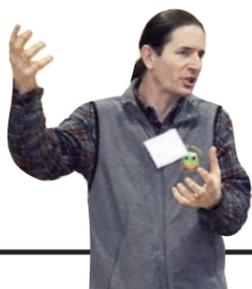


Lt. Governor
comes to
Coventry.
1B



More folks
moving in than
moving out.
14

the Chronicle

THE WEEKLY JOURNAL OF ORLEANS COUNTY

TWO SECTIONS, 44 PAGES

VOLUME 45, NUMBER 4

JANUARY 24, 2018

ONE DOLLAR

Ray pleads guilty to second degree murder



Jeffrey Ray, left, waits while new members of the jury pool are seated Monday. Along with him in court were his lawyers David Sleight, center, and Kyle Hatt. Photo by Joseph Gresser

by Chris Braithwaite

NEWPORT — Jeffrey M. Ray faces 20 years to life in prison after pleading guilty to second-degree murder Tuesday morning.

His defense team never disputed the fact that Mr. Ray shot and killed his ex-wife's husband, Rick Vreeland, in Brownington on May 25, 2015. There was an eyewitness. Mr. Ray's son followed his stepfather to his father's home that day and arrived in time to see the slaying.

Charged with first-degree murder, Mr. Ray resisted any effort to negotiate a plea deal over the three years he spent in jail awaiting trial. But that resistance ended Tuesday in the Criminal Division of Orleans Superior Court, after Orleans County State's Attorney Jennifer Barrett agreed to reduce the charge to second-degree murder.

The jury, picked Monday to hear the grim evidence in what was expected to be a nine-day trial, never set foot in the courtroom Tuesday. Instead Judge Robert Bent thanked them for their part in the proceedings and sent them home in plenty of time for lunch.

The cautiously choreographed process of accepting a guilty plea to murder broke down briefly Tuesday over the question of just what Mr. Ray intended to do when he fired a single hollow-point bullet into Mr. Vreeland's chest from his 44- (Continued on page twenty.)

New group focused on change for the good

by Elizabeth Trail

BARTON — On the one Saturday in recent memory when it's been warm enough to do something outdoors, a good-sized group of Northeast Kingdom people chose to spend the afternoon in a church basement planning how to bring about change for good.

Saturday was the day that a group called Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) sat down to decide which of the many possible

local problems it's going to tackle first.

After several hours of discussion and several votes, they chose to focus on families and transportation, at least for starters.

"The issues we pick don't define our organization," lead organizer Martha Braithwaite said. "We can take on other issues later."

Community organizing is about harnessing the power of group action to make change happen. And

(Continued on page eighteen.)

The HEAT Squad is coming to the Kingdom

by Joseph Gresser

LYNDONVILLE — Northeast Kingdom residents who shivered in their homes during this winter's cold spell may not have to repeat the experience next year. The HEAT Squad is coming to town.

Melanie Paskevich, director of the Home Efficiency Energy Team Squad, traveled around the Kingdom on January 18 and 19 to meet potential partners as the program prepares for a spring launch. She was at the Lyndonville

headquarters of Rural Edge, a sister housing organization, when *the Chronicle* caught up with her Friday.

Trisha Ingalls, the director of Rural Edge, said her organization runs a homeownership center currently offering education for those looking to buy a house, along with counseling on rehabilitating buildings.

The HEAT Squad will provide more assistance for people who need

(Continued on page seventeen.)

ReNewport narrows projects down to four

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — Things did not go exactly as planned at the second reNewport meeting.

The gathering on January 17 drew a good crowd of around 100 people. The discussions of

potential directions for civic engagement were thoughtful and respectful.

Voting to narrow down the 17 potential projects suggested at the first reNewport convocation in December to eight contenders went smoothly.

The surprise came when officials from the Vermont Council on Rural Development returned to the gym in the Newport Municipal Building after retiring to tabulate the second round of voting.

Instead of the expected three final projects, there were four.

Council on Rural Development Director Paul Costello explained the result.

Louise Bonvechio, appointed that night to chair the reNewport effort, decided one of the topics had nearly as many votes as the winners and was important enough to be included in the work.

Mr. Costello unveiled the four winners: expand community events and celebrations, enhance and market the Newport tourism experience, support and attract businesses and entrepreneurs, and improve and coordinate

(Continued on page twenty-eight.)



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VEC offers energy transformation incentives

In 2018, Vermont Electric Co-op (VEC) is offering an expanded menu of financial incentives to VEC members for energy transformation technologies that help members move away from fossil fuels to electricity and advanced wood heating. This program includes bill credits for electric and plug-in hybrid cars as well as lower-carbon heating and cooling systems.

"We all know that buying a vehicle or upgrading a home heating system is a big commitment, even if doing so means saving pretty significant money down the road," said Christine Hallquist, chief executive officer of VEC. "We hope these bill credits can help with these up-front costs."

Like in 2017, VEC will continue to offer bill credits for cold-climate heat pumps (\$150 per outdoor unit) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, like a Chevy Volt or Toyota Prius Prime (\$250 for

purchase and \$50 per year for a lease).

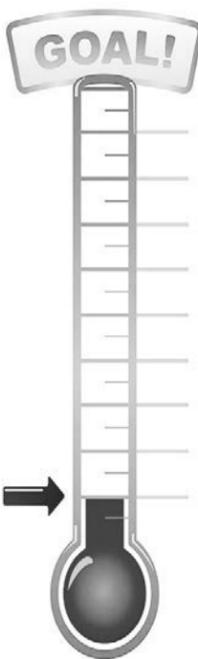
VEC is boosting the bill credit for all-electric vehicles, like a Chevy Bolt or Nissan Leaf, to \$500 for a purchase and \$100 per year for a lease.

New in 2018 are incentives for wood pellet stoves and heat pump water heaters, which are both eligible for a \$150 bill credit.

These offerings are part of VEC's Energy Transformation Program, prompted by Vermont's Renewable Energy Standard, which was passed by Vermont lawmakers in 2015. The law requires electric utilities to implement programs to help their customers shift their energy sources from fossil fuels like gasoline or heating fuel, to electricity or other non-fossil fuel sources.

For more information about these incentives, please call (802) 635-2331, e-mail support@vermontelectric.coop, or visit www.vermontelectric.coop. — from VEC.

Please help WARM THE CHILDREN-Orleans County, Inc. to continue!



In addition to the 180 children provided for this past season, Warm the Children also reached out to two families that experienced a fire in the past year. In order to continue with the program, we will need to raise an additional \$7,000 over the months ahead. If your family, company or organization is looking for a great cause to donate toward, please think of us. Warm the Children has clothed school-aged children of Orleans County since 1994. 100% of all donations received are used to purchase warm winter outerwear. You can warm a child any time of year! Send your tax deductible donation today.

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Derby labor market continues to show growth

The Derby labor market area in December continued to show growth on a year-to-year basis. Figures from the state Department of Labor showed the area had a larger workforce and more jobs than in December 2016.

Unemployment was lower this past December than a year earlier — 4.7 percent in 2017 compared to 5.1 percent in 2016.

The underlying figures show 12,750 were available to work this December, and the area was able to produce 12,150 jobs. Six hundred people were left without employment.

During the same period in 2016 the labor market had 12,650 participants. Of those, 12,000 had jobs and 650 did not.

In November 12,900 folks were ready to work. There were 12,350 jobs and 500 unemployed people. According to the state, the jobless mark was 4.1 percent.

The Department of Labor rounds its numbers to the nearest 50 people. That makes it sometimes look as if the department's math is incorrect.

It does not adjust local figures for predictable seasonal factors, such as weather, holidays, and school vacations. The unadjusted statewide unemployment rate for December 2017 was 2.5

percent, the rate a year earlier was 2.8 percent, and November's rate was 2.7 percent.

With seasonal adjustment, Vermont's unemployment rate in December of 2017 was 2.8 percent, well below the national jobless mark of 4.1 percent. Last December Vermont posted a 3.2 percent unemployment rate, and November saw a 2.9 percent rate.

Derby again had the second highest rate in the state, topped only by the Vermont part of the Colebrook, New Hampshire, area, which weighed in at 6.3 percent.

Morrisville-Waterbury and the Vermont portion of the Littleton, New Hampshire, area were tied for the third slot at 3.5 percent each.

Elsewhere in northern Vermont, St. Johnsbury's 3.2 percent rate garnered the sixth slot, while Highgate's 2.8 percent was good enough for tenth place.

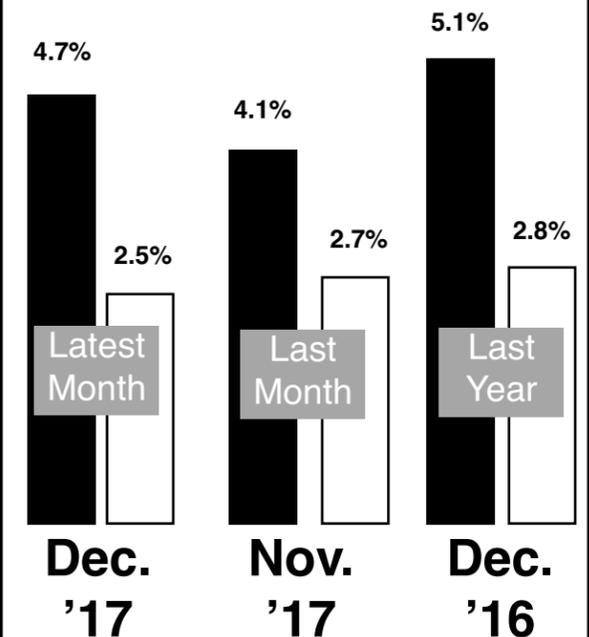
Barre-Montpelier had a 2.4 percent rate and the sixteenth lowest rate in Vermont.

The title for lowest unemployment rate among the state's 19 labor market areas was Burlington-South Burlington which posted an enviable 1.9 percent jobless mark, squeaking ahead of its perennial rival, White River Junction, which put up a rate of 2 percent even.

The jobless rate Derby & Vermont

Derby

VT



These unemployment rates for Vermont and the Derby labor market area are from the Vermont Department of Labor. They are not seasonally adjusted.

VNRC offers "Smart Growth" grants

The Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC) is seeking applications for its 2018 Small Grants for Smart Growth program.

The grant program provides seed money for community-based, local initiatives related to smart growth including: advocacy for better land use through municipal planning, regulations, or advocacy in the permit process; or initiatives in the following areas provided they relate to smart growth: transportation; housing; conservation, including agriculture, forestry, and historic preservation; downtown and/or village center development or revitalization.

"For more than 50 years, VNRC has been working to promote smart growth opportunities," said VNRC executive director Brian Shupe. "We know that a little money can go a long way to help host a public meeting, pay for an

informational letter, or kick start a planning process that helps a community have a valuable conversation about smart development."

Grants are expected to be in the range of \$500 to \$1,500 per project. A second year of funding may be available for qualifying projects. Local or multi-town entities, such as municipalities, municipal commissions or committees, nonprofit organizations, and citizens groups working with a nonprofit or seeking 501(c)(3) status are encouraged to apply. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, and review of applications will begin in early March, with applicants notified within 30 days of receipt of the application.

For more information about the grant, eligible activities, and an application, visit: vnrc.org/smallgrantssmartgrowth18/ — from VNRC.

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Editorial

Fire department merger should benefit everyone

With the very able assistance of Orleans Village Administrator John Morley, the Barton and Orleans fire departments are pursuing something of a merger.

What a great idea!

For years now, all emergency departments — fire, rescue, ambulance — have struggled with finding the volunteers needed to keep operations running smoothly. The work is tough, both physically and emotionally, requires training, is often dangerous, and involves sudden disruptions of a night's sleep, breakfast, supper, family outings, work. Neither accidents nor fires have ever agreed to happen only at convenient times.

Frankly, we've never understood why there are as many volunteers as there are. It takes a certain kind of person to be willing to jump out of bed at 1 a.m. and run into a burning building to save a person, a beloved pet, a cow, or administer to a bloody teenager in a bad wreck.

Our admiration for those people is immense. As is our gratitude. We are, indeed, fortunate that most small towns can still muster enough volunteers to carry on.

But it's getting harder.

Volunteers generally don't work entirely for free, but close enough. For instance, if a Glover ambulance worker gets called out and goes to the hospital with a patient on a call she or he gets a whopping \$25 for the effort.

Would you do it for that kind of money?

So back to the original point here. Mr. Morley has done his usual efficient and sensible job and helped facilitate a complicated, cooperative effort between the two fire departments. A merger should help both departments and ultimately ease strain on limited resources and improve service.

As Mr. Morley put it, firefighters basically want to fight fires. They didn't sign up for the job in order to be bookkeepers. The latter is something he can help with.

Going forward, it may be necessary for more emergency departments to find a way to merge so each has enough personnel and to streamline administration. Good for Mr. Morley and for

Barton and Orleans fire chiefs Kevin Tartaglio and E.J. Rowell in leading the way toward a promising model.

Beyond that, one volunteer we spoke to suggested that towns might be a little more appreciative, and, say, give volunteers — those people who are willing to risk their lives for yours — an incentive, like maybe a tax break for their service.

It's a good suggestion. We've long taken it for granted that there will be among us a certain number of people who will take us to the hospital in the middle of the night, or come fight our fire, on their own time, basically out of the goodness of their heart.

It's not likely that our small towns will, anytime in the near future, have full-time paid fire and ambulance departments. It is time that we acknowledge generous volunteers with something more than an occasional thank-you.

Meanwhile, we applaud Mr. Morley, the Barton and Orleans fire chiefs, and the Barton Select Board for working so cooperatively toward a sensible solution to a problem that's likely only to get worse. — T.S.

Chronicle office hours

We are open for business:

Monday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tuesday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday, closed.

Thursday and Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Come by our office located on Water Street in Barton or phone us at (802) 525-3531.

the Chronicle

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Founded in 1974 by Chris Braithwaite, Ellen Braithwaite, and Edward Cowan.

A ballad to George Washington: The crossing of the Delaware

by Rita Chartrand

In '75, when the war came along,
George Washington — known as a good man and strong —
Was chosen as general and spurred on his men,
But his army lost battles again and again.

Thus the war lingered on but the prospects were dim;
The Redcoats were winning — the future looked grim;
And while Congress bogged down in more long-winded sessions,
The army got ready to take on the Hessians.

In '76, our man weighed up his chances
Of going to New Jersey and making advances.
He led his good men through the deep, drifted snow,
Determined to rout the despicable foe.

Near Trenton, the men now snuck up with great care
To the river ahead — the deep dark Delaware;
They quietly mustered their ranks and their forces,
Their rifles, their cannon, their flag, and their horses.

'Twas late Christmas night when the men gathered thus;
The river was jammed up with ice floes and slush;
The 40-foot boats were propelled by the oarsmen
And carried the soldiers, the horses, the horsemen.

Washington stood at the prow of his boat,
Shouting "Victory or death" — that's an actual

quote;
The crossing took hours and the weather 'twas bitter;
But amongst George's army, there wasn't a quitter!

The men crept on up in the dead of the night;
They found, on arrival, no Hessian in sight!
The Hessians were sleeping off vittles and liquor;
They woke up afumble, but the Yankees were quicker!

A battle ensued and the Hessians were routed;
The Hun was defeated and victory was touted;
King George was aghast when the outcome he learned,
And George Washington knew that the tide had been turned!

© 2018 by Rita Chartrand

Death notice

Donald Nelson Allard

Donald Nelson Allard, 76, died on January 21, 2018, at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Sherbrooke in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Visitation will be held at the Cass Funeral Home, located at 545 Rue Dufferin in Stanstead on Friday, January 26, from 2 to 4 p.m., and from 7 to 9 p.m., and on Saturday, January 26, from 10 to 11 a.m. A celebration of life will follow at the funeral home.

About letters, editorials, and opinions

The Chronicle welcomes letters from our readers from all points on the political spectrum.

The deadline is Monday at noon. Letters may be dropped off, mailed, e-mailed, or faxed. Letters on paper must be signed, and all letters must include a telephone number for confirmation. All letters must include the writer's town.

We will not publish a letter that has been sent anonymously to this office. In rare and extreme circumstances, we will publish a letter without the writer's name. If we refuse such a request, the writer has the option of withdrawing the letter.

Please keep your letters brief. We reserve the

right to edit letters for content.

Letters should be about public issues, not personal gripes. We will not run letters that are libelous, racist, or contain personal attacks. We welcome robust debate but won't print letters which, in our opinion, are merely offensive.

If you have had a letter published lately, we won't be likely to print a second one for a few months. This is simply to give everyone a turn.

Thanks for your help making these pages thought-provoking, lively, and interesting.

Editorials are initialed by the author and reflect a consensus of the editorial staff of *the Chronicle*. Opinions and letters are the opinion of the author.

Letter to the editor

All you need is one thing in common

To the editor,

He was boarding my flight when I first laid eyes on him. Straight, longish blond hair covered some of his forehead, and he was in 100 percent green clothing. He was a bit pudgy in a prepubescent way and stood about four feet, eight inches. His shoulders slanted downward, and he didn't look like he had much to be excited about because his expression was just blank. As he got closer his focus sharpened and he reached out, opened the glass case that holds a multitude of free snacks for mid-flight munchers and started to grab handful after handful of cookie packages. At this point, I saw what was written on his shirt: John Deere.

His mother tried to stop his cookie grabbing, and I could see she was embarrassed. You see, the lad was profoundly mentally challenged and, no doubt, after hours of our flight being delayed, both were on their last nerve.

"You like John Deere tractors?" I asked.

His mom answered, "He likes anything John Deere!"

Putting my face close to his and looking him straight in those big eyes, I said, "I worked on a farm and loved the John Deere tractor. It started when I wanted it to, and the gears were as smooth as silk. John Deere makes the best tractors, even though they're now making them overseas and out of fiberglass instead of metal. I loved that little John Deere tractor on the farm!"

I wasn't at all certain I'd seen any flicker of understanding in his eyes, but those boarding behind this fellow were now forcing us to separate. He started to walk down the aisle, arms filled with the mother lode of chocolate chip cookies and didn't look back.

Later, when I had time, I found his seat and began another pro-John Deere monologue. "I love the colors on a John Deere, too. Green and yellow are perfect together. My boss bought an International 1066 with a cab, but I didn't like it



one little bit. The John Deere had no cab and could pull a full hay wagon or plough or spring tooth harrow like it was nothing. The best part was the way that tractor felt so friendly when I was driving. I guess all John Deere equipment is good to drive!"

The boy had been watching me as I spoke. No response. Then I said, "I'm so glad you love John Deere so much!"

This time I didn't have to imagine a response. His eyes lit up like emeralds on a sunny day. He didn't smile. He didn't nod. His eyes just started to twinkle.

The old advertisement stated: "Nothing runs

like a Deere."

You know what's even better? Nothing twinkles like a John Deere fan.

If you look, there's something in every single person who loves something you do. Be it chocolate chip cookies or a very favorite make of farm equipment. Find this common denominator and watch what happens. Even if it's highly unlikely that you'll get a response, I promise you one thing: You'll both be a little happier for the rest of the day because you've both found a kindred spirit. Blessed be.

Heather McKeown
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 If anyone is interested in submitting a sauce for the cook-
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Letter to the editor

We are partners in a loving project

Dear editor,

Next week is National Catholic Schools week, and I am eager to promote the cause of my own parish's Catholic school. But this letter is equally for sharing my story and philosophy of education. For those who come along on this quick sojourn of a Catholic priest's reflection on education, I hope I share a meaningful thought or two. So as not to bore the same literary companions — whoever is still reading — I jump through the years of my Catholic education with just a note or two for each phase of that blessed journey. It was not the typical journey of Catholic school students.

My Catholic mother thought she wanted to be a professional elementary school teacher, but she never held a job in the field. Instead she ended up homeschooling five children — me, being the middle — through at least part of our k-through-12 education. I was either stupid lucky or extremely blessed, because the right combination of natural aptitudes and interests, along with chance opportunities, led me to jump from homeschooling to college before the age of 17. It was principally a love of chemistry that opened my great abilities in science and mathematics. Living a few miles from an exceptionally well-staffed chemistry undergraduate department, they recruited me before I saw it coming. I became a nationally ranked chemistry student under their tutelage, graduating at the age of 20. But following the example of a certain biblical pearl merchant, I dropped the promising career in chemistry, and spent the next six years in preparation for church ministry. Ordained a Catholic priest at the age of 26, with my two master's degrees in theology, I started a different

kind of career.

A constant force in this story is the love of learning and love of truth, ever since I was first drawing, with utmost fascination and intrigue, the molecular structures for carboxylic acids in ninth grade. This love eventually led me to study subjects that for years had been uninteresting to me. Perhaps only biblically conversant Christians will understand that I say "a love of truth" was there, and not "a love of learning truths." The best I can describe this is that I experienced firsthand and personally the mysterious confluence of belief in a creator and a curious awe and wonder about creation. Other parts of my own spiritual testimony in this matter may follow, but I focus on this thought. It is not wrong to say that a love for truth is what sustained me when thrown into roles of teaching, and then administrating, in Catholic schools, when I was truly unprepared for either task. It is a love for truth that is largely responsible for my efforts to promote and develop a local Catholic school. It is here that I apply to our current educational climate, with all its challenges, that idea that there is a difference between loving to learn truths and a love of learning truth. Truth itself must be lovable. Education cannot be the mere imparting of facts. It cannot be the mere passing on of skills that have proved, in a utilitarian way, to produce "results."

A phrase that I'm sure everyone has heard is that students "fall through the cracks" in public schools. I have never wholly adopted the phrase, because I'm not sure I completely agree with it. I offer an alternate picture that some students lie stranded in ditches and trenches made by

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All horizontal rows of nine, all vertical columns of nine, and all the heavily outlined boxes of nine squares must contain all the numbers from one to nine.

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cultural revolutions in our country. To keep the geological analogy of "falling through cracks," these changes in culture are more like geological shifts that made glacier sized ditches. The best kinds of public school teachers, those I think most loved and respected by the public, encounter some children long after the cracks turned into chasms beneath them. The best of teachers look down at such students, helplessly wishing they could pull those students up and out of these life situations, but are either not able to do so, or are not allowed to. In part every good teacher is battling cultural entropy, and those in the public schools are finding they have fewer and fewer tools to do so. The tools were intentionally abandoned by the

(Continued on page seven.)



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Letters to the editor

We are partners in a loving project

(Continued from page six.)

bad teachers and the bad cultural architects of the previous decades. Catholic schools kept more of those tools of cultural influence. Such things as increased parent participation, volunteerism, and the ability to affirm religious energies in society have helped us much, even if they were only an accidental benefit of the separation of church and state.

A year and a half ago my school was pledged the largest single private donation ever in our history, and Mr. Tony Pomerleau happily fulfilled his \$120,000 commitment. After this unprecedented boost to our finances (20 years in the waiting since it was once announced the school was "broke and closing shop") we are bracing ourselves for the prospect of using his gift intentionally to budget deficits, so that we do not turn ourselves into a private tutoring service for the middle class. Our families and parishioners are also taxpayers. It is an investment in the families who are with us here and now, for the

good of church and society and culture, that St. Paul's is only announcing the slightest increase in yearly tuition, while at the same time making even greater substantial discounts for families with multiple children. Other potential discounts and credits are reflecting more and more the reality that it is due to commitments made by families, as families, that we continually offer a good education in the Catholic tradition. Without the backing of taxpayers, our schools have always been powered by vows. It so happens now that marriage vows provide more energy and creativity than religious vows (though I supply what energy and creativity I can through my ecclesiastical state of celibacy). If the vows hold strong, a Catholic school will fulfill its tasks regardless of money or a shortage. If the vows are broken, no amount of money will save the cultural loss.

It goes without saying there have been families who enrolled in Catholic schools only to leave saying that they were not getting enough

for what they had paid in. It is the miracle that such a school as St. Paul's can continue to exist because so many families feel they have gotten much more than they paid in. It is a counterpoint to our Catholic faith that, if we know the one who redeems the world, we ourselves do not claim to be saviors. No earthly product is free; we cannot create ex nihilo like God. All visions of worldwide salvation rely on faith, and education in an intellectual sense has not eradicated poverty, or drugs, or broken families, or ruined lives. It has only revealed some widening gaps between the "haves" and "have nots." This is not only where Catholic schools have something to say. It is where we should be stating the one unique educational doctrine that we have ever had. Education will not redeem the world. Gnosticism has always been anathema to us. Our scriptures say "love is strong as death," and it is love that is redemptive. It is love that turns the cross into the resurrection. Catholic schools hold a particularly powerful, even if sometimes controversial, vision of the revelation of love.

The mere existence of Catholic schools in this northeastern U.S., a part of the U.S. of diminished religious adherence, has a value as a sign of witness. I will not offer the shallow argument that Catholic schools are good for society because we can provide such unique attention and loving care to the kids who need it most. Their families as a whole need it most, and that long-term project costs us the most. We are partners in a loving project even with those who do not offer mutual support for our work. Because of a certain religious doctrine we continue to witness to a means to love, which we have found in a tradition we call Catholic. It is not that we have a certain truth that is useful; it is that truth is itself lovable, or God is no longer good.

For those not convinced, we wish you well, and affirm whatever truths we can both acknowledge. For those uncertain, I say, come and see if you love the things we love.

Happy Catholic Schools Week to all friends of Catholic schools and Catholic school families.

The Reverend Father Timothy Naples, pastor of St. Paul's Catholic School, Barton

Kingdom Winter

by Ellin Anderson

Empty of warmth and human wit,
The vacant summer cabins sit
In havens that the lake won't reach,
On our serene and sheltered beach.

And when the autumn leaves have blown,
We'll find the summer snowbirds flown
To seek a hot and sunny land
Where snow is never mixed with sand.

When icy days are mildly bright,
They'll miss the slant of iron light
That comes to cheer the resting house
Delighting just one guest: a mouse.

And then, they'll miss the chilling breath
Of arctic cold whose touch is death
When fire is life, when time runs slow
As ice ten thousand years ago.

But they won't know the crystal days

That sparkle while the whole world plays
In drifts arranged for our delight
Through half a year of winter white,

Or wake to see the pale pink fire
Of sunrise, warm as hearts' desire,
When February branches glow
With cherry blossoms made of snow.

No season's change will see us race
From what was someone's summer place:
Against the flowing years, we'll stand
Like cliff and rock, bound to the land.

No oath's required, or word, or deed:
As faithful as the birds we feed
Through winter's diamond-scattered black,
We'll glitter here till friends fly back.

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- *Pitch Perfect 3* (PG13) - 6:20
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Opinion

Quality in water and farming

by Agriculture, Food and Markets Secretary Anson Tebbetts

As you go about your day, it's likely you pass a farm — or two or more — along the way. Hidden in hamlets and stretched out in the valleys, Vermont's farms are part of our daily lives.

And although farmers have worked the land

for over a century, there may be something unexpected, yet rooted in Vermont, happening behind the scenes.

Something innovative. Something progressive. Something that's making a difference, over time, in our land, waterways, farms, and in our communities.

Vermont farmers, along with many others in our state, are working for water quality.

A closer look at Vermont farms shows how cutting edge technology is increasingly becoming the new norm. From state-of-the art waste management systems to cover crops that keep agricultural fields growing biomass year-round preventing soil from eroding, Vermont agriculture is evolving once again. New generations, along with legacy farmers, are actively making improvements on their farms and they are networked for change: In 2017, 3,137 farmers, partners, and members of the public took in 5,011 hours of education at 93 water quality events. Last year 70 Vermonters received advanced certification in manure application. It's progress.

And that's just the beginning. In 2017, the state invested \$17-million in related water quality projects across all sectors. As part of this investment, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture devoted \$5.2-million in technical and financial assistance, engagement and outreach, rules and regulation, and inspection and enforcement — it's the biggest water quality investment in the history of Vermont.

The Agency of Agriculture's work over the past year includes \$1.1-million in grants for on-farm projects such as fencing, manure storage and barnyards, \$1.7-million in Clean Water Initiative grants to partners for education, implementation and phosphorus reduction alternatives beyond traditional conservation practices. There are 31 people at the Agency of Agriculture's water quality division focused on ensuring the regulations are achieved, designing conservation practices, and offering education and

technical assistance to help farms make the necessary changes for water quality. Grants and the technical support offered by the agency are a tool for farmers who are motivated to change, and all grants require money from the farmer.

In addition, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, in partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), inspects farms and jointly enforces water quality regulations. In 2017, Agency of Agriculture investigators performed 392 inspections including investigating 150 complaints — 100 percent of those received. Farmers who knowingly do not comply with laws face action: In 2017 farmers received 93 enforcement actions from the agency, a 145 percent increase over 2016. This increase is due to more boots on the ground inspecting.

Despite this progress, we at the agency must do more. We will expand implementation of Best Management Practices as well as thinking of innovative ways to reduce phosphorus. We need policies that create new markets to export phosphorus and create incentives for farmers to keep phosphorus off the land.

Farmers are stepping up because they, too, are passionate about the land, water, animals and communities. They are passionate about the jobs they provide, and committed to making the best, award-winning products from Vermont. Passion extends to many others as well. The Agency of Agriculture is working closely with partners such as the Department of Environmental Conservation, University of Vermont Extension, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Lake Champlain Basin Program, and many more.

Certainly, there is much more work to do. But by working together with investment, education, enforcement and assistance, Vermont is on an upward trajectory, aiming high for quality in land, water, and agriculture. We are all committed to a greener Green Mountain State, and unified, we will get there.

OCNRCD to hold annual plant sale

Does this mean it's spring already? Not quite, but one sure sign is the annual Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District (OCNRCD) plant sale. The sale offers a variety of bare-root plants, including fruit trees, berry bushes, native trees, and a new selection of native wetland plants and shrubs. Planting with native plants can provide many benefits for property owners: tasty snacks, added beauty to the landscape (even in the wetter spots), shade, erosion control on lakeshores and riverbanks, habitat for wildlife, and much more. All profits go towards the OCNRCD's many conservation programs.

Please visit the OCNRCD website at www.vacd.org/conservation-districts/orleans-county/ for a full catalog and order form. Orders are due by Saturday, March 31. Pickup is on Saturday, May 5, in front of the U.S.D.A. office at 59 Waterfront Plaza in Newport.

For questions, or to have a hard copy of the catalog mailed, contact Sarah Damsell at sarah.damsell@vt.nacdn.net, or at 334-6090, extension 7008. — from the OCNRCD.



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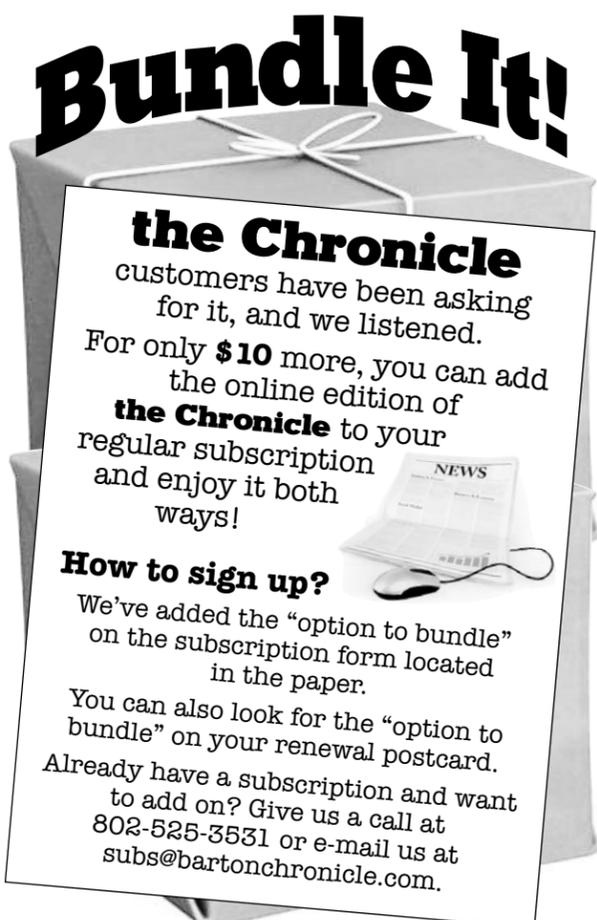


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January 27, 2018

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Letters to the editor

Slow down and clean up your car

To the editor,

I've been thinking about this for quite some time, so here it goes. When did people get so lazy? Isn't it law here in Vermont to clear your vehicle of ice/snow so you can see to drive safely and you are more visible to other motorists?

On Wednesday, January 17, my husband and I were driving on Route 14, heading to Newport Center, when we met this woman in an SUV coming towards us, and two fairly big pieces of ice/snow flew off the top of her vehicle and struck us in the front of my car. There wasn't anything I could do because I had this car behind me in a Subaru right on my a__! (And the road still had icy spots on it from the previous weekend.)

What is wrong with people?? This is wintertime. People don't seem to think or care. I travel 16 miles to work, and there are so many drivers out there (in early morning especially), who drive like it's summertime, and get on your a__ even though you are driving with the conditions of the road and what I am comfortable driving. I would rather get to work late, than not to make it at all!

Lori A. Tatro
Brownington

Dinner and dance to support Puerto Rico hurricane relief

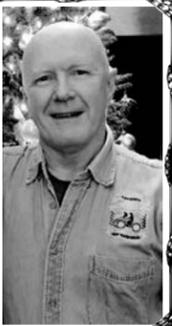
A live music and Caribbean dance party and dinner on Saturday, January 27, at Sterling College will benefit hurricane relief for Puerto Rico.

Dinner is at 5:30 p.m. and live music with Mal Maiz, starts at 6 p.m., in Dunbar Hall. All proceeds go toward an established Puerto Rico based nonprofit, Plenitud PR, organizing grassroots hurricane relief and educating fellow Puerto Rican residents about rebuilding and planning for long term sustainability. Both the dinner and dance party are on a sliding scale donation starting at \$10 for dinner, but people are asked to please donate generously. Call to reserve dinner tickets. Donations for the dance party will be taken at the door.

For more information contact: Kris Coville at 586-8022, or mama.kris.coville@gmail.com. To learn more about Plenitud's work, check out their website at plenitudpr.org. — submitted by Anne-Marie Keppel.

Lawrence Cavanagh
Celebrating his 65th birthday, as well as his 45-year retirement, at the Eagles in Newport on Friday, January 26, at 6 p.m.

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Congressional leaders are not doing their duty

To the editor,

Is the United States a democratic republic or a socialistic country? Our forefathers said, "We the people." They fought against tyranny. I call upon U.S. citizens to rebel against dictatorial behavior that is driving this nation to socialism.

"We the people" of this country and state have too long sat back and trusted our Congress — people to serve us honorably and faithfully. What do we now have? Dictators who are so focused on their own agenda that they openly state "no compromise" regardless of the safety and interests of the general population. They vote their own wages (allowed by the Constitution). They boycott issues that financially affect many working citizens of our country. Meanwhile they smugly sit back and collect their wages because

they enacted their own security whether they do their job or not. These actions have a name — socialism, dictatorship. They fail even to come together to pass a viable budget and avoid a government shutdown.

Article 1, Section 9, Clause 7 of our Constitution contains two clauses that make the federal budget not a *power* but a **legislative duty**. Our congressional leaders are not doing their duty. We need to demand term limits for Congress people. The people of this country need to force change. How? Vote out of Congress people who do not do their legislative duty and are guiding this nation toward socialism.

Lorelei Willis
Troy

May you find a way

by Tammy Currier

May this year be a great one,
A much better one,
Than the year before.
May 2018 bring you realizations of your dreams,
As 2017 has gently shut the door.

May you have more smiles than tears.
May you appreciate all that you have.
May you never judge yourself too harshly,
As you journey on your path.

May you have kindness in your heart,
And God within your soul.

May you be the bigger person,
Wherever you may go.

May you find delight,
In the laughs of little children,
For they are our future generation.
May you seize every opportunity,
When you're at work or on vacation.

As 2018 is just beginning,
I hope you fill it with love and sun-filled days.
May you have a year of revelations,
Where there's a will,
I hope you find that way.

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The Chronicle is looking for crazy, odd, and even disastrous wedding stories for an upcoming wedding supplement. Do you have a funny story or photo about your special day that you would like to share with our readers? Send your stories and pictures to news@bartonchronicle.com by Monday, January 29, and please include contact information.

The supplement will be published with our February 7 edition.






Happy Birthday to the following people!

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Lawrence Cavanagh, Jan. 26
Crystal Dopp, Coventry, Jan. 26
Matthew Powell, Jan. 26
Leonard Wright, Danville, Jan. 26
Norbert Fournier, Derby, Jan. 26
Sunny Naughton, Jan. 27
Rona Bruneau, Orleans, Jan. 27
Jessica Sheehan, Derby, Jan. 27
Ben Hamilton, West Charleston, Jan. 28
E. Ritchie Green, Barton, Jan. 28
Rita Nye, Barton, Jan. 28
Seamus Greenwood, Hinesburg, Jan. 29
Mika Greenwood, PA, Jan. 29
Jackson Lafont, Barton, Jan. 29
Jillian Stevens, Jan. 30
Carol Ann Trombly, Jan. 30
Natasha Buck, Newport Center, Jan. 30
Evelyn M. Bowen, West Charleston, Jan. 31
Paul Sheltra, Irasburg, Jan. 31
Lyrik Bathalon, Irasburg, Jan. 31
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Scarlett Shafe, Irasburg, Feb. 1
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Amy Brill, Sutton, Feb. 2
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Names are submitted by your family and friends, but if you'd like your name removed or your town changed, please let us know. Once you've submitted a birthday, no need to resubmit next year.

North Country Hospital annual meeting

Fort: Political situation poses threat to health care

by Elizabeth Trail

NEWPORT — “Community strong” seemed well chosen as the theme for this year’s North Country Hospital annual meeting, held on January 18 at the East Side Restaurant.

The meeting was planned for 7 p.m. But at that hour, dinner was just being served.

“We were just having so much fun socializing,” said Julie Riffon, executive director of primary care and quality management for the hospital. “We don’t get to see each other very often.”

About 80 people attended the meeting at the East Side. The hospital is governed by a board of 16 trustees, elected by a larger group of corporate donors. About a third of the board comes up for re-election each year.

Besides voting in the slate of trustees, board members approved a bylaw change that sets a three-term limit on their service.

The new year also sees a changing of the guard as board Chair Katherine Austin finishes her term. She’ll be succeeded by local businessman Frank Noel.

“We wouldn’t have moved here if we hadn’t seen the tremendous resource we have here in this hospital,” Mr. Noel said. He sees the hospital as a significant driver of Newport’s economy. And he hopes to bring a business perspective to running it.

“But,” he acknowledged, “it’s not an easy time for a hospital.”

Ms. Austin’s mother, Betty Lahar, is retiring after many years as head of the hospital auxiliary.

“Good riddance, Betty,” quipped Claudio Fort, president and chief executive officer of the hospital.

Mr. Fort said he’d spent hours writing his presentation, only to be upstaged by the applause for Mrs.

Lahar’s brief off-the-cuff speech.

But when he settled down to his talk, Mr. Fort was serious.

“We’re facing threats to health care because of the political situation in this country,” he said.

As outlined in the four-color annual report handed out at the meeting, one in every five Americans experiences some type of mental illness, and this area is no exception. Vermont is the ninth hungriest state in the nation with 14 percent not being sure whether they’ll have food to put on the table. And nearly 4,000 Vermonters are in treatment for opioid abuse.

The Northeast Kingdom has the worst outcomes in the state, Mr. Fort said. And North Country Hospital is trying out some innovative new ways to deal with the problems facing its population.

“It’s been a challenge finding mental health placements since Irene,” he said, reminding his audience that the tropical storm had destroyed the Vermont State Hospital along with many other aging public buildings in Waterbury.

Now the emphasis is on diagnosing and treating problems before they develop into full-blown mental health crises, he said.

And mental health services are being integrated into primary health care, he said, an approach that not only offers the hope of getting help earlier, but also removes a lot of the stigma.

“No one knows who you’re seeing when you’re sitting in the waiting room of your primary care practice,” says John Lippmann in a short hospital-produced video that was shown at the meeting. Dr. Lippmann is medical director for primary care in the North Country health system.

Mental health issues should be treated no differently than a cardiac

problem or any other kind of health problem, he says.

“It’s all part of the overall health of the individual.”

The hospital is also pushing to be sure that patients experiencing a crisis can speak to a mental health professional the same day they call for help.

To fight the opioid epidemic, the hospital has been tightening its practices about prescribing opioid drugs.

“We’re limiting the number of pills we prescribe for pain,” says Dr. William Brunelli in another video clip played at the after-dinner presentation. When the risks of opioids are explained, many people choose to skip pain medication altogether, he says.

To help people who are already struggling with addiction, Dr. Lippmann said, the hospital is working toward enabling primary care physicians to provide substance abuse treatment.

And the hospital has teamed up with the Journey to Recovery Community Center in Newport to grow its recovery coaching program.

This year, the hospital found a unique way to help people who are having trouble getting enough healthy food, Mr. Fort said. It set up its own community supported agriculture (CSA) program, and gave out shares of fresh produce to people who need access to fruits and vegetables.

There were pickup stations in Barton and Newport where participants picked up not only bags of produce, but also recipes, tips, and how-to advice. Children got passports that were stamped whenever they tried new foods.

The produce is grown by teens in the Youth Conservation Corps, on fallow farmland at the old Bluffside Farm.

“It’s a win-win-win,” Mr. Fort said. “We’re no longer sitting around waiting for you to get sick. We’re figuring out how to keep you from getting sick in the first place.”

On that note, he said, the hospital took a major step in

preventing the spread of disease by requiring all employees to get a flu shot.

“Even though this year’s vaccine turned out to be only about 10 percent effective,” he said, “the vaccine is still the best way to protect yourselves and your family.”

The hospital has also become a smoke-free zone.

“Smoking is the leading cause of preventable health problems,” Mr. Fort said.

The next challenge is to get rid of the unhealthy food that’s served in the hospital, both in patient meals and in the cafeteria.

“It’s like saying would you like french fries with your angioplasty?” he joked.

Presenting the medical staff report, Dr. Maria Fatigati noted that Canadian doctors are now in the majority at North Country.

“We may have to change the name to Hôpital de pays du Nord,” she said.

The hospital’s financial report shows not quite \$83-million in operating revenue and almost \$85-million in operating expenses. It had about \$3.1-million in uncompensated care and bad debts, though that is significantly down from previous years.

With a \$1.9-million operating loss, the overall picture is kept in the black by about \$4.5-million in investment earnings, gains, and donations.

According to figures the hospital presented to the Green Mountain Care board last summer, operating revenues were down by about \$3.7-million from the previous year, with declines in outpatient surgery, emergency room services, diagnostic imaging, and outpatient lab tests.

“While we still have work to do, our financial situation makes progress challenging,” that report concludes.

The full version of the annual report and the videos about the hospital’s fresh approaches to thorny problems are available on the hospital’s website at northcountryhospital.org.

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Orleans Village Trustees Rec group plans ambitious calendar

by Elizabeth Trail

ORLEANS — A recreation-oriented subgroup of the Friends of the Library is dreaming up ideas for activities around the village.

April Lane, a member of the not quite formed Orleans Recreation, unrolled a paper timeline of possible events on the table in front of the Orleans Village Trustees at their meeting Monday. Among Ms. Lane's ideas are a street dance, maybe with a beer tent, and a bus tour of local breweries. The group is also planning family oriented events, Ms. Lane said, pointing to the recent winter party, ice skating, and sliding as examples.

But the town also needs activities for young adults, she said.

"A lot of people my age are moving back and there isn't a lot to do."

Town Administrator John Morley said his concerns about a street dance would be alcohol, police, and liability, but the details can probably be worked out.

He seemed more concerned about whether the village might be asked to handle money related to activities without having a clear relationship to the organization.

"I'm not sure who's Friends of the Library and who's the recreation committee," he said.

"Right now we're just a group of women who meet on Friday nights," Ms. Lane said.

She added that she knows what goes into creating a 501(c)3

nonprofit, and she doesn't have the time, at least not this year.

At some point, Mr. Morley and Ms. Lane plan to meet to find a way to approach the financial and organizational end of things.

The trustees also got a letter from the local Masonic Lodge asking to have the annual \$750 rental fee for the space the group uses in the municipal building reduced or even totally done away with. The lodge negotiated a 99-year lease about 80 years ago, Mr. Morley said, back at a time when it had a lot of members.

At the suggestion of Chair Eric Lanoue, the board decided to eliminate the lodge's rent for the coming year.

In other business, the board approved a letter that Mr. Morley drafted, thanking the Barton Select Board for its support of the proposed merger between the Barton and Orleans Fire Departments.

"Barton voted unanimously to support the consolidation proposal," Mr. Morley said.

He also praised the select board for its openness to understanding the tax implications of the merger. Town taxes would fund the combined fire departments.

In other business, the trustees approved a hazard mitigation plan developed by the Barton Select Board.

"It will help with grant applications to have this in place," Mr. Morley said.

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\$325 (30 hours) includes some materials. Tool safety for machine and hand tools, then design your project with teacher mentor. Thursdays, January 25–March 29, 5:30–8:30 p.m.



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New to Computers

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Microsoft Office

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Etsy - Buying and Selling

\$40 (4 hours). Buy and sell handmade or vintage items, art, and supplies. Thursdays, March 15 & 22, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Smartboard Training for Educators

\$60 (6 hours). Increase skills with Smartboard in classrooms. Tuesdays, March 20 & 27, 4–6 p.m.

Grant Writing and Grantsmanship

\$120 (12 hours). Consider general and specific techniques which can increase the chances of funding for grant proposals. Tuesdays, January 23–February 27, 6–8 p.m.

Bring Balance to Your Budget

Free. Develop a budget, identify financial goals, understand the balance between spending, saving, and borrowing. Thursday, January 25, 6–7 p.m.

De-mystifying Investing

Free. Rules for investing, develop a strategy, choose quality investments, diversify portfolio, invest for the long term. Thursday, February 8, 6–7 p.m.

Tax Tips and Budgeting for Seasonal Employees

Free. Learn how to plan for the off season and file taxes to benefit your seasonal employment lifestyle. Thursday, March 15, 6–7 p.m.

Superbowl Munchies

\$45 (3 hours) includes materials. Restaurant quality finger foods that you can make at home. Tuesday, January 30, 5–8 p.m.

Kombucha Brewing

\$25.00 (2 hours) includes materials. Class includes science of this process, ingredients, SCOBY (mother), and container. Tuesday, February 13, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

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St. Patrick's Day Feast

\$45 (3 hours). Join Chef Sky to prepare a brisket to celebrate. Tuesday, March 13, 5–8 p.m.

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Beginning Genealogy

\$120 (12 hours). Find records that can begin the creation of a family tree. Tuesdays, February 6–March 20 (no class March 6), 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Ceramics Studio

\$120 (12 hours) includes materials. Explore sculptural and functional ceramics. Thursdays, February 15–March 22 (no class March 1), 6–8 p.m.

Conversational French

\$120 (12 hours). Basic French for customer service or personal travel needs. Tuesdays, February 6–March 27 (no class February 27), 6–7:30 p.m.



Crochet for Beginners

\$80 (8 hours). Learn different stitches and pattern reading. Thursdays, February 8–March 1, 6–8 p.m.

Knitting for Pleasure

\$60 (6 hours). Basic techniques in knitting, purling, cable, casting on, and binding off. Thursdays, March 8–29, 6–8 p.m.



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(Includes book binding lesson.) \$140 (12 hours) includes materials. Make your own sketch book then develop drawing techniques in the pages. Tuesdays, February 6–March 27 (no class February 27 & March 6), 6–8 p.m.

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Free. Born after 7/1/83? This class required to operate a snowmobile. Call 802-673-5430 to register. Tuesday, January 9, 5:30–9 p.m. & Thursday, January 11, 6–9 p.m.

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Changes to acceptable logging practices explained

by Joseph Gresser

LYNDONVILLE — Dave Wilcox, watershed forester with the state Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, looked around a Lyndon State College meeting room on January 16, and rather than appearing dismayed by a turnout that could be counted on the fingers of one hand, he said it was a sign of success.

State officials have been holding small meetings about changes to acceptable management practices for maintaining water quality on logging jobs for the past few months, he said.

“The fact only a few of you are here means everyone got the word,” Mr. Wilcox joked.

It may also be many loggers and foresters weren't aware that the state plans to make changes to management practices.

As Mr. Wilcox's first slide acknowledged, the most recent set of rules went into effect in October 2016, not much more than a year ago.

Acceptable management practices are measures foresters, loggers, and landowners can apply to be sure of staying on the right side of the state's water quality standards to keep from sending silt and debris into Vermont streams, rivers, and lakes.

Mr. Wilcox said his department is contemplating changes to the regulations because people who were being trained to enforce and follow them found some aspects unclear.

To the uninitiated, some of the differences seem minor, but they are important to loggers or foresters who may have to move equipment into a site or logs out of it. The state has created the rules to make sure forestry activities don't harm the environment.

That may mean building permanent or temporary roads over streams, and putting in culverts to divert the flow under them.

Mr. Wilcox said the purpose of the new regulations is to help people working in the woods to know when a culvert is required and how big a pipe is called for in any situation.

As his first act Mr. Wilcox introduced the term “active channel.” He said it's the portion of a stream through which water flows on a regular basis.

A new definition says, “the active channel is narrower than the bankfull width (approximately 75%) and is defined by the breaking bank slope and typically extends to the edge of permanent vegetation.”

Another important new definition also calls for close observation. The “ordinary high water

mark” is the “line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or the presence of litter and debris.”

A person who intends to drive equipment over a stream also needs to know the difference between a perennial and intermittent stream.

The former is what most people would call a stream. Water runs along their length most of the year, and they are rarely dry.

Perennial streams tend to be seasonal and are rarely dry. The new rules change their definition by reducing the size of the watershed they drain from a half acre or more to at least a quarter acre. According to the definition, a stream is considered perennial even if it appears dry on the surface for a time but it continues to run underground.

Intermittent streams, as the name suggests, go dry on a regular basis. Even though they do not always flow, those streams have well-defined channels and show signs that sediment has been carried downstream.

Mr. Wilcox said loggers and foresters can easily tell the difference. Intermittent streams, he said, don't harbor fish or other such aquatic life.

The newly written definitions come to fruition in a pair of tables showing proper culvert sizes for intermittent and perennial streams based on the size of the area drained by the streams.

According to the tables, temporary crossings — those that will be in place for less than 18 months — need smaller culverts than permanent crossings.

There is an exception for intermittent streams in winter months. The regulations say brush can be laid over the stream course so equipment and logs can cross, but only when the ground is frozen.

After his presentation, Mr. Wilcox called for questions, and got one from Alan Robertson of Sheffield, who manages a tract of forest.

Mr. Robertson was happy to have the definitions of perennial and intermittent streams clarified. But, what, he asked about ephemeral streams? Those, he said, come about when there is exceptionally wet weather that causes water to flow on the surface, but not in an established water course.

Mr. Wilcox said he thought the regulations, by describing the other two types of streams so thoroughly, implicitly left ephemeral streams unregulated.

Mr. Robertson was not satisfied with the



David Wilcox, watershed forester with the state Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, explains new acceptable management practices to a small group of foresters and loggers.

Photo by Joseph Gresser

explanation. What protection would he have if a “person just out of college with a forestry degree” came on his property on a wet day and decided he was in violation of accepted management practices, he asked.

Mr. Wilcox agreed Mr. Robertson had a point and said he'd consider what to do.

Trevor Evans of Derby asked about the assumptions forestry officials used when they drew up the culvert size table. He said he had no problem with the work, but assuming a parcel of land had a steeper or more gentle slope would change the outcome of calculations.

Mr. Evans said it would be nice to know what the underlying assumptions are so people could do their own math. He acknowledged few would care to do so.

Mr. Wilcox said he could get the information Mr. Evans wanted, but suggested a person doing his own figuring would probably call for the same sized culverts as the state tables do.



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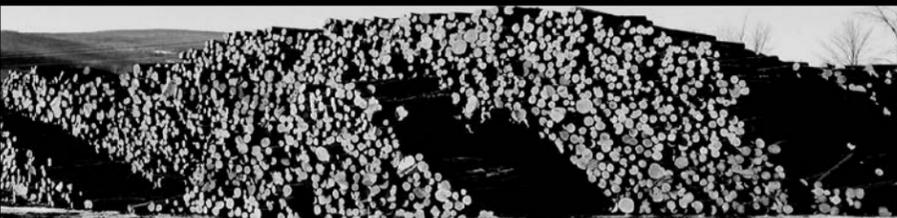
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Proposed DEC rule for Great Hosmer dropped

by Tena Starr

CRAFTSBURY — A state proposal aimed at solving the conflict between motorized and non-motorized boats on Great Hosmer Pond in Craftsbury and Albany has been set aside.

In a January 11 letter, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Emily Boedecker says, “The department has determined that proceeding to formal rulemaking at this time will not advance a resolution for the conflicts that are occurring on Great Hosmer Pond.”

By phone Monday, Commissioner Boedecker said, “The message to your readers is keep talking.” She said she’s not walking away from the situation, but root causes must be addressed.

There’s been a long-running dispute between the various groups who use the narrow, 150-acre pond. That, in itself, is not unusual — most well used bodies of water run into a conflict from time to time between those who like motorboats and Jet Skis and those who prefer quieter uses like rowing or kayaking.

A couple of factors make the Hosmer situation somewhat different than the norm. One is that the Craftsbury Outdoor Center uses the pond as a training ground for its clients. Critics say that, as a result, scullers clog the water and come into conflict with camp owners who want to use motorboats.

Another issue is the size and shape of the pond itself.

In Hosmer’s case, the state proposed a rule that would have banned sculling in favor of motorized craft during certain hours. Traditionally, while trying to establish balance, the state does show some preference for the kinds of boating that have the least impact.

DEC proposed a rule last year that said the use of racing shells and rowing sculls would be prohibited between 1 and 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. and sunrise from the last Saturday in May through the first Monday in September.

DEC held public meetings and received hundreds of comments both on the proposed rule and the situation at Hosmer Pond.

Commissioner Boedecker said on Monday that she hopes to start a conversation about the root causes of the conflict, and to come up with better ways to solve similar problems that might arise on other bodies of water.

“I wasn’t prepared to move ahead with a rule just for the sake of making a rule, just for the sake

of saying we did something,” Ms. Boedecker said. She said she will continue to explore what she sees as the underlying issues, and that will include talking to legislators.

Meanwhile, she said, the Outdoor Center is working on its schedule for next summer, and everyone concerned should continue to come up with their best ideas for peaceful coexistence.

In the fall of last year the Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC) weighed in on the matter, threatening to challenge the legality of DEC’s proposed rule.

In a letter to DEC, the environmental organization said, “DEC seems to recognize that its proposal to restrict the non-motorized use of rowing in favor of motorized use is in conflict with state law that prohibits high speed motor boating within 200 feet of a shoreline.”

One of the problems at Great Hosmer is that it’s narrow.

The letter’s author was VNRC Policy and Water Program Director John Groveman, who noted that he was executive director of the former Water Resources Board, which administered the Use of Public Water Rules before the Legislature eliminated the board in 2004.

Commissioner Boedecker says in her letter that “the root of the conflict lies in the residency and investment made by both homeowners and the Craftsbury Outdoor Center, and in the inherent space limitations of the pond. When overall user numbers are aligned with the pond’s carrying capacity, different uses can co-exist more easily within the framework of existing safety rules. When numbers exceed the carrying capacity of the pond, conflicts escalate. To address the conflict, we must have a mechanism that addresses root causes.”

The problem on Great Hosmer has been “oversimplified as an issue between motorboating and sculling,” Commissioner Boedecker says in her letter. “Fundamentally, it’s an issue of residency, investment, and the carrying capacity of a water body.”

The pond’s small size and narrow shape exacerbates the issues there, she says.

“Discussion prompted by the release of the draft rule failed to yield a viable schedule to allocate hours during the most sought after times

— weekday mornings, weekday evenings, and summer weekends.”

Over the past few months, three approaches have demonstrated themselves worthy of further exploration, Ms. Boedecker says in the letter.

One would take public waters into consideration in Act 250 proceedings. So if there was a new — or change to — land use significant enough to trigger Act 250, conditions in the permit would also regulate adjacent public water, taking into consideration how the proposed land use affects the water.

A second would revise the Use of Public Waters rules to define a threshold carrying capacity for public water bodies and set up a group permitting process that “considers the frequency, size, and type of activity that would required a recreational use permit.”

And a third approach would be to rebuild part of the Water Resources Board to provide a citizen forum to “develop consensus-based resolutions for user conflicts,” Commissioner Boedecker suggested.

“I will be reaching out to legislators, and to individuals and entities, to discuss the opportunities and challenges afforded by these approaches,” her letter says.

“As we invest in growing the outdoor recreation economy, and as we invest in cleaning up Vermont’s ponds and lakes, we need to have a consistent mechanism to weigh the economic potential and investment with the impact on current residents, individuals and organizations. We must ensure that Vermont’s waters continue to be a resource for everyone.”



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More people moving in than out, report says

by Tena Starr

Vermont tops the list of states that people are moving into, according to United Van Lines, which compiles an annual report on where Americans are moving to and from. Its report says that Vermont had the highest percentage of inbound migration in 2017 with nearly 68 percent of moves to and from the state being inbound.

Their report is in stark contrast to the general thinking that Vermont is far more likely to lose than acquire population.

The bad news is that most of those who moved in last year were older folks rather than the young people with families that Vermont seeks. However, most of those who moved in were well off.

The United Van Lines report says that, as a region, the mountain west is a go-to place with 54 percent of moves being inbound. Those states include Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Colorado, and Washington.

Southern states also saw a high number of people moving in with 52 percent of total moves being inbound. The top reasons included a company transfer or new job, retirement, and proximity to family, according to the report.

The Northeast in general showed a “moving deficit,” with a higher percentage of people moving out than moving in. In New Jersey 63 percent of those moving were outbound, in New York 61 percent were outbound, and in Connecticut 57 percent of people using United Van Lines moved out of the state.

However, Vermont was the top inbound state in the country.

The inbound states of 2017 were Vermont, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, South Dakota, Washington, South Carolina, North Carolina, Colorado, and Alabama, in that order.

The top outbound states were Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Kansas, Massachusetts, Ohio, Kentucky, Utah, and

Wisconsin, in that order.

United Van Lines says that 28.5 percent of those who moved into Vermont in 2017 said they did so for retirement reasons. Zero percent moved out for that reason.

Nearly 11 percent moved in for health reasons; zero moved out for the same.

Thirty-nine percent moved in for reasons they expressed as “family.” Twenty-five percent moved out for the same reason.

Twenty-five percent moved in for “lifestyle.” Just over 12 percent moved out for the same reason.

Twenty-eight percent moved in because of a job, but three-quarters of those who moved out, 75 percent, left because of a job.

Only about 15 percent of those who moved into the state were between the ages of 18 and 34, United Van Lines says. That’s opposed to 50 percent in that age group who moved out.

Most people moving into Vermont are aging. Nearly 41 percent of the people who moved to the state last year were 65 or older. And none of that age group moved out, according to United Van Lines.

Eleven percent of people ages 35 to 44 moved in, but 25 percent moved out.

Eighteen percent of people 45 to 54 moved in, while 12.5 percent moved out.

Nearly 15 percent of the people who moved into Vermont last year were between the ages of 55 and 64, while 12.5 percent in that age group moved out.

In other words, the older you are, the more likely to move into Vermont, while the younger you are, the more likely to move out.

Only 10 percent of those moving into Vermont last year made less than \$50,000 a year. Fifteen percent had incomes of between \$50,000 and \$74,999. Five percent made between \$75,000 and \$99,999. A whopping 45 percent of those who moved into the state had incomes of between \$100,000 and \$149,000. No one in that income

bracket moved out, at least not using United Van Lines. However, among those movers who made \$150,000 a year or more, 25 percent were inbound, but nearly 43 percent moved out of state.

More people with incomes between \$75,000 and \$100,000 moved out than in. While 20 percent of those movers were inbound, about 56 percent were outbound.

United Van Lines’ report says it’s been tracking its customers for 40 years, and “the data we collect is reflective of national migration trends.”

Some states had about the same number of people moving in as moving out. Neighboring New Hampshire was one of them.

Wood heat guidebooks offered

The Vermont State Wood Energy Team is offering two new resources for modern wood heating. *A Practical Guide to Modern Wood Heating: Successful Conversion to Wood Heating for Schools in Vermont* and *A Practical Guide to Modern Wood Heating: Successful Conversion to Wood Heating for Affordable Housing in Vermont* are comprehensive guides intended to educate administrators, building managers, and school boards about the possibilities for wood heat as a lower-cost, more predictable, stable, and local energy source.

These 70-page guides provide insight on wood fuel types, pricing, and installation considerations, and offer additional resources and case studies. Both guides are available free online and in print by request. The PDF for the school guide is available at: bit.ly/2EWYwQM. The affordable housing guide can be found at: bit.ly/2qq6eQe.

To request a print copy, contact Emma Hanson, wood energy coordinator at the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation at emma.hanson@vermont.gov, or at (802) 622-4187. — from the Agency of Natural Resources.

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In Superior Court

Heroin sale nets Swanton man up to three years in jail

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — A murder trial scheduled to start Tuesday caused officials in the Criminal Division of Orleans County Superior Court to call for help in the form of Judge Michael Kupersmith.

On Tuesday Judge Kupersmith imposed a sentence of up to three years on Zachary Flanagan, 31, of Swanton after Mr. Flanagan pled guilty to a charge of selling less than 200 milligrams of heroin.

According to an affidavit from Newport City Police Detective Aaron Lefebvre, now serving with the Vermont Drug Task Force, an informant referred to as "Orange" told police he could buy drugs from Mr. Flanagan.

On December 7, 2016, Orange spoke with Mr. Flanagan while Detective Lefebvre listened. Orange set up a time to meet and agreed to pay \$60 for four bags of heroin.

Detective Lefebvre drove Orange close to the meeting place and watched as Mr. Flanagan handed over the four bags of heroin.

After a felony charge of lewd and lascivious conduct was amended downward by State's Attorney Jennifer Barrett, Fabian A. Prive, 57, of Newport pled guilty to stalking.

Judge Kupersmith gave him a suspended three-to-six-month sentence.

According to the affidavit filed by Newport City Police Patrolman Joshua Lillis, a bar manager called police on April 24 and said Mr. Prive had groped an off-duty bartender. Three surveillance cameras recorded Mr. Prive's interaction with the woman.

The woman said Mr. Prive touched her stomach, breast, and thigh. She told him he should not do that.

In her statement, the bartender said, "The entire time I felt uncomfortable, but violated at the same time. I feel I have never given him any reason for him to think I would be interested in him in any way, shape, or form."

When questioned Mr. Prive said he had too much to drink. He denied touching the woman's thigh.

Zachary K. Godfrey, 35, of Holland was released on conditions after pleading innocent to sexual abuse of a vulnerable adult by a caretaker.

State Police Detective Trooper Clark Lombardi said he was contacted by a Northeast Kingdom Human Services employee on

January 4, 2017. She said a woman Mr. Godfrey was caregiver for told her she had intercourse with him.

Trooper Lombardi spoke with the woman who confirmed the story and said it had happened more than once.

According to the affidavit Mr. Godfrey admitted having a sexual relationship with the woman. He said she initiated it a number of years ago, and he thought he had done nothing wrong, the affidavit says.

Man charged with Barton burglaries

Jacob A. French, 30, of St. Johnsbury denied breaking into the Barton Public Library and was released on conditions after pleading innocent to two charges of unlawful mischief and a pair of felony burglary charges.

Trooper Joshua Mikkola said the librarian called police on November 19, 2017, and said someone had gotten into the library and stolen things.

Librarian Antoinette Eubanks said a basement window was smashed sometime between noon November 18 and 9 a.m. the following day. She said the burglar took items worth about \$125 and did around \$200 in damage. He couldn't get upstairs because of a locked door.

The following day Trooper Mikkola learned from Trooper Daniel Lynch of another burglary in Barton. A video of the break-in showed a man and woman walking onto a porch.

Trooper Mikkola took still images of the two and showed them to Ms. Eubanks. According to the affidavit, she hesitantly identified the woman, but did not recognize the man. The woman Ms. Eubanks identified admitted taking part in both burglaries and identified the man as Mr. French.

Trooper Lynch investigated a home burglary that also took place in Barton on November 19. He said the exterior porch door of the home was broken and people appeared to have gotten inside.

They rummaged through a filing cabinet, he said, but didn't get into the rest of the house.

Trooper Lynch got video footage of the intruders, and learned of Ms. Eubanks' identification from Trooper Mikkola.

An anonymous caller also told police the woman identified by Ms. Eubanks was responsible.

The man also identified Mr.

French as the person in the video, Trooper Lynch said.

On January 19, a jury found Danual J. Morrow, 46, of Newport guilty of concealing stolen property worth no more than \$900. The offense for which he was convicted was less serious than the felony version he was on trial for.

Newport City Police Patrolman Richard Wells' affidavit said the manager of Vista Foods called police on May 18, 2016, and said Mr. Morrow had been spotted putting shopping carts into his basement through the bulkhead door.

While he was on the phone the manager said he could see Mr. Morrow getting another of the carts, which cost more than \$200 apiece.

Patrolman Wells and Patrolman Corey Marcoux paid a visit to Mr. Morrow's home. He said he had been taking the carts and showed them the 16 he had stashed in his basement.

Judge Bent sentenced Mr. Morrow to a 19-day stint on the state work crew.

Thirty-year-old Shawn W. Turnbaugh Jr., of Orleans pled guilty to taking an antlerless deer and was fined \$500.

Warden Jenna Reed's affidavit says she got a call on November 15 from the State Police, who had been told a person shot an antlerless deer in Newport Center. The shooter was still there, Warden Reed was told.

The man who made the complaint told Warden Reed he heard a gunshot near his property and drove to where he thought it had been fired. There he saw a van with its back door open and three men standing around a deer.

Before leaving, the caller took a photo.

Warden Reed recognized Mr. Turnbaugh from the photograph and asked law enforcement officers to keep an eye out for the van. About 15 minutes later she received another call, this from a man who said he was hunting in Newport Center and heard a gunshot. He said he and his hunting buddy drove over to see what was going on and saw a blue pickup take off. He said the two men saw a deer lying in the woods. As they tried to drag it to the road, a vehicle pulled over and

its driver accused them of shooting it.

Warden Reed found the deer in the spot described by the first caller. She spoke with Probation and Parole Officer Arthur Gibney who said Mr. Turnbaugh was wearing a GPS tracking device that showed he was where the deer was found at the time it was shot.

Warden Reed talked again with the second caller who admitted his story was a lie. He said he shot the deer and Mr. Turnbaugh and a youth cooked up an alibi after they were caught by the first caller.

She said Mr. Turnbaugh, by helping to drag the illegal deer, was guilty of aiding in taking an antlerless deer.

Justin C. Holton, 27, of Bennington was sentenced to spend 34 days on a state work crew, but with credit for time already served will not have to fulfill that obligation.

He pled guilty to simple assault for an incident that took place at Northern State Correctional Facility in 2015.

State Police Detective Sergeant Darren Annis' affidavit says he was called to the prison on December 8, 2015, and was told Mr. Holton assaulted a fellow inmate on December 1.

Robert A. Sanville, 42, of Lowell pled no contest to driving with a suspended license (DLS-2). Judge Kupersmith sentenced him to a two-day term on the work crew.

Warden Reed said she was on the Balance Rock Road in Westfield on November 26, 2017, when she saw Mr. Sanville drive his pickup into a pull-off and get stuck in the snow.

While investigating a potential firearms violation, Warden Reed asked about his license and found it had been suspended.

Kimberly A. Lindner, 47, of North Troy pled guilty to DLS and had another three days added to the sentence she is already serving.

Ms. Lindner was on Route 105 in Newport on December 22. Her car's inspection sticker had expired, a fact that did not escape the eye of Orleans County Deputy Sheriff Jonathan MacFarlane.

contact Joseph Gresser at joseph@bartonchronicle.com

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In Superior Court

Richford man acquitted of several charges

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — On December 13 a jury in the Criminal Division of Orleans Superior Court acquitted Justin L. Vantour of first degree aggravated domestic assault with a weapon, domestic assault, and unlawful mischief.

The jury found Mr. Vantour, 28, of Richford guilty of a second charge of domestic assault.

On January 18, Judge Robert Bent gave Mr. Vantour a suspended three-to-six-month sentence.

In his affidavit, State Police Trooper Daniel Lynch said a woman went to the State Police barracks in Derby on September 11 and said Mr. Vantour threw a block of wood at her and hit her in the face.

She said he also displayed a BB-gun and said she was in good aim.

Careless or negligent driving

Caleb B. Kelley, 21, of Newport pled guilty by waiver to careless or negligent driving and was fined \$400. Mr. Kelley's plea came after the charge was amended from one of driving under the influence (DUI).

State Police Sergeant David Roos said he was told of a rollover crash on the Dane Hill Road in Charleston on July 1.

Sergeant Roos arrived to find firefighters and emergency medical crews had preceded him and were searching for ejected passengers.

There were long skid and scuff marks on the gravel road and it appeared the truck had rolled over several times, suggesting it had been going very fast before the crash.

Sergeant Roos went to a nearby house where he found Mr. Kelley's father. The elder Mr. Kelley went into the house and persuaded his son to speak with Sergeant Roos. Mr. Kelley appeared confused and said he recalled driving to a friend's house but not the accident.

Mr. Kelley said he wasn't sure how long he had been at the house where he was found, but thought it was around an hour.

Jake W. Donmoyer, 27, of Essex Junction was fined \$500 after he pled guilty by waiver to DUI.

Trooper Calvin Burns' affidavit says he was sent on July 3 to investigate a crash on Route 58 in Brownington. Mr. Donmoyer said a pickup swerved into his lane and he hit the guardrail as he tried to avoid a collision.

Trooper Burns said he smelled alcohol coming from Mr. Donmoyer.

Judge Robert Bent fined Terry K. Stone \$500 and referred him to the reparative board after the 59-year-old Barton resident pled guilty to giving false information to a law enforcement officer.

Mr. Stone hit a telephone pole on the Daniels Pond Road in Glover on June 18, 2016, according to the affidavit from State Police Sergeant Andrew Jensen.

When Sergeant Jensen got there he found Mr. Stone and another man near a badly damaged Ford Mustang.

Both men agreed Mr. Stone was going a bit too fast and lost control. Mr. Stone admitted drinking three beers before taking the wheel.

On June 23 Sergeant Jensen spoke with a man who said the crash happened in front of his house. He heard a speeding car start to skid and then the crash.

The homeowner ran to see if anyone had been hurt. Mr. Stone and his passenger asked the homeowner to call a wrecker, but not the State Police.

They then walked into the nearby woods with what the homeowner thought were bottles of some kind. The two men returned empty handed. The homeowner followed their path the next day and found three full bottles of Molson and a paper six-pack holder.

When Sergeant Jensen visited the place indicated by the homeowner the bottles were gone, but the paper container was still there.

Misdemeanor arraignments

Among those pleading innocent to misdemeanors were:

Chris J. Bastarache, 35, of North Troy to DUI on December 28 in Derby;

Eric Skoritowski, 25, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to DUI on January 2 in Troy; and

Richard Tortorino, 21, of Burlington to three charges of violating an abuse prevention order on November 29, December 20, and December 22.

contact Joseph Gresser at joseph@bartonchronicle.com

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Measurement (abbr.)	35. Caucasian language
4. Returned material authorization (abbr.)	37. One thousand (Span.)
7. Sorting	39. Musical style drum and bass
12. Attribute	41. Evergreen trees native to warm climates
15. Poked holes in	42. Begin __: start fresh
16. Angers	44. Marshy outlets
18. Doc	47. A chicken lays one
19. MLB journeyman pitcher Dillon	48. Yemen's largest city
20. Not don't	49. Conversion rate
21. Snubs someone	50. Single Lens Reflex
24. Where kids bathe	52. Atlanta rapper
27. One might be in distress	53. Reduce the importance of
30. Chair	56. Faces of buildings
31. Music industry honors (abbr.)	61. Something achieved
33. Dash	63. Distribute again
34. Owed	64. Tooth caregiver
	65. 007's creator

CLUES DOWN

1. Skater Lipinski	29. Dardic ethnic group
2. Data	32. Supports the rudder
3. Single step	36. An ugly evil-looking old woman
4. Destroyed financially	38. Of a fasting time
5. Fail to interpret correctly	40. Filled with passengers
6. Fava d'__: tree found in Brazil	43. Below the ribs and above the hips
7. Vehicle	44. Binary-coded decimal
8. Limited	45. 51 is a famous one
9. Old English	46. Goes into a funk
10. Aussie golfer Norman	51. Chief O'Hara actor
11. Job	54. Videocassette recorder
12. Loose-fitting undergarments	55. Scored perfectly
13. Protected by balancing	56. Type of tree
14. Give up	57. __ Spumante (Italian wine)
17. Fifth note of a major scale	58. Popular commercial "pet"
22. Extravagantly bright	59. Supreme god of Ancient Egyptians
23. Takes dictation	60. Room in a home
24. 19th letter of Greek alphabet	62. __ and behold
25. Rounded knob (biology)	
26. French philosopher Pierre	
28. Mothers	

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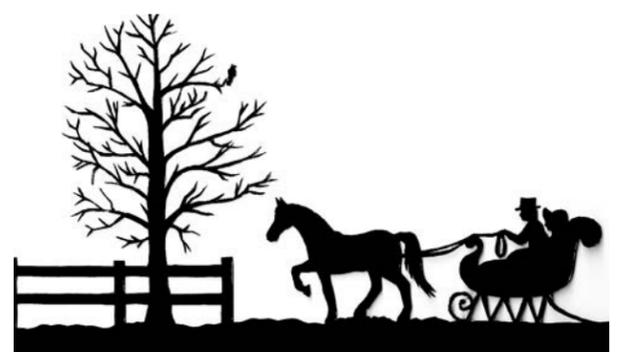
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Grant will support over 600 energy audits

(Continued from page one.)

to upgrade houses for health and safety reasons, she said.

Neighborworks of Western Vermont, a housing organization based in West Rutland, started the HEAT Squad in 2010 using grant money from the U.S. Department of Energy.

Neighborworks of Western Vermont Director Ludy Biddle saw that many homes in her area needed insulation or better heating systems in order to keep families warm during the winter. It turned out improved energy efficiency immediately saved money for homeowners.

The one-stop heating efficiency program started by Ms. Biddle and Ms. Paskevich spread to cover five counties, Rutland, Addison, Bennington, Windsor, and Windham, performing 5,000 energy audits and seeing 2,000 efficiency projects through to completion.

In September the Northern Borders Regional Commission gave Neighborworks of Western Vermont a \$250,000 grant to allow it to expand the HEAT Squad program to the Kingdom.

Ms. Paskevich said the money, spread out over three years, will allow the squad to conduct at least 660 audits in Orleans, Essex, and Caledonia counties, and to see at least 233 completed projects.

A person starts the process by calling the HEAT Squad and scheduling a home energy audit. Ms. Paskevich said her organization charges an average of \$150 for an audit conducted by a HEAT Squad employee.

Auditors will share the results of their surveys as soon as they're finished, Ms. Paskevich said.

"We're the only ones who do that," she added.

From there, the homeowner can use the HEAT Squad as an "objective guide to get connected with a certified local contractor."

"That's the beauty of the program," Ms. Paskevich said. "We're not selling anything."

After the contractor is finished with the upgrades, whether it means installing a more efficient heating system or adding insulation, the HEAT Squad inspects the work to certify that it was performed correctly.

The HEAT Squad will even fill out the forms needed to get tax rebates for efficiency projects, Ms. Paskevich said.

She said her organization can also write loans to finance the work.

"There is a zero default rate on energy loans

because people are saving money," she said.

Ms. Paskevich said homeowners will have to wait a few months to sign up for the program, but she urged contractors interested in working with the HEAT Squad to contact her through the organization's website — heatsquad.org.

She said her organization is also seeking a full-time employee to work with Rural Edge and conduct energy audits around the Kingdom.

The HEAT Squad is unusual because it targets middle as well as lower income people, Ms. Paskevich said.

While much of the work done so far has been on single-family dwellings, she said, the HEAT Squad is happy to work with the owners of apartments, duplexes, and condominiums.

If employers want to invite the HEAT Squad to explain its services, the organization will be happy to oblige them, Ms. Paskevich said.

She said the vast majority of people taking

"That's the beauty of the program. We're not selling anything."

advantage of the squad's offerings learn about the program by word of mouth.

Ms. Paskevich said the people she works with generally hope to save money and have a warmer home. However, whether clients care or not, the program can have a major environmental impact by reducing the amount of fuel needed for heating and cooling.

She said the squad usually focuses on the top and the bottom of the house. The majority of lost heat goes through the roof, due to insufficient insulation.

Basements are a concern, because they often lack insulation and may be a source of unwanted moisture.

"I've seen homes with rivers running through the cellar," Ms. Paskevich said. She admitted exaggerating, but said her statement did not stretch the truth far.

Getting water out of the house can save energy by eliminating the need to run dehumidifiers that use a lot of electricity, she

said.

Contrary to widespread opinion, windows are a lesser concern when making a house tighter, she said.

"Manufacturers have done a good job persuading people that new windows will make a big difference," Ms. Paskevich said, but that is not true.

It takes 30 years to save enough energy to pay for new windows or doors, she said. Additional insulation and air seals will pay for themselves in five years.

Ms. Paskevich said most of the problems from windows come from the way they are installed. Caulking around window frames goes a long way toward solving such problems at a cost much lower than replacing the windows, she said.

The HEAT Squad will sometimes recommend changes to a heating system to improve efficiency, Ms. Paskevich said.

Many homes rely on electric space heaters, which are highly inefficient and expensive to run, she said.

A recent addition to the HEAT Squad toolbox is heat pumps, which run at 250 percent efficiency, as they pull heat from even cold outdoor air and release it indoors.

Ms. Paskevich said the pumps can be run backwards in the summer to cool homes in hot weather. Insulation is also a dual purpose technology. She said her own home has been much more comfortable in the hot months since she added insulation.

In addition to keeping homes warm and saving energy, the HEAT Squad also hopes to provide another important benefit to the Kingdom — jobs.

Ms. Paskevich said she expects contractors will need to hire new workers to deal with the business brought to them through the HEAT Squad. She said building supply companies should also see an uptick in their business and a need to hire more employees.

At present, Ms. Paskevich is still building relationships with municipalities, businesses, and nonprofits in the Northeast Kingdom. When those partnerships are in place and the HEAT Squad has put together a list of contractors, it will open for business.

Ms. Paskevich said she hopes homeowners can apply online for a visit from the squad beginning in April.

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NEKO was born of a collaborative effort

(Continued from page one.)

after several years in the making, NEKO is now set to step up to the plate.

In 2015, the Center for an Agricultural Economy started a listening project to find out what people in the Hardwick area wanted to see changed in their lives.

"The CAE wanted to do ambitious community building," Director Sarah Waring said at Saturday's meeting.

But instead of going it alone, the CAE decided

to involve other area organizations, focusing on churches.

"The goal was to build a member-led interfaith community with the power to improve the quality of life of the people and places of the Northeast Kingdom," Ms. Waring said.

So far, NEKO has drawn in six area churches, the CAE, the local Grange, and a group of private dues-paying individuals called the Friends of NEKO.

Over the past year, each group has held at least one house meeting. The goal was to listen to people from all over the area, and build a list of the problems they're facing.

"The feeling of helplessness can be overwhelming," said Ed Garrett, speaking for Caledonia Grange #9. "There are just so many issues."

Although his group held only one formal listening session, members also brought back results from a lot of intentional one-on-one conversations.

Saturday's "issues assembly" was held to decide which two of many possible problems the fledgling organization should address first.

The group's guiding principles — inclusion and participation, dignity and connection, and care for the environment — were displayed at the front of the room.

It's important not to take on too much at one

time, said Ken Galdston of the Intervalley Project, an umbrella group that helps local communities get their own organizing efforts started.

The 90 specific problems that came up at the house meeting can be sorted into nine major areas of concern: children, youth and families; public schools and education; senior citizens and aging with dignity; transportation; health care; substance misuse and the opioid crisis; mental health care; employment and a livable wage; and creating gathering spaces and other opportunities for community connection.

There were other stories that were compelling and important that affected fewer people, Ms. Braithwaite said.

With nine possible focus areas, the member groups met separately to decide which seemed most important.

"It will feel good to focus on something," Mr. Garrett said before the decision process. "Even if it's not our favorite issue."

After two rounds of discussion and voting, the list was winnowed down.

"Transportation came up in many meetings," said Reeve Basom.

During conversations at the Hardwick Area Food Pantry, she had spoken to a homeless man who said that he can get to doctors' appointments, but his biggest challenge is getting groceries home.

She spoke to an elderly woman who is going to have to move once she stops driving.

(Continued on page nineteen.)

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Group looks to pick specific projects

(Continued from page eighteen.)

"Transportation is connected to everything else," Ms. Basom said.

The next step, Mr. Galdston said, is to decide on specific projects or actions within those areas.

"The issues you pick need to be specific, immediate, organizable, and winnable," he told the group.

Using transportation as an example, Mr. Galdston said it's unlikely that a small group like NEKO is going to change state transportation policy or get a bus line to serve every Northeast Kingdom town.

But one group Mr. Galdston works with built a network of volunteers to drive people to medical appointments, he said. And the group got grants to help with the expenses.

Other participants brought up the possibility of fixing up donated cars to give people low-cost transportation to work, or subsidizing repairs to keep old cars on the road.

The next step is to brainstorm possibilities and do some research, Mr. Galdston said.

"Look on the Internet for examples of programs that have worked for other small groups," he said.

During the last part of the meeting, participants teamed up to work on one of the two issue areas, or joined the committee that will be setting up a formal governance structure for the group.

contact Elizabeth Trail at elizabeth@bartonchronicle.com



Over snacks and coffee, a group representing the United Church of Newport decides which issues they'd like to focus on in the coming year at Saturday's Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) issues summit. From left to right are Kendall Lambert, Pastor James Merriam, Hillary Potter, and Karen Chitambar. Photo by Elizabeth Trail

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Dr. Donald (Don) Sawyer is from Otego, NY. He began his college studies as a pre-law student at Grove City College in Grove, City, PA, with a major in biology. In the summer of junior year, he took Organic Chemistry at the University of Arizona and felt a call to medicine.
 Dr. Sawyer went to medical school at Oral Roberts University School of Medicine in Tulsa, OK, did his internship at Hamot Medical Center in Erie, PA, followed by a general surgery residency at Marshfield Clinic/St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield, WI.
 In 1988 Dr. Sawyer joined the Medical Corps, U.S. Army Reserve, and now serves as a Colonel. He did multiple tours in Afghanistan and then Kuwait. His most recent civilian position was as an active Medical Staff member of Surgery at Northern Maine Medical Center in Fort Kent.
 Dr. Sawyer is married to Robbin and they have three grown children. He enjoys walking and snowshoeing with his wife and dog, mountain biking, cross country skiing, snowboarding, golf and fly fishing. He also has a passion for Motorsports and regularly participates in the Targa Newfoundland car rally.
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Intent was key part of defense

(Continued from page one.)

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The charge, amended by Ms. Barrett as part of the plea bargain, was that Mr. Ray shot with intent to kill.

But when Judge Bent asked him if that was what he was admitting to, Mr. Ray replied that he had shot Mr. Vreeland, but didn't intend to kill him.

"I can't accept the plea agreement," Judge Bent ruled. At that, Mr. Ray and the four lawyers involved in the case left the courtroom.

When they returned about 15 minutes later, Ms. Barrett had amended the charge again. Now it read that Mr. Ray had shot Mr. Vreeland "intending to cause great bodily harm."

Mr. Ray acknowledged that was the case, and Judge Bent accepted the guilty plea. Sentencing will come later, after the state prepares a presentence report on Mr. Ray. The sentencing hearing is expected to last three days.

That same legal element — intent — seemed to be a key part of the defense that St. Johnsbury attorney David Sleigh was preparing to make at trial. During Monday's selection process, he questioned prospective jurors closely on the

matter. Could they, he asked, decide that Mr. Ray was innocent if the intent to kill Mr. Vreeland was a necessary element of the crime, and Mr. Ray was too drunk to form any such intent?

According to police affidavits in the case, Mr. Ray's blood alcohol level when he fired the shot was three times the legal limit for drivers.

To prove the original first-degree murder charge, Ms. Barrett would have had to convince the jury that, in addition to all the elements that establish second-degree murder, the killing was premeditated.

Mr. Ray and Mr. Vreeland, both residents of Brownington, were on very bad terms. After the shooting Mr. Ray told police that Mr. Vreeland and his ex-wife, Brenda, "took everything he had, to include his land, his house, his business, and his kids."

Police were told that Mr. Ray dropped a letter in Mr. Vreeland's mailbox on May 25, 2015, then drove across the Vreeland lawn on his way home.

Mr. Vreeland hopped in his own pickup and gave chase, police said, followed by Mr. Ray's teenage son, who lived with his mother and stepfather.

In court Tuesday, Ms. Barrett said that Mr. Ray was still in his vehicle when Mr. Vreeland drove up, got out of his truck and walked over. Mr. Ray, she said, fired one shot through his open front-seat window.

State Police Detective Sergeant David Zorn said, in his 2015 affidavit, that Mr. Ray's son ran toward him and tried to get the gun away from him. Then, he told the detective, the son turned to Mr. Vreeland, who was "choking and gurgling."

Had the trial proceeded Tuesday, Mr. Ray's son was scheduled to be the state's first witness.

Mr. Sleigh assured potential jurors on Monday that the defense would not dispute the fact that Mr. Ray had shot Mr. Vreeland, and killed him.

A prominent defense attorney, Mr. Sleigh was not always on good terms with his client. In March 2016, almost a year after the shooting, Mr. Ray asked the court for permission to fire Mr. Sleigh and find another lawyer. The reasons for the request were not discussed in open court. But after listening to Judge Bent explain the role of a criminal defense lawyer, and a brief private conference with Mr. Sleigh, Mr. Ray withdrew the request.

Jury drawn, but trial canceled after plea

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — In the course of selecting a jury of nine women and six men to decide a first degree murder charge against Jeffrey M. Ray, 53, of Brownington Monday, prosecution and defense lawyers gave a window into the strategies they had planned to use during the trial.

The jury was chosen Monday and ready to go, but the trial, scheduled to start at 8:30 Tuesday morning, did not occur. Instead, Mr. Ray pled guilty to a charge of second degree murder.

At Monday's jury drawing, David Sleigh, one of Mr. Ray's defense team, told potential jurors his client shot and killed Rick Vreeland, his ex-wife's husband, in Brownington on May 25, 2015.

Mr. Sleigh said Kyle Hatt, who was to lead the defense team, would claim Mr. Ray was so intoxicated at the time of the shooting he was unable to form the intention to kill at the heart of a first degree murder charge.

He implied that the defense hoped the jury

would find Mr. Ray guilty of a lesser offense.

Orleans County State's Attorney Jennifer Barrett asked questions intended to elicit potential jurors' comfort with drinking and firearms, as well as connections to likely witnesses.

In a little more than four hours Mr. Sleigh and Ms. Barrett were able to winnow a crowd of 43 potential jurors down to a 12-person jury and three alternates.

Presiding Judge Robert Bent said he would choose, by drawing numbers, which 12 would take part in final deliberations.

The day began as a member of the court staff gave general information, such as what forms to fill out to get paid for their services, to the jury pool.

Court Officer Pat Sloan seated two dozen of those present in numbered seats inside and in front of the jury box. They would be the group to be questioned by lawyers.

The defense, prosecution, and judge had

charts listing each juror by name and seat number. As potential jurors were excused and new ones brought in to take their seats, lawyers worked to keep their charts up to date.

As they questioned jurors, the lawyers frequently referred to their charts. While there were occasional slip-ups with names, the potential jurors seemed to take them in good humor.

Judge Bent thanked the potential jurors for giving up their time to perform an important civic function.

He explained the opposing lawyers would question each of them "to satisfy themselves they have a panel of people prepared to be unbiased."

Judge Bent then told the jury pool what was expected of them.

"Jurors decide facts," he said. "I tell you what the law is."

He gave the example of a person accused of

(Continued on page twenty-one.)

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Judge stressed importance of jurors' work

(Continued from page twenty.)

running a red light. The jury, Judge Bent said, would hear evidence and decide if the light was red or green. The judge tells the jury that the defendant must be acquitted if the light was green and convicted if it was red.

Turning to the case at hand, Judge Bent gave the jury pool a hint of what they would be asked to determine.

"A homicide charge requires a complex set of instructions on what the law is," he said. "In hindsight it is important to see what was on his mind."

Judge Bent again stressed the importance of the work jurors do.

"This is one of few opportunities to participate in government," he said.

Being on a jury gives citizens a practical lesson on constitutional principles as they are applied to people accused of crimes.

One of those, Judge Bent said, is, "it is better to let a guilty person go free than an innocent person be convicted."

He reminded the jury pool of the state's obligation to prove all the elements of a crime beyond a reasonable doubt, but not beyond all doubt.

"The defendant is not required to prove himself innocent," he said. "The defendant is just here because he is here. That is not evidence of his guilt, it just means he is here to face a charge."

Judge Bent reminded potential jurors that Mr. Ray has a constitutional right to remain silent.

"He has the legal right to do that, that is all you need to know," the judge said.

Judge Bent acknowledged that sitting on a jury requires some mental gymnastics and is unlike one's normal mode of thinking.

"When you go downstairs and find two kids squabbling, you say, what's up?" he said. "The innocent one will say something, the guilty one tends to be quiet. That's not how it works here. It's up to the state to prove the essential elements of a crime."

Jurors are not permitted to speak with anyone about the trial or read or listen to news accounts, Judge Bent said. Family members are included in that prohibition, he added.

"You go home and your significant other says, Honey, what did you do today?" he said. "It's a surprising but known fact that spouses have



Jeffrey Ray in court Monday.

Photo by Joseph Gresser

opinions. It's also a well known fact they are willing to share their opinions."

Judge Bent said jury members cannot allow that to happen.

He warned against those who might freelance and seek outside information. A juror who looked up the answer to a question on Google caused a verdict to be thrown out and caused a new trial, Judge Bent said.

He warned jurors not to be offended if a lawyer encountering them unexpectedly in the courtroom appears flustered and looks the other way. Lawyers don't want to have even the appearance of trying to influence the jury outside of the courtroom.

When he was finished with his introductory remarks, Mr. Ray came into the courtroom along with Mr. Hatt and Mr. Sleigh. Ms. Barrett came in with Deputy State's Attorney Todd Shove. Judge Bent then started the winnowing process by asking those selected to sit in the jury area if their schedules would permit them to attend the trial. He said it was likely to last for at least a week, and the court schedule would allow for it to run from January 23 through February 1.

Some could not. One woman said she had no one to watch her children during that period; another said he already bought tickets for a scheduled vacation.

(Continued on page twenty-two.)

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None claimed to have firm opinion on guilt

(Continued from page twenty-one.)

The judge considered people's excuses and asked the lawyers if they had a problem with relieving any of them from serving on the jury.

Neither had any objection to any of the dismissals.

A few people had read or heard about the shooting, but none claimed they had a firm opinion on Mr. Ray's guilt or innocence.

Judge Bent read the information, that is the formal charge of first-degree murder Mr. Ray was facing.

"I'll tell you the import of that charge," Judge Bent said. "Almost nothing."

"Just because Mr. Ray is charged means nothing except he has been invited to be here at this event. Mr. Ray is entitled to what we call a presumption of innocence. He is presumed to be innocent."

Mr. Sleigh reminded potential jurors of the judge's statement later, as he questioned them, calling it "the one piece of evidence you have heard so far."

Ms. Barrett, though, was the first to step to the lectern to query the 24 potential members of the jury.

"I appreciate you being here," she told them. "This is important, not only to the state of Vermont, but to the defendant as well."

"There are no wrong answers to these questions," Ms. Barrett said. "We just need you to be truthful."

Ms. Barrett said she expected the jury to hold her to the obligation of proving the state's case beyond a reasonable doubt.

She then reminded them they would have to make their decision based only on what they heard in the courtroom.

Judge Bent agreed and said, pointing to the witness box, "That box is your only source of information."

Ms. Barrett ran through a series of questions, beginning by asking if people had heard about the case. Those who said they had were asked if they

had made up their mind.

Some potential jurors were less firm in denying bias than others, and Mr. Sleigh and Mr. Hatt could be seen jotting notes as they spoke.

Ms. Barrett asked if people had feelings, positive or negative about police, whether they liked or disliked guns, whether they drink or not, and if they have moral objections to the consumption of alcohol.

She asked if anyone knew a functional alcoholic, someone who holds down a job and gets by even though he drinks to excess.

"Just because Mr. Ray is charged means nothing except he has been invited to be here at this event. Mr. Ray is entitled to what we call a presumption of innocence."

"Is there anyone who thinks drunk people can't make decisions?" Ms. Barrett asked, hinting at an essential point in the defense strategy.

She then asked if any potential juror had an experience with a violent drunk.

"The judge will tell you it's okay to use your common sense and experience to weigh the facts," she said. "That's different from prejudice."

When she asked, "Is there anyone who thinks alcohol is an excuse to be violent?" Mr. Sleigh jumped to his feet to object.

After a conference out of earshot from the jury pool, Ms. Barrett returned to the lectern and rephrased her question.

"Do you think alcohol is a cause of violence?" she asked.

Ms. Barrett then asked if any juror thought he or she could not hold out in an opinion on the case if the rest of the jurors disagreed.

Ms. Barrett finished her questioning by

asking if people were happy to be there.

Two men said they would prefer to be skiing, but all eventually said they were happy.

When Mr. Sleigh's turn came he broke the ice by saying, "I've never seen jurors so happy to be here and I've been practicing law for 34 years."

He repeated a couple of Ms. Barrett's questions to assure himself that people thought they could be fair and impartial.

Mr. Sleigh then asked if any potential jurors worked performing chemical analysis or blood tests, as substance abuse counselors, or in the field of psychology or psychiatry.

He asked if anyone disagrees that alcohol alters perceptions, alters emotions, or adversely impacts judgment.

Mr. Sleigh also asked if anyone had a family member who was the victim of an act of violence and if that act was connected with alcohol.

He reminded potential jurors of the judge's words on the presumption of innocence and asked if anyone thought his client was "probably guilty."

When one man said he thought he was, Mr. Sleigh asked if he understood that was contrary to the idea of presumed innocence.

The potential juror said he did not agree.

"That's remarkable," Mr. Sleigh said. "You understand my concern, though."

He then reminded jurors of the state's obligation to prove each element of a charge. Even if the state can prove almost definitively four elements of a charge, if they cannot prove the fifth and final element, the jury cannot render a defendant guilty, Mr. Sleigh said.

He told the jury pool his client would claim a defense of diminished capacity, claiming he was too intoxicated to form the state of mind required for a first-degree murder conviction.

First degree murder requires a finding of premeditation, Mr. Sleigh said. If jurors found the evidence did not support intent, would they be able to render a verdict of innocent? he asked.

After the first round of questioning, the lawyers and Mr. Ray retired to Judge Bent's chambers to decide which potential jurors to excuse from serving.

They returned and sent seven people home. Mr. Sloan assigned another seven members of the pool their seats and the process resumed.

It wasn't until midafternoon that the two sides were able to agree on a group of people they believed would decide the case in a fair and impartial manner.

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The Vermont Department of Labor
100 Main St., Suite 210
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Health officials offer flu advice

Flu is widespread across the state, and health officials want to make sure Vermonters know what steps to take to prevent becoming ill, and when to seek treatment.

Health Commissioner Dr. Mark Levine, said that flu is on the rise in Vermont, and because the vaccine is less effective against the predominant strain of virus that's circulating, it's important that people know what to do if they get sick.

"The H3N2 flu strain is what we are mainly seeing in Vermont and around the country," said Dr. Levine. "This version of the flu can result in more severe illness, with more severe consequences for some people, though even regular flu can be pretty unpleasant."

It is not too late to get a flu shot, and this is especially important for people at high risk of complications from the flu. This group includes: pregnant women, young children, adults 50 years and older, and people with chronic health conditions like asthma and diabetes.

"Some protection is better than zero protection," said Dr. Levine. "While the vaccine is less effective against H3N2, it works well against other flu strains that are circulating. Getting vaccinated will also help those who have more trouble handling the flu if they were to get it, especially babies too young to be vaccinated and those who have weakened immune systems."

Flu can hit older adults particularly hard. Vermonters age 65 and older are encouraged to contact their health care provider to discuss getting vaccines that are designed to give older people a stronger immune response. Dr. Levine recommends that older Vermonters contact their doctor as soon as they suspect they may have the flu.

"If you start having flu symptoms, talk to your doctor about antiviral treatment right away," he said. "Antiviral drugs are most effective within the first 48 hours of the onset of illness."

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue.

The Health Department recommends that Vermonters take steps to prevent flu and to know what to do if they become ill:

— Get vaccinated. Everyone over the age of six months should get a flu shot.

— Keep germs from spreading: Wash hands, cover coughs and sneezes, stay home if feeling sick.

— Those at high risk of complications from flu should call their doctor as soon as they become ill.

To find more information about flu prevention and treatment, visit: healthvermont.gov/flu. — from the Vermont Department of Health.

The Village of North Troy is looking for a FULL-TIME UTILITY OPERATOR effective June 30, 2018.

Training will begin in May. High school or GED with strong background in math required. Operator will be in training and required to travel to classes and take exams. Some computer skills. Wage is commensurate with experience.

Applications are available at the Village of North Troy, 160 Railroad St., North Troy, VT, Monday–Tuesday and Thursday–Friday between the hours of 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-2:30 p.m. or call (802) 988-4700.

Deadline for applications is February 28, 2018.



Come and Join Our Team!!

Diet Aide & Cook Positions Available POSITIONS AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY!

A progressive and well-established Food and Nutrition team is looking for Diet Aides to join our system!

North Country Hospital's Food and Nutrition department has immediate openings for a Per Diem Cook and Full-time & Per Diem Diet Aides. Under the direct supervision of the Food Service Supervisor, the Diet Aide performs the function of cash register operations, washes pots and pans, performs a variety of food service, situation, and other tasks related to the preparation service and delivery of meals to all patient age groups, including infants, children, adolescents, adults, and geriatric populations.

Job Requirements- High school graduate. Must be able to do simple arithmetic and follow instructions. Up to three months of on-the-job training is usually sufficient to learn normal daily routine for two position assignments. An additional six to twelve months of on the job and/or related experience are usually required to gain proficiency in departmental routines and procedures.

If you are qualified and want to know more about these exciting opportunities, apply online at: www.northcountryhospital.org.

For additional information, contact:
Tina Royer, Recruitment Coordinator
Human Resources
North Country Hospital
189 Prouty Drive
Newport, Vermont 05855
(802) 334-3210, ext. 407
Fax: (802) 334-3510
E-mail: troyer@nchsi.org
Website: www.northcountryhospital.org

Northern State Correctional Facility

Correctional Officer I

Correctional Officer I positions are available in northern Vermont. Our facility is located in Newport, Vermont. This is a permanent classified (full benefit package) state employee position. Benefits include generous health care package, free dental, pension, and union membership in the Vermont State Employees Association (VSEA), vacation, personal, sick, and compensatory time off. Starting pay is \$17.59 that increases to \$18.35 within six months. We offer 8 weeks paid on-the-job training. Minimum qualifications include a high school degree or equivalent, and at least 2 years of full-time work experience. Duties involve the supervision, custody, and training of inmates confined in a correctional facility. Extensive background checks are required. If you have questions, please contact Karen at: 802-334-8906, or: Karen.Marchant@vermont.gov.

You must apply online to be considered:
www.careers.vermont.gov. Reference Job ID#622532.
Application deadline: February 18, 2018.

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Rhonda Smith, at: 802-754-8575
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PARAEDUCATOR

Newport City Elementary School is looking for a paraeducator, school session, 6.5 hours a day. Previous experience preferred. Candidate must meet the district's requirements of 48 college credits or paraeducator certificate and portfolio; or successfully passing the Para Pro test.

Specific Position Requirements/Qualifications: Strong communication and organizational skills; ability to work effectively within a team environment and a willingness to participate in training opportunities. Having a strong physical stamina, positive energetic attitude, and a willingness and experience to work with students is a must.

Salary & Benefits: Salary will be based on experience and benefits as per the support staff policy.

Submit letter of interest, resumé listing 3 references (or 3 current letters of reference), or complete an NCSU application, copy of Para Pro test or official college transcripts, and submit to:

Theresa Perrault, Administrative Assistant
Newport City Elementary School
166 Sias Ave.
Newport, VT 05855
or email to: theresa.perrault@ncsuvt.org

Applications are available at the Newport City Elementary School office or the North Country Supervisory Union office.

Deadline: The application screening process will begin immediately and continue until position is filled.

Criminal Record Background and Child Abuse/Neglect Registry Checks are required.

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Must have current master's license and maintain license to meet governmental regulations. Ability to work from ladders, scaffolding, or roofs, to install, maintain, or repair electrical wiring or equipment. Heavy lifting and awkward body positions for short periods of time.

This is a full-time position with a benefits package.

Interested applicants can apply online at:
<http://www.jobs.net/j/jqAPDCTQ?idpartenaire=10342&jobdetails=true>

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The Vermont Department of Labor
100 Main St., Suite 210
Newport, VT 05855

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118 Main Street, Suite 2A
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WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

The legal voters of the North Country Union High School District, consisting of the Town School Districts of Brighton, Charleston, Derby, Holland, Jay, Lowell, Morgan, Newport Center, Troy, Westfield, and City of Newport, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the North Country Career Center Assembly Room (Room 380), in Newport, Vermont, on Monday, February 26, 2018, at 6:30 o'clock in the evening, to act upon the following business, to wit:

ARTICLE I: To elect, by ballot, the following officers for the district: a moderator, a clerk, and a treasurer, each to serve for one year.

ARTICLE II: To hear and act upon the reports of the district officers.

ARTICLE III: To decide what salaries shall be paid to officers and directors of the district.

ARTICLE IV: North Country Union High School and North Country Career Center: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend \$15,848,200, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$14,286 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 0.02% lower than spending for the current year.

ARTICLE V: North Country Union Junior High School: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend \$4,360,600, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$15,824 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 5.51% higher than spending for the current year.

ARTICLE VI: Shall the North Country Union High School District authorize the Board of School Directors to place \$350,000 of undesignated FY2017 fund balance from the general fund operations in the Capital Improvement Reserve fund?

ARTICLE VII: Subject to approval by the State Board of Education, shall the boundaries of North Country Union Junior High School District be changed to include Westfield Town School District?

Voting on the aforementioned Articles IV and VII will be by Australian ballot at each regular polling place in each member town and city of the North Country Union High School District on **Tuesday, March 6, 2018**. Voting on the aforementioned Articles V and VII will be by Australian ballot at each regular polling place in the towns of Derby, Holland, Jay, Morgan, and City of Newport on **Tuesday, March 6, 2018**. The polls shall be opened and closed according to law, and as set by the Board of Civil Authority of each town or city within the union District, and said respective Boards of Civil Authority shall be responsible for determining the eligibility of persons to vote and the supervision of the election, and the presiding officer shall direct the manner in which the vote and ballots on the appropriation questions are counted in each respective town and city. The municipal clerks of the member towns and city shall certify the tallies to the Board of School Directors and shall transmit the certified tallies to the North Country Union High School District Clerk.

DISCUSSION AND DEBATE ON THE APPROPRIATIONS SHALL BE CONDUCTED AT THE ASSEMBLED NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2018, AT 6:30 P.M.**, AT THE NORTH COUNTRY CAREER CENTER ASSEMBLY ROOM (ROOM 380) IN NEWPORT, VERMONT. THE ASSEMBLED MEETING SHALL ALSO CONSTITUTE THE PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING REQUIRED BY 17 V.S.A. §2680(G).

ARTICLE VIII: To see when, by date and time, the North Country Union High School District shall hold its Annual District Meeting in 2019, and the time it shall hold special district meetings under the provisions of 16 VSA 706j (a) (5), 706p, 17 VSA 2643, and 17 VSA 2655, including any special meetings held subsequent to the Annual District Meeting in 2018.

ARTICLE IX: To do any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

ARTICLE X: To adjourn.

Dated at Newport, Vermont, this 16th day of January, 2018.

Jackie Young
 Peter Moskovites
 Le-Ann Tetreault
 Richard Nelson
 Richard Cartee
 Marguerite Griffith
 Scott Boskind
 Tim Cartee
 George Swanson
 Rose Mary Mayhew
 NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Received and recorded this 17th day of January, 2018.
 David Ghelli, Clerk, NCUHS District

Big turnout for Orleans winter party



About 100 people turned out for the second annual winter party put on by the Friends of the Jones Memorial Library and Orleans Recreation as part of the village vibrancy project. There was free cocoa, cookies, and coffee for the community. Families enjoyed the wonderful, always free, skating rink in Orleans, along with sliding at the school. Pictured here from left to right: Aliyah Grady, Lydia Atwood (in back), Julianna Grady, and Zander Grady enjoy the sliding slopes at the Orleans Elementary School. Photos courtesy of Bryanne Marquis

PUBLIC NOTICE

TOWN OF DERBY HAS VACANCIES FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS: **3 YEAR SELECT BOARD MEMBER, 2 YEAR SELECT BOARD MEMBER, 1 YEAR TOWN AND SCHOOL MODERATOR, 3 YEAR LISTER, 1 YEAR DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR, FIRST AND SECOND CONSTABLE, TOWN GRAND JUROR, 5 YEAR CEMETERY COMMISSIONER, AND TOWN AGENT.**

DERBY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POSITIONS AVAILABLE ARE: **3 YEAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, 2 YEAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, AND 1 YEAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, AND NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL: 3 YEAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER.**

PETITIONS AND CONSENT OF CANDIDATE FORMS CAN BE PICKED UP AT THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ELECTION WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 6, 2018, TO ELECT BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT.

ALL PETITIONS MUST BE FILED WITH THE DERBY TOWN CLERK BY 5 P.M. ON JANUARY 29, 2018.

Barton Village, Inc
 17 Village Sq.
 Barton, VT 05822
 www.bartonvt.com

Notice of Amendment of Ordinance #BV09, Ordinance Regulating the Use of Firearms.

On January 22, 2018, The Barton Village Board of Trustees reviewed proposed changes and adopted amendments to the existing ordinance regulating the use of firearms.

DEFINITION OF FIREARM: ~~a weapon from which a shot is discharged by gunpowder.~~ any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, which will, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.

SECTION 2B

This Ordinance shall not prohibit shooting events from taking place within the Village of Barton, where such events are run by certified Range Masters, and where the organization putting on such events first provides proof of insurance to the Trustees of the Village of Barton who may, in their discretion, allow such events to take place at a designated time and location.

Other grammar related changes can be found in the full text on the website or can be examined at the Village Office during regular business hours.

Additional information pertaining to this Ordinance may be obtained by contacting the Barton Village Board of Trustees with any questions. Please call the office at 802-525-4747 during normal business hours to leave a message for the Trustees.

CITIZENS' RIGHT TO PETITION FOR VOTE Title 24 V.S.A. § 1973 grants citizens the right to petition for a vote at a special or annual Village Meeting to disapprove ordinance amendments adopted by the Village Trustees. To exercise this right, citizens must present to the Trustees or the Village Clerk a petition for a vote on the question of disapproving the amendments signed by not less than five percent (5%) of the Villages qualified voters. The petition must be presented within forty-four (44) days following the date of the adoption of the amendments. Unless a petition requesting a vote is filed pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 1973, the amended "Ordinance Regulating the Use of Firearms" shall become effective sixty (60) days from the date of said adoption.



Zoey Copp takes to the ice at the public rink in Orleans.

Fire Alarm Panel Upgrade – Request for Proposals North Country Union Junior High School (NCUJHS)

The Board of School Directors of NCUJHS School District is requesting proposals for **Fire Alarm Panel Upgrade**.

For additional information, and to schedule an appointment for a pre-proposal walk through, call the school's maintenance director, Kevin Hodgeman, at (802) 766-2276, ext. 5112, or e-mail: kevin.hodgeman@ncsuvt.org.

Proposals shall be delivered to the main office of the school no later than 2 p.m. on February 14, 2018, and addressed as follows:

North Country Union Junior High School
 "Fire Alarm Panel Upgrade"
 Attn.: Annette Cross
 57 Junior High Drive
 Derby, VT 05829

E-mailed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals will be opened publicly and read aloud at the Building Committee meeting scheduled for February 15, 2018, and will be presented to the school board at their meeting scheduled for **February 20, 2018**.

The NCUJHS anticipates awarding the contract within two weeks of the proposal due date.

The NCUJHS District reserves the right to accept any proposal which it deems most favorable to the interests of the school district, and to reject any and all proposals, or any portion of any proposal submitted, which, in its opinion, is not in the best interest of the school district. The school district also reserves the right to waive any technicalities in the bid process not in the best interest of the school district.

Junior high school music program to hold "Super Saturday" fund-raiser

The North Country Union Junior High School (NCUJHS) band and chorus will hold an indoor yard sale and silent auction on "Super Bowl Saturday," February 3, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the NCUJHS cafeteria.

Students are raising money for their end-of-year trip to give a performance at the Great East Music Festival in Hampstead, New Hampshire, finishing with a visit to the nearby Canobie Lake Amusement Park. Why wait for summer yard sales. Stay warm and dry at this indoor event while finding some great deals and helping nearly 80 students take their music on the road. Also not to be missed at the same event will be a silent

auction. Please join in the excitement of bidding on a wonderful assortment of gift certificates and goods from local vendors.

As an extra Super Bowl kicker, there is an ongoing bottle drive to benefit the music trip at both Thompson's Redemption in Derby, and Buzzy's Beverages in Newport. Please bring in empties from now through March 17 and ask that the refund be credited to the junior high music trip fund. All proceeds from these three fund-raisers will help with transportation costs, festival fees, meal vouchers, and scholarships for this much-anticipated trip. — submitted by Peter Storrs.

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On January 13, the Vermont Elks held the north district Hoop Shoot with shooters from the Burlington, Newport, St. Albans and St. Johnsbury areas. The winners will advance to the state finals on Saturday, January 27, at Spaulding High School in Barre. Pictured here from left to right are: Leo Willey, district director; Maren Nitsche, 12-13 winner, St. Johnsbury; Bryn Jenness, 12-13 runner-up, Newport; Tessa Napollitano, 10-11 winner, Burlington; Antonio Piplica, 8-9 winner, Burlington; Kaylee Hamlett, 8-9 winner, St. Johnsbury; Cora Thomas, 10-11 runner-up, St. Albans; Alexander Gordon, 10-11 winner, Burlington; Jacobi Lafferty, 12-13 winner, Burlington; and Steve Edgerley. Missing from the picture are Jonathan Kocis, 10-11 runner-up, Newport; Joshua Kocis, 12-13 runner-up, Newport; Julie Combs, 8-9 runner-up, St. Albans; Davis Palmieri 8-9 runner-up, St. Johnsbury.

Photo courtesy of Ann Edgerley

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Louise Bonvechio chosen to chair the process

(Continued from page one.)

health and wellness services as well as early childhood education.

Ms. Bonvechio was chosen to chair the reNewport process by Mr. Costello and his associates. He announced her selection at the beginning of the meeting, and said the council has found it important to have a local person to iron out disagreements and encourage communication between groups in a town.

After the meeting Mr. Costello said he and others from the council were looking for someone to assume the role and wanted to find a person with the proper leadership skills, but without a political agenda.

He said his group asked a large number of people from a wide variety of backgrounds to suggest a person to fill the job and settled on Ms. Bonvechio.

She works as chief financial officer for Community National Bank and has volunteered for organizations in the community.

Ms. Bonvechio said she currently presides over the Rural Edge board of directors, is treasurer of the Goodrich Memorial Library, and serves on the regional advisory board for the North Country Career Center.

She grew up in Westfield and has worked for Community National for 25 years.

"I've done a lot of community service," Ms. Bonvechio said. "But this is a shift in what I've been doing."

Her decision came about two hours into a two-and-a-half-hour long meeting. Mr. Costello and Jenna Koloski, the council's community and policy manager, arrived early to put up large sheets each labeled with one of the "ideas and opportunities identified by Town Forums," as a more detailed handout said.

In addition to the four ideas eventually chosen by the meeting, there were sheets that said "improve community communications and connection," "create educational and career training options," "improve public transportation," "improve downtown traffic and pedestrian safety," "develop a community center," "expand bike tourism and improve bike-ability," "improve housing in Newport," "develop a deeper connection with Quebec partners and visitors," "address substance abuse," "improve the waterfront and lake access," "redevelop Bluffside Farm," "revitalize downtown Newport," "attract a hotel to Newport," and "start a Newport mentorship program."

When members of the crowd had finished greeting each other Mr. Costello reminded the group of what his organization does and doesn't do.

"We don't have power," he began. "We don't know what's good for Newport. We don't think we're better than the local folks. We're conveners."

The Newport process was the sixtieth organized by the Council for Rural Development, he said.

"We meet in the spirit of collective activity," Mr. Costello said. "Resources go to communities that are ready for them."

He went on to praise the city.

"You've got to know this is one of the most beautiful places in Vermont," said Mr. Costello, who listed some of Newport's assets, including Lake Memphremagog, proximity to the Canadian border, the working landscape that surrounds the city, and "great people."

He urged his audience to set its sights high and reminded them "the biggest challenge in democracy is figuring out how to work together to get things done and to see the best in people."

Ms. Koloski told those gathered that they should think about which idea they can put their energy toward.

"None of these are bad ideas," Mr. Costello said. "We're not voting anything off the wall. The final report will list all these ideas. We're moving from ideas to action."

The decision made by Newport residents will affect the composition of the leadership team the council will bring to the final meeting of the

process on February 21, he said.

"We're not building an official town plan," Mr. Costello reminded those in attendance. Instead the choices should be the answer to the questions "what do I want to see for the long-term good of Newport," and "what do you see for the future."

He encouraged Newport's citizens to create a broad vision of "a community that builds bridges, not fences."

The council members then opened the floor for community members to share their visions for a better Newport.

Laurie Grimm said she would like the city to become a place high school and college students would want to return to and where they could find good paying jobs.

Another resident wished the city's residents would be comfortable enough not to need drugs.

A regional economy supportive of the needs of adults and children is the desire expressed by Colleen Moore de Ortiz.

Bruce James said he wants to see Newport become a destination sought out by tourists.

"I'd like this to be a place where we can support each other," said Anne Chiarello. "Where everyone knows everyone who wants to be known, and where when people need help we can be there for them."

One woman told the group she had left and come back to Newport three times.

"I want this to be a place for kids to come back to," she said, "but we have to give them a reason to stay."

Mr. Costello then asked if anyone thought an important idea had been missed at the earlier meeting.

"The biggest challenge in democracy is figuring out how to work together to get things done and to see the best in people."

Ms. Moore de Ortiz spoke up to say she thinks providing early childhood education is an important task for city residents. Many women cannot go to work for lack of childcare or, if they do work, find their earnings just pay for providing care for their children.

She proposed including her concern with health and wellness, a suggestion that drew no opposition.

Mr. Costello said it was nearing time to vote. The council's process called for cutting the number of ideas under active consideration from 17 to eight in the first round of voting.

He said, "When I was on the school board in my town, the superintendent once said, 'If we have a list of 20 things we want to do, we're guaranteed to fail at all of them.'"

Mr. Costello said the choices should not be abstract ideas, but things people in the community can do for themselves.

"You're not voting for ideas for Montpelier to work on," he said.

He then called for volunteers to read the title of each idea and the accompanying explanatory text.

After that was done, Mr. Costello asked for champions to speak on behalf of ideas they found most important.

He asked those who wished to push an idea to consider if it is actionable, if it's already being addressed, and "is it within your power?"

The choices, he suggested, ought to be "what's most doable and what's most impactful."

Diane Peel said she favored creating a community center for art and recreation.

"It's doable," she told the group, "it just takes hard work."

Others spoke up for a better transportation

system to bring visitors to Newport and to serve those who cannot afford private cars.

Mayor Paul Monette spoke on behalf of small businesses, which he said are vital to the city's economy.

Mary Pat Goulding, the president of the Memphremagog Watershed Association, pushed for improving the waterfront.

Ms. Moore de Ortiz argued in favor of early childcare education and claimed every dollar spent results in seven to nine dollars of eventual benefit.

Steve Wright, who manages Jay Peak, cited his own statistics as he urged people to support an effort to market Newport to tourists.

Jay Peak, he said, gets a million visitors a year. With a good promotional effort, Mr. Wright said, the city might be able to get 5 or 10 percent of those people to visit Newport.

That would be an additional 50,000 to 100,000 visitors a year.

City Council President John Wilson agreed with Mr. Monette.

"We need to attract businesses and entrepreneurs," he said. "We need businesses to put people to work."

Once the arguments were made, each participant was given an envelope full of orange and blue stick-on dots. The orange dots were worth three points, the blue one. Each person could distribute their dots in any way they saw fit.

After a great deal of hustle and bustle the voting ended and Mr. Costello and his team bore the sheets off to the counting room.

He returned to announce that improving public transportation, enhancing Newport tourism, developing a community center, supporting businesses, expanding community events, improving the waterfront, revitalizing the downtown, and improving health and wellness had garnered enough votes to survive the first winnowing.

After revealing the top vote getters, Mr. Costello took a bit more time to speak about community.

"This is not just about the economy," he said. "It's really about leadership. A real leader can listen to ten different people talking and know they are all telling the truth. They are telling a facet of the truth."

After a bit more discussion on the finalists, citizens received a second envelope, this with red and green dots. They cast their ballots and waited for the final three to be chosen.

While they waited groups of residents gathered to talk, and some walked toward a table weighed down with refreshments at the back of the room.

As the results were revealed, council officials placed sign-up sheets on another table. These were for people who wished to work to bring the chosen ideas to fruition.

The table began attracting people even before the meeting concluded.

Mr. Costello had some closing words, though.

He noted the results of the voting and promised to bring experts in marketing from around the state along with people skilled in fields related to the other items on the city's to-do list.

Although many ideas were set aside, Mr. Costello said nothing should stop those who believe in them from moving forward to make them real.

As people left the hall and the people from the Council on Rural Development began packing up, Ms. Bonvechio took time to speak with a curious onlooker.

She acknowledged using her position to add the fourth item to the final list. It had a great deal of support and was doable, Ms. Bonvechio said, so it made sense to make it a final choice.

The new chair of reNewport then showed her skills include diplomacy.

When asked which was the item she put on the final list, Ms. Bonvechio gently declined to answer.