

Listen and you will hear stories from Nanny Goat Hill

All are invited to An Afternoon with Marie's Stories — author and antiquarian Marie Flaim Tedford lived in Underhill Center for many years with her husband Ted Tedford and their family. On Sunday, February 18, 1:30 PM, please join members of her family at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library in Jericho for a reading from Marie's collection of short stories, Nanny Goat Hill. Stop in and meet Marie's husband and kids, who will read selections from her book as well as an item or two from Marie's stories for young children. Please enjoy this free afternoon of reading and conversation. There will be cookies and beverages for all.



BOOK COVER IMAGE COURTESY CAROLYN BATES PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO OF MARIE BY JERRY JOHNSON

Chittenden East Phoenix Cheerleading win

Enthusiastic congratulations to Rodriguez Lajoie, McKinley Wheelock, Shyanna Haskins, and Autumn Bushey! On Saturday, February 3, 2024, Chittenden East Phoenix Cheerleading won first place out of six youth teams at the NVAC Cheerleading Competition hosted by South Burlington High School.

These athletes have been working on this year's routine for months and have been working of their Cheerleading skills for years. Congratulations to these amazing athletes! We are so proud of you!

Chittenden East Phoenix is a youth cheerleading squad for athletes in grades kindergarten through eighth grade and has three seasons throughout the year. Phoenix Cheer's mission statement is to encourage self-confidence, self-discipline, and community through safe instruction in tumbling, jumping, dancing, cheerleading, stunting, leadership, and teamwork. The lessons and values learned while participating in cheerleading will assist our athletes in achieving success and happiness throughout their lives.

For the fall season, Team Phoenix has been fortunate to team up with Chittenden East Youth Football to cheer for the Wolverines! If you would like more information about Wolverines football, contact ceyfafootball@gmail.com. The winter season is competition season and generally starts the last week in November. Team Phoenix's spring season is an opportunity to try cheerleading as a beginner or continue to build skills as a returning athlete.

If you have a child in grades K-8 who enjoys dancing, gymnastics, tumbling, acrobatics, performing, ninja, yelling, or working in a team — please consider joining Phoenix Cheer.



Spring season will start Thursday, March 14, 2024. Practices will be at Smilie Elementary School in Bolton, Thursdays from 6:00 – 7:30

PM. For more information or to join, contact phoenixcheerallstar@gmail.com.

Education funding and Act 127: school board perspective

By Tara J. Arneson
Vice Chair, Mount Mansfield Unified Union School Board

It's budget season in Vermont. Local officials are working through complex plans and having pragmatic discussions about what to fund and what to cut for the next fiscal year. Community forums and informational meetings will be had so that we can all be prepared to vote on Tuesday, March 5. This is no different for school boards across the state. Many of us are reconciling the implementation of Act 127 as we consider how to continue to offer a high-quality education to Vermont's children while we have flat enrollments, inflation, and rising healthcare costs. I assure you, this has not been an easy budget season.

Recently, *VT Digger* shared a letter written by State Representative Emilie Kornheiser and State Senator Ann Cummings directed at school boards regarding Act 127 and education funding. The letter vilifies school boards based not on facts or data, but rather on testimony not provided by actual school board members. Both school boards and superintendents have been given the opportunity to give testimony on Thursday, January 25. The testimony given is eye-opening. Educational leaders from around

our state gave stark actualizations as to how this would play out in their respective districts.

School boards go into this work with the best interest of Vermont's children in mind. Numerous districts, including mine, will lose tax capacity under Act 127. This means the new law will require a higher tax rate to maintain the same level of spending per student. The law does provide for a 5% rate cap for the first years. It is important to know that for our district to keep our budget below the cap, we would have to cut over \$5 million dollars from the budget, or about 70 teachers. However, as written in the law, if school boards don't use this 5% rate cap this year, we can't access it again in future years. For some districts, including mine, it's not in our best interest to be below this 5% cap because it would gravely impact how we can educate children in our district.

We are also in an era where our school buildings are tired and outdated. These buildings have been given a lot of care over the years, but they are in need of significant repair. Almost 20 years ago, the Legislature put a temporary hiatus on capital project funding for schools, leaving local communities to bear the brunt of large-scale building projects. As the years continue to pass, that temporary

hiatus seems to be more and more permanent every day. My district has been judicious in our spending and haven't taken out bonds for capital improvements. But, as our buildings continue to age and as we are required to test for PCBs, the taxpayers are going to have to approve move bonds and bigger budgets for existing and future repairs.

When we talk about vulnerable Vermonters, our school-aged children highlight that population. School boards are elected to be their voice and represent public education in our state. We serve to represent their best educational interest. Most of us are volunteers, giving countless hours each week, to ensure our schools are providing the most quality public education they can.

Since the pandemic, we have seen a shift in student needs at schools. Students need more and more support, not just academically, to develop into well-rounded, kind, and responsible human beings. Schools across the state and nation have been looked to for giving children this support as well as safe, supportive environments where they can grow. Our budgets reflect the changing needs of students and the need to keep qualified educators employed in our districts. I recognize that the intent of the law was to develop a

greater equity in funding education, knowing that the studies done show that it should cost more to educate students with higher needs. Part of my work with my board has been to create a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee that focuses on bringing equitable learning environments to our students every day. We strive to inject equity into every aspect of our work so that we can ensure all students are represented.

My district has consistently offered transparency in our budget process through informational meetings, community letters, and supplying all information on our website. Local legislators attended our December 18, 2023 meeting to hear what the impact would be in our area. As boards continue to pass budgets and hold more space for the community to provide input, I would encourage members of the public to reach out and talk to your school board about the budget. I recognize that some will only focus on the percentage increase. Please look past that number and ask questions. This is an incredibly complicated matter and my hope is that we can work together so that our children don't lose any part of their education because of failed budgets.

VT Legislature to modify Act 127 school funding law

The information below is breaking as the Mountain Gazette goes to press for the February 15 edition. Details are as yet uncertain, so keep an eye and ear tuned to the Legislature and local school boards for accurate information. — Editor

Apparently having realized that many school districts were planning (and budgeting) to take advantage of what amounts to a loophole in Act 127 as passed in 2022 — which would have caused an unintended and large bump to the state's obligation for school funding in the next five years — during the week ending Friday, February 16 the Legislature will consider how to modify Act 127. A *VT Digger* story on February 9 (<https://vtdigger.org/2024/02/09/lawmakers-move-to-replace-controversial-property-tax-cap-with-targeted-discount/>) says, "The bill, H.850, would scrap the blanket 5% property tax cap originally included in Act 127

and instead give districts a 1 cent discount on homestead property for every percent decrease in their "tax capacity" resulting from Act 127... phased out over five years." and "To allow school districts time to make changes, the bill would let districts delay their budget votes, which traditionally occur on or before Town Meeting Day in March, until no later than April 15."

Per MMUUSD board member Edye Graning (Front Porch Forum, Underhill, February 9), the MMUUSD board will have held a meeting on Monday, February 12; and will hold a budget information presentation on Thursday, February 15 at Camel's Hump Middle School, in person and online via Google Meet (<https://meet.google.com/kpk-ufcr-iof>). Recordings will be available after the meetings. It is very likely that these meetings will include discussion of what course to pursue in this muddled situation.

MyVoterPage reminder ahead of March 5 Presidential Primary

With the Presidential Primary and Town Meeting Day — Tuesday, March 5 — about one month away, Vermont Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas reminds Vermonters about the resources available to them through her office's MyVoterPage online platform, <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>. This online platform is a comprehensive resource for election information and allows voters to perform a variety of functions related to voting.

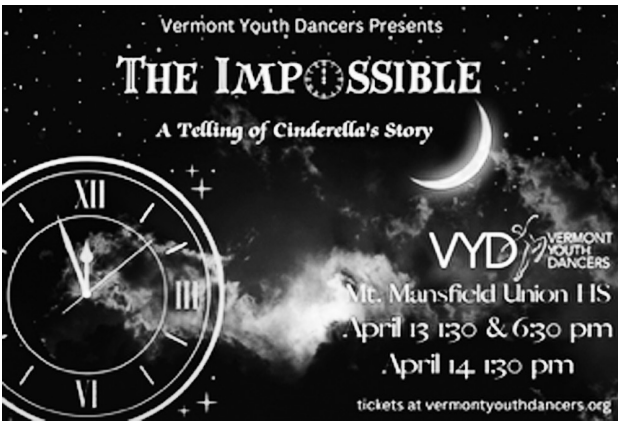
"As we approach the Presidential Primary, the *MyVoterPage* is a valuable resource for Vermonters," said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. "It's a one-stop-shop, from registering to vote to tracking an absentee ballot, and I strongly encourage voters to check it out if they haven't yet!"

- At this online platform, Vermonters can:
- check their voter registration status;
 - register to vote;

- request an absentee ballot by mail;
- track their ballot status;
- challenge / fix errors in their mail-in ballot;
- find their polling place;
- update their registration information on file with their city/town office;
- view sample ballots for upcoming elections.

Voters access their page by logging in with their name, date of birth, registered town, and either their Vermont driver's license/permit/ID or the last four digits of their Social Security Number.

"Vermont is one of the most engaged electorates in the country, and my office's primary mission is to make sure our elections are secure and accessible," said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. "By putting Vermonters in the driver's seat of their voting experience, the *MyVoterPage* platform is a crucial part of that effort."



Vermont Youth Dancers (VYD) presents *The Impossible*, A Telling of Cinderella's Story at Mount Mansfield Union High School, Browns Trace, Jericho on Saturday, April 13, 1:30 and 6:30 PM, and Sunday, April 14, 1:30 PM. VYD brings this classic tale to life with current music in a full-length stage production. Do not miss our signature blend of exciting hip hop and inspiring lyrical choreography, imaginative sets and beautiful costumes. Tickets go on sale March 1, <http://vermontyouthdancers.org>. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Bolton Citizens Fair on Saturday, February 17

By Carol Devlin, Bolton Assistant Clerk and Treasurer
Let's get back to the Fundamentals of Citizenship! Come to Smilie Memorial Elementary School, Theodore Roosevelt Highway, Bolton on Saturday, February 17, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

The Bolton Citizens Fair offers an antidote to cabin fever! There will be free food, kids' activities, and Bolton History!

You can vote for Bolton's Pet Mayor — learn more and nominate your pet online at <https://forms.gle/i2c5q2kL8pD1ggqn9>.

Neighbors and town officials will be there and can answer your questions: Who can vote? How do I register to vote? Where and when do I vote? How can I learn about parties and candidates? What do town commissions and committees do? Why should I vote or go to Town Meeting?

Take advantage of living in a democracy! Your voice deserves to be heard, and your vote is your voice! Representatives from the three major political parties will be staffing information tables!

Underhill reschedules Winter Carnival

From the Underhill Recreation Committee

Unfortunately, due to the warm weather the weekend of February 10-11 when the Underhill Winter Carnival was originally scheduled, the Underhill Rec Committee decided to postpone Winter Carnival.

We have rescheduled for Friday, February 23, 5:00 – 8:00 PM; and instead of doing a weekend-long Carnival we will host this singular skating event at Moore Park.

Mark your calendars and join us for hot cocoa, a fire with s'mores, music, a food truck, and skating under the lights!

Hope to see you there!

Lamoille North Annual Meeting February 19

By Michele Aumand
Cambridge School District

Join Lamoille North for our 2024 Annual Meeting on Monday, February 19.

We are planning an exciting evening filled with community spirit, food, presentations, and valuable information. Join us for dinner, hear from students, and learn about our 2024-2025 school budgets at the 2024 Annual Meeting on Monday, February 19, 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the Community Education Center at Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, Hyde Park.

This is your opportunity to be a part of the decision-making process that shapes the future of our schools. Join us as we present the district reports and 2025 school district budgets, giving you an in-depth look at the plans and priorities for the upcoming academic year.

The evening is totally free and we'll have childcare available on-site. We just ask you to register at this link: <https://www.lnsd.org/departments/news/details/~board/updates-content/post/lamoille-north-2024-annual-meeting>, or visit <http://www.lnsd.org/>.

Cambridge Food Shelf wish-list for food, winter clothing

Greetings, Caring Community!

The Food Shelf is in need of the following food items: hearty soups, flour, sugar, cake mix/brownie mix, applesauce, snack-type food (granola bars, etc.), crackers, pasta, any type of personal care products (toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, etc.), toilet paper.

Did you know that we also offer, when we can, dog and cat food? We are always grateful for any pet food donations, too!

Thank you to all of you community members who have donated clothing. We are appreciative because you have allowed us to continue to offer clean free clothing to people in this area. Our space is limited so at this time we are only accepting cold weather items, winter clothing only... no shoes, no boots. We need: toddlers clothing: sizes 2, 3, 4, 5 (we have lots of baby clothing); and men's sweatshirts, sweaters, pants, jeans, T-shirts — all sizes. All clothing should be freshly washed, with no animal hair of any kind!

The Food Shelf is located in the basement of the Second Congregational Church in Jeffersonville. The Food Shelf is open

COMING EVENTS

Ongoing Events

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 8) at 6:00 PM. Visit our website for more information or to request a zoom invitation: <https://www.jerichohistoricalsociety.org/events.html>.

Craft Group: meets twice a month on Thursdays (February 22; March 7, 21), 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 atowerinvt@gmail.com, or Julie Hehir, 802-899-3199 or juliehhehir@comcast.net.

Soup+Bread+Ale Experience, Fridays through March 29, 5:00 – 8:00 PM, Sinclair Inn Bed and Breakfast, 389 VT Rt. 15, Jericho. Originally reserved for Inn guests, we are opening up reservations on the first and third Friday nights (February 2, 16; March 1, 15) to community members as well as guests. Each event includes: unlimited servings of two homemade soups inspired by what ingredients we can get fresh and local, with vegan/vegetarian option always available; unlimited local artisan bread; a variety of soup accoutrements; and one Ale "Enchantment of Surpassing Excellence" (a special ale brewed and canned locally at Lucy & Howe Brewing Company). Cider is available as gluten-free drink option. Come sit by the cozy fire with friends, good food and great conversation in the warm space of Jericho's premier Victorian Bed and Breakfast. \$25 per person (\$20 without ale). Reservations required, 802-899-2234 or sinclairinnbb@gmail.com.

Calvary Episcopal Church Soup and Bread Supper, on the last Thursday of the month (February 29), 5:00 – 7:00 PM, Calvary Episcopal Church, VT Rt. 15, Jericho. Come and enjoy some great soups and fellowship with your friends and neighbors.

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@unitedwaynvt.org.

Thursday Trivia nights — Thursdays, through May 1, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Supersounds Trivia at Jericho Cafe & Tavern, VT Rt. 15, Jericho. Come by for Trivia, hosted by DJ Mike Toomey. Lots of awesome prizes, and a way to ward off the winter blues.

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

Weekly Community Choir — If you love to sing (or want to join in on the piano to help folks learn parts and play accompaniment), come join *Mountainsong!* We are a volunteer-run community singing group that harmonizes together in four parts on the second and fourth Thursdays (during the winter) of the month (February 22; March 14, 28), 6:30 – 8:00 PM at the Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 195 VT Rt. 15, Jericho (across from Packard Road). Whether you sing in the shower, sing Karaoke, or just like to sing in harmony with others, bring your voice and join us! Do you learn by ear or read music? Either way, you'll be comfortable here. Our aim is to sing for the joy of singing (no performances except for one short one for family and friends at the end of the season). Come

Coming events continued on page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

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From the Underhill Recreation Committee

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The Food Shelf is located in the basement of the Second Congregational Church in Jeffersonville. The Food Shelf is open

on Tuesdays from 1:00 – 7:00 PM, and donations are accepted during those hours. There is also a donation box in the lobby of the Union Bank in Jeffersonville and at the Varnum Memorial Library.

Questions? The phone number for the Food Shelf is 802-644-8911. If no one answers, please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Many thanks for helping us help our neighbors!

Westford Rec babysitting course through 4-H

By Amanda Gifford, Westford Recreation Coordinator

This two-day babysitting course for ages 11-18 helps middle school and teen-aged youth learn what it takes to be a responsible, caring, trustworthy, competent, capable, and safe babysitter. Through role-playing, discussion and hand-on activities, youth will learn about child development stages, positive discipline, safety and emergency preparedness, first aid (youth receive a custom first aid kit), food and nutrition, and the business of babysitting.

Snacks will be served the first date, and pizza the second date — as part of nutrition and how to serve food learning! Be sure to tell us of dietary restrictions. Please bring a full water bottle. Please be sure to wear comfy and warm indoor clothing and bring indoor shoes to change into that are suitable for playing with babysitting clients! The Red Brick Meeting House is never warm, and the floors are lovely wood.

The class runs on Sundays, March 10 and 17, 1:00 – 5:00 PM at the Westford Red Brick Meeting House, 1685 VT Rt. 128, Westford. You must attend both sessions to receive the certificate.

Register by Sunday, March 3 online at <https://forms.gle/a54Rguos6EjQKmFv6>. There is a limit of 15 participants. The class is effectively FREE! Bring a check for \$20 made out to *Westford Recreation* to the first class, and it will be returned to you upon successful completion of the course!

If you have questions or would like to request more information about this event, email us at recreation@westfordvt.us.

To request language interpretation/translation assistance and/or a disability-related accommodation to participate in this program please contact Molly Corinne Cooper, 866-860-1382 or 802-656-4820, or email Corinne.Cooper@UVM.edu by Friday, February 16 so we may assist you.

Jericho Town Maintenance Facility video explains need

By John Abbott, Jericho Town Administrator

On the ballot during Town Meeting on March 5, 2024 will be the question of resident support for a \$4.15M bond for construction of a Town Maintenance Facility. The Selectboard and Highway Department staff hosted a very successful "open garage" event before the holidays and a list of the Top 10 Reasons it is in our shared interest to pursue this project. If the bond vote passes, design and permitting effort would begin immediately after and construction slated for April 2025.

To see the feasibility study, our consultant from Ascent Consulting Matt Young's recent presentation to the Selectboard, and a new video highlighting need for the new facility, please go online to https://jerichovt.org/Highway-Department/news_feed/town-maintenance-facility-2.

Water, sewer bill assistance program ends March 15

Do you need help paying an overdue water or sewer bill? The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) can help. Eligible households have until Friday, March 15 to apply.

The LIHWAP program pays for overdue water and/or sewer bills, including back charges and fees associated with the outstanding balance. In addition, the program may be able to provide a one-time future payment. Payments are made directly to your water/sewer provider.

To be eligible, you must be a customer of a public drinking water and/or wastewater utility in Vermont. In addition, gross household income must be below 60% of the state median income based on household size. For a household of four, this would be \$66,396. Renters are eligible for this program.

To apply, mail the application and your current water/sewer bill to Economic Services Division, Application & Document Processing Center, 280 State Dr., Waterbury, VT 05671. The application can be found at <https://dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/hwa> or by calling 1-800-339-6433.

This program is administered by the VT Department of Children and Families (DCF) using funding provided by the federal government during the Covid-19 pandemic. So far, the program has paid over half a million dollars in water and sewer bills, and there are still funds remaining. However, all funds must be spent by the end of March or they will be returned to the federal government.

Find more information about the program at <https://dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/hwa> or call 1-800-339-6433.

Brewster Trails cleanup update

By Laird MacDowell, Chair, Cambridge Trails Committee
Members of the Cambridge Trails Committee, the Vermont Land Trust, and local volunteers have completed clearing most of the Brewster Uplands Conservation Trust (BUCT) Trails of downed trees and broken branches due to the recent windstorms. The following trails have been cleared:

- The one-mile-long Pond Loop Trail off West Farm Road;
- The two connected West Farm Road trails that lead to Jeff Falls;
- The Midlands mountain bike trails off Cliff Reynolds Road;
- The major Brewster Uplands trails: Canyon Road Trail, Loggers Loop and Old Carriage Road Trail;
- Rood Pond Trail;
- The Edwards Road section of the Alden Bryan Brewster River Trail. Note that a major landslide at the downstream end of this Trail took out a six section, 100-foot-long bridge as part of the trail. The landslide was the result of the heavy rain and warm up on December 18, 2023. Plans are to reroute the bridge in the spring over the landslide.

The main Alden Bryan Brewster River Trail from Canyon Road to the Midlands trails has been closed for the winter to protect the deer yard. It will reopen in mid-April. All the other trails listed above are open for winter use.

If any downed trees requiring removal with a chainsaw were missed on the listed trails, please contact laird.macdowell@gmail.com with the location and trail name.

COMMUNITY COLUMNS

Newsletter from the Jericho Community Center

By Julia Blake, Jericho

Do you ever wonder what is going on in that old building at 329 Browns Trace in Jericho? It is the Community Center, humming with activities. The Operating Committee of the CC plans to give residents periodic news from the Center, so that when you see the lights on and cars in the lot, you will know the historic building is doing its thing.

In 2023 there were over 5000 visits to the Center. Activities there included many private celebrations, meetings of various groups, plus soccer, dance and fitness classes, clothes and plant swaps.

Recent improvements to the Center include addition of wi-fi, restoration of all the windows, new tables, a new drop box for payments, and so on.

New activities include sponsoring a monthly Coffee Hour for Underhill and Jericho people, hosting the Death Café meetings, initiating a survey for renters to offer suggestions for improvements (which the Committee appreciates and seriously considers), and initiating this newsletter.

On the horizon: an upgrade to the utility room and bathroom, which will include the addition of hot water! (It would be great if

we could add a kitchen but for many reasons this is not feasible.) In March a presentation on How to Stop Bleeding will occur, and of course the Green-Up Day breakfast in May. Maybe even a Solar eclipse activity?

See the website at <http://ccjvermont.com> for a calendar of events, and if you're interested in helping the Operating Committee, contact me at juliablake@comcast.net. The Jericho Center Preservation Association owns the building and the Committee runs the day-to-day operations. Keeping the Center going depends on rental income, donations, grants, and a small amount from the Town of Jericho. If you make donations to the CC funds, you are much appreciated. The rental fees are kept as low as possible (\$15/hour for private or non-profit events, \$20/hour for for-profit events.)

If you are one of the many users of the space, please treat the building gently, leave it clean and ready for the next users, take your trash away with you — simply care for the space so it can continue to offer its gifts for another 175 years.

This area is very fortunate to have a Community Center with dedicated, hard-working volunteers. In this age of turmoil, a feeling of belonging, of being at home in a community, can help give all our lives meaning.



A mock-orange scissor bee, dwarfed by the flower in which it is foraging, is one of over one thousand taxa (many at species level) of invertebrates Bernie Paquette has observed in his Jericho back yard and posted on iNaturalist, including 98 bee species, over three years — including the first iNaturalist posting observation in Vermont of this lovely, tiny wild bee.

PHOTO BY BERNIE PAQUETTE

Coming events continued from page 2

as often as you are able. Cost: \$1 a week toward space rental. We also ask for a contribution to purchase music for the group of \$7 per semester (fall and spring). Questions about the group? Questions about the group? Contact Lynne Robbins, 802-899-2436 or lar.2436@gmail.com, or Doug Varney, 802-343-4513 or vthockeyman@gmail.com, or just show up!

Healthy Habits VT, meets Friday and Saturday mornings: Fridays in Essex Junction at 9:30 or 11:00 AM; Saturdays in South Burlington at 9:30 AM. Leslie Dunn leads weekly group meetings where participants talk about managing weight, being more physically fit, and motivating each other — building habits to achieve better health is the underlying theme of each meeting. For more information, go to <https://www.healthyhabitsvt.com/>, email leslie@healthyhabitsvt.com, or call 802 234-1277.

Coming Events

Wednesday, February 14

Reflections on Redistricting, 7:00 PM, in person and live-streamed, Kellogg-Hubbard Library, 135 Main St., Montpelier. The League of Women Voters of Vermont (LWVVT) in partnership with Kellogg-Hubbard Library presents the fourth in its 2023-24 Lecture Series on Election Issues and Democracy, this season on structural and cultural issues that affect voter attitudes and election results. Tom Little, former state Representative and Chair of the Legislative Apportionment Board will cover Vermont's state constitution and statutory structure and process for periodic legislative district reapportionment and the roles of the Apportionment Board and the General Assembly, and will focus on where and how the process generated controversy over the last two cycles. Live-streamed by Onion River Community Access TV (<http://orcamedia.net/>).

Thursday, February 15

Jericho-Underhill Coffee Hour, 10:00 AM, Community Center in Jericho, 329 Browns Trace, Jericho Center (back room). Pick up coffee and food at the nearby Country Store to bring (breakfast sandwich service ends at 10:00 AM). Join friends new and old and enjoy an hour of socializing!

Friday, February 16

VTSU Calcutta Night Fundraiser, 6:00 – 8:00 PM. VT State University, Johnson. The softball team at VTSU Johnson is doing their Calcutta fundraiser again — tickets this year are \$50; if you want to bring a guest it is an additional \$17 or they can just purchase a ticket for double the chance to win. The cost of ticket includes a dinner, but you don't need to be present to win! The Grand Prize is \$750. All the money we raise goes the team trip to Myrtle Beach at the end of February for spring training. To purchase a ticket, please contact sbsweet802@gmail.com.

Fish Dinner — takeout, pick up 5:00 – 6:30 PM, St. Thomas Catholic Church parish hall, Underhill Center. Served on the first Friday of Lent by the St. Thomas Parish Knights of Columbus. Adult meal (\$17): baked fresh haddock with lemon butter dill glaze, wild mushroom and herb rice pilaf, buttered green beans, coleslaw, roll, dessert; kids' meal (\$8): crispy battered fillets, tater tots, buttered green beans, coleslaw, roll, dessert. Please call ahead to reserve tickets (802-899-4632). Tickets may also be purchased at Wells Corner Market in Underhill Center, or Snowflake Chocolates in Jericho.

Saturday, February 17

JULC Annual Pancake Breakfast, 8:00 – 11:00 AM, United Church of Underhill, Park St., Underhill Flats. Come to the Jericho-Underhill Lions Club 33rd annual pancake breakfast, serving pancakes (both regular and gluten-free) with real Vermont local maple syrup, sausages, bacon, coffee, milk, and orange juice. Proceeds go to fund the David Damkot Memorial Scholarship fund, which provides scholarships to deserving Mount Mansfield Union High School seniors. Take-out available. There is no fee for the breakfast, donations are gladly accepted, as are food donations for our local food shelf.

Third Annual Westford Winter Festival, 11:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Westford Town Common, VT Rt. 128, Westford. For more information: WestfordWinterfest@gmail.com

Horse Parents 101 Free Informational Clinic, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Blackrose Morgans, 906 Middle Rd., Colchester. Got a horse crazy kid at home begging for riding lessons, and you have no idea what to do about it? We're here to help. We'll talk about what a kid can learn around a farm, safety, how much it's going to cost, and what kind of commitment levels there are to help you and your family decide if this is the sport for you. Bring your questions and your sense of humor! No commitment to sign up for anything at Blackrose; grown-ups only, please; RSVP via <https://forms.gle/jUVRSVQhxcujYGar6>. Dress warm! The barn is fully indoors, but not fully heated. Light refreshments provided. Visit us at <http://www.blackroseorgans.com> or [\[www.facebook.com/blackroseorgans\]\(http://www.facebook.com/blackroseorgans\). Questions? Email \[info@blackroseorgans.com\]\(mailto:info@blackroseorgans.com\).](http://</p>
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Sunday, February 18

Winter Tracking Walk, 10:00 AM, Peter A Krusch Preserve, 316 North Cambridge Rd., Jeffersonville. Vermont Master Naturalist and tracker Sophie Mazowita will be helping us find animal signs in winter. Depending on the amount of snow we get before the walk we are suggesting poles and yak tracks or micro spikes, as the trail can be icy. To pre-register please email events@kruschnaturepreserve.org.

Valentine's Day brunch for People Helping People Global, 12:00 – 2:00 PM, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, VT Rt. 15, Jericho. Join in for great food, an extensive silent auction, and live music from The Smokey Newfield Project. \$20 per adult, \$5 for kids and students, children 3 and younger are free; \$50 for a complete family ticket. You can learn more about the PHPG cause at <http://phpgmicrolending.org/>. All proceeds will go towards the economic development projects in Nicaragua. Tickets are available online (<https://www.givesignup.org/TicketEvent/PHPGValentinesDay>) or at the door. Call or email Isabel Tuck with any questions, 802-373-1562 or igamm@gmail.com.

Winter Soup Bowl, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, Underhill Town Hall, Underhill Center. A variety of soup selections will be provided, including a vegan option. Bring your own utensils, bowls, beverages, and cheese or bread or dessert to share. Come share in the fun of this free and family friendly event!

Thursday, February 22

The Archaic Period of the Far Northeast, 7:00 – 8:30 PM, online. Join the Friends of Missisquoi NWR from the comfort of your home to continue the exploration of the cultural heritage of the Missisquoi area. In this Zoom presentation Dr. Fred Wiseman will examine the beginnings of social and ecological complexity with the beginning of optimized food collecting and astronomy and stone-structure built environments. He will explain some of the amazingly complex material culture of the era, including stone and ivory, and will discuss the evidence for complex and astronomical ritual and social organization. This is a free event, but please register to join online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/an-unexpected-complexity-the-archaic-period-of-the-far-northeast-tickets-763723315997>.

Saturday, February 24

For the Love of Hospice: Remembrance Ceremony, 2:00 – 3:00 PM, First Unitarian Universalist Society, 152 Pearl St., Burlington. Please join the University of Vermont Health Network Home Health & Hospice McClure Miller Respite House and Community Hospice team for a ceremony to remember our loved ones who have passed. RSVP by Wednesday, February 14 by [clicking this link](#). Please make sure to include your loved one's name if you'd like it read during the ceremony. The service will also be live streamed; if you are interested in joining virtually, please contact kathleen.merrick@uvmhomehealth.org to receive a link via email or call 802-860-4497, ext. 3405 with any questions.

Sunday, February 25

History of Quilting, 2:00 PM, Holcomb House, 188 Main St. East, Johnson. The Johnson Historical Society hosts this talk by Andrea Blaisdell on the origins and history of quilting, featuring examples of antique quilts. Andrea, a long-time member and President of the Common Threads Quilt Guild, brings many years of quilting experience and knowledge to the program. Participants are invited to bring a heritage quilt to show off to other quilt enthusiasts. All are welcome. Homemade refreshments will be served. Free. Questions? Call Linda, 802-635-7401.

Monday, February 26

Sustainable Woodstock's Food Security Work, 6:00 – 7:30 PM, Jericho Town Library, on the Green in Jericho Center. In this free public Transition Town Jericho meeting, join the Director of Sustainable Woodstock, a nonprofit based in the Upper Valley, to learn about the various food security initiatives they run. The Executive Director Jenevra Wetmore will present on their two community gardens, which are open to local residents and have plots dedicated to growing for the local food shelf. They will also present on their work to build raised beds in low-income communities, and their Grow Your Own Garden Program (GYOG), which provides free seeds and seedlings to local families every spring. Transition Town Jericho has been overseeing various projects around local food and food accessibility. RSVP by sending an email to TTJericho.VT@gmail.com. For general info on Transition Town Jericho, check out their website: www.transitiontownjericho.net.

Wednesday, February 28

Age Well Grab'n'Go Lunch, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, St. Thomas Church, Underhill Center. Menu: diced beef with

potatoes and Burgandy wine sauce, broccoli, roll, pumpkin craisin cookies, milk. To preregister (required) by Friday, February 23 contact Teri. office@stthomasvt.com or 802-899-4632.

Monday, March 11

Lamoille County Legislative Breakfast, 8:00 – 9:30 AM, Jenna's Promise, 117 Saint Johns Road, Johnson. The session begins with a light breakfast, followed by a short briefing by the legislators attending, and a Q&A session. Breakfast by Two Sons Bakehouse; coffee by Jenna's Promise Roasting Company. Learn more and please register at <https://lamoilleconomy.org/breakfast/>.

Sunday, March 17

Winter Soup Bowl, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, Underhill Town Hall, Underhill Center. A variety of soup selections will be provided, including a vegan option. Bring your own utensils, bowls, beverages, and cheese or bread or dessert to share. Come share in the fun of this free and family friendly event!

Thursday, March 25

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



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mtngazette@gmavt.net

HEALTH NEWS

Test your home for radon gas for free

From the Vermont Department of Health

Did you know radon can cause lung cancer? Radon is a radioactive gas that has no color, taste, or smell, but it 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.

January was National Radon Action Month and it is still the perfect time to join the almost 63,000 Vermonters who have already tested their homes for radon. It's easy and it's FREE. Request your kit today! Learn how by visiting <https://www.HealthVermont.gov/radon> or by calling 1-800-439-8550.

Northern EMS offers EMT course

Northern EMS is offering an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course at Northern Emergency Medical Services, Wilson Road, Johnson. The classes begin on Monday, March 4, 6:00 – 9:00 PM, and meet every Monday and Wednesday (same times) through Wednesday, June 19.

The course is designed to train and prepare the student to perform entry level duties after passing the National Registry test. The course and the test are free of charge.

Please email Kathy Jocquim, director@fairfaxrescue.com. If you have any questions, please call Northern EMS at 802-635-3600.

Boosting immunity

By Dr. Mary Kintner

There is no shortage of opinions about the pros and cons of vaccines. Regardless of whether you decide to get the seasonal flu vaccine, the COVID vaccine, or no vaccines, there are steps you can take to reduce your risk of becoming ill.

The most effective way to prevent the spread of infection is frequent and thorough hand washing. When you cough or sneeze, do so in your elbow. In addition, there are other ways to fortify your immunity — i.e., your own natural defense against infections and disease.

Lifestyle is a powerful determinant in your health — positive choices promote health; negative choices promote disease. Four habits that adversely influence health are the following:

1. White sugar because it decreases white blood cells — the immune system's army — by 40% within 30 minutes for the next five hours. By contrast, complex carbohydrates from fruits and vegetables do not have this effect.

2. Alcohol has a similar effect as white sugar, plus it depletes the body's nutritional status.

3. Obesity has a negative impact on immunity because it decreases white blood cells and antibodies — the organisms which fight invaders.

4. Food sensitivities can lead to leaky gut syndrome, which depletes the immune system by sending out false alarms of foreign invasion.

There are specific dietary supplements and foods that can boost immunity:

- Vitamin C increases white blood cell formation as well as interferon — a major immune support. Take vitamin C in small doses because it only persists in the body for four hours. It is especially important at night since it is used in the repair that happens during sleep.

- Bioflavonoids, found in nuts, dark cocoa powder, grapefruit, and white tea, to name a few, increase the activity of other immune cells called natural killer cells and B cells.

- Carotenoids, found in fruits and vegetables, increase natural killer cells, T cells, and quell damaging free radicals.

- Zinc increases white blood cells, natural killer cells, and T cell activity.

- The sulfur in garlic and onions fortifies the immune system.

- Selenium, found in fish, egg yolk, Brazil nuts, and garlic, increase natural killer cells.

- Omega 3 oils, found in deep sea fish, flax, and supplements, strengthen the whole body including the immune system.

- Mushrooms such as Shiitake, Reishi, and Maitake have been found to enhance immunity.

- Capsaicin, found in hot peppers as well as ginger, cilantro, and oregano, have all shown antimicrobial activity.

- Probiotics, found in foods such as yogurt, kefir, and other fermented foods, support the gastrointestinal tract, the densest site of immune tissue in the body.

Habits that promote immunity include:

1. Getting adequate sleep.

2. Developing and keeping a positive outlook.

3. Practicing stress management techniques because stress depletes immunity.

4. Getting adequate sunlight. Vitamin D, which the body makes naturally in response to sunlight is deficient in many people in the northern hemisphere. The benefits of Vitamin D beyond bone formation are being discovered. These benefits include improved mood and immunity.

5. Getting regular moderate exercise is also beneficial, but excessive exercise can deplete immunity.

6. Staying well adjusted, with regular chiropractic care, can allow the nervous system to coordinate bodily defenses optimally as well as decrease stress.

7. Staying well hydrated by drinking plenty of water (half your body weight in ounces. discourages the organisms that thrive on dehydrated mucous membranes).

The season for increased infections is upon us, but we do not have to get sick. Practicing healthy habits including hand washing, adequate rest and relaxation, proper nutrition and hydration, and spinal adjustments can help you hedge your bets against these maladies.

Relay For Life of Chittenden County — June 7

Join the American Cancer Society's 33rd Annual Relay For Life of Chittenden County to help end cancer as we know it, for everyone. This high-energy community event will take place at the Champlain Valley Exposition, Essex Junction, from Friday, June 7, 6:30 PM – Saturday, June 8, 6:30 AM. This year's theme

will be *Star Light, Star Bright — Wish Upon a Cure Tonight*, and will celebrate and recognize survivors, thrivers, and caregivers.

The funds raised by our passionate volunteers go towards cancer research, advocacy, and patient support, such as the Hope Lodge in Burlington, a 24/7 hotline, and rides to treatment. To learn more or join, visit <http://www.relayforlife.org/chittendenvt>.

Talking about the birds and the bees

Parents have recently been asking me for the bare facts about when and how to talk to their children about sex. Given their concerns, I thought I would take the covers off this topic and provide you with some information.

Different approaches for different stages

First, children do not learn about sex in a single “birds and the bees” conversation. Instead, these conversations occur over years — similar to their overall body and mental development.

Toddlers will always be interested in their bodies. Parents at this age should begin to identify the genitals using the proper terms in a matter-of-fact way without embarrassment.

If your preschool child is caught playing doctor or nurse, be reassured that this does not mean your child will be promiscuous or overly interested in sex. This is a great time to teach your child about good and bad touch and that their body is their own and they have the right to privacy.

A pregnancy or birth in the family is always a good opportunity to discuss how babies are conceived and born. If a preschooler or kindergartener wants to know where they came from, you can tell them the story of the egg that grew in the womb or uterus — but be sure your child wants to hear this and not the story of how they came from Chicago to move to Vermont or upstate New York.

Early school aged children will need to be informed about reproduction. A book may be useful if you are worried about what words you will want to use for this conversation. Your child's health care professional can help here with recommendations of what to say or read.

Menstruation should be introduced by age 8 to girls and boys. While schools will teach reproduction, parents need to teach and share their values about having sex and should do this before their children learn the mechanics and science of reproduction in school.

Don't just focus on the don'ts regarding sex and sexuality but also the dos. What can they do to address peer or partner pressure to be sexual when they feel they are not ready?

Acknowledging sexuality is not the same as giving your permission for them to have sex. Listen more than you talk and answer any questions or information heard or learned at school or via the media.

Hopefully, tips like these will be far more revealing when it comes to undressing your fears regarding how to become more comfortable talking to your child about sex.

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 Larner College of Medicine

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Update from the VT House

By Theresa Wood • State Representative

Washington-Chittenden House District

January 28

Most work is being done in committees right now. In my committee (House Human Services), we have been working on our recommendations for the budget adjustment act, a bill relating to flavored e-cigarettes and vaping, and modernizing the emergency housing “program.”

The House has passed the following bills and they have now been referred to the Senate:

H.560 — technical corrections to workers' compensation;

H.659 — a bill related to captive insurance (Vermont is an international leader in this field);

H.603 — poultry slaughter exception to inspection;

H.839 — the fiscal year 2024 budget adjustment act (more on this below).

The budget adjustment is exactly what it sounds like — it's a mid-year adjustment to the current budget. In this year's bill support was extended in the following areas:

- housing individuals who are homeless (reducing what is paid to hotels);

- investing in homelessness prevention through landlord assistance and other supports;

- additional resources for increasing housing stock;

- flood recovery;

- food insecurity.

If you call and leave a message for me at the State House, it

sometimes takes a day or so to receive it. If you just want to let me know your thoughts on a particular bill and don't need a call back, that's okay. However, if you are expecting a call back, I'm not able to return your call unless you leave your number.

I can be reached at twood@leg.state.vt.us.

February 9

Last week in the Legislature again focused primarily on committee work. In my committee we are continuing to take testimony on the Administration's fiscal year 2025 budget proposal. We are hearing from the Departments of Health; Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living; and Children and Families. Additionally, we are hearing from individuals directly impacted by the services of state government as well

as community partners like the mental health/developmental disability agencies, Area Agencies on Aging, housing providers; Vermont Food Bank, and many more.

The full House of Representatives advanced two bills last week:

S.160 — an act relating to state education property taxes and flood related damage; this bill has made it through both the House and Senate and is on its way to the Governor for signature;

H.363 — this is an act prohibiting discrimination based on certain hair types and styles.

Information on these bills and many other items of interest can be found on the Legislative web page found here: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/>.

Please contact me with questions or discussion at twood@leg.state.vt.us. Thanks for reading!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Raceway Road condition

To the Editor,

I have lived on Raceway Road for 27 years and the current conditions are the worst I have ever seen it. You cannot go more than 10 MPH, A couple of weeks ago my wife was transported by ambulance to the hospital and as I followed them to the hospital, they could only do 5 MPH. Thank goodness it was not life threatening.

I have brought this issue up about the condition of the road five years ago at Town Meeting and Tim Nulty acknowledged the road warranted getting paved, based on the studies the town did. So I ask, what are they waiting for?

The band-aid approach of dumping more gravel to fill in the potholes has only compounded the problem — raising the road at least a foot more than when I first moved onto Raceway Road, causing flooding at the end of my driveway as well as the neighbors'.

What is it going to take to get this problem fixed?

Vincent Comegno
Jericho

About Raceway Road conditions

To the Editor,

I live on Raceway Road and would hate to see it paved, inviting accidents to motorists and pedestrians, dog-walkers, and

wildlife that cross the road. The siting of the road has hazards that would increase with inevitable higher speeds. I specifically am concerned with the blind spot at the steep pitch on the edge of a ridge between the Davis farm and the Chamberlain home, as well as the bend at the western terminus of Raceway.

Yes, the crazy winter freeze and thaw cycling, together with incessant rain through this past year, have been hard on this road, with formation of potholes in places where water has pooled.

Three things could improve the road maintenance:

1. Signs posted at either end of the road saying NO THROUGH TRAFFIC. LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY;

2. Post slower speed limit signs, so hopefully people cut back the amount of bouncing airborne along the road. I grew up in a more rural area where dirt roads were traveled more cautiously because it was miles to a mechanic if you broke an axle or bent your tire rims;

3. Attention by our road crews to open up some drainage into ditches in trouble spots. Right now the grading is leaving mounded gravel on both sides of the road, which fails to allow drainage off the travelled surfaces, so potholes naturally form.

Consider our rising budget for town services: if you hate more taxation, slow down and drive in a considerate manner.

Stephanie Bellomo
Jericho

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*The days are lengthening quickly now... by the end of February, there will be an additional 1.25 hours of daylight.
This month's full moon is called the Snow Moon and will be at peak illumination on Saturday, February 24, at 7:30 AM.*

TOWN MEETING INFORMATION

Vermont Presidential Primary

All voters in Vermont should note that a statewide Presidential Primary will be held on Tuesday, March 5, to vote for candidates for President of the United States.

MMUUSD budget presentation, Act 127 update February 15

By Edye Graning, Chair, MMUUSD Board

Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (MMUUSD) residents are encouraged to join the MMUUSD Board for a budget information presentation on Thursday, February 15 at Camel's Hump Middle School, Richmond and online via Google Meet (<https://meet.google.com/kpk-ufcr-tof>) for an update on Act 127 and to discuss and consider approval of the motion by the Finance Committee to revise and re-warm the 2024-25 budget based on proposed changes to Act 127.

We look forward to seeing you at this meeting in person or virtually.

Lamoille North School District 2024 annual meeting February 19

By Michele Aumand, Cambridge School District

Join Lamoille North for our 2024 Annual Meeting on Monday, February 19.

We are planning an exciting evening filled with community spirit, food, presentations, and valuable information. Join us for dinner, hear from students, and learn about our 2024-2025 school budgets at the 2024 Annual Meeting on Monday, February 19, 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the Community Education Center at Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, Hyde Park.

This is your opportunity to be a part of the decision-making process that shapes the future of our schools. Join us as we present the district reports and 2025 school district budgets, giving you an in-depth look at the plans and priorities for the upcoming academic year.

The evening is totally free and we'll have childcare available on-site. We just ask you to register at this link: <https://www.lnsd.org/departments/news/details/~board/updates-content/post/lamoille-north-2024-annual-meeting>, or visit <http://www.lnsd.org/>.

Jericho Town Meeting updates and information and elections

Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 5. Visit the Town Meeting Page to see draft documents of the budget and read the warning for the meeting: <https://jerichovt.org/jericho-town-meeting>. At Town Meeting, residents will vote on articles including the Town budget of \$3,456,499 for the upcoming fiscal year; appropriating \$579,107 of the total \$965,748 Underhill Jericho Fire Department (UJFD) budget to support UJFD operations in Jericho, and to exempt the UJFD fire station property on Browns Trace from property taxes for five years; and two articles: "Shall the Town adopt all budget articles by Australian Ballot?" and "Shall the Town adopt all Public questions by Australian Ballot?"

Visit the Elections Page to see sample ballots for the town and general election: <https://jerichovt.org/elections>. Polls for voting by Australian ballot will be open on Tuesday, March 5 at the Mount Mansfield Union High School (Browns Trace, Jericho) from 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM. Ballot items include electing candidates for these positions: Moderator, one year term; Town Clerk, one year; Select Board Member, three year term; Select Board member, one year of an unexpired three year term; Cemetery Commissioner, three years; Jericho Underhill Library District Trustee, four years (two positions); Jericho Underhill Park District Trustee, three years (two positions); MMUUSD Board of Directors, three years (one position); MMUUSD Board of Directors, one year of an unexpired three year term (two positions).

The Jericho Selectboard will hold an informational budget hearing at the Jericho Town Hall (VT Rt. 15) on Monday, February 26 at 6:00 PM, the final public hearing on the FY'25 general and capital budgets. The agenda for this meeting includes a final public hearing of the cost estimate, timeline, and tax implication for the bond vote to construct a new Town Maintenance Facility.

There is a video from MMCTV about the proposal for the new Town Maintenance Facility, online at <https://archive.org/details/jerichogaragebond2024>. For additional information: https://jerichovt.org/Highway-Department/news_feed/town-maintenance-facility-2.

The Jericho Planning Commission has been working on issues related to walking, biking, and connectivity, and at earlier meetings has presented information on:

- VT Rt. 15 Riverside sidewalk — the new portion of sidewalk planned for VT Rt. 15 to connect the Jericho Market to Park Street in Underhill, slated for construction in 2025; and
- VT Rt. 15 multi-modal path, connecting Jericho Corners to Riverside.

The Jericho Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (JDEIC) is asking the voters of Jericho to reflect on our current Town Meeting practices. What is the "most democratic" way of doing business? What is the most inclusive and accessible way to engage voters? How are you most likely to participate and vote? Do we want to continue with the system we are using, or make a total or partial shift to Australian ballot? If we make a change, how do we want that change to look? How do we create a hybrid version of our current system (minus the voting) that preserves the ability to share thoughts and engage in dialogue with each other?

At Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 5, residents will have a floor vote on the following questions:

- Shall the Town adopt all budget articles by Australian Ballot?
- Shall the Town adopt all public questions by Australian Ballot?

As we approach Town Meeting Day, the JDEIC encourages voters of Jericho to reflect on these practices, review the information gathered by the DEIC, and engage in conversation. Read more at https://jerichovt.org/diversity-equity-inclusion/news_feed/australianballot, and for additional details visit <https://jerichovt.org/diversity-equity-inclusion>.

The rink will be closed until the sap stops flowing.
— Underhill Recreation Committee

Westford Annual Town Report available

By Holly Delisle, Westford Town Administrator

The 2023 Annual Town Report is now available to view on the town website (<https://westfordvt.us/annual-town-reports/>) in full color! This year's report is dedicated to Nanette Rogers for her years of service to the town as Town Clerk first, then Town Administrator.

A paper copy of the report will be mailed to all households with a registered voter as well.

Westford voting and Town Meeting

The Town of Westford holds its Town Meeting at the Westford Elementary School, 146 Brookside Rd., Westford on Monday, March 4 at 7:00 PM at which time the Town's Annual Meeting will commence to act on three articles (Articles 1-3), including one that asks whether votes on all public questions should be by Australian ballot. Following the floor votes on those items, there will be a public informational hearing on the articles to be voted by Australian ballot (Articles 4-6) the following day.

Australian ballot voting in Westford takes place at the Westford Elementary School on Tuesday, March 5, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM, on three articles that ask voters to: approve the Selectboard's budget for the coming year of \$2,223,929; approve a bond of (up to) \$630,000 for the purchase and equipping of a fire tanker truck for the Westford Fire Department; and to elect candidates to the following offices: Town Moderator for a term of one year; Selectboard for a term of three years; Selectboard for a term of two years; Selectboard for a term of one year; Library Trustee for a term of five years; Library Trustee for a term of five years with four years remaining; Library Trustee for a term of five years with one year remaining.

Westford Library presents Meet the Candidates forum February 15

By Bree Drapa, Librarian, Westford Public Library

The Westford Public Library is proud to impartially inform the community on its choices for Selectboard. We invite you to attend the Meet the Selectboard Candidates Forum on Thursday, February 15, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, on Zoom (Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85912977083>). Moderated by Westford Public Library Director Bree Drapa, this event will be recorded by LCATV and will be available to watch later.

The Zoom audience will be muted, with cameras off, maximizing time for candidates to answer questions and minimizing distractions. Each candidate will have time to introduce themselves and speak about their priorities for the upcoming term.

This is not a debate. It is an informational meeting that will help voters get to know each candidate better.

Here are the candidates running and the seats they are running for:

- Greg Bemis and Deb Sawyer Jorschick (two-year term);
 - Patrick Haller and Basil V. Panattu (three-year term);
 - Casey Mathieu (three-year term with two years remaining);
 - Robert Bancroft and Wendy Doane (one-year term).
- Candidates will answer pre-submitted questions.

Town Meeting continued on page 12

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- 75% off weatherization project costs, **up to \$4,000**
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- Financing starting at **0% interest**, or add the monthly payment to your utility bill.

It's possible to make your home more comfortable and energy efficient for around \$50 a month. Income-eligible Vermonters may qualify for free weatherization services.

*Subject to availability and eligibility.

Learn More

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.

Our artist for the month of February is Monique Dewyea. Come enjoy her beautiful watercolors!

Adult programs

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Seated Tai Chi for Fall Prevention. Age Well and DRML are sponsoring Seated Tai Chi for Falls Prevention for those 60+ or those who have limiting conditions that would like to improve their balance, strength, and well-being. We will learn the Sun Style Form and ways to reduce stress and tension for you to apply when needed. The form can be adapted to your personal needs, so all can participate fully. In person at DRML, or ZOOM from the comfort of your own home. Zoom link will be provided. Registration required, please contact Certified Instructor Jo Osborne at joannosborne2@gmail.com.

Thursdays, February 15, March 14, April 11, and May 9, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Representatives Trevor Squirrel and Edye Graning will be holding monthly legislative updates for Jericho and Underhill residents at the Library. We hope to have remote attendance capability for these updates and will provide that information as we get closer to the event date. If you have specific questions or would like to know what is being discussed at the statehouse, please join us for this conversation.

Thursday, February 15, 7:00 PM: Board of Trustees Meeting. Held in person; a virtual meeting is available for those who wish to remain remote. Please contact Holly (drawsonmemlib@gmail.com) to receive the link.

Sunday, February 18, 1:30 PM: An Afternoon with Marie's Stories. Join members of Marie Tedford's family for a reading from Marie's collection of short stories, *Nanny Goat Hill*. Stop in and meet Marie's husband and kids who will read selections from her book, as well as an item or two from Marie's stories for young children. All are invited for this free afternoon of reading and conversation. There will be cookies and beverages for all.

Thursdays, February 22, March 7, 21, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Crafters Group. Join us at DRML in the fireplace room for a couple of hours of crafting and conversation with your neighbors. All are welcome, beginner to expert, in any craft you can transport. Hope to meet you there! Any questions — please contact Amy Tower, 802-355-9671 or atowerinv@gmail.com, or Julie Hehir, 802-343-0034 or juliehehir@comcast.net.

Tuesday, February 27, 7:00 PM: Mystery Book Group. We will be discussing *The Mountain Wild* by Sarah Stewart Taylor. If you need a copy, call the library or request a copy on our online catalog using your library card. Also, each person will talk about a mystery book of their choice. We meet in person in the program room.

Thursday, February 29, 7:00 PM: *Bikes vs. Cars*, a movie presented by the Jericho Energy Task Force.

Ongoing

Tuesdays, 10:30 AM: Baby Toddler Storytime. [ages 0-5] Come on down to the story corner and get cozy with tickles, bounces, songs, rhymes, and stories!

Fridays, 11:00 AM: Stories and Songs with Beth and David London. [ages 0-5] Come dance, sing, and play with Beth and David! A reminder, they will not be here during school vacation on Friday, February 23.

Here is what's going on this month! All programs meet in person at DRML, unless otherwise specified.

Friday, February 16, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: LEGO Club. [ages 6+] Build a snowflake, a snow man, or a ski slope! Use a challenge card for inspiration or flip through the *LEGO Ideas* book. Anyway you look at it, there's no wrong way to LEGO! Please sign up for this very popular program when you call, visit or email the library.

Thursday, February 22, 3:00 – 5:00 PM: Animation Club. [ages 8+] With a few props, a camera and a whole lot of patience you can make a stop motion movie! We also have tablets with animating apps to try your hand drawn animations. Please sign up for this very popular program when you call, visit or email the library.

Thursday, February 15, 3:00 – 4:30 PM: Minecraft Social. [ages 8+] Come make new friends or hang out with old buddies while playing Minecraft! Please bring your own device if you have one. The library does have a few tablets so those without a device can play too!

Tuesday, February 27, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Nintendo Switch Games. [ages 8+] Catch up with friends during the break when you come to play the library's Nintendo switch games like Mario Kart, Super Smash Bros and Sports Party.

Thursday, February 29, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM: Board Game Petting Zoo. [all ages] Break up the school break by visiting the library and playing some games. Any game that is on the shelf will be available to play, and Ms. Abbey will be on hand to help you figure out the rules. We have games for everyone from preschool on up!

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

New hours: Tuesdays 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM; Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Saturdays 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

Please join us for the following weekly programs and special events at Jericho Town Library in Jericho, VT. Building accessibility note: we are working hard on a project to make our historic building accessible to all Vermonters, but visitors must currently use a set of stairs to get to the front entrance of the building and a longer staircase to reach the second floor. We are committed to serving all members of our community; if you cannot enter our current building and would like to attend one of our programs, please reach out so that we can try to modify our plans.

Thursdays, 9:30 – 10:00 AM: Storytime Yoga. This interactive, movement-based storytime is designed for kids ages 6 and under (with an accompanying adult).

Thursdays, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Playgroup. Make new friends and enjoy our second floor play area for two hours of unstructured play. Kids 6 and under (with an accompanying adult).

Saturdays, 9:00 – 10:00 AM: Romp & Rhyme. Drop in for a short storytime, followed by unstructured play on the second

floor of the library. Babies and toddlers (with an accompanying adult).

Friday, February 16, 3:00 PM and Saturday, February 17, 8:30 AM: Join Conservation Commission member Sabina Ernst in the Great Backyard Bird Count, an international participatory science project, while watching birds on the Town Green. All ages.

Saturday, February 17, 1:00 – 2:30 PM: Ingredient-of-the-Month Cookbook Club. Join us for a potluck-style event on the third Saturday of each month to eat and make merry. In February we encourage participants to bring dishes featuring citrus. All ages.

Sunday, February 18, 10:30 – 11:30 AM: Community Yoga. Gentle, accessible, slow flow. This donation-based class meets on the third Sunday of each month. Donations are optional and go directly to the instructor, Deanna Bartlett. (Suggested donation: \$14.) Bring your own mat and any other props! Teens and adults. Registration encouraged and walk-ins welcome.

Thursday, February 22, 1:30 – 2:30 PM: Around the World in 2024, a geography program for homeschooling kids on the fourth Thursday of the month. All are welcome, but the program is designed for ages 7-10. Kids 7+ welcome to attend unaccompanied. Please register in advance on our website.

Thursday, February 22, 7:00 – 8:00 PM: In-person discussion of Ben Goldfarb's nonfiction book *Crossings: How Road Ecology is Shaping the Future of Our Planet*. Teens and adults.

Wednesday, February 28, 7:00 – 8:00 PM: Q&A with author Ben Goldfarb about his book *Crossings*. On Zoom; please register for the event in advance by visiting our website. Teens and adults.

During the week of February vacation, we will run several space-themed activities for elementary-aged kids. Please check our website for details.

In March, we will be launching a Speculative Fiction Book Club for adults who love science fiction, fantasy, alternate histories, dystopian novels, and anything just a little bit weird! Please check our website for details.

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

The month is short and sweet so be sure to stop by and see what's cooking-up at the Varnum Memorial Library! In addition to our new winter gear available for your snow enjoyment, we've got snacks, warm drinks and community in abundance. If you're getting anxious about your taxes, don't worry! AARP will be providing tax preparation assistance at the Varnum, as always. The dates WILL be announced as soon as they are set. As always, please check our calendar of events on our website for more detailed information and any updates: <http://www.varnumlibrary.org>

Thursday, February 22, 4:30 – 5:45 PM: BoundLess Book Club. This new club is all about what you're reading at the moment, advising others of read-alikes and actual time to read!

In addition, we offer this month:

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00 AM: Story Time for all ages.

Tuesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Board Games for All.

Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:30 PM: Crafternoon.

Thursdays, 10:00 AM: Coffee and Conversations.

Thursday, February 15, 3:00 – 5:00 PM: Afternoon Snack Time (with Patty).

Tuesday, February 20, 5:00 – 5:30 PM: Nutrition and Wellness Talks with Paige Kelly.

Sunday, February 18, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: 4H LocalVores Club.

Sunday, February 18, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Book of Goose Book Club.

Saturday, February 24, 1:00 – 2:30 PM: National Tortilla Chip Day Party. You know we're going to celebrate, so come join us!

The Varnum staff and volunteers always look forward to seeing you so don't be a stranger!

The Varnum Library, Jeffersonville; <http://www.varnumlibrary.org>; 802-644-2117

Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Friday/Saturday 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM; closed Sunday-Monday unless otherwise noted.

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.

For the month of February ONLY! Essex High School Art 3, Art 4, and AP Art students selected pieces made with a variety of mediums, like oil, acrylic, watercolor, and digital; as well as pieces which explore a variety of themes from masculinity and childhood, to pets and outer space. Each piece is displayed with pride. As you explore the exhibition we hope that you take some time to really admire each piece.

Tuesdays, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Crafting with Marianne.

Thursdays, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: LEGO Club. Grades 1-4, sign-up required (call or email). Kids will ride the bus (with note from home and EWSD transportation form) to the library each week. More information on bussing to those who sign up. Snack included. We will do a combination of free building, building challenges, and have lots of LEGO fun! Space is limited, so plan to attend weekly and sign up early. Priority will be giving to kids who did not get in the first session.

Thursdays, 11:30 AM, inside the library: Early Literacy Storytime. We sing songs, read stories, move and do crafts! No sign up needed, all ages are welcome.

Thursday, February 22, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Table Top Game Night. Meets the second and fourth Thursdays, hosted by avid table top gamers Bill & Martha McClintock who will bring games from their extensive home game collection to share with those who come. This is a new group, so we will see how it goes. Please come to make things like this possible. Snacks provided. Bring your own beverages.

First Thursday of the month (March 7), 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Makers' Group. All types of crafters are welcome to attend. Bring projects to show off, share expertise, and enjoy each others' company.

The Westford Food Shelf is now open twice a month, on the first Wednesday of each month (March 6), 4:30 – 5:30 PM, on the third Saturday (March 18), 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.

Find us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/westfordpubliclibrary) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/WestfordVT_pl). Bree Drapa, Librarian. 802-878-5639; www.westfordpubliclibrary.org; westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com.

FAIRFAX COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Please sign up at least one week before the program date; all events free unless noted. Please contact libraryfairfax@gmail.com or 802-849-2420 to register for events! For up-to-date information about programs, visit our website www.fairfaxvlibrary.org where you can also find a link to the interactive Google calendar.

Mango Languages is another language learning resource, with a site and app that offers lessons in more than 70 languages, is made possible through the support of the Green Mountain Library Consortium (GMLC). Choose from over 70 world languages to learn on your desktop or mobile device. Family Profiles are the perfect way to enrich the lives of your loved ones with language and culture; once logged in, tap on the three horizontal lines in the upper right corner to find the Family Profiles setup page. To begin using Mango Languages, all you need is a Fairfax Community Library card. Learn more at: <https://connect.mangolanguages.com/fairfaxvlibrary/start>. Find the link to Mango Languages on the library website under the Resources tab and at: <https://fairfaxvlibrary.org/mango-languages.html>.

Youth events

Tuesday, February 27, 5:30 PM: D&D Club. Dragons! Danger! Dice! The library is now hosting a middle school D&D club. Join our DM, Nic, and create a character to take on exciting magical adventures! No prior Dungeons and Dragons knowledge is necessary, and players of all experience levels are welcome. Materials provided. Grades 5-8. Club meets every other Tuesday. Please email libraryfairfax@gmail.com or call 802-849-2420 to register!

Mondays through February 26, 3:30 PM: Chess Club. Chess Club is starting up again! Learning chess has been proven to have many benefits: such as building creativity, problem solving and concentration! Ages 7+. Space is limited, so please register! You can email libraryfairfax@gmail.com to sign up!

Wednesdays, February 14, 21, 28, 10:30 AM: Preschool Story Time. Join us for stories and songs! Children's books will be available to check out as well. Before you leave, pick up an activity to make at home!

Wednesday, February 14, 1:00 PM: LED Rose Bouquet. Make a bouquet of roses that light up! Materials provided. Ages 8+ Please email libraryfairfax@gmail.com or call 802-849-2420 to register!

Wednesday, February 21, 3:00 PM: Yarn Letters. Create some colorful yarn wrapped letters! Materials provided. Ages 8+ Please email libraryfairfax@gmail.com or call 802-849-2420 to register!

Wednesday, February 28, 3:00 PM: DIY Zoetrope. Learn how to make one of the oldest moving picture devices, and draw your own mini-movie! Materials provided. Ages 8+ Please email libraryfairfax@gmail.com or call 802-849-2420 to register!

Adult events

Saturday, February 17, 10:30 AM: Needle Felting with Nicole Bachand. Join Nicole to learn the basics of needle felting, and make a fuzzy creation! Materials provided. Please email libraryfairfax@gmail.com or call 802-849-2420 to register!

Tuesdays, February 20, 27, 5:30 PM: Mandarin Club with Keyuan Xiang. Interested in learning Mandarin, or just want to know more about Chinese culture? Join Keyuan Xiang at the library for lessons! You don't need to come to each club meeting, but registration is required for the day or days you would like to attend. Please email libraryfairfax@gmail.com or call 802-849-2420 to register!

Thursday, February 22, 4:00 PM: Library Book Club. The book this month is *The 100 Year Old Man Who Climbed out the Window and Disappeared* by Jonas Jonasson. Book club will meet in the library. A Zoom link will be available for anyone who wants to attend remotely. If you would like to borrow a copy of the book, or request the Zoom link, Please email libraryfairfax@gmail.com or call 802-849-2420 to register! All are welcome!

Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 10:00 AM – 5:30 PM (Fridays, 4:15 PM); Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM; and Saturdays 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

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

RICHMOND LIBRARY

Seeking Artists and Collectors — RFL is currently scheduling art shows for our walls and display case in 2024. If you have framed pieces (art, photography) and would like to schedule a show, contact us to choose your month. 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, nutcrackers, 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, 802-434-3036 or library@richmondvt.gov.

Children's Art from the Ukraine: On loan from The Fermata Arts Foundation in Avon, CT, we will be displaying 16 drawings done by students of the Vasylykivskiy Children's Art School in Izyum, Kharkiv region, Ukraine. Ranging in age from 9-14, students created a piece in support of Fermata's mission of promoting peace through arts and culture.

Wednesday, March 13: Vermont Reads: *Last Night at the Telegraph Club*. RFL joins libraries and community groups around Vermont in a big community facilitated discussion of this novel by Malinda Lo. The book is suited for teens and adults and focuses on a Chinese American older teencoming of age in 1950s San Francisco. Copies of the book are available to take home (to keep or to borrow) now. There will be a free swing dancing lesson on Friday, April 5 and community art with Radiate Art Space later in April. Join us as we explore themes of Chinese American immigrant experience, McCarthyism, and queerness in mid-century America.

Library News continued on page 7

Library news continued from page 6

Saturday, February 24, 11:00 AM: The Great Puzzle Challenge. Make a team of up to three to four people and compete to see who can assemble their fun 500-piece jigsaw puzzle fastest! Register in advance, 802-434-3036 or library@richmondvt.gov.

Monday-Tuesday, February 26-27, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM: MMCTV Video Workshop for Middle School Students. We are once again partnering with local community media center MMCTV to offer the ninth annual video workshop for middle school students during the February school vacation. This year the theme will be *It Happened at the Library*. We will imagine plausible and fanciful scenes set in the library and produce short videos using a variety of filming techniques. Students ages 10-14 are invited to register for this fun, free workshop offering hands-on filming and editing experience. Time will be split between the library and the television studio. Space is limited so call or email the library to register, 802-434-3036 or library@richmondvt.gov.

Tuesday mornings through April 9: AARP Volunteer Tax Preparers. Volunteers working with AARP are meeting with seniors to prepare tax returns in the library community room. Call the library (802-434-3036) to schedule an appointment.

Thursday, February 15, 7:00 PM: Mystery Book Group. Join us in the Mezzanine Lounge to discuss *Man in the Queue (Alan Grant, #1)* by Josephine Tey. Contact Maureen Parent (802-434-2055, mparent@gmavt.net) with any questions.

Wednesday, February 21, 4:00 PM: Climate Action Book Discussion: *The Heat Will Kill You First*. Richmond Free Library and Richmond Climate Action Committee invite you to read and discuss *The Heat Will Kill You First: Life and Death on a Scorched Planet* by Jeff Goodell. This book focuses on the global impacts of heat and offers advice on how we as individuals and communities can adapt. Books are available now.

Weekly/Monthly Children's Programs

Weekly programs at the RFL run from September-May and follow the MMUUSD schedule for vacation days and weather closure days.

Wednesdays, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Storytime/Playgroup. The good times kick off with stories and action songs in the Library Community Room and then the toys come out for free play with friends new and old. Co-sponsored by the Library and the Lund Center. Kids infant-five years and their grownups are invited to join the fun.

Mondays, 10:30 AM: Baby Laptime. This short, active story time 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. This program is designed for infants and early toddlers.

Third Saturday (February 17) of every month, September-May, 10:30 AM: Hora del Cuento (Spanish Storytime). Join native Spanish speakers Chichi and Eva in the Community Room for 30 minutes of picture book stories and rhymes. This program is a great introduction to Spanish for young children and a nice way for parents of older children placed in the Spanish Immersion Program to hear the language.

Snowshoes to Lend — Patrons with valid library cards from Richmond or Huntington may now borrow snowshoes at the Richmond Free Library for a week at a time. Adult and youth sizes as well as poles are available. Snowshoes were purchased by the Richmond Recreation Committee (comprising members from Huntington, Bolton, and Richmond) through a grant from Rise VT. Call or email the Library for more details (802-434-3036 or library@richmondvt.gov), or stop by to borrow some, and get out and enjoy the winter trails with your family.

Trustees Meetings are on the second Monday of the month (February 12, March 11) via Zoom until further notice. All meetings are open to the public.

What can you borrow from the Library? Borrow books (fiction, non-fiction, memoir), magazines, DVDs, Playaways, early readers, board books, graphic novels (for all ages, audiobooks on CD, Spanish language books for kids, chapter books, comic books, Vox books (picture books that talk!), STEAM kits, storytime bags, a sewing machine, a blood pressure monitor, lawn games, snowshoes and poles, a firewood moisture meter, and an appliance voltage meter.

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. 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

All month: KCR Display: Mae Juniper Stokes: Portals.

Mindfulness Bingo: Already stressed out by New Year's resolutions? Take home a Bingo sheet and pause every day to practice some mindfulness.

Main Reading Room Community Puzzle: help put together a puzzle! Found in the main reading room. Puzzles rotate out as they are completed.

Puzzle Swap: Bring a puzzle, take a puzzle. Adult and kid friendly puzzles welcome! Only puzzles that have all the pieces. Drop your puzzle off on the table next to the main desk.

Brownell Writers Challenge: 2024 is the year of the dragon! Come to the library to write a 3-5 sentence story inspired by an image of someone coming face to face with a dragon. All youth patrons (children or teens) can participate in this writing challenge! Your story will be entered into a drawing for a \$15 Phoenix Books gift card and may be included in our next zine. The winning story may also be published in the Essex Reporter.

Thursday, February 15, 10:00 – 10:30 AM: Story Time. Picture books, songs, rhymes and crafts. Come read and play with us. Special Chinese language story time on February 8! In the picture book area.

Friday, February 16, 5:30– 6:30 PM: TAG: Perler Palooza. TAG is open to grades 6-12 and is serving PIZZA! Come volunteer your time and skills and make the library a better place! This time: Do a throwback craft and make perler bead designs of your choice.

Saturday, February 17, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Book and media donations accepted. The Brownell Library Foundation will be accepting books and media for their book sale. 2 boxes maximum per person.

Saturday, February 17, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: LEGO Fun. Build creatively with LEGOs. Your creations will be displayed in the library! Children under 9 years old must bring a responsible caregiver.

Saturday, February 17, 2:00 – 3:45 PM: TEEN Throwback Matinee. Call the Library for title. Teens, join us for a throwback movie and popcorn. A posh Beverly Hills high school's most popular student does her best to survive the ups and downs of adolescent life. Rated PG-13, Paramount Pictures; 97 minutes.

Monday, February 19: closed for Presidents' Day.

Tuesday, February 20, 10:00 – 11:30 AM: Current Events Discussion Group, in-person and online. This discussion group will attempt to look at, reflect on, and analyze daily events and try to discern trends and understand the national picture and the larger world, basing the discussion on factual information in a non-judgmental framework. Please fill out the online form to receive information on joining this program via GoToMeeting.

Tuesday, February 20, 1:30 – 2:30 PM: Red Clover Award Book Group. Each month, students in Gr. K-4 will read two titles from this year's Red Clover book list and complete an activity.

Tuesday, February 20, 1:30 – 2:30 PM: Golden Dome Award Book Group. Registered students in Gr. 4-8 discuss a book from this year's Vermont Golden Dome Book List.

Tuesday, February 20, 1:30-2:30pm - GMBA Group. High school aged students discuss one of the Green Mountain Book Award nominees and engage in lively discussion about what they like and don't like, what themes they notice, and how what they're reading reflects and comments upon our society at large.

Tuesday, February 20, 5:00 – 6:00 PM: Learn to Crochet and Knit. Meet up in the Main Reading Room and pick up the basics of crochet and knitting. Feel free to bring projects and hang out with new fiber artists!

Tuesday, February 20, 7:00 – 9:00 PM: Brownell Library Trustee Meeting.

Wednesday, February 21, 10:00 – 10:45 AM: Play Time. Read one story together and play! We have giant blocks and other creative play materials. Recommended for families with children ages 1-4.

Wednesday, February 21, 2:30 – 4:00 PM: Tinker Time: Mighty Marionette. Every month we will do a different activity during Tinker Time. This time, create a marionette alligator, giraffe or other mystery creature out of cardboard tubes and string.

Wednesday, February 21, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Humanities Council: Red Scare. Rick Winston will be presenting on the role of two Burlington newspapers, the Burlington Free Press and the Burlington Daily News, in the events of the Red Scare Era. This program is inspired by this year's Vermont Read, *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* by Malinda Lo. In this book, the main character, Lily, and her family face pressure related to their precarious situation as immigrants, specifically as Chinese immigrants in the aftermath of the anti-communist hysteria of McCarthyism. We will delve into the many themes of this book all year long; check out our events calendar for more opportunities to engage with the book, and pick up a copy of the book at the library.

Thursday, February 22, 10:00 – 10:30 AM: Story Time. Picture books, songs, rhymes and crafts. Come read and play with us. Special Chinese language story time on February 8! In the picture book area.

Friday, February 23, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Switch. Newcomers and pros alike are invited to take turns playing collaborative and multi-player games on the library's new SWITCH. Recommended for grades 3-8.

Saturday, February 24, 10:00 – 10:45 AM: Saturday Stories. Meet in the picture book area for stories, rhymes and fun! Best for 3-7 year olds.

Saturday, February 24, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Winter Sowing. Too cold to start planting? Not at all! Come start some seedlings for the spring with guidance from Master Gardeners. Supplies limited.

Saturday, February 24, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Zen Gardens. Based on the book *Ojichan's Gift* by Chieri Uegaki, we will create our own zen garden to take home.

Wednesday, February 28, 10:00 – 10:45 AM: Play Time. Read one story together and play! We have giant blocks and other creative play materials. Recommended for families with children ages 1-4.

February 26 through March 5, Art Lab: Dream Quilt. This winter break, stop by the youth non-fiction table and record one of your dreams on a paper quilt square. When you are done, bring your creation to the youth desk so that we can add it to a "Dream Quilt" in the library. This Art Lab is inspired by the story quilts of Faith Ringgold, an African American artist and social activist. Available while supplies last. Recommended for all ages. Submitted quilt squares may be selected for inclusion in our next zine.

Monday, February 26, 11:00 – 11:45 AM: English Language Learning Club. Come practice English in a relaxed setting. We will meet in the Main Reading Room. Open to all levels.

Monday, February 26, 1:00 – 2:00 PM: Tech Help with Clif. Offering one-on-one technology help. Reservation required. Please call 802-878-6955 at least 48 hours in advance.

Monday, February 26, 4:00 – 5:00 PM: Build a Fort & Read - Create forts with giant blocks, sticks, tablecloths, a parachute and mats, then climb in and read.

Monday, February 26, 6:30-7:30pm - Must Read Mondays: Last Night at the Telegraph Club by Malinda Lo. Seventeen-year-old Lily Hu can't remember exactly when the feeling took root—that desire to look, to move closer, to touch. Whenever it started growing, it definitely bloomed the moment she and Kathleen Miller walked under the flashing neon sign of a lesbian bar called the Telegraph Club. Suddenly everything seemed possible. But America in 1954 is not a safe place for two girls to fall in love, especially not in Chinatown. Red-Scare paranoia threatens everyone, including Chinese Americans like Lily. With deportation looming over her father — despite his hard-won citizenship — Lily and Kath risk everything to let their love see the light of day.

Tuesday, February 27, 10:00 – 11:30 AM: Current Events Discussion Group, in person and online This discussion group will attempt to look at, reflect on, and analyze daily events and try to discern trends and understand the national picture and the larger world, basing the discussion on factual information in a non-judgmental framework. Please fill out the online form to receive information on joining this program via GoToMeeting.

Tuesday, 2:00 – 3:00 PM: Chess Time. Whether you're just learning or already play a good chess game, you are welcome at this Chess Time. For all ages.

Tuesday, 5:00 – 6:00 PM: Learn to Crochet and Knit. Meet up in the Main Reading Room and pick up the basics of crochet

and knitting. Feel free to bring projects and hang out with new fiber artists!

Wednesday, February 28, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Comics Club. Perfect for all third through sixth grade comic book/graphic novel/manga fans! This month we'll make action figures out of sculpey clay. We will be meeting at Brownell and walking over to the Teen Center together.

Thursday, February 29, 10-10:30am - Story Time - Picture books, songs, rhymes and crafts. Come read and play with us. In the picture book area.

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.

Monday, February 19: closed in observance of Presidents' Day.

For all ages

February 27, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: PhotoVoice Gallery Opening. Photographers from Maple Ridge Lodge and Memory Care residence will display their work and be available for questions. Light refreshments will be available. Photos on display through Friday, March 15.

Library of Things: borrow a USB plug-in DVD player. Please note that it does not work with Chromebooks. You will need a DVD player app on your computer/laptop to watch movies.

Children's area

Through Saturday, March 30: Bear Bingo. Bears have decided that the library is the place to spend the winter! Can you find them all? Grab a bear bingo sheet and search the library for as many as you can find. When you find one, grab a sticker and put it on the matching bear on your sheet. Each completed row earns you a raffle ticket. Tickets can be entered into the raffle box in the children's room for a chance to win a copy of a bear themed picture book! Happy Hunting (but don't wake the bears!)

Exploration Station: Ongoing. See the blue table for this week's challenge.

Mondays, 11:00 AM: Musical Mondays with Miss Noreen. Rock 'n' read with Miss Noreen!

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

Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: LEGO Club. Come and check out our great collection of LEGOs! No pre-registration necessary. Best for ages 9 and up, or 6 and up with an adult helper.

Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Pokemon Club. Open to grades 4-8. Pokemon decks available for kids to play the card games, as well as some themed crafts available. Participants are invited to bring their own handheld videogame devices or tablets to play their own Pokemon games or Pokemon Go.

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

Adult area

Wednesdays through March 27, 1:00 – 2:00 PM: French Club for Adults. Voulez-vous pratiquer le français ensemble? (Do you want to practice French together?). Designed for adults with some basic (Level 1) French skills who want to improve their French conversation skills and expand their French vocabulary. Meets in the Mezzanine.

Monday, February 20, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Evening Zentangle with Julia Davenport. For adults. Enjoy this beautiful art form that welcomes slowing down and tapping into your creativity. No prior art experience needed. Register through the website.

Thursday, March 7, 12:00 – 1:00 PM: March Noontime Book Group. *That Bird Has My Wings: the autobiography of an innocent man on death row* by Jarvis Jay Masters. While on death row, Masters wrote an astounding memoir that is a testament to the tenacity of the human spirit and the talent of a fine writer.

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.

Museum Passes are available for year 'round fun!

Have you ventured to an exciting locale lately? How about helping others do the same? Seeking donations of travel guides (Frommer's, Fodor's, Moon, Lonely Planet, Rick Steves', Rough Guides) from 2020 or later - any country or region accepted. Must be in excellent condition, unmarked, and with any maps included. Thanks!

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; website <https://www.essexfreelibrary.org/>.

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OBITUARY



Susan M. Houle, 76, of Westford, VT died Friday, February 2, 2024 surrounded by her family at UVM Medical Center. She was born in Burlington, VT on April 14, 1947, the daughter of Albert Arthur Miller and Nelda Mary Carroll. Susan graduated from Winooski High School, Winooski, VT and attended Champlain College in Burlington.

She worked for IBM and was the first female technician in Manufacturing Maintenance, and went on to be promoted to manager. After retiring from IBM, she continued to pursue her love of competitive horseback riding on her Morgan horse *Lady Liea*. She and Liea were Reserve Champions of the Vermont 3-Day 100-Mile Ride and retired the Morgan Field Trophy many times over a decade of competing. After competing horses, Sue moved on to competing with her beloved dog *Spring* in dog agility trials, and won many classes over several years competing in agility classes in several eastern states. Spring was the 2022 Agility Trial Champion. Susan is survived by her husband Philip Guare of Westford; her sons Stephen Houle (Nancy) of Swanton, VT and Shane Houle of Westford; her stepdaughter Tonya Guare (Michael); her mother Nelda Miller; her grandchildren Kyle and Kelsi Houle of Highgate, VT, Spencer Houle of Swanton, and

Bryan Roy (Allison) of Georgia, VT; great-grandchildren Easton and Finley Roy; her siblings Marilyn Combs of Punta Gorda, FL, Danny Miller of Jamaica, VT, Judy Forkel (Gus) of Lady Lake, FL, Maureen Miller (Ted Bourgault) of Hardwick, VT, Patrick Miller (Lynne) of Lady Lake, FL, Flossie Miller (Gary LeBlanc) of Shelburne, VT, and Michael Miller; and her sister-in-law Rhonda Miller. She is also survived by several nieces and nephews, and her good friends Sue and Dan Boyer. Susan was predeceased by her first husband Alfred E. Houle; her father Albert Miller, her brother Bernard Miller, and her sister Nancy Miller. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Monday, February 12, 2024 at St. Francis Xavier Church, Winooski. Burial will be in the spring at St. Luke Cemetery in Fairfax, VT.

COLLEGE NEWS

Willow Albee of Jeffersonville, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Nolan Barber of Jericho, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Weston Black of Cambridge, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Taylor Bevins of Jericho, VT, a junior majoring in Marketing, has earned Dean's List honors for the Fall 2023 semester at the University of Tampa, Tampa, FL.

Emily Bouchard of Duxbury, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 President's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Piper Boudreau of Waterbury, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Adam Brown of Cambridge, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 President's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Rebecca Busichio of Waterbury, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 President's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Lewis Clapp of Waterbury, VT, class of 2027, majoring in Mechanical Engineering, has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA.

Olivia Croteau of Jeffersonville, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Chase Desroches of Jeffersonville, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Cole Dezan of Waterbury, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Allison Fullem of Underhill, VT, class of 2027, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology, has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA.

Ty Haessig of Jericho, VT, class of 2027, majoring in Biomedical Engineering, has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA.

Ashley Letourneau-McGarvey of Jericho, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 President's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Rowan Lucier of Jericho, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Haleigh Newell-Rentz of Underhill, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Deanna Norton of Westford, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Jenna Pelland of Jericho, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Rosemarie Phelan of Jericho, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Beatrice Potter of Jeffersonville, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Jessica Pouliot of Westford, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Viktoria Provencher of Waterbury, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Josie Rand of Waterbury, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Emmanuel College, Boston, MA.

Deven Ruggles of Jericho, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Ella Schroeder of Jeffersonville, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List and President's List at the University of Hartford, West Hartford, VT.

Grace Solod of Underhill, VT, class of 2024, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology, has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA.

Jordan Soutiere of Cambridge, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Rowan Stoner of Underhill, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Rita Veve of Jericho, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Lily Walsh of Jeffersonville, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

Kayla Yalicki of Waterbury, VT has been named to the Fall 2023 President's List at Vermont State University, Randolph Center, VT.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Discovering kinship: a journey of love and support

From the Vermont Department for Children and Families
"Was I in Kinship Care?" A revelation from the producer of the COVE/VKAP documentary. This eye-opening moment reflects a common experience in Vermont: countless children are nurtured by grandparents, aunts, uncles, or family friends, yet the term *kinship care* often remains unfamiliar.

Are you part of a kinship family? If you're raising a child who isn't biologically yours, or if you grew up in the care of someone other than your birth parents, you're living the kinship experience. It's more common than you might think, and it's filled with unique challenges and joys.

Your kinship community in Vermont: At Vermont Kin as Parents (VKAP), they embrace these less conventional family dynamics. Their mission? To connect, support, and empower kinship families like yours.

Why Join VKAP?

Community connection: You're not alone. Meet others who truly understand your journey.

Expert guidance: Navigating the system can be tough. VKAP is there to help, with training and experience in the challenges kinship families face.

Confidential support: Your story is safe with us. We honor your privacy in every conversation.

No cost to you: Thanks to our funding, all VKAP services are provided free of charge.

Child-centric vision: Everything we do is through the eyes of the children we serve, ensuring their well-being and happiness.

Get in touch: Your kinship journey is unique, and VKAP is there to walk alongside you. For guidance, support, and a listening ear, reach out to VKAP.

Call VKAP at 802-871-5104 or visit their website at <https://www.vkap.org/>.

Your family's story is important; VKAP is there to listen and help. Navigate the path together with VKAP.

Get a personalized home energy assessment — free

From Efficiency Vermont

When you make smart, informed efficiency improvements at home, the upgrades can pay off. Reduced energy bills and a smaller carbon footprint are a win-win. So, what's the best way to get started? What, specifically, needs improving? Which upgrade comes first? Does a heat pump make sense in your home?

Shine a light on these questions and more when you schedule a free Virtual Home Energy Visit with Efficiency Vermont. A home energy expert will assess your home via video chat and provide you with a custom assessment, identifying where you may be losing heat or wasting electricity — even noting opportunities for increasing health and safety. In addition to areas for improvement, you'll be provided with a personalized list of next steps — just what you need to get things moving in the right direction.

Schedule a virtual visit today, online at <http://www.efficiencyvermont.com/Visit>.

Free Family Law Clinic February 27

Legal Services Vermont is hosting a free Family Law Clinic for low-income Vermonters on Tuesday, February 27, from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM. It is by appointment only and space is limited. You can ask for an appointment by phone, video conference, or in-person in Burlington.

Lawyers can answer your questions about divorce, parentage, custody, visitation, child support, and more.

To make an appointment, call Legal Services Vermont at 1-800-889-2047. Leave a message with your name and contact number. Please be sure to mention the Family Law Clinic. A Legal Services Vermont advocate will call you back to screen for eligibility and schedule your appointment.

United Way Volunteer Connection

GET CONNECTED TO VOLUNTEERING — United Way's Volunteer Connection site is set up to help connect agencies and volunteers. Go online to <https://unitedwaynwvt.galaxydigital.com/> to learn more about these and other opportunities.

SCORE A HIT — SCORE is a mentoring service whose volunteers help individuals and small businesses reach their goals. Volunteer mentors provide free business advice and education to aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners. As a mentor, you may help clients solve problems, make their businesses more efficient, and help develop long-term business plans. If you have good communication skills, experience in your particular field, and a few hours a week to give, you can help entrepreneurs achieve their dreams of success! Contact recruiting0284@scorevolunteer.org.

AND JUSTICE FOR ALL — Burlington Community Justice Center is seeking volunteers for their Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) program. COSA teams provide weekly support to individuals who are reentering the community and who have been deemed high-risk or high-need by the Department of Corrections. Volunteers can help effect meaningful change in the community and make a positive impact on someone's future. About one hour a week for a one-year period. Training provided. Contact rlawler@burlingtonvt.gov.

MARATHON! — RunVermont is gearing up for the 35th Vermont City Marathon to be held Friday-Sunday, May 24-26. Volunteer opportunities include handing out race bibs and shirts, supporting runners by staffing an intersection, an aid station, or a relay exchange zone. No experience needed. Contact volunteer@runvermont.org.

DOLLARS AND SENSE — The Janet S. Munt Family Room is in need of a temporary financing mentor to help with day-to-day finance management including overall budget management, lasses, tracking processes, grant management, invoicing, etc. If your skills can address these needs, contact Josh Miller, josh@thefamilyroomvt.org.

REHAB — Burlington Health and Rehabilitation Center is looking for volunteers to help with activities with residents who may have long-term or short-term needs. Volunteers can prepare their own activities or use a set activity prepared by the recreation director. Contact leslie.hakey@genesishcc.com.

VT Disaster Recovery Fund hires Allocations Director

Laurie Kozar has been named the director of allocations for the Vermont Disaster Recovery Fund as it gears up to provide grants to people affected by the 2023 floods.

The Vermont Disaster Recovery Fund (VDRF) was created following Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 to help individuals affected by disasters after they have exhausted all other sources of assistance, such as from FEMA, homeowner and flood insurance, and grants from local and regional disaster funds. Now, with Vermont still working to recover from flooding last summer that damaged homes, farms, and businesses, the VDRF is ramping up again, with support from partners including the Vermont Community Foundation.

In her new role, Kozar will lead the effort to access grants from the VDRF. She will work with local and regional recovery groups as well as locally based case managers in analyzing cases, identifying potential resources, and, when all other funding sources have been exhausted, assisting in the application for funds from the VDRF.

"Laurie is exactly the right person to execute a people-first approach to allocating funds and aiding survivors," said Chris Graff, chair of the Vermont Disaster Recovery Fund.

Kozar's position is financed by the Vermont Community Foundation through its VT Flood Response & Recovery Fund, which has raised \$12.7 million and granted or committed \$12.3 million of that total, so far.

"We know that some of the people who most need help after a disaster can't get it, or get enough of it, from government or private insurance, and that this stalls long-term recovery," said Dan Smith, president and CEO of the Vermont Community Foundation. "Thanks to the incredible generosity of everyone who has donated to our flood fund, we can help partners like VDRF as we strive to close funding gaps, maximize available resources, and put hard-hit communities back together."

For the past two and a half years Kozar has been serving as a financial coach and energy efficiency guide for a statewide program managed by Capstone Community Action. After last year's flooding, she served on an ad hoc team to seek funding for impacted Vermonters by engaging and advocating with partners across sectors. Kozar also provided direct assistance to help survivors navigate the various funding opportunities available.

"The complexity of systems can be daunting," said Kozar. "The funds available through VDRF offer a lifeline to help close gaps and keep the recovery moving forward."

Disaster survivors apply for funding at the VDRF either through local and regional long-term recovery groups or through case managers. The VDRF can provide grants of up to \$25,000. Visit <https://www.vdrf.org/> to learn more.

For additional information about how charitable giving through the Vermont Community Foundation is helping the state respond to the 2023 floods, visit <https://vtfloodresponse.org/about-the-fund/overview-and-strategy/>.

ART / MUSIC / THEATER



The Bryan Fine Art Gallery in Stowe, opening Wednesday, February 7 and running until Sunday, July 14; presents Evoking Vermont's Landscape, running Wednesday, February 7-Sunday, July 14, and featuring works by six Vermont artists: Ken Rush, Danby; David Pound, Stowe; Steve Clark, Vergennes; Kate Follett, Jacksonville; James Rauchman, Morrisville; Mathew Pardue, N. Ferrisburgh. Pictured above is Steve Clark's watercolor Town of Stowe. Free admission. For more information: 802-760-6474 or www.bryangallery.org. Bryan Fine Art Gallery, 64 S. Main St., Stowe. Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Friday, Saturday 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Weekly Burlington Literature Group meets on Tuesdays, via Zoom: Michael Sevy of Jericho co-leads this weekly virtual book group and would 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 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. Our next author is Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison and we will be reading *Song of Solomon* and *Jazz*. The Swedish Academy cited her “novels characterized by visionary force and poetic import,” through which she “gives life to an essential aspect of American reality.” The schedule is as follows: *Song of Solomon*: February 13, Chapters 1-3; February 20, Chapters 4-7; February 27, Chapters 8-10; March 5: Chapter 11-end; *Jazz*: March 12, beginning through “the woman sitting by her ironing board in a hat in the morning;” March 19, chapter beginning with “The hat, pushed back on her forehead,” through “Golden Gray watched and he thought he was ready for those deer eyes to open;” March 26, chapter beginning with “A thing like that could harm you” to end. Other authors in our schedule include László Krasznahorkai, Patrick Modiano, Iris Murdoch, David Foster Wallace, Colum McCann, Saul Bellow, and Thomas Pynchon.

Call for Artists and Creatives to join April Arts for Asylum Seekers — a month of creative sharing in support of the Chittenden Asylum Seekers Network (CASAN). Register by Tuesday, February 27. See <http://www.casanvermont.org> for more information, including FAQ and sign-up information. To join one of our Zoom Information sessions, email artsforasylumseekers@gmail.com. Arts for Asylum Seekers is not a virtual art auction. It is modeled on a walk-a-thon, but instead of walking, the participants (called Creatives) make art, write, play music, or do some other creative project. Creatives can be visual artists, sculptors, potters, poets, writers, musicians, photographers, gardeners, dancers, any kind of interesting endeavor! Creatives of all ages and all skill levels, amateur or professional, are welcome to participate. A Creative's project could be to write a poem or make a sketch a day. Or they could do a larger project and share their progress, sending out a section of a story, or

photos of a quilt as it comes together. Creatives reach out to friends and family to ask them to sponsor their participation in Arts for Asylum Seekers. Sponsors will make a donation to CASAN in exchange for receiving content from the Creatives daily or weekly in April, through email or another virtual avenue. With the Creative's permission, CASAN will help Creatives find sponsors by publicizing their work on the CASAN website and Facebook. Chittenden Asylum Seekers Assistance Network (CASAN) assists people in Chittenden County who are in the legal process of seeking asylum. Supported by local volunteers and donors, we provide welcome, financial support, advocacy, and connections to social services as people strive to begin new lives in safety. Have a look to learn more about our work and go to the Arts for Asylum page to find out more about the Chittenden Asylum Seekers Assistance Network (CASAN) at <http://www.casanvermont.org>. Donate today!

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

At Bryan Fine Art Gallery in Stowe, opening Wednesday, February 7 and running until Sunday, July 14: *Evoking Vermont's Landscape*. Six talented Vermont artists will showcase their original interpretations of the state's diverse scenery, creating an immersive experience that celebrates Vermont's natural surroundings in a collection of captivating artworks that capture the spirit of Vermont, — each artist bringing their own flair and interpretation of Vermont's varied topography. Participating artists: Ken Rush, Danby; David Pound, Stowe; Steve Clark, Vergennes; Kate Follett, Jacksonville; James Rauchman, Morrisville; Mathew Pardue, N. Ferrisburgh. Free admission. An artists' reception will be held on Saturday, February 10, 1:00 – 4:00 PM. For more information about this and other upcoming exhibitions and events, please visit www.bryangallery.org. Bryan Fine Art Gallery, 64 S. Main St., Stowe. Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Friday, Saturday 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM. For more information contact 802-760-6474 or info@bryangallery.org.

Monthly Essex Art League meeting on the first Thursdays — Artists and art lovers are welcome to join Essex Art League (EAL) and participate in our year-round, weekly en Plein Air gatherings. We meet each Thursday to paint in a different and beautiful location in the area. Joining EAL also avails you of opportunities for field trips to shows and galleries as well as participating in workshops. The Essex Art League has been open to artists and art lovers from throughout Vermont for 50+ years. We meet the first Thursday of each month from September-June. The topics for our upcoming meetings are as follows — March 7: nationally acclaimed VT artist Mark Boedges speaks about his work and composition; April 4: Annelein Boekenkamp, a Vermont watercolorist, speaks on her process and journey; May 2: metal artist Rebecca Nase Chomyn of Fairfield discusses her process; June 6: summer potluck kicks off EAL summer recess. Those looking for more information may go to our website <http://essexartleague.com/>.

SongFarmers, a community music jam — a place for friends and neighbors to play music just for the fun of it. SongFarmers meets on every third Wednesday of the month (February 21; March 20), 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the Jericho Community Center, Browns Trace, Jericho Center. For people of all ages who want to play folk, Americana, blues, bluegrass, Celtic, and more on acoustic instruments: guitars, banjos, mandolins, fiddles, ukuleles, bass, keyboard. No electronics except keyboard and bass. It's a circle gathering where everyone who wants to will have a chance to lead songs. Common tunes with simple chord progressions are encouraged so that everyone can play along. If you plan to lead, please choose a song that you can play at a



At the Emile Gruppe Gallery through Sunday, March 17: Which Way Up? Four Perspectives on Finding the Way, a collection of acrylic and oil landscape paintings by Gretchen Alexander, Natasha Bogar, and Alexandra Haselton, and kiln-formed glass by Christy Witters. Pictured above is Gretchen Alexander's A Long Time Ago. An artist reception will be held Sunday, February 18, 1:00 – 3:00 PM. The Emile A. Gruppe Gallery, 22 Barber Farm Rd., Jericho. For more information call 802-899-3211 or online to www.emilegruppegallery.com. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

steady rhythm and bring a chord chart for your song. Both songs and instrumentals are great. Please note this is not a performance, open mic, or lesson. Folks who want to sing, or just come and enjoy the gathering, are welcome too. Bring snacks and drinks if you like, but no alcohol. Free. Registration is appreciated; contact CommunityJamJUVT@gmail.com.

Weekly Community Choir — If you love to sing (or want to join in on the piano to help folks learn parts and play accompaniment), come join *Mountainsong*! We are a volunteer-run community singing group that harmonizes together in four parts on the second and fourth Thursdays (during the winter) of the month (February 22, March 13, 27), 6:30 – 8:00 PM at the Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 195 VT Rt. 15, Jericho (across from Packard Road). Whether you sing in the shower, sing Karaoke, or just like to sing in harmony with others, bring your voice and join us! Do you learn by ear or read music? Either way, you'll be comfortable here. Our aim is to sing for the joy of singing (no performances except for one short one for family and friends at the end of the season). Come as often as you are able. Cost: \$1 a week toward space rental. We also ask for a contribution to purchase music for the group of \$7 per semester (fall and spring). Questions about the group? Questions about the group? Contact Lynne Robbins, 802-899-2436 or lar.2436@gmail.com, or Doug Varney, 802-343-4513 or

Art / Music / Theater continued on page 10

WORSHIP SERVICES

Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Sunday services at MMUUF are held at 9:30 AM on the second and fourth Sundays 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, umcho@gmail.com. Located next to the Jericho Town Hall on VT Rt. 15.

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. Weekly 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.goodshepherdjericho.org.

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@ucuc.church. For instructions on joining worship from home, please see <https://unitedchurchofunderhill.com/joining-worship-from-home/>.

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.jccvt.org

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. The Spirit is stirring in this little church. Come be a part of it! Calvary is located at 370 VT Rt. 15 in Jericho and worships Sundays at 9:30 AM. The parish administrator can be reached at calvarychurchjericho@gmail.com or 802-899-0453.

St. Thomas Catholic Church

St. Thomas Catholic Church in Underhill Center invites you to join us in person for the Holy Mass at 8:30 AM every Sunday. There is also a vigil Mass at 4:00 PM on Saturday evenings. Our priest, Fr. Richard Calapan, also celebrates Mass during the week, on Tuesdays at 6:30 PM and Fridays at 8:00 AM. Confessions are available on Tuesdays before Mass. Visit us at www.stthomasvt.com or call 802-899-4632 for more information.

Covenant Community Church — “Come As You Are!”

What is the Covenant? The unique character of the Covenant is expressed in the design of the logo — people united in Christ, people serving people in God's name, and people bringing people to Christ. The basis of the design is symbolic of four people facing north, south, east, and west. Note that each one's arms are outstretched, indicating the church's outreach in mission and service to the world. The four are part of the whole, yet their hands do not touch, symbolizing their unity in the freedom and evangelical warmth that characterizes the Covenant. The geometric arrangement of the four figures results in a cross-like pattern, representative of the center of our faith. The center circle symbolizes the unity and the bond of fellowship which we call “the Covenant.”

Sunday: Bible Study, 9:00 – 9:45 AM; Worship Service: 10:00 – 11:00 AM; Coffee Hour: 11:00 AM – ?
Covenant Community Church, 1 Whitcomb Meadows Lane, Essex (VT Rt.15 across from John Leo's)

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.

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>

SENIOR NEWS

Age Well Grab'n'Go meals

Age Well provides services to individuals 60+ and their spouse or caregivers, and a disabled person(s) living with the senior, regardless of financial status. Suggested donation is \$5.

Bolton will now have Age Well Grab'n'Go meals delivered to the Bolton Fire Station on the second Wednesday of each month — February 14, March 13 — pick up times between 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM. To order a meal, please contact Robin Pecor-Brunell, 802-434-3042 or rpecor@hotmail.com, by the Friday before the meal is to be delivered. The delivery on February 14 will be: Swedish meatballs with sauce, rotini noodles, carrots/green beans, wheat roll, pineapple tidbits, and milk.

Underhill's February Grab'n'Go meal pick-up will be Wednesday, February 28, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM at St. Thomas Church, Underhill Center. Menu: diced beef with potatoes and Burgandy wine sauce, broccoli, roll, pumpkin craisin cookies, milk. To preregister (required) by Friday, February 23 contact Teri, office@stthomasvt.com or 802-899-4632.

Helping to do good in the world, one person at a time

Want to have fun with neighbors?

Mount Mansfield Villages is looking for volunteers to join our neighbor-helping-neighbor organization. We serve older adults in the towns of Cambridge, Jericho, and Underhill.

Do you like meeting people? Do you like helping out your older neighbors? We currently have 63 members and are looking for a few more volunteers to help assist them.

Our most popular service requests are rides to medical appointments, shopping, and errands. We reimburse our volunteers 50 cents a mile. It's easy to volunteer. You will receive an email with a list of current opportunities and you can choose to volunteer or not. No set schedule.

There are other benefits of being a volunteer; among them, you are invited to all of our social events. But the biggest benefit is helping our older neighbors to continue to live in our community, and you meet some darn nice people!

Background checks (we do them) and proof of auto insurance (if you volunteer to drive) required.

Visit our website at <http://www.mountmansfieldvillages.org> for more information on our non-profit organization. Click on the *Volunteers* tab at the top of the page and complete the Volunteer application form. Or, call 802-858-5381 for more information.

How to liven up a cold day

From the Central Vermont Council on Aging

We want you and your loved ones to stay engaged, connected, and healthy! CVCOA's Helpline staff is here to support you. Call Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM, or leave a non-urgent message for us anytime at 1-802-477-1364 or toll-free at 1-800-642-5119.

Get moving — Drop into a free exercise class near you. Peruse all sixteen current offerings here: <https://cvcoa.org/exercise-and-wellness-classes>.

Eat healthy — Have lunch at your local nutrition program or learn about how you can receive home-delivered meals or assistance with your grocery budget: <https://cvcoa.org/meals-and-nutrition>.

Get online — Sign up for an in-person technology class: <https://cvcoa.org/senior-planet>, or join us online: <https://cvcoa.org/technology-training>.

Be creative — Join our creative aging program: <https://cvcoa.org/enhancing-social-connection-through-arts-and-technology>.

Take a break — Attend a dementia-friendly community event! We're hosting Memorable Times Online every week through the winter. Learn more here: <https://cvcoa.org/support-groups>.

Volunteer! We need people like you to keep these programs (and more) going in the community. Tell us what interest you and get started today at <https://cvcoa.org/volunteer-application>.

Age Well joins March For Meals to combat food insecurity, isolation

Age Well is proud to announce that it will be participating in the 22nd annual March for Meals, a nationwide campaign led by Meals on Wheels America designed to rally around our aging neighbors and protect the essential services that enable so many to remain healthy and independent at home. As the largest provider of Meals on Wheels in Vermont, Age Well provides over 270,000 home-delivered meals annually, addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, combatting social isolation, and enabling independence and improved health outcomes for thousands.

"Age Well serves as a lifeline for older adults in Northwestern Vermont, providing an array of services, including Meals on Wheels. The demand for those needing home-delivered meals continues to grow rapidly even post-pandemic, with a nearly 25% increase," said Sara Wool, Director of Development.

Art / Music / Theater continued from page 9

vhockeyman@gmail.com, or just show up!

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

News from Burlington City Arts (BCA; <https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/>): In the lower-level and first-floor galleries, *Here Now: Art and Migration* (<https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/exhibition/here-now-art-and-migration>) features a group of international and national artists exploring concepts of borders, movement, and migration across local urban centers and global geographies. Sajjad Abbas (Baghdad, Iraq), Teresa Baker (Los Angeles, CA), Lydia Nakashima Degarrod (Oakland, CA), Verónica Gaona (Houston, TX), Paula Higa (Burlington, VT), Matthew Schrader (Middlebury, VT), and Edra Soto (Chicago, IL) boldly reimagine borders as sites of historical investigation, social reckoning, and conduits of an emerging aesthetic. On the second floor, *Margaret Jacobs: Kinship* (<https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/exhibition/margaret-jacobs-kinship>) explores the tensions and harmonies between the man-made and natural worlds through steel sculptures and finely crafted jewelry. Jacobs is an enrolled member of the Akwesasne Mohawk tribe and cultural histories and identity inform her belief that materials have their own distinct narratives.

The Architecture + Design Film Series continues with *Vanish: Disappearing Icons of a rural America* (<https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/event/architecture-design-film-series-vanish-disappearing-icons-rural-america>). Come out to Contois Auditorium on Wednesday, February 21, 6:30 PM for this compelling chronicle of the visual preservation adventures of photographer, Jim Westphalen, who has traveled the country creating stunning imagery of America's disappearing rural structures. Westphalen, who also directed the film, will be on

hand for a special introduction.

Calling all emerging artists! Apply by Friday, March 15 for the 2024 Diane Gabriel visual Artist Award (<https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/artist-resources#DGVAA>) and get the support you need to grow your artistic practice in 2024 with a prize valued at \$6K. Established in 2021, this award honors Diane Gabriel (1947-2017), a celebrated artist and educator. Inspired by Gabriel's often experimental creative practice, the award provides support to an up-and-coming artist to allow them to catalyze innovative ideas, experiment with media, and explore new horizons.

Don't miss the first installment of *Literary Intersections: here-now-art-and-migration* on Thursday, February 22, 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the BCA Center's Lorraine B. Good Room — a new series that will present topical writing with textual, sometimes visual, affinities with art on view at the BCA Center. We'll kick things off with an exciting interdisciplinary evening that will reflect on the kaleidoscopic relevance of the exhibit, featuring Vermont poet Sarah Audsley, author of *Landlock X*, and Leslie Sainz, author of *Have You Been Long Enough at Table*.

Drop in to the BCA Center on Saturday, February 24, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM in the 4th Floor Education Studio for an art-making activity inspired by the work of *Here Now: Art and Migration* artist Lydia Nakashima Degarrod. You and your creative crew can explore printmaking and sculptural techniques, and create your own vibrant mobiles and wall hangings around themes of family and home.

Creativity will go to the dogs at BCA Studios on Sunday, February 18 with our Family Pet Portrait workshop for young artists ages 9 and up. Teen Studio Sessions are back starting Saturday, February 24, with the opportunity for teens to develop their personal practice in the drawing, painting, or print studios. Staff off school break boredom with our February Break Camp, where kiddos ages 6-9 will create art that engages with our new

The annual March for Meals celebration commemorates the historic day in March of 1972 when President Nixon signed into law a measure that amended the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. This critical support and federal funding has fueled the growth of the Meals on Wheels network for more than 50 years. Throughout March, community-based Meals on Wheels programs nationwide unite for this annual awareness campaign, to celebrate the success of the public-private partnership and secure the necessary resources to support older adults in accessing nutritious meals, friendly visits, and safety checks.

Ellie Hollander, President and CEO at Meals on Wheels America, emphasizes the need for increased funding to ensure local programs can meet the growing demand. "Now is an important time for us to unite to ensure that Meals on Wheels is there for all of our senior neighbors in need," said Hollander. "In the face of soaring demand and costs that surpass our current resources, we need to come together as communities to bridge the gaps. I encourage you to participate by donating, volunteering or speaking out for seniors throughout March to play your part. We can't do it alone — it takes all of us to March for Meals."

Age Well's Meals on Wheels program relies on the generous support of community members, local businesses, partner organizations, and more than 800 volunteers. Trio Community Meals serves as our partner in both production and distribution of our meals and will once again be supporting our efforts as a 2024 Community Champion Sponsor. We would also like to thank other top sponsors, MVP Health Care and WCAX. To learn more about supporting March for Meals, please visit <https://www.agewellvt.org/giving-back/march-for-meals/>.

Meals on Wheels America is the leadership organization supporting the more than 5000 community-based programs across the country that are dedicated to addressing senior hunger and isolation. For information or to find a Meals on Wheels provider near you, visit www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org.

Age Well, as the leading experts and advocates for the aging population for 50 years, believes that health happens at home — and focuses on lifestyle, happiness, and wellness, not on age. Committed to helping individuals age well, we reduce barriers by providing access to healthy meals, in-home care, expertise on Medicare and insurance, long-term and short-term care options, a Helpline, and many more community resources. To learn more about Age Well, visit <https://www.agewellvt.org/>.

Here Now exhibition.

The Vermont Arts Council is now accepting applications for its annual Creation Grant, which supports artists or artist groups in creating new work. Grant funds may be used to compensate artists for time spent creating new work, to purchase materials, or to rent equipment or space for the process. This highly competitive program is reviewed by an independent panel of practicing artists and arts professionals. Both established and emerging artists are encouraged to apply. Examples of fundable projects: a multimedia artist creating a new video series; a writer completing the first draft of a novel; a dance ensemble developing choreography for a new piece; a visual artist creating art for exhibition that explores new subjects and techniques; and a musician composing music for a new album. Application deadline: Tuesday, April 9. Learn more and apply at <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/find-a-grant/artists/creation/>.

SUMMER CAMPS

Green Mountain Conservation Camp registration 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 Department's Green Mountain Conservation Camps (GMCC) 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 at 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.

"Whether kids come alone or with friends, they are guaranteed to meet new people and form new bonds while experiencing Vermont's natural resources to the fullest," said Fish and Wildlife Education Specialist Hannah Phelps. "An important take-away message and common theme during the week is that conserving and managing habitat will help ensure Vermont will have fish and wildlife in the future."

"We would love to have all of the advanced sessions filled for campers who have already attended a basic session," added Phelps. "Advanced sessions are for campers who have completed a basic session in a previous summer and who are 16 years old or younger. Advanced sessions include more in-depth activities about backpacking, camping, natural resources, and unique hunting and fishing techniques."

Conservation Camps open Sunday, June 16 and continue until Friday, August 16. Tuition is \$250 for the week, including food, lodging, and equipment, and financial assistance is available.

Information and registration are available at www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

For more information, contact FWGMCC@vermont.gov or call 802-522-2925.

BCA Summer Camps open for registration

Secure a summertime filled with creative fun for the young artists in your life — Burlington City Arts' (BCA's) summer camp registration is now open. With an abundance of unique offerings for ages 6-17, half-day options to combine to create

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Jericho Development Review Board will CONTINUE the public hearing at 7:00 pm on WEDNESDAY March 13, 2024 at the Jericho Town Hall to consider the following.

- A request to the DRB by Benjamin Randall for final plat review for a 3-lot subdivision. The property is located at 39 Orr Road which is in the Low-Density Residential Zoning District.

All interested persons may appear and be heard. Additional information related to this application may be viewed at the Jericho Planning and Zoning Office during regular business hours.

Chris Flinn
Zoning Administrator
cflinn@jerichovt.gov

Summer Camps continued on page 11

SCHOOL NEWS

Lamoille North 2024 Annual Meeting February 19

Join Lamoille North for our 2024 Annual Meeting! We are planning an exciting evening filled with community spirit, food, presentations, and valuable information! We are thrilled to invite you to our 2024 Annual Meeting, scheduled for Monday, February 19, 2024, from 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the Community Education Center at Green Mountain Technology and Career Center in Hyde Park.

This is your opportunity to be a part of the decision-making process that shapes the future of our schools. Join us as we present the district reports and FY2025 school district budgets, giving you an in-depth look at the plans and priorities for the upcoming academic year.

Join us for dinner, hear from students, and learn about our FY2025 school budgets.

The evening is totally free and we'll have childcare available on-site. We just ask you to register at this link: <https://www.lnsd.org/departments/news/details/~board/updates-content/post/lamoille-north-2024-annual-meeting> (or visit www.lnsd.org).

Cambridge Elementary School preschool screening

Will your child be turning 3 or 4 by September 1, 2024? Cambridge Elementary Early Childhood Program invites families in Cambridge and Jeffersonville with eligible preschool students to call 802-521-5613 to make an appointment for a developmental screening. There will be two sessions held at Cambridge Elementary School/ Preschool on Thursday, March 14: 1:30 – 2:30 PM, and 2:30 – 3:30 PM.

Please contact Erin Vaillancourt, 802-521-5613, no later than Monday, April 1 to reserve a time for your child.

Screenings will take approximately 60 minutes. During this time, parents will fill out a brief developmental questionnaire about their child while educators interact with the children to gain information about each child's development in the areas of speech and language, social/emotional, motor, and cognitive. This is also a time for parents to ask questions about their child's skills and about our preschool program.

UVM-4H Showcase explores range of STEM topics

STEM Showcase 6.0, presented by University of Vermont (UVM) STEM Ambassadors, offers a fun, hands-on learning opportunity for students in grades 3-9 who are interested in exploring science, technology, and engineering.

The Saturday, March 23 event will be held on the UVM campus in Burlington, 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM. Although free, registration is required as space is limited. Registrations will be accepted until Wednesday, March 20 or until the showcase is filled.

Voter registration drive and mock election at MMU

By Jessica Alexander, Jericho Town Clerk

Just wanted to share a wonderful day that I had at Mount Mansfield Union High School on Thursday, February 8. I visited the American Law Class earlier in January to discuss a little bit about voter registration and preparation that goes into planning

Summer Camps continued from page 10

a full-day camp (see catalog at <https://secure.recl.com/VT/burlington-vt/catalog>) and an Aftercare Art Club that goes until 5:00 PM, you can create a custom camp experience that supports your whole family.

Spaces are limited and they go fast, so be ready and browse the options, submit a scholarship application (<https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/form/apply-for-a-youth-scholarship>), create an account or locate your login at <https://secure.recl.com/VT/burlington-vt/catalog> and be ready with your camper's full information for checkout. You can also peruse our camp registration FAQs (https://www.burlingtoncityarts.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/Camp_2024_FAQ_edited.pdf) to get all the tips and tricks that will make registering a breeze.

Chittenden County Soccer School 2024

By Eric Barker

Registration is open for Chittenden County Soccer School (CCSS) 2024, Monday-Friday, July 8-12 at Mills Riverside Park in Jericho. 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!

There are half-day and full-day camp options, and age groups range from 5-16+.

Please email barkereric15@gmail.com, with any questions. Or visit our website at <http://chittendencountysoccerschool.org>.

Registration open for summer camps at Poker Hill Arts

Summer dreamin' on a cold winter's day! Registration is open for two camps: Art from Nature, Monday-Wednesday, July 1-3; and Fairy Camps, from Mondays, July 8 or 15. See Poker Hill Arts summer camps online at <https://www.pokerhillarts.com/summer-camps>.

Poker Hill Arts will also offer Musical Theater camps from Mondays, July 22 and 29, contact <http://dthomas0712@gmail.com>; and Music Rocks camps from Mondays, August 12 and 19, contact timbolandusa@gmail.com.

an election. These students then planned for and set up a voter registration drive and mock Presidential Primary Election that took place on February 8.

The community at the school was very welcoming and it was great to see the students answering the new voters questions and checking to see that the voter registration form had been completed correctly. They also registered 75 new voters in about two hours. All students, of any age, were able to participate in their mock election.

Students that are 17 now but will be turning 18 by the Tuesday, November 5 General Election will be able to vote in the Tuesday, March 5 Presidential Primary.

Thank you to the MMU students, faculty, and staff for making this happen.

Saxon Hill School registration open for 2024-2025

Registration is now open to new families for the 2024-2025 school year! Come join Saxon Hill School (SHS), a family-cooperative preschool offering three NAEYC accredited programs, including kindergarten, for children ages 3-6. Our school is inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy and is a unique and wonderful place for young children and their families. Saxon Hill is located in Jericho, where it has been serving Jericho and the surrounding communities since 1964.

Our mission: Saxon Hill School is committed to working in partnership with families and communities to educate and support children while heeding their individual needs for growth and development.

For more information please visit <https://saxonhillschool.org/registration.html> or email Registrar@SaxonHillSchool.org.

MMUUSD budget presentation, Act 127 update February 15

By Edye Graning, Chair, MMUUSD Board

Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (MMUUSD) residents are encouraged to join the MMUUSD Board for a budget information presentation on Thursday, February 15 at Camel's Hump Middle School, Richmond and online via Google Meet (<https://meet.google.com/kpk-ufcr-tof>) for an update on Act 127 and to discuss and consider approval of the motion by the Finance Committee to revise and re-warn the 2024-25 budget based on proposed changes to Act 127.

We look forward to seeing you at this meeting in person or virtually.

Video on History of Cambridge High School, 1920-1967

By Peter Opstrup, Cambridge Historical Society

Join Cambridge High School alumni Reg Wilcox for a look at the history of the Cambridge High School — on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/TwXKM7VKT48>.

SPORTS NEWS

Young skiers in Vermont get a break

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

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

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

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

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

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

New Hampshire and Vermont Shrine Teams announced

The stage is set for the 71st Annual Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl with the announcement of the two Shrine teams representing the finest high school football talent of New Hampshire and Vermont. The rosters include Charlie Czapski of Westford, who attends BFA Fairfax; Philip Gulozio of Jericho, who attends Mount Mansfield Union High School in Jericho; and Max Spaede of Essex, who attends Essex High School.

This summer's classic is scheduled to be played Saturday, August 3 in Dave Wolk Stadium at Vermont State University in Castleton, VT, with kickoff at 11:30 AM.

More than 200 graduating high school seniors from New Hampshire and Vermont were nominated by their head coaches. In each state, screening committees led by the Shrine Head Coaches selected their respective teams.

Twenty-five schools are represented on the New Hampshire Team and twenty-one on the Vermont Team. The two teams will meet with their respective coaches in March to review game plans. Both teams will report to Castleton University on Sunday, July 28 to begin formal practice.

The Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl is played for the benefit of the Shriners Children's facilities and in its first 70 years has raised millions of dollars. The Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl game is one of 30 Shrine games played every year across the country. This twin state game is sponsored by the two Shrine Centers of Vermont, Cairo (Rutland) and Mt. Sinai (Montpelier).

Westford Rink update

By Lori Miller, Westford Recreation Committee

February 6

The rink is still officially closed. This winter has not been a good one so far for trying to have an outdoor rink. The ice is approximately three inches thick as of late afternoon on February 4. Quoting directly from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, "As a general guideline, 3½ to 4 inches of clear ice is required to walk on..."

I realize this is a rink and not a lake or pond, but someone could still get injured falling through. And if the liner gets cut by a skate, that will be the end of the rink for this year. Also, it is not uniformly frozen. The VT Rt. 128 /library edge of the rink is less frozen than the rest and more prone to melting as it gets more direct sunlight. This week's forecast looks pretty dismal for ice building, I hate to say.

Maybe we'll have a really cold February and March.

Sports News continued on page 12

CLASSIFIED ADS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: State of Vermont, Chittenden Superior Court, Probate Division Docket Number 23-PR-07404: In re Estate of Leona Rita Nichols, Notice to Creditors. To the Creditors of Leona Rita Nichols, decedent, late of Jericho, Vermont (decedent's town of residence): I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period. Dated 11-20-2023. (Signature of Fiduciary) Executor/Administrator Randall Nichols c/o Timothy S. Hawkins Esq., mailing address 17 Stebbins Street, St. Albans, Vermont 05478; phone number 802-524-1434, email timothyshawkins@comcast.net. Published in the Mountain Gazette, publication date February 15, 2024. Name and address of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court/ Probate Division/Chittenden Unit, P.O. Box 511, Burlington, VT 05402-0511.

Underhill: Gentle senior man who enjoys classical music offering 2 rooms/private BA in exchange for cooking 2 meals/week, some shared conversation, and nighttime "just in case" presence. \$350/month. Familiarity with memory loss is a plus. A pet would be considered! 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

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HANDYMAN/CONSTRUCTION

Jay and Jeremy

HANDYMAN

emeryj1882@gmail.com

802-373-0018 or
802-370-8704

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Essex, VT 05452

Sports News continued from page 11

Annual Westford Broomball Tournament

By Amanda Gifford • Recreation Coordinator, Westford
It's back — ice or not!

The 23rd annual Westford Broomball Tournament will be Saturday, February 17 during the Westford Winterfest, at the Westford Ice Rink on the Common. \$15 per player (grades 9 and up); 22 team slots available, first-come, first-served. Teams will battle it out in 20-minute broomball games played 4v4 plus goalies on the Westford outdoor ice rink in a double elimination tournament.

This is not ice hockey! No skates are needed; players wear boots (your own). We'll provide the equipment.

Teams can be coed. Adult teams are grade 9 and older and there is no limit to the number of players on a team.

All players (or a parent if under age of 18) must sign a waiver, or you will not play... no exceptions. Additional waivers are available at Westford Town Offices.

Games will start on the half hour starting at 9:00 AM. Exact times and schedule to be determined by the number of teams registered. We will email all teams prior to the tournament with their first game time.

Food and refreshments will be for sale in conjunction with the Westford Winterfest throughout the entire tournament.

Register at <https://www.gameonvt.com/programs.php?sport=28>.

Cambridge Little League registration open through March 31

Sign up for the spring season of baseball and softball with Cambridge Little League! Registration is open through March 31, online at <https://clubs.bluesombrero.com/cambridgellvt>. On the website, create an account and profile for your child, and select the appropriate baseball or softball program.

Coaches and volunteers with all levels of experience are also needed — opportunities are available during registration.

For more information or with questions, contact cambridgeyouthbaseball@gmail.com or check out our Facebook page *Cambridge Youth Baseball and Softball*.

MMU Youth Lacrosse spring registration

By Gregg Schmidt

Mount Mansfield Youth Lacrosse

Mount Mansfield Youth Lacrosse (K-8) Registration is now open for the Spring 2024 Season!

Mount Mansfield Boys Youth Lacrosse (MMBYL) offers lacrosse programs for youth residing in the Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (Underhill, Jericho, Richmond, Bolton, and Huntington) as well as neighboring communities without programs (i.e., Cambridge), aged Kindergarten through grade 8. No experience is necessary at any level. All are welcome.

Registration is open through Friday, February 23. To register and get more information please email mmulaxcoach@gmail.com.

LUHS boys' soccer team Calcutta Dinner March 22

Come support Lamoille Lancers boys' soccer at their Calcutta Dinner on Friday, March 22, 5:00 – 8:00 PM at 129 VFW Dr., Hyde Park. For \$100, you get a prime rib dinner for two (and get waited on by our Lamoille Lancers Boys' Soccer team) catered by the Charlemont Restaurant, lots of raffle prizes, and a chance to win \$1500

This is an opportunity to support our student athletes as they fundraise for their trip to play soccer in Spain this summer!

Please reach out to thad_krueger@yahoo.com or any LUHS boys' soccer team member if you are interested in a wonderful evening out, a chance to win some major money and prizes, and supporting our hard-working boys' team!

Kick It fitness class at Cambridge Community Center

A new Kick It series has begun at the Cambridge Community Center — it began on Wednesday, February 7 and will run weekly through March 13 (\$12 per class). This is a fun, 13-round, music-driven, motivating group fitness class that combines kickboxing/boxing movements with upbeat music. Rounds include a warmup, high-intensity intervals with kickboxing combinations, low impact movements, and a meditative cooldown. Modifications are offered throughout class, so all fitness levels are welcome. Just bring your yoga mat and water!

Instructor Amy is a Jeffersonville resident and an AFAA and NASM certified kickboxing instructor. Classes are at the CCC on Old Main St., Jeffersonville, 5:30 – 6:30 PM. Register in advance online at https://cambridgeccvt.myrec.com/info/activities/program_details.aspx?ProgramID=30921.

Town Meeting continued from page 5

Bolton Town Meeting March 4, voting March 5

The Town of Bolton will hold its Town Meeting at Smilie Memorial Elementary School, 2712 Theodore Roosevelt Highway (U.S. Rt. 2), Bolton at 7:00 PM on Monday, March 4. Voters at the meeting will decide on the Town Budget of \$1,601,157, and will discuss the articles to be voted on Tuesday, March 5 by Australian ballot: Article 4 elects town officials; Article 5 asks voters to authorize adding one-quarter-cent to the tax rate to support the Conservation Fund.

Voting by Australian ballot will be Tuesday, March 5 at Smilie Memorial Elementary School, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM.

The Town Officers on the ballot include: one Cemetery Commissioner for a term of three (3) years; one Cemetery Commissioner for a term of two (2) years remaining on a three (3) year term; one Town Moderator for a term of one (1) year; one Select Board member for a term of two (2) years; one Select Board member for a term of three (3) years; one Town Treasurer for a term of two (2) years remaining on a three (3) year term; one Town Clerk for a term of two (2) years remaining on a three (3) year term; and one School Board Director for a term of three (3) years.

Underhill Town Meeting information

Underhill's Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 5 at 9:00 AM at Browns River Middle School (BRMS), River Rd., Jericho on Tuesday, March 5. Voting for Australian ballot articles will be held at BRMS, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM.

Those who attend the Town Meeting in person will decide on two budget articles: general fund expenditures of \$1,655,573 (\$1,396,103 raised by taxes, \$259,470 from non-tax revenues) and highway fund expenditures of \$1,691,639 (\$1,576,639 raised by taxes, \$115,000 by non-tax revenue).

Australian ballot measures will elect all Town Officers and School Directors, and will decide the following questions:

- whether to approve expanding the Selectboard from three members to five members;
- whether to borrow up to \$290,000 for the purchase of a dump truck;
- whether to allocate \$100,000 the town receives for State Aid to Highways into the town's Highway Capital Reserve;
- whether to exempt the Underhill Jericho Fire Department property from taxation for municipal and school purposes, for 5 years; and
- whether to allocate several amounts to local organizations: \$485 to support Steps to End Domestic Violence, \$1000 to support The Jericho Farmer's Market, and \$600 to Mount Mansfield Community TV (MMCTV).

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Waterfowl blinds must be removed

Waterfowl hunters who did not remove their hunting blinds from the waters of the state earlier must do so before Thursday, February 15 on Lake Champlain, or Wednesday, May 15 on inland waters, according to a reminder from the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

State law requires removal of the blinds before these deadlines to protect natural areas and to prevent boating accidents after the ice melts.

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