave and ideals to live by. What understanding of birds and humans have you gained through myths you have heard, told, or invented? The Birds of Vermont Museum's 2025 art show is centered on these ideas. We invite art submissions that bring birds and their meanings into art to retell an old story, weave several together, represent your beliefs, and/or create a myth for the future. Entries are due by Monday, March 24, 2025, 11:59 PM. Submit up to three works

using the online form at <https://tinyurl.com/bovm-art-2025> in one of these file formats: .jpg (visual art); .mp3/.mp4 (music/video); .pdf or .txt (stories, poems). Apple users, please use the “compatible” option if uploading an image, as we may not be able to view Apple's default .heic file type. Artists of all ages and all professions (or none) are invited to submit. No work using generative AI will be accepted. All traditional media and other digital media are allowed as are visual, textual, and/or audio works. Include your name, email, town, and a brief description of each work (size, media, when made) with your submission(s). Include a sentence or two about the story, belief, or myth you drew upon/created. We can also accept submissions by email: send files (same formats) to museum@birdsofvermont.org. Please put “Submission for Birds and Myth art show from <your name>” as the email subject. Or, you may send up to three prints or photos (not originals) to Birds of Vermont Museum, attention: Birds and Myth art show, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd., Huntington, VT 05462. In addition to walls, we have shelves for smaller three-dimensional pieces, room outdoors for weather-impervious works, and some ceiling area. We may need to work together to display audio or multi-media works. You are welcome to visit to consider the potential. Jurors will select pieces by early April and will let artists know soon after, by email. Accepted pieces should arrive at the Museum by April 20 and be ready to hang or display (all hanging hardware already attached). The art show runs May 1-October 31 at the Birds of Vermont Museum. Artists are wholly responsible for shipping or drop-off/pick-up. Pick-up should occur by December 30, 2025, if possible. The Museum asks for permission to reproduce images of the selected works in print and online as part of publicity for the exhibit; this is not required. Artists who show their work here are invited to sell accepted work, cards, stickers, or related gift items on consignment through our gift shop. We are always thrilled to arrange artist workshops at the Museum with our exhibitors. Please call or email Kir Talmage or Allison Gergely with any questions. We can be reached at 802-434-2167 or museum@birdsofvermont.org. We look forward to seeing your work!

The weekly virtual Burlington Literature Group welcomes new committed readers to our sessions. The group has been in existence for years meeting in a physical space but, since the pandemic, has changed to online Zoom sessions occurring every Tuesday at 6:30 PM. We break down interesting, challenging books into weekly segments of 60-100 pages, 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.

Grants awarded to support creative aging and youth — Vermont's youngest and oldest will soon have more opportunities to learn and socialize through painting, storytelling, dance, music, and other arts programming supported by grants from the Vermont Arts Council. Twelve organizations received a total of \$50,000 in funding through the Council's Creative Aging grant program, and six organizations received a total of \$30,000 in funding through the Council's Early Childhood Arts Partnership grant program. Among the funded projects are creative movement and circus arts instruction in St. Johnsbury; clay, photography, printmaking, and writing classes in Lamoille County; movement for Parkinson's classes in Burlington; and ceramics, fiber arts, and more in White River Junction. A full listing of supported programs can be found at <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/organizations/creative-aging>.

Use your voice to offer hope in uncertain times

In a time of uncertainty, where fear and division cast shadows over marginalized communities, Vermont's Freedom & Unity Chorus rises as an act of resistance and a beacon of hope. We believe in the power of the collective voice to combat fear and build unity through song.

Different from the typical community chorus, we bring inspiring music directly to our communities, performing at festivals, community events, and benefit concerts. We use our voices to heal, inspire, and challenge the status quo.

Why join us? Make a real impact: use your voice to create positive change; be part of a movement: in a time of uncertainty, join a group that believes in the power of unity; fun and inclusive: we're a supportive and welcoming community where everyone is accepted and encouraged to be themselves, and we strive

Art / Music / Theater continued on page 9

Miscellaneous news continued from page 6

Therefore, you don't need to buy new phone equipment to use VoIP.

Currently Fidium charges \$20/month for VoIP phone service. If you add a battery backup, it will currently cost an additional \$20/month.

Traditional phone and DSL internet services are not being discontinued in the Lamoille FiberNet area at this time — Fidium customers will be notified well in advance when this affects the Lamoille FiberNet area.

Library news continued from page 7

Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Pokemon Club. Grades 1-8. Decks available for card games. Themed crafts. Participants may bring gaming devices for Pokemon Go and other Pokemon games.

Fridays: Grab'n'Go Craft Kits. While supplies last.

Adults

Thursday, March 6, 12:00 – 1:00 PM: Noontime Book Group, reading *Liliana's Invincible Summer: A Sister's Search for Justice* by Cristina Rivera Garza. Pulitzer Prize Winner for Nonfiction. “A searing account of grief and the quest to bring her sister's murderer to justice years after the fact.” (*The Boston Globe*)

Saturday, March 8, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Zentangle for adults with Julia Davenport. This art form welcomes slowing down, taking your time, and seeing what happens. Sign up on the website. If you register and can't attend, please call to open the spot for someone else.

Tuesday, March 11, 2:00 – 3:30 PM and 6:00 – 7:30 PM: Noreen's Creative Card Class. For adults. Learn how to make two different cards. Register on website.

One important difference between using the traditional copper phone lines and using VoIP is that with VoIP, you won't have phone service if the power goes out, unless you have also purchased a battery backup (called an Uninterrupted Power Supply or “UPS”) for the phone; these batteries will typically extend your phone service for 4-24 hours during a power outage. Connecting your equipment (modem and router, or extenders if you have them) to a standard power supply or surge protector

connected to your generator will mean you will have phone service during power outages.

Lastly, if you are on Lifeline or a similar medical alert system, you should know that those systems also can work with a VoIP system.

For more information on Fidium VoIP services, go online to <https://www.fidiumfiber.com/phone-service>.

Tuesday, March 18, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Zentangle for adults with Julia Davenport. This art form welcomes slowing down, taking your time, and seeing what happens. Sign up on the website. If you register and can't attend, please call to open the spot for someone else.

Wednesday, March 19, 2:00 – 3:00 PM: Scrabble/Conversation Français. French Conversation and Scrabble. Open to ages high school and above; for levels Elementary II and above. Improve your French while enjoying a friendly game of (French) Scrabble!

Thursday, March 20, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Trivia Night for adults and teens. Join us for some friendly trivia competition! Light refreshments provided.

Tuesday, March 25, 6:00 – 7:30 PM: Board Games for Ages 18+. Bring your friends and enjoy the library's board game collection (or bring your own to share with the group). Light refreshments provided.

Thursday, March 27, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Publishing 101. Join Rachel Fisher and Rachel Carter of Onion River Press for an overview of the publishing process.

Thursday, April 3, 12:00 – 1:00 PM: Noontime Book Group, reading *The Marriage Bureau for Rich People* by Farahad Zama. Bursting with the color and allure of India, and with a cast of endearing characters, this novel has shades of Jane Austen and Alexander McCall Smith but with a resonance and originality entirely its own. (Good Reads)

Weekly events

Tuesdays, 10:30 – 11:30 AM: Tech Time. Drop in with your device and your questions. We'll do our best to answer them! No appointment needed.

Tuesdays, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Drop-In Needlecraft Group. Enjoy chatting with other crafters as you work on your project.

Fridays, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Rummikub for adults.

Social media: check us out on Facebook and Instagram for updates on events!

Essex Free Library, 1 Browns River Rd., Essex; 802-879-0313; @essexfreelibrary; <https://www.essexfreelibrary.org>.

OBITUARIES



Howard "Howie" F. McRae of Underhill, VT died Saturday, February 15, 2025 at the Arbors in Shelburne, VT after a long battle with Parkinson's. He was born October 15, 1943 in Taunton, MA, where he graduated from Bishop Coyle High School in 1961. A quiet, deliberate man, Howie had a kind heart, an endearing chuckle, and a belying twinkle in his eye. He lived, always, a very service-before-self sort of life whether it was at work, church, in the home, his adopted

Pleasant Valley, or at the wax bench for the Mount Mansfield Union High School (Jericho, VT) Cross Country Ski Team. Athletics weren't an opportunity for Howie as a kid so his primary focus was academics. After high school he commuted to Boston College (Boston, MA), earning a degree in chemistry before continuing his education as a graduate student at Notre Dame (Notre Dame, IN). It was at his first job out of college with Westinghouse Defense and Space Center near Baltimore, MD where he met Nancy Stewart, a fellow engineer. Nancy and Howie married on July 29, 1972 in Texas, MD and quickly set a goal of moving to Vermont within two years. In the summer of 1973, they purchased a rundown farmhouse on Pleasant Valley Road in Underhill. The newlyweds quickly became active in the tight-knit farming and outdoor communities: raising pigs, horses, cutting firewood, clearing trail and skiing — lots and lots of skiing. Son Rob and daughter Sue arrived in 1976 and 1977 and were quickly recruited to help out around the place. They were encouraged to pursue any sports they desired: soccer, downhill and Nordic skiing, horseback and bike riding. Howie and Nancy picked up many of these sports too. Howie was an early adopter of mountain biking in the '80s. In Vermont, Howie worked at Haveg Super-Temp, later named Champlain Cable, to develop specialty wire insulations. He later worked for Belden Wire and Cable in Essex, VT and Richmond, IN, and consulted for Belden in Nogales, Mexico. He finally retired from Harbor Industries, where the production staff extolled him for his kindness and for being one of the few engineers who took the time to really explain the processes to them. In Pleasant Valley, free time was initially spent painting the house, replacing clapboards, refinishing wood floors, or tearing out plaster and lathe: great kindling for their two woodstoves. Soon that free time became consumed by following Rob and Sue on the athletic journey Howie never had as a youth. Vacations were spent not on airplanes, but at races and games, and also in the garden, where Howie and Nancy grew and put up most of their own vegetables for years. This included a brief foray into organic carrots by the quarter acre. The family also raised pigs and Holsteins for meat; both were sources of adventure, including the animals breaking out of fences and chasing family members. Sue's Pony Club horses also kept the McRaes on their toes. Howie joined a group of men who mountain biked in the summer and cross country skied in the dark on winter Thursday nights, followed by popcorn and beer. It took Nancy's encouragement every week to get the introvert out the door, but he always had a good time with the guys. There were also countless weekend "backcountry" ski adventures around Mount Mansfield over the years. Ever the athlete, Howie ran his first marathon at age 54 and would go on to run in 28 races in 24 states plus Québec, frequently winning his age group. If Howie wasn't waxing skis or driving to soccer tournaments, he was trying to teach his children the Periodic Table of Elements or consoling them when their cars met the odd ditch or telephone pole. When he became a grandfather, he patiently untangled fishing line, worked on puzzles, and read books to his grandchildren. Around the dinner table, he was a wonderful listener and a wise contributor to any discussion. His encyclopedic memory was widely known, especially, at Trivial Pursuit games during the holidays with family and neighbors. Pleasant Valley was home for Howie and Nancy for more than 50 years except for a five-year "exile" to Indiana when Belden closed their Essex plant. Throughout his years in Vermont, Howie taught religious education classes at St. Mary's in Cambridge, VT, sang in the holiday choir, and participated in many stewardship projects and fund-raising activities for the church. Howie leaves his wife of 52 years, Nancy; son Robert (Elizabeth) of Big Sky, MT; daughter Susan (Mark) Fell of Brighton, CO; five grandchildren: Finnegan and Maeve McRae, Eleanor, Emmett, and Otto Fell; two sisters, Nancy McRae of Pepperell, MA and Joan Ramsey of Deerfield, NH; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents Rhea (Perrault) and Howard McRae and by a sister, Joyce Anctil. The family is grateful to all the staff at the Arbors for their loving care and kindness and to the Hospice team and volunteers who assisted Howie. Visiting hours will be held at A.W. Rich Funeral Home, Essex Chapel, on Friday, March 7, 2025, from 4:00 – 6:00 PM. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at St. Thomas Church in Underhill Center, VT at 11:00 AM on Saturday, March 8, 2025. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial donation to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity or the Michael J. Fox Foundation. Please visit <https://awrichfuneralhomes.com/> to share your memories and condolences.

According to the Green Mountain Club, this winter is the fifth snowiest on Mount Mansfield since the snow stake was installed 70 years ago (that was 1954)

VSAC news: College & Career Pathways registration open

The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) will be offering a free, public event for high school families on Saturday, March 8, 1:00 – 5:00 PM. Families can participate in-person at UVM or virtually via Zoom. Find additional details by visiting <https://www.vvac.org/plan/college-career-pathways>. And high schools around the state are invited to bring students to one of this year's College & Career Pathways weekday events being offered at four locations:

- Landmark College, Thursday, March 13, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM;
- Saint Michael's College – Thursday, March 20, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM;
- Vermont State University Lyndon Campus – Monday, April 7, 8:45 AM – 1:45 PM (in partnership with the NEK College Fair);
- Vermont State University Castleton Campus – Wednesday, April 9, 8:45 AM – 2:00 PM (in partnership with the Rutland Area Guidance Counselors' College Fair).

Find additional details at the website listed above and visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCP2025> to bring students to one of the weekday events.

High school student To-Do list — the pace of post-high school planning is picking up. There's a lot to get done before the end of the school year. You can prepare using VSAC's free junior- and senior-year checklists for the 2024-2025 academic year:

- Junior Checklist: https://www.vvac.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf_resources/HS_Junior_Year_Planning_Checklist.pdf;
- Senior Checklist: https://www.vvac.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf_resources/HS_Senior_Year_Planning_Checklist.pdf.

JES Farm to School seed sale

Jericho Elementary Farm to School is partnering with High Mowing Seeds to fundraise for the JES Farm to School program. If you order your seeds through this fundraiser, a portion of the proceeds will be donated to our JES Farm to School program. All seeds are 100% organic and Non-GMO.

Orders are due by Saturday, March 29. To order seeds, go online to <https://high-mowing-seed-fundraiser-copy.cheddarup.com/>.

Please note — when an item is out of stock or on backorder, we will substitute it with a similar variety so that your order ships complete. Orders must be placed with JES and not with High Mowing directly. Seed varieties for gift boxes may vary.

Seeds will be sent home with students before April break. If you do not have a student at JES, you will need to make arrangements to pick them up from the school. An email will be sent at a later date with a pickup information.

For growing information, please visit <http://highmowingseeds.com>.

Winona Smith Scholarship opportunity now open

The League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Fund is now accepting applications for its Winona Smith Scholarship program. Created in 1998 to honor the legacy of League leader Winona Smith, the scholarship is awarded annually to Vermont high school seniors who embody the characteristics and qualities Smith displayed of civic participation and community service.

Three \$2000 scholarships will be awarded to students who demonstrate financial need, scholastic achievement, and come highly recommended by their teacher.

Applications, due on April 30, must be completed online at <https://lwvofvt.org/winona-smith-vermont-scholarship-application/>, where more general information is also available. Students need to submit two essays (300-500 words) — one on issues concerning voting rights, and the other on the impact of a recent civic, national, or world event. A letter of recommendation from a teacher is also required, submitted online at <https://bit.ly/LWVTeacherRec>.

The scholarship can be applied towards continuation of education in an accredited vocational, technical, or trade school, or at a two- or four-year college or university. Scholarship recipients will be announced on June 1.

Last year, the League awarded scholarships to students from Essex and Winooski High Schools and St. Johnsbury Academy.

Questions can be directed to Scholarship Coordinator Audrey Grant, lwvofvt.edfund@gmail.com.

News from the VT Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)

Do you have students that need help filing their 2025-26 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2025-26 school year? VSAC is offering one-on-one appointments, virtually and in person, throughout February. Go online to the VSAC calendar, <https://www.vvac.org/events/list>, for a full listing.

FAFSA — Filing a FAFSA is the first step to getting college financial aid. Need help filing your FAFSA? Visit VSAC's calendar of events to book a one-on-one virtual or in-person appointment.

Grants — These are often called "gift aid" as they don't need to be paid back. View VSAC's step-by-step webinar on completing the Vermont Grant application.

SCHOOL NEWS

Scholarships — Use a single application to apply for more than 150 VSAC-assisted scholarships. Don't miss the Wednesdays, February 12 deadline.

Registration is now open for College & Career Pathways — VSAC will be offering this free, public event for high school families on Saturday, March 8, 1:00 – 5:00 PM. Families can participate in-person at UVM or virtually via Zoom. Find additional details by visiting <https://www.vvac.org/plan/college-career-pathways>. Also, high schools around the state are invited to bring students to one of this year's College & Career Pathways weekday events (<https://www.vvac.org/plan/college-career-pathways>) being offered at four locations:

- Landmark College — Thursday, March 13, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM;
- Saint Michael's College — Thursday, March 20, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM;
- Vermont State University Lyndon Campus — Monday, April 7, 8:45 AM – 1:45 PM (in partnership with the NEK College Fair);
- Vermont State University Castleton Campus — Wednesday, April 9, 8:45 AM – 2:00 PM (in partnership with the Rutland Area Guidance Counselors' College Fair).

Find additional details go online to <https://www.vvac.org/plan/college-career-pathways> and visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCP2025> to bring students to one of the weekday events.



MMUUSD names new superintendent

Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (MMUUSD) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. John Muldoon as its next superintendent. Dr. Muldoon will assume the role following the retirement of Dr. John Alberghini in June.

Since 2021, Dr. Muldoon has served as the Assistant Superintendent of Maple Run Unified Union School District in St. Albans. Previously, he served as Principal of Shanghai American School in China, and held multiple leadership roles in Massachusetts, including Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction at Belmont High School and Middle School Assistant Principal in Melrose Public Schools.

"Dr. Muldoon stood out for his curiosity and communication skills, data-driven decision making and his strong commitment to student success," said MMUUSD board chair Edye Graning. "He has both a deep understanding of rural schools and communities, and a broad and innovative perspective on education due to his experience as an educator overseas. We could not be more pleased to welcome him to our district."

In the coming months, Dr. Muldoon will work closely with Dr. Alberghini, the MMUUSD board, administrators, and staff to ensure a seamless transition. Opportunities for the community to meet Dr. Muldoon will be announced later this spring.

"Vermont schools face unprecedented challenges, but MMUUSD is positioned to navigate them with strength," said Muldoon. "With dedicated staff, strong systems, and a community that puts kids first, the district embraces innovation and continuous improvement. Everyone I've met has wowed me with their kindness, expertise, and commitment to students. I'm honored by the opportunity to join this incredible team and help shape its bright future."

Dr. Muldoon holds a doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Northeastern University. He earned his M.A. at Salem State and his undergraduate degree at Merrimack College. Muldoon grew up in southern New Hampshire and currently resides with his wife, four-year-old daughter, and dog in Stowe. His first official day with the district is Tuesday, July 1.

Art / Music / Theater continued from page 8

to become one of the most diverse and inclusive choruses in Vermont; community focused: we take our music directly to the people, where it matters most; accessible to all: dues are a low \$35 to cover costs, and no one is turned away for lack of funds.

The Chorus meets Tuesday evenings, 7:00 PM, March 11-October 14 at the Chapel of St. Michael the Archangel on the campus of Saint Michael's College, Colchester. We sing all different genres of music with a meaningful message, including

pop, folk, rock, soul, gospel... even Broadway when appropriate!

Whether you're a seasoned singer or just love to belt it out in the shower, we want you! We sing four-part choral arrangements. The ability to read music helps. Audio files will be made available to assist members in learning their parts.

Want us to sing for your organization? We're always looking for new ways to collaborate with community groups doing good works. If you need us for a benefit concert or a dose of musical

inspiration, let us know!

To learn more and join the movement, visit our website <https://www.vermontsfreedomandunitychorus.org/about-us>. Join us and be part of a powerful movement that makes a difference, one song at a time!

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Maria Rinaldi, vermontsfreedomandunitychorus@gmail.com.

SENIOR NEWS

A Matter of Balance sessions in Richmond

Many older adults experience concerns about falling and restrict their activities as a result. *A Matter of Balance* is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels. This is the perfect course for you if you are concerned about falling or have fallen in the past; are interested in improving balance, strength, and flexibility; or you have restricted activities because of falling concerns.

A Matter of Balance was developed at the Boston Roybal Center for Active Lifestyle Interventions and is specifically designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels among older adults living independently. Age Well instructors Susan Murray-Grage and Rebecca Ryan will teach this free course.

During this eight-session course co-sponsored by Age Well and the Richmond-Bolton-Huntington Community Senior Center, students will learn to:

- view falls as controllable;

- set goals for increasing activity;
- make changes to reduce fall risks at home;
- exercise to increase strength and balance.

We will meet Thursdays, March 6-April 24, 9:30 – 11:30 AM at the Richmond Congregational Church, 20 Church St., Richmond. Advance registration is required. For more information and to register, please contact instructor Susan Murray-Grage, susan.murray.grage@gmail.com or 802-310-6451.

Free online courses for seniors

Technology Literacy Online, weekly on Wednesdays, through March 19, 1:00 – 2:30 PM, offered on Zoom by the Central Vermont Council on Aging. Are you interested in learning more about technology? Technology for Tomorrow, Central Vermont Council on Aging, and Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging are offering free classes to attend through Zoom. Classes will require an email address to send the Zoom link to, and internet access to use Zoom. The classes are:

- March 5: Online Scam Prevention;

- March 12: Understanding Smartphones;
- March 19: Intro to Gmail.

To register contact Lucas Rose, 802-479-1953 or Irose@cvcoa.org, with your name and the course(s) you would like to take.

Make a difference, make connections at CVCOA

From the Central Vermont Council on Aging

Are you looking for a way to make a difference? Older adults need you!

Join our caring community of volunteers and have a direct impact on the lives of your neighbors, while forging connections in your community. Listen online to one of our volunteers share what volunteering has meant to her at <https://youtu.be/oYgAwkPjEY>.

Contact us today at volunteer@cvcoa.org. For more information see <https://cvcoa.org/volunteer>.

SPORTS NEWS

Cambridge Rec sponsors Learn to Swim this spring at Smuggs

By Leslie Realand, Cambridge Recreation Board

Spring registration is open for Cambridge Rec Swim Lessons at Smugglers' Notch Resort is open! The spring session starts the week of March 9 and ends the week of April 13 and will be held at the Courtside Pool at Smugglers' Notch.

The cost for Cambridge/Jeffersonville residents is \$60 (after a \$20 subsidy from Cambridge Rec Board); \$80 for non-residents; free for dependents of Smugglers' Notch Resort employees. To register and for more details and information, go online to <https://bit.ly/3Xj5fyj> (short for <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdDbqOqRi0QApYx1fvsGhcJqsiU216wSJBqkTCmYNMIVmVMAQ/viewform>).

Questions? Contact Suzanne Hoepfner, LGI, WSI, Aquatic Training and Program Manager at Smugglers' Notch Resort at shoepfner@smuggs.com.

2025 Mount Mansfield Girls Lacrosse

Mount Mansfield Girls Lacrosse Club offers girls in grades 4-8 the ability to learn and play lacrosse. The season runs from the end of March through the first week of June.

Practice is held at Browns River Middle School, Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:30 PM; games are played on Sundays from the first Sunday in May through the first weekend in June.

Also looking for coaches to assist with the 3/4/5/6 team this year..

Please contact melisamutolo@icloud.com for details. Registrations will be accepted through Saturday, March 15.

Cambridge Youth Baseball and Softball sign-ups

It might seem early to be thinking about T-ball, baseball, and softball with all this snow that we have, but registration is only open through Saturday, March 1 — that's less than two weeks away!

We don't want any child that wants to play to miss registration, as we can't accept any late registrations. All programs are \$43. There are discounts for families with multiple players and also for those who volunteer with the program.

To register, go online to <https://clubs.bluesombrero.com/cambridgellvt>, then tap or click on the Register button, create a Sports Connect account and profile for your child, choose the appropriate baseball or softball program to register for:

- T-ball — typically preschoolers and kindergartners, coed;
- Minors / Rookies Baseball — coach pitch, typically boys in grades 1-2;
- Minors Baseball — player pitch, typically boys in grades 3-4;
- Majors Baseball — typically boys in grades 5-6;
- Minors / Rookies Softball — coach pitch, typically girls in grades 1-2;

- Minors Softball — player pitch, typically girls in grades 3-4;
- Majors Softball — typically girls in grades 5-6.

If your child played last year, you should have an email with easy-to-click buttons for registration in your inbox.

Starting with the 2025 season, children League Age 4-7 will have the ability to register for any Little League program they choose. For players League Age 8-12, eligibility is still based on residency or school enrollment. We welcome Waterville students, as well.

Let's have some fun and play ball! For questions or for more information, please contact cambridgeyouthbaseball@gmail.com.

Calcutta March 8 to benefit Essex Youth Hockey

The Essex Youth Hockey Association (EYHA) Board of Directors invites you to our annual EYHA Calcutta for an exciting night of fun, food, and fundraising on Saturday, March 8, 4:00 – 8:00 PM at the American Legion, Colchester (right across from the Spanked Puppy). This kid-free evening (!) will be catered by Green Meadows Catering. Come and enjoy yourself while supporting EYHA.

Tickets are \$100 for a dinner for two, a Calcutta ball (with insurance), and a shot at winning the \$1000 grand prize! Can't make it? You can still purchase a ball and we'll track your progress throughout the night.

There will also be door prizes all night long, live and silent auctions, and a cash bar (bring cash for drinks and raffle tickets). Only 100 balls will be sold, so grab yours ASAP — bring your friends and join us for an unforgettable night!

For tickets and more information, go online to <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/essex-youth-hockey-2025-calcutta>.

Donate your old bikes to Old Spokes Home

Have a bike you don't ride anymore? Or a kids' bike your kiddo has outgrown?

Old Spokes Home is accepting donations of used bikes. Adult and kids' bikes are welcomed. Donations can be dropped off at 331 N. Winooski Ave., Burlington, during business hours: Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Wednesday 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; and Saturday 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Contact 802-863-4475 or info@oldspokeshome.com with questions.

Old Spokes Home is a community supported 501c(3) nonprofit bike shop creating access to bikes for all! Give your old bike a new life, and help someone else access the mobility, agency, and magic of bikes.

Girls on the Run at BRMS needs volunteers

Girls on the Run Vermont (GOTRVT) is an amazing organization that helps girls build confidence to overcome

difficult situations, inspire others to keep going when it's hard, and embrace their confidence to make a difference in their community. It's also a lot of fun! There are girls in grades 5-6 at Browns River Middle School who would like to participate in GOTRVT but we need volunteer coaches to make that happen! Would you be interested in volunteering your time to this fantastic 10-week program this spring?

Make a positive impact and empower young Vermont girls in your community by volunteering as a coach with GOTRVT this spring! Navigating through tough times takes perseverance. Today's girls deserve mentors who teach them how to build their inner strength and keep going, even when it's difficult. GOTRVT's curriculum helps participants build this very confidence. As a coach, you are the one who guides them through this unforgettable journey.

Not a runner? Haven't coached before? No problem! Girls on the Run Vermont provides training, easy to follow lesson plans, supplies, and support for a transformational season. The 10-week season begins the week of March 17, and ends with a celebratory 5K on Saturday, May 31. Teams meet twice weekly for 90-minute sessions to connect, move, learn, and have fun! Team schedules are set by their volunteer coach teams. The BRMS GOTR program will be open to girls in grades 5-6.

Visit <https://www.gotrvt.org/coach> to learn more about coaching or to sign up to volunteer. Learn more about GOTRVT's programs and complete a Participant Interest Form at <https://www.gotrvt.org/programs>, where caregivers can complete a Participant Interest Form, too. Questions? Contact GOTRVT at stephanie@girlsontherunvermont.org or 802-871-5664.

GOTR is coming to Cambridge!

Girls on the Run (GOTR) inspires individuals of all abilities to discover, build, and grow their self-confidence. Together, they experience a sense of belonging and connection as a team. Volunteer coaches facilitate lessons that blend physical activity with life skill development including managing emotions, fostering friendships, and expressing empathy. At the end of the season, the team completes a 5K together at Essex Fairgrounds, which provides a tangible sense of accomplishment and sets a confident mindset into motion.

In Cambridge, GOTR is open to girls in grades 3-6. Practices will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00 – 5:30 PM at Cambridge Elementary School, beginning Tuesday, March 18 and running through the end of May. The registration fee is \$86 per participant, with scholarships available.

For more information and to register, go online to <https://www.gotrvt.org/>.

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SPORTS NEWS



An alert white-tailed doe checks her surroundings in a Vermont forest. PHOTO FROM VT F&W WEBSITE

VT F&W seeks comments on changing deer hunt, other hunting regs

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife (VT F&W) Board is inviting public comment on proposed changes to Vermont's white-tailed deer, moose, and turkey hunting regulations, as well as the rules for transporting wild game meat from out of state.

The proposed deer hunting changes, recommended by the VT F&W Department's biologists, are the most extensive of the four. They come five years after state biologists last updated Vermont's deer regulations. Deer is Vermont's most popular game species, with about 60,000 resident hunters and 7500 out-of-state hunters heading into the white-tail woods each fall, and just over 20% successfully harvesting deer.

Several of the proposed changes aim to balance Vermont's deer herd to what available habitat can support by encouraging hunters to harvest more antlerless deer, primarily adult female deer called "does," in certain parts of the state.

"Deer hunting is incredibly important to many Vermonters' culture and sense of identity, and it is also absolutely essential for keeping deer numbers in line with what is sustainable for our habitats," said Interim Commissioner of VT F&W Andrea Shortsleeve. "The updates our biologists are proposing will help hunters continue to balance Vermont's deer herd with the available habitat as our forests get older, winters get warmer, and land use patterns change."

The main proposed changes to Vermont's deer hunting regulations would:

- Allow hunters who obtain antlerless permits to harvest antlerless deer during the regular November season. Currently only antlered deer, primarily adult males called "bucks," can be harvested during the November season.
- Set the archery season as October 1-December 15,

including during the regular November season. Currently the archery season closes during the regular November season.

• Create special additional archery hunting zones with a September 15 opening date in select areas where deer numbers are high.

• Allow hunters to hold two antlerless permits from different Wildlife Management Units at the same time. Currently, hunters can only hold one antlerless permit.

• Allow hunters to harvest a second legal buck during the season if they have already harvested one buck with three or more points on one antler and one or more antlerless deer. Currently, hunters can only harvest one buck per year.

• Reinstate an antler point restriction in Wildlife Management Unit D1, where mature buck numbers are low.

• Return the state's youth deer hunting weekend to the Saturday and Sunday prior to the start of the regular November season.

"In a nutshell, there are some very specific parts of the state — like the Champlain Valley — where we need hunters to harvest more does," said Shortsleeve. "Doe numbers are one of the main factors that determine the deer herd's ability to grow. In much of Vermont the herd is already pretty well balanced to the available habitat, but in some areas there are just too many deer. In those places, our forests are suffering as a result."

In addition to the proposed deer regulation changes, the board also invites public comment on proposals from department biologists on the moose and turkey hunting seasons, and on transporting wild game meat from out of state into Vermont.

The proposed new moose regulations would increase the season from six to nine days and expand the use of firearms for a small number of hunters. The proposed new turkey regulations would expand the fall archery season to the start of October. Existing regulations on bringing wild game meat from deer and elk harvested out of state into Vermont are proposed to now apply to moose and other species in the deer family as well.

The proposed new deer and turkey hunting regulations and the game meat transport regulations would take effect in 2026, if approved. The proposed new moose hunting regulations would come into effect between fall 2025 and 2026, if approved. The full proposed changes for all three hunting seasons and the game meat transport regulation can be read in their entirety on the board's website under the "Active Rulemaking" heading.

The department will accept public comment on all four proposed regulation changes through Sunday, May 25, 2025, via email to ANR.FWPublicComment@vermont.gov. Additionally, public hearings will be held at 6:30 PM at the following dates and locations:

Monday, March 17, Mt. Anthony Union High School, 301 Park St., Bennington;

Tuesday, March 18, Lakes Region High School, 317 Lakes Region Rd., Orleans;

Thursday, March 20, Union 32 Middle & High School, 930 Gallison Hill Rd., Montpelier;

Tuesday, May 6, Winooski Middle & High School, 60 Normand St., Winooski.

A fifth public hearing in southern Vermont will be scheduled for early May and announced in the coming weeks on the board's website under the "Public Hearings" heading.

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See page ten for more information.

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