

Alburgh voters reject second school spending proposal during Tuesday election

By MICHAEL FRETT
Islander Staff Writer

ALBURGH – Alburgh voters narrowly defeated their school’s second proposed education budget during a special election Tuesday, according to preliminary results shared by the town’s government.

According to results shared by the town, Alburgh voters defeated the school district’s proposed \$8.6 million spending plan by a 136-to-100 vote margin in an election that saw less than half of the more than 500 voters who turned out for Town Meeting Day participate.

The Alburgh school district had proposed an \$8.6 million budget to afford both its elementary and middle school, and tuition for Alburgh children attending high school in another town, thinning its original Town Meeting Day budget by around \$107,000 after sidelining a tentative solar project.

The district had also budgeted to expand a library media position to a full-time position under its latest budget proposal, accounting for the extended role through a spending cut at the Grand Isle Supervisory Union level that had been passed down to the supervisory union’s three member districts.

Alburgh is now the second district in Grand Isle County to reject a second proposed school budget this year, with voters in Grand Isle, Isle La Motte and North Hero similarly defeating their district’s proposed budget by a narrow margin in late April.

Both districts had had an initial budget proposal rejected on Town Meeting Day, adding those school districts to a list of nearly 30 in Vermont that saw their education budgets defeated amid a backlash spurred when complications with reforms to Vermont’s education tax formula and inflation threatened to surge education taxes statewide.

Notably, Alburgh was expected to benefit from those reforms to the state’s education taxes formula, which had been amended by Vermont’s legislature under Act 127 to more favorably weigh a school community’s rurality and students’ experiences with poverty when determining local education taxes.

Despite those reforms, which suppressed the town’s base education tax rate by nearly 10 cents, issues with a variable known as the common level of

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Grand Isle Selectboard to continue talk on splitting clerk and treasurer posts

By MIKE DONOGHUE, Islander Staff Writer

GRAND ISLE - The Grand Isle Selectboard plans to resume its discussion about shifting the job of town treasurer from an elected to an appointed post on May 20.

Selectboard member Jen Morway said during the board meeting this week she is looking forward to a full discussion on the change, including hearing thoughts from the current Town Clerk and Treasurer Melissa Boutin on how to split the current single salary.

She said Boutin will be able to give an idea how she splits her hours for the two elected posts.

Morway said the Selectboard needs to determine if the clerk and treasurer are two part-time posts, or if one is full-time and the other part-time.

Board Chairman Jeff Parizo said he thinks the salary for the treasurer will depend in part on whether the person is willing to take on additional duties for the town, like is done in South Hero.

Boutin makes about \$77,000 a year by holding both town positions in Grand Isle. She gets a separate paycheck for duties with the unified union school district.

The change would need Grand Isle voter approval. The Selectboard almost included the issue on the annual Town Meeting Day ballot in March, but eventually said they wanted more research and discussion. The board said the delay also would give members more time to explain both the short-term and long-term benefits for the town and taxpayers.

Vermont has seen a large number of towns vote in recent years to move toward appointing part-time professional treasurers to oversee municipal finances.

Arlington voters were among the most recent to overwhelmingly approve the switch to an appointed job. The joint post of Finance Administrator/Treasurer in Arlington will now pay \$40 an hour for 20 hours a week. The job includes, among other things, overseeing town spending, budget, payroll, providing financial

reports and working with listers on taxes, the *Bennington Banner* reported.

In other action, Selectboard member Ron Bushway said the town will host free metal day on Saturday May 18 at the Grand Isle Transfer Station for people seeking to dispose of various objects.

The town normally hosts free metal day at least once a year and accepts many metal objects from the five Grand Isle towns. Motor vehicles are not accepted.

The Northwest Solid Waste District also is hosting a hazardous waste disposal event this Saturday at the Grand Isle Transfer Station.

Both events are from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Bushway said.

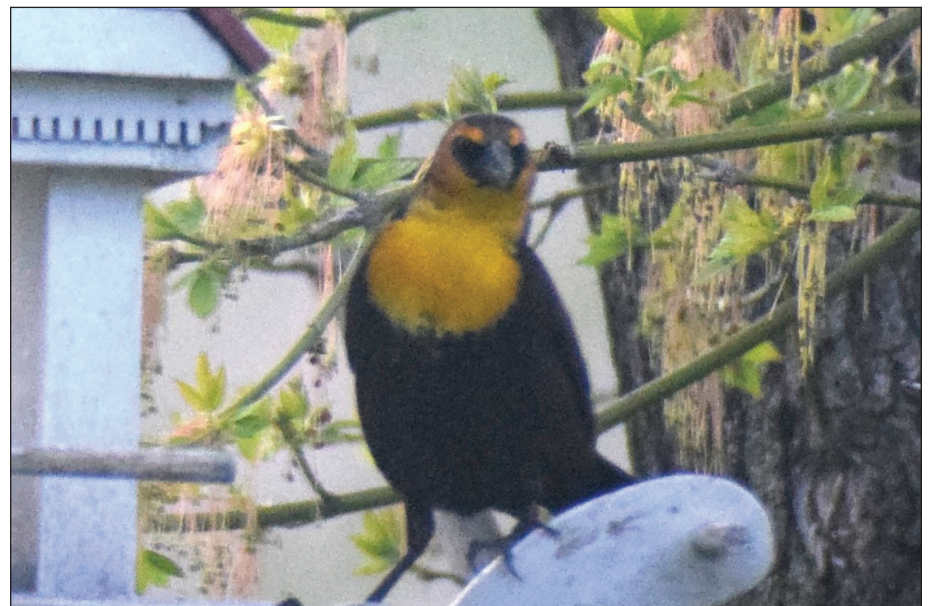
Bushway reported Vermont's annual Green Up Day was successful in Grand Isle. He said the highway department helped pick up along the road-sides the green bags filled by local volunteers.

Bushway reported that it is no longer just the routine litter that is left behind. He said household trash, tires and other items are now being discarded before the annual May event.

The board began discussion on how it might deal with a local delinquent tax bill. The property owes about \$18,000, but a tax auction is not likely to generate that much of a bid.

Boutin said it is an ongoing delinquency issue and the property needs to come off the books. The board will continue to discuss the issue.

Island feeder gets rare, unexpected visitor



Grand Isle's Mitch McGrath shared this photo of an unexpected visitor here in the Champlain Islands. A common sight in Western and Midwestern cattail marshes with a notoriously cacophonous call, this yellow-headed blackbird may have strayed into the Champlain Valley after being blown off course during recent Midwestern storms. *Photo courtesy of Mitch McGrath.*

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ALBURGH SCHOOL BUDGET

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

appraisal, a measurement weighing property sales prices against their assessed value used to determine local school taxes in Vermont, had ultimately spiked the town's final education tax rate by around 12 cents for every \$100 of assessed property value.

Alburgh school officials will have to warn another school election for later this year for a revised budget.

Without a voter approved budget, Vermont law will allow Alburgh to only spend up to 87% of the district's last voter approved budget, an amount likely requiring steep programming or staffing cuts.

According to the school district's segment of Alburgh's most recent annual town report, the Alburgh Community Education Center taught 187 during the 2023 and 2024 school year, making the school the largest in Grand Isle County.

Anderson said police received a report regarding a male pedestrian getting struck by multiple vehicles. Colchester Police, Fire and Rescue all assisted.

As part of the ongoing investigation, the deceased man was transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Burlington for further examination.

Anybody with information on the crash is asked to call state police at 802-878-7111.

Meanwhile in Georgia, Trooper Jordan Peterson said a southbound Chevrolet Colorado truck crashed off I-89 about halfway between exits 19 in St. Albans and 18 in Georgia.

Peterson said the early reports indicated the truck rolled over in the median and was on fire. When the troopers arrived they found the vehicle fully engulfed in flames.

The Georgia Fire Department extinguished the flames and troopers determined there was a lone operator in the truck who sustained fatal injuries.

The investigation into the cause of the crash, the identity of the decedent and the full vehicle information, is ongoing due to the significant damage caused by the fire.

As a part of this investigation, the operator was transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Burlington for the autopsy.

Police asked any witnesses to call State Police 802-524-5993.

Amcare Ambulance Service, Missisquoi Valley Rescue and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office also assisted at the scene.

NORTH HERO NEWS

COMMUNITY HALL PARKING LOT PAVING

By Corinn Julow, North Hero Town Clerk

The parking lot for the Community Hall will be paved the week of May 20-24. Access to the town office may be limited but we will be open.

Taxes are due May 20, the final payment of the year and subject to a late penalty, so every effort will be made to leave the parking lot open on this day. May 21-24, the parking lot will be closed. The town office may be accessed by driving on the south side of Hero's Welcome to a back parking lot and walking to the Community Hall. Visitors are urged to only do this if absolutely necessary as large construction equipment with limited availability will be moving around the parking lot.

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Two dead after I-89 crashes in Colchester and Georgia

By MIKE DONOGHUE, Islander Staff Writer

Vermont State Police report serious crashes on Interstate 89 in Colchester and Georgia have claimed lives in recent days.

A pedestrian was killed on Interstate 89 in Colchester around 8:55 p.m. Monday, while a fiery crash claimed a life at about 11:55 p.m. Sunday in Georgia, state police said.

While police believe they know the name of the crash victim in Georgia, they were withholding his identity until it could be confirmed through the autopsy, officials said.

Bhim Jogi, 38, of Colchester was killed when lying in the northbound travel lane along the white fog line, Sgt. Michael Anderson said.

Anderson said Jogi was struck in the northbound lane in Colchester by two passenger cars, which stopped and a tractor-trailer truck, which continued on.


Vermont State Police were still actively seeking to identify the tractor-trailer unit and speak with the operator on Tuesday.

The names of the two car drivers were not immediately provided by state police.

No criminal charges are anticipated against the drivers involved, Anderson said.




He said the investigation revealed that due to the darkness and Jogi's dark clothing, the operators were unable to see him lying in the roadway.

Jogi was dead at the scene near mile marker 92.



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On Dillenbeck Bay, scientists look for a 'living fossil'

By MICHAEL FRETT
Islander Staff Writer

ALBURGH – Early one Friday morning, a fishing boat staffed by three biologists and a journalist crawled onto Dillenbeck Bay from Alburgh, creeping north along the coast toward Goose Point and a string of faded orange plastic buoys bobbing atop the water.

Two biologists toward the boat's bow – the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's Dave Gibson and Dan DeLucia – reached a fisherman's hook over the boat's nose toward the closest buoy and, grasping at a cord dripping with lake water, began reeling the first 200 feet of netting arrayed beneath the bay by biologists the day before.

"We've got a fish," DeLucia said after several minutes. "You can feel it tugging on the net."

A few moments later, he and Gibson untangled a sizable channel catfish from their net. While it would have been an impressive catch for an angler, the two biologists immediately lowered the disoriented catfish back into Dillenbeck Bay as a third biologist, Lee Simard, noted the catch on a spreadsheet pinned to a fish and wildlife department clipboard.

The biologists had a different catch in mind.

"We had some reports from ice fishermen who were fishing for walleye," Simard said. "Our hope is that this might be an area where they're overwintering."

The "they" Simard referenced, and the whole reason for the Friday outing, was the lake sturgeon, Lake Champlain's bony-backed sea monster and, according to many who study and recreate on Lake Champlain, one of the most unique animals calling the Lake Champlain watershed home.

"... one of the most charismatic species in Lake Champlain"

Long-lived and often described as a "living fossil" due to how closely modern lake sturgeon resemble their prehistoric ancestors, lake sturgeon are bottom feeders recognizable by their whisker-like barbells on their snouts and the bony plates tracing their backs. Sturgeons can also grow to be monstrously large, with some older lake sturgeon growing as long as seven feet and weighing more than 300 pounds.

They are the largest and longest lived fish in Lake Champlain, according to wildlife officials, and have an intimate relationship with people living in the lake. Local Abenaki note the fish as a historically important resource for Native American settlers on Lake Champlain, and more recent residents will fondly recall pulling their first or largest sturgeon from the lake and its neighboring riverways.

Historians will often cite lake sturgeon as a likely culprit behind a number of sightings of "Champ," Lake Champlain's resident lake monster, and to this day, massive lake sturgeon can still inspire awe. In 2016, photos of a dead lake sturgeon washing up on a private, Isle La Motte shoreline went viral after Vermont Fish and Wildlife officials posted about the six-foot-nine, 160-pound behemoth on social media.

"They get big," Simard said between periodic notetaking during Friday's sampling trip. "I'd argue they're one of the most charismatic species in Lake Champlain."

Since 1972, five years after the commercial fishery was closed on Lake Champlain, the

lake's sturgeons were declared endangered in Vermont. According to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, once abundant populations of lake sturgeons in both Vermont and across North America saw a sharp decline over the course of the 1800s and early 1900s until, by the middle of the century, sturgeon stopped appearing in local fisheries assessments altogether.

Initially disposed of as nuisance fish by commercial anglers, sturgeons later became sought after for their eggs, which could be treated with salt and preservatives to create a delicacy recognizable as caviar. On Lake Champlain, sturgeon were further impacted when dams built in the lower Lamoille and Missisquoi rivers began blocking sturgeon from their historic spawning grounds further upstream, and disrupted the rivers' natural waterflow in ways that risked disturbing sturgeons' remaining spawning sites.



Lee Simard, a fisheries biologist for Vermont Fish and Wildlife, handles a sturgeon caught during a 2023 sampling session near Alburgh. Photo courtesy of Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

Those same years also brought the sea lamprey to Lake Champlain. An invasive, eel-like fish and parasite, lampreys followed the Hudson and Champlain canals into Lake Champlain during the 1800s, and while some disputed genetic evidence suggests there may have been a native sea lamprey population at some point in Lake Champlain's history, a fresh invasion of new lamprey dramatically affected both lake sturgeon and a number of other native fish species.

According to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's management plan for sturgeon, the sea lamprey may have had as dramatic an impact on Lake Champlain's sturgeons as the dams blocking fish from their spawning grounds. The majority of adult sturgeons recovered during the state's early sampling projects were found riddled with recent or healing lamprey wounds, and studies cited by Vermont's management plan suggest lampreys were an even greater threat for younger fish.

"It's very likely sea lamprey are one of the leading causes for the decline of lake sturgeon," Simard agreed when speaking with *The Islander*. "There are pictures of sturgeon with dozens of lamprey wounds. Sturgeon are hardy fish, but it doesn't help when they're covered with these parasites."

Lamprey have similarly attached themselves to native gamefish like landlocked Atlantic salmon and lake trout, dramatically harming those species' survivability in Lake Champlain as well.



Fisheries biologist Lee Simard stitches up a lake sturgeon surgically implanted with a tracking device during a recent sampling session near Alburgh. Photo courtesy of Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

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“It’s a long game”

Lake sturgeons’ recovery remains an open question for biologists like Simard.

Since the early 1970s, the sturgeon’s place on Vermont’s endangered species list made fishing for sturgeon illegal, and an active monitoring program has been underway since at least the late 1990s, when wildlife officials began sampling for sturgeon to get a better sense about how the lake’s population had been faring since the fishery’s closure decades before.

During the spring and fall, when cooler weather means friendlier conditions for sturgeon, biologists like Simard will head onto Lake Champlain for sampling, a process involving dipping large gillnets rigged with holes wide enough to only catch larger fish into the lake overnight, and surgically tagging any sturgeon snagged in those nets with a radio transmitter biologists can use to study their movements in the lake.

This past Friday, Simard and other biologists were drawn to Dillenbeck Bay after hearing from local ice fishermen that sturgeon had apparently overwintered in the Alburgh inlet. Officials hoped a few sturgeon recovered from Dillenbeck Bay could be tracked toward their eventual spawning grounds, which Simard said were likely in the Missisquoi River somewhere downriver from the Swanton Dam.

“We know a decent amount about the Winooski River’s population, but my goal is to learn more about the Missisquoi’s population,” Simard said. “What we’re trying to figure out is where, when they’re not spawning, they’re hanging out in the lake.”

Sturgeon have historically spawned in four of Vermont’s major rivers – the Lamoille, Missisquoi and Winooski rivers, and the Otter Creek – and conservation efforts have fallen particularly on the three northernmost of those major rivers, with Vermont’s management plan for sturgeon setting a goal of around 750 mature adults each for the Lamoille, Missisquoi and Winooski rivers.

Sturgeons are still occasionally sighted and caught near Otter Creek, according to state wildlife officials, and there is no historic record of sturgeon spawning in any of Lake Champlain’s New York tributaries.

Biologists like Simard seem optimistic, however, that their work could pay off.

Anecdotally, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is hearing more about sturgeons from anglers fishing the Winooski River, and biologists seem to be finding more juvenile fish when sampling. Adults recovered from Lake Champlain are also showing fewer signs of fresh lamprey wounds, likely the result of an aggressive – and at times controversial – lampricide program targeting the parasitic fish.

Sturgeons’ long life span, however, can make it a challenge to fully grasp their population’s health in Lake Champlain. It can take decades for a sturgeon to mature to an age where they might reproduce, and even when mature, an adult lake sturgeon might only head upriver to spawn once every few years.

It could be decades before biologists working in Lake Champlain have a complete understanding of lake sturgeons’ recovery, according to Simard.

“That’s the rest of my career,” he said. “It’s a long game.”

For sturgeon in the Lamoille and Missisquoi rivers, much of their historic spawning territory is still blocked by manmade dams, as the Swanton Dam still spans the Missisquoi River near Swanton’s historic village and the Peterson Dam continues looming above the Lamoille River over what was once known locally as the “Sturgeon Hole” near Milton.

Hydroelectric dams upstream, meanwhile, might moderate their flows during sturgeons’ springtime spawning season, but occasional bursts of water could disrupt that river flow and affecting the sturgeon and a number of other fish spawning downstream.

It was also unclear, according to Simard, what the changing climate could mean for Lake Champlain’s sturgeon, and as the lake adjusted to an ecosystem already bombarded with invasive species, Simard said he was “scared” about the possible arrival of the round goby, an invasive fish currently threatening Lake Champlain from the Champlain Canal to the lake’s south and the Richelieu River to its north.

Prolific breeders and insatiable eaters of both fish eggs and young fry, round goby have dramatically shaken up food webs in the Great Lakes, with some research suggesting their arrival had stressed those lakes’ spawning sturgeons while attacking and displacing other spawning gamefish like lake trout and smallmouth bass.

Goby also voraciously eat zebra mussel, another invasive species, but zebra mussels are toxic, and as goby are in-turn eaten by shorebirds and larger fish, they risk passing those toxins up the food chain.

“I’m scared to have goby,” Simard said, “and what it means for our sturgeon.”

“Humans are part of the equation”

The biologists’ sampling mission on Friday was seemingly a bust.

After reeling in 2,400 feet of gillnet and a full string of buoys, the three officials caught a channel catfish, a walleye and, notably, a lake trout that showed none of the signs typical of a hatchery-raised fish, suggesting it was instead a part of the lake’s recovering, naturally raised trout population.

There were few signs, however, of the sturgeons known to relax under Dillenbeck Bay.

“It looks like we picked the wrong day,” Simard joked with *The Islander*.

The trio had caught two sturgeon the day before, however, and when, on a whim, Simard lowered a receiver made to detect the audio trackers biologists had implanted in captured sturgeon into Dillenbeck Bay, a console connected to that receiver immediately began clicking and beeping, a signal that at least one of the group’s previously caught sturgeon was lurking below.

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In fact, there were at least two scouring the bottom of Dillenbeck Bay detected by Simard’s receiver.

“That is the fish we tagged and caught yesterday,” Simard said as a set of numbers blinked on the console’s screen. Another number flashed a few minutes later, corresponding to a fish the group had tagged near Butler Island the previous year.

“These are almost certainly not the only two sturgeons in the area,” he added.

Information from periodic tracking by biologists, as well as a network of stationary sensors overseen by the University of Vermont, will help biologists like Simard better understand sturgeons’ interaction with the lake, answering questions around where sturgeon may spend their summers and winters, whether sturgeon staging in one area may prefer to spawn in another, and whether the sturgeon spawning in the Missisquoi River might interact with their counterparts in the Lamoille and Winooski rivers.

Simard expects to continue surveying waters near the Champlain Islands for the rest of the month, when lake sturgeon opting against periodic spawning may be trolling the lake’s shallower waters, and again this fall, when fish are less likely to face stress from warmer, summertime waters.

The results from those surveys, while piecemeal, could eventually inform officials in their planning for sturgeons’ future, part of a larger mission to understand how humans could better guarantee that Lake Champlain’s ancient giants could continue charming anglers, stalking Lake Champlain’s waters and even inspire the occasional sighting of a mythical sea monster.

“Humans are part of the equation,” Simard said. “We need to minimize our impact as much as we can.”

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Milton Little League celebrates opening day with extra 'buzz'

By MICHAEL FRETT, *Islander Staff Writer*

MILTON – With some noted “buzz,” Milton Little League began its summer season this weekend with its annual opening day celebrations at Bombardier Park.

According to Jessica Groeling, the vice president for Milton Little League’s board of directors, this year’s event, bookended with a small parade and first pitches, helped ring in the little league season for around 160 children, a typical amount for the Chittenden County town’s celebrated little league program.



Photo by Steve Lamonda, *Islander Contributor*.

“It’s so important for the kids to have a day of celebration,” Groeling told *The Islander*. “It’s such a great opportunity for the kids to have an event and to set the stage for the local season.”

Milton’s little league series has been a celebrated part of the Milton community since its inception in the 1950s,

when the late Bill Black recruited Milton’s first little league team from a sandlot diamond near Route 7. In the years since, the organization has grown into a registered nonprofit, offering a little league program at a relatively low cost for children both in and around Milton.

For a little more than a decade, Milton Little League’s organizers have turned its annual opening day into a community celebration, leading with a parade shepherded by Milton’s fire and police departments, and its rescue service, and centering opening remarks and an honorary opening pitch from prominent members of the little league’s community.

This year, opening remarks were delivered by Milton Little League’s president, Andrew Farrar, and came courtesy of a speech prepared by current little leaguer John Olson, and the day’s opening pitch came from Grace Williams, a pitcher in the Milton High School’s varsity softball team and a coach for Milton Little League’s softball program.

“It’s ten o’clock in the morning, sun shining, no clouds in the sky,” leads Olson’s speech, according to a script shared with *The Islander*. “It is the perfect day.”

According to Groeling, around 300 people crowded the Bombardier Park baseball field named in Bill Black’s honor to celebrate the league’s opening day. The event, catered by local vendor Matt Mullen, also featured inflatable games provided by Bounce Around Vermont, a St. Albans-based company the league contacted to make the event more fun for Milton Little League’s younger players.

This year also saw a little extra “buzz” courtesy of the Milton High School’s Yellow Jacket, who took a spot in this year’s parade usually reserved for “Champ” after attempts to host the Vermont Lake Monsters’ mascot fell through at the last minute.

For the kids in Milton Little League, the yellow jacket was, according to Groeling, a “hit.”

“We couldn’t get Champ this year, so we had to improvise with a bee, and it was a hit,” she told *The Islander*. “It was a fun day.”

Missing driver caused crash that injured South Hero man on I-89

By MIKE DONOGHUE, *Islander Staff Writer*

RICHMOND – Vermont State Police say they are seeking a vehicle that helped cause a two-vehicle crash that sent a South Hero man and his dump truck crashing off Interstate 89 and down an embankment in Richmond on Sunday afternoon.

Mitchel Richardson, 41, of South Hero was northbound in his 2000 International when an unidentified vehicle tried to merge onto I-89 at the Richmond interchange and abruptly slammed on their brakes about 5 p.m., state police said.

Richardson attempted to avoid a collision with the unidentified vehicle, Trooper Quincy Chandler said. However, Richardson’s truck made contact with another car instead, police said.

Richardson lost control of his truck, which went over the guardrail and down an embankment between U.S. 2 and I-89, Chandler said.

The car was able to come to a safe stop, but the third vehicle that caused the crash never stopped, police said.

Richardson told *The Islander* the missing vehicle was a newer model red Toyota SUV.

State police are asking anybody with knowledge of the missing driver or that saw the crash to call the Williston barracks at 802-878-7111.

Richmond Rescue transported Richardson to the UVM Medical Center, where he was treated for his injuries. He was wearing his seatbelt. The dump truck was demolished.

The car that was able to stop was driven by Brian Kelly, 49, of Bristol, Conn. The 2023 Subaru Outback also had two passengers, Tina Kelly and Erin Kelly, police said. Nobody was injured and the car had minor damage.

It was raining at the time and the road was wet.

Also assisting at the scene were the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, Richmond and Bolton Fire Departments, and TDI Repair and Towing.

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In a cheesy “Iron Chef,” North Hero students raise funds for charity

By MICHAEL FRETT
Islander Staff Writer

NORTH HERO – Along a row of foldout tables, educators, parents and students alike made the final preparations Monday evening to their submissions for what, according to school staff, had become an annual tradition for the North Hero school community.

Amanda Ellison, the school’s principal, scooped out helpings of her “funeral potatoes,” a cheesy potato casserole crusted with Frosted Flakes, onto small serving plates, while the school’s health assistant Desiree Maltais dusted her blueberry- and brie-stuffed French toast with sugar.

Nearby, sixth grader Mabel Roche arranged slices of a cheese quesadilla, and fellow sixth grader Patrick Newell filled Styrofoam bowls with macaroni and cheese. Mary Ellen Hutchins, a paraprofessional at the school, helped her son Brayden put the finishing touches on “Brayden’s Ham and Cheese Sliders.”

It was the evening of the North Hero School’s annual “Iron Chef” competition, and the night’s theme was, according to organizers, cheese.



“It was mainly about cheese, and I had a good idea with my family’s Vermont mac and cheese,” Newell, one of the sixth graders, told *The Islander*. “It’s a really good way to use cheese.”

For around a decade now, the North Hero School has hosted an annual “Iron Chef” event in its gymnasium, hosting the event as a fundraiser of sorts for a charity of the students’ choice.

The event is more modest than its prime-time counterpart, without the sharp timelines, strict guidelines and intense judging panels associated with the classic cooking competition. Instead, a group of teachers, parents and students each come up with a dish, and simply let visitors who paid the event’s \$6 entrance fee sample what they want before voting for their favorites.

The event was, according to Hutchins, who

helped organize the school’s “Iron Chef” event with its parents, teachers and youth organization (PTYO), a way to help involve students in community service. Proceeds from the event, Hutchins said, would be donated to the Ronald McDonald House Charities, a national charity selected by North Hero’s students due to its support for families with sick children.

“A teacher started it maybe ten years ago to help teach the students about community service,” Hutchins told *The Islander*. “It’s important to teach kids to give back, and that giving back can be fun.”

Nearby, Roche, a sixth grader at the school, told *The Islander* she thought it was good that students like her had a chance “to help people” with their event.

“Some people need help,” Roche told *The Islander*.

According to the school’s principal, Ellison, Monday’s “Iron Chef” event was also a good way to get members of the school’s community together, particularly after restrictions prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic made it harder for parents and community members to be directly involved with happenings at their local school.

It was also an easy way to get students involved in their community, Ellison added.

“It gets the families out and the kids cooking,” Ellison said. “We get to see more parents, and I’d love to have the community come, especially in the post-Covid world when there are still some restrictions.”

Monday’s event, timed to coincide with the school’s annual bookfair, drew a modest crowd to the North Hero School, with parents accounting for the bulk of those attending. Still, according to Hutchins, the school managed to raise \$210 for the Ronald McDonald House Charities, and those involved in Monday’s “Iron Chef” seemed excited about their work.

On Tuesday, Hutchins revealed the day’s winners:

- In the student division, Brayden Hutchins won with his ham and cheese sliders;
- In the adult division for sweets, Maltais won with her stuffed French toast; and
- In an adult division for savory foods, preschool teacher Chelsea French won with pulled-pork macaroni and cheese.

“It’s a good way to get people involved,” Ellison said.



Mary Ellen Hutchins, right, and Brayden Hutchins prepare a helping of “Brayden’s Ham and Cheese Sliders” during Monday’s “Iron Chef” event.

Photo by Michael Frett.

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Milton school officials plot June vote following second budget loss

By MICHAEL FRETT,
Islander Staff Writer

MILTON – Milton school officials are looking to bring a revised education budget before voters in early June, more than a month after voters decisively rejected their schools' proposed spending plan for a second time in early April by a nearly two-to-one margin.

During a special meeting organized last week, the district's school board suggested trimming its proposed education budget ahead of a June 4 vote by another roughly \$450,000, an amount that, according to school officials, could effectively thin the school's share of an anticipated education tax increase in Milton to zero.

"I'm still a fan of what we currently have in place, but I would like to see what that budget would look like," Kumulia Long, the school board's chair, said. "If we do this thing, here are the opportunities the district will still be able to provide. I think we need to see that."

Milton was one of several districts in Northwest Vermont to see an education budget defeated for a second time amid a statewide backlash over an education tax increase prompted earlier this year by complications from reforms to Vermont's formula for determining education taxes, as well as impacts from inflation and the loss of federal funding allocated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Voters resoundingly rejected Milton's latest school proposal by a nearly two-to-one margin last month, with 1,114 voters opposing the district's revised \$36.7 million budget and only 635 voters supporting it. The town similarly defeated the district's initial \$37.2 million budget proposal on Town Meeting Day, albeit by a narrower 1,744-to-1,121 margin.

The district's proposed \$36.7 million budget would, according to school officials, have likely spiked Milton's education tax rate by another 15 cents for every \$100 of property value had it passed in April.

The majority of that tax increase, however, came not from projected school spending in particular, but from complications within the formula used to determine local education taxes in Vermont.

Milton, like a number of towns in Northwest Vermont, saw its common level of appraisal, a ratio comparing the sales prices of local properties to their assessed value, sink over the last year as a hot housing market continued spiking property prices above their assessed values. The lower common level of appraisal, as a result of the state's tax formula, effectively hiked local education taxes in Milton.

A similar dynamic was impacting education taxes in other Northwest Vermont communities, as well, likely reflecting the tight real estate market that was further spurred by a pandemic era real estate boom and continued to linger in a number of Northern Vermont communities where, according to the latest U.S. Census, local populations were poised to continue growing or at least stabilize.

Residents speaking with Milton's school board last month were apprehensive about the proposed tax increase, suggesting it could price some locals – particularly older residents – out of Milton.

Milton school officials were limited to what they could cut, as well, as contracts for teachers and administrators had already been signed, meaning certain staffing cuts were now legally impossible.

At least a few called on the school board to look at administrative costs, an increasingly common refrain among some residents voicing their opposition to the Milton school district's proposed budgets.

"Given the vote that happened for the second vote for a school budget," Milton resident Wendy Wilton told the school board, "I think it's critically important that, if the board wants [a budget] to pass, that there be significant movement on administrative overhead."

It was a sentiment shared by at least one member of the district's school board.

"Administratively, we've gotten a bit bloated, and I think there are positions that can take on other duties," the school board's Scott O'Brien said. "As duties have been passed around, I don't think they've fallen into the right categories, and I think that seriously needs to be looked at."

Other school board members said they feared administrative cuts could risk side effects for educators working in classrooms, as fewer administrators could see certain duties now fall to teachers.

"There's so much that takes teachers away from the front of a classroom anyway," Karen Stout, the school board's vice chair, said during last week's meeting. "If we eliminate any support that they have, that creates that much more of a problem."

Some members of the school board did suggest that the district could look into deeper questions about the schools' organization and programming once an education budget was eventually passed, but added it would take more than the few weeks between special elections for the school board and the schools' administration to responsibly manage that kind of analysis.

At least some concern offered during last week's meeting fell less on budget amounts and more on information around the budget, with board members pointing toward both the April election's low turnout and some voters' insistence on ideas like cutting back the schools' administration as proof that the Milton district was not advertising its special elections and administration needs well enough.

"We haven't done the story explaining what that is and why that is, and we let these stories take hold without us saying anything or explaining them," the board's Jeremy Metcalf said. "Whatever we do, we need to be full-throated as a board in totality behind whatever budget is passed."

The school board did not agree to any particular budget cuts during its meeting last week, agreeing through consensus to instead only look over a presentation from the Milton school administrators outlining what a \$450,000 reduction could look like for the Chittenden County district when the board meets again in early May.

A decision to schedule a new election for June 4 was unanimous.

"We're fiscally responsible for the district, and that's what we're doing," Long said. "That's what we did with the first budget and the second budget, and that's what we'll do for the third budget."

Under Vermont law, should Milton continue without a voter approved budget, officials would only be allowed to spend up to 87% of their last voter approved budget, an amount that could dramatically affect what programming the district could offer between its three schools.

The Milton Town School District maintains both an elementary and middle school at a campus on Herrick Avenue, and a high school.

"Our comments are not that we do not support the school system here, but we're very concerned about the affordability," resident Lori Donna told the school board last week. "There are many of us that are feeling that pinch, especially the elderly."

Milton school officials have suggested, however, that attempting to "zero out" the district's share of its expected tax increase could have dramatic effects on students' experiences in Milton's schools.

A previous presentation from the district suggested Milton officials would have to look at nonrequired services like bussing and cocurricular programming like sports and clubs to manage the requisite budget cuts. While most education services offered by the schools were required, there were a few places where education programming might also be trimmed in order to limit the district's tax increase.



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County Music Festival set for May 15

By Natalie Churchill,
Island Arts

ALBURGH – The Grand Isle County Music Festival is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15, at the Alburgh Community Education Center. County students, grades 5 through 8 will rehearse for the performance May 14 and 15. The show begins at 5:30 p.m. with both chorus and band music. The event is free and all are welcome.

The efforts of local music teachers Julian Cunningham (Alburgh), Maddie Gibbons (North Hero and Grand Isle), and Marissa Jedziniak (Folsom) make this festival possible. The festival directors and accompanist are sponsored by Island Arts who will provide snacks for the hungry young musicians.



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Cassandra Heleba. Publicity photo.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the students to come together with singers and band members across the county and gain experience from working with different directors.

Cassandra Heleba is the festival band director, who teaches general music and beginning band at Eden Central and Waterville Elementary schools. Daniel Leonard will direct the chorus and is the choral director and music teacher at Colchester Middle School. Accompanist Patricia Jacob is a retired band and choral director who served 28 years as a percussionist with Vermont's 40th Army Band.



Daniel Leonard. Publicity photo.



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Jury convicts Colchester man on all counts related to drug deal in Swanton with fatal shooting

By MIKE DONOGHUE
Islander Staff Writer

RUTLAND – A Colchester man has been convicted in U.S. District Court in Rutland on four drug, gun and robbery charges stemming from an investigation into the fatal shooting of a narcotics dealer at a Franklin County home two years ago.

The jury needed just over 3 hours before convicting Dominique "Wop" Troupe, 37, of Bay Road on all four felony charges he faced during the six-day trial.

Troupe faces a mandatory minimum of 15 years in prison and a potential maximum sentence of life.

After the foreperson announced the verdict Monday afternoon, the defense asked for a polling of the jurors individually. Each reported Troupe guilty on all counts.

Chief Federal Judge Geoffrey W. Crawford agreed to give defense lawyer Chandler Matson of Stowe time to consider filing post-trial motions.

Troupe had denied all four counts, including a charge of conspiring with one of his former girlfriends, Jayme Sartelle, 42, of Colchester and Misti-Lyn Morin, 44, and her housemate, Eric Raymond, 33, of Swanton to distribute crack cocaine between July 2021 and at least Feb. 2, 2022 – the day of the fatal shooting.

Elijah Oliver, 22, of Haverhill, Mass. was found dead from two gunshots inside the residence at 45 First St. in Swanton about 4:35 a.m. Feb. 2, 2022, state police said.

Nobody has been charged in Vermont Superior Court with the killing of Oliver, who was identified as a member of the Gangsta Disciples gang by his hometown newspaper.

Raymond has admitted he fired one of the shots, while an unidentified companion of Troupe fired the other shot, records show. Oliver was shot by two different caliber handguns, investigators have said.

A federal grand jury also charged Raymond and Troupe for one count of carrying a firearm on Feb. 2 while furthering their drug trafficking and the gun was unlawfully discharged that day.

Raymond and Troupe and others conspired to commit a robbery and "threaten physical violence to persons and property in furtherance of robbery" by taking drugs, money and personal property by actual or threatened force on Feb. 2, the indictment said.

Besides convicting Troupe on all four counts, the jurors made a factual finding that a firearm was discharged during a drug trafficking offense.

The jurors also said they found Troupe was part of a drug conspiracy that involved more than 500 grams of cocaine (more than 17 ounces) – which will mean a possible enhanced penalty at sentencing.

Raymond has pleaded guilty to four felonies and is due for sentencing this month.

At least nine people were in the single-family residence of Crystal Ahl and Elvin Sweet at the time of the fatal shooting, state police said. Ahl, 44, was among the witnesses to take the stand early last week.

Troupe, who also uses the street name "Juice," and Raymond were the main people behind the drug trafficking conspiracy, records maintain.

The mothers of both Oliver and Troupe were in the courtroom for the verdict.

The government presented 22 witnesses, including the lead investigator State Police Detective Sgt. Isaac Merriam, three members of the Vermont Drug Task Force and several people involved in illegal drug trafficking.

The final witness was Dr. Elizabeth Bundock, Vermont's chief medical examiner, who conducted the autopsy on Oliver.

Troupe did not take the witness stand and opted not to have any witnesses testify on his behalf.

The Vermont State Police, the Vermont Drug Task Force and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives combined for the sweeping investigation.

Troupe also has denied a charge of possession with intent to distribute nearly a half-pound of crack cocaine in September 2022, records show.

The crack cocaine was found in his vehicle when the Vermont Drug Task Force arrested him in the current case as he got off a Lake Champlain ferry in Grand Isle, court records show.

Troupe was a primary source of supply for crack cocaine being sold at the River Street residence, Chief Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael P. Drescher has said in court records.

Drescher and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Turner prosecuted the case.

Court records note multiple witnesses have indicated Oliver was a rival drug dealer operating out of the First Street residence and his business was impacting the profits of Troupe, Raymond, Morin and Jesse L. Sweet, 28, of Swanton.

Troupe, Sweet and others implemented a plan to carry out an armed robbery of Oliver, seeking to steal drugs and money, court papers note. Sweet reportedly backed out of the holdup, but witnesses reported Troupe drove at least one robber to Oliver's home to execute the armed robbery, Drescher wrote.

"The evidence against Raymond includes admissions from those with whom he sold cocaine that the shooting victim's drug business was eating into Raymond's," Drescher has indicated in court papers.

"Witnesses also recount that Raymond made admissions relating to his involvement in the shooting and admonishing others with information about the shooting not to talk about it," Drescher said at the time.

Authorities have maintained Troupe is a dangerous and untruthful defendant. Troupe, who also has traveled internationally, is a risk to flee, officials have said.

Raymond had left his residence at 361 North River Street during the early morning hours of Feb. 2, 2022 despite a court order requiring him to observe a curfew, Drescher noted. He added Raymond went to the First Street residence where the fatal shooting happened and while en route back to North River Street he was picked up by Sweet.

Sweet also had been charged earlier as part of the sweeping investigation. Court records note that Sweet was aware of the planned robbery and he disabled a video surveillance system at 45 First Street.

Sweet filed a signed plea agreement with the prosecution on Dec. 13, 2022 -- the same day the new 10-count indictment was announced.

The fatal shooting happened during a robbery and Eric Raymond was trying to protect his drug-selling turf, a federal prosecutor has said. He shared with Morin the home at 361 North River Street.

Raymond was among those to flee the shooting before Swanton Village Police and the U.S. Border Patrol could arrive, court records indicate.

Morin has pleaded guilty in federal court to 5 felony charges that were filed as part of the investigation into an out-of-state gang member getting fatally shot at a Swanton home.

Morin has admitted she was among at least four people to willfully conspire to distribute crack cocaine between July 2021 and February 2022 and that she knowingly allowed her residence at 361 River Street to be used as a "Crack House" to help distribute the drug between April 2021 and Feb. 2, 2022.

Morin also admitted to three counts of knowingly possessing various firearms while being an unlawful user of and addicted to a controlled substance. The cases involved a 9-mm semiautomatic pistol on July 4, 2021, a multi-caliber receiver assembled as an AM-15 semi-automatic assault-style rifle on June 19, 2020 and a Berretta 9-mm short (.380) semi-automatic pistol on Feb. 2, 2022 -- the day the homicide was reported.

Morin is due for sentencing this month.

Drescher said Morin managed or controlled 361 River Street in Swanton and used it to help conspirators to distribute crack cocaine. He said if her case had gone to trial several witnesses would have outlined Morin's conduct and her illegal possession of firearms.

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Officials begin bait drop as wild rabies outbreak expands to Franklin County

By ISLANDER STAFF

SOUTH HERO – In response to a growing number of rabies cases among wild animals, state and federal agencies began deploying baited vaccine doses in Vermont’s northwesternmost counties this weekend.

According to Vermont officials, the state’s health department and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture began deploying sweet-smelling doses of an oral rabies vaccine in Chittenden, Frankling, Grand Isle and Lamoille counties this weekend in response to a growing rabies outbreak among wild animals.

The announced bait drop comes after an outbreak of rabies among wild animals tracked in Chittenden County apparently expanded to nearby Franklin County. Since 2022, 51 animals in Chittenden County and five in Franklin County have tested positive for rabies.

“We’ve seen a significant increase of rabid animals in Chittenden County over the past several years,” Dr. Natalie Kwit, a state public health veterinarian, said in a health department statement. “The outbreak is now impacting Franklin County, where we haven’t seen many animals test positive for rabies.”

Rabies is a deadly disease affecting mammals that is primarily spread through biting. Without intense post-exposure treatment, rabies can be fatal for both humans and animals.

In Vermont, rabies is most often seen in raccoons, skunks and other wild mammals, though the disease can spread to pets and livestock that have not been vaccinated against rabies.

Vermont health officials said this month’s distribution would include baited vaccine packets dropped from low-flying airplanes in rural areas and from helicopters in more suburbanized neighborhoods, as well as by hand in the region’s more densely populated communities.

“This bait drop will help prevent spread of rabies among wildlife,” Kwit said, “protecting people and domestic animals who may come into contact with them.”

The nearly 250,000 packets officials plan to drop are sweetly scented to draw wildlife into consuming an oral vaccine, and are not poisonous or harmful to people, pets or local wildlife. State officials ask, however, that Vermonters avoid handling or moving any discovered packets unless necessary.

This month’s vaccine drop is in addition to an annual rabies vaccination drop scheduled in August.

Obituary

TERRENCE (“TERRY”) J. MARTIN

NORTH HERO - Terrence (“Terry”) J. Martin of North Hero passed away unexpectedly at home on March 3, 2024. He was 67 years old.



Terry was born in Newport, VT on Dec. 29, 1956. He was the youngest of 5 children born to Wendell and Marion (Shallow) Martin. Terry attended South Burlington High School, where he also played football, and graduated in 1974. After graduation Terry moved to South Carolina where he tried his hand in the hospitality business, but the lure of Vermont pulled him back and he eventually found employment in the commercial roofing industry, first as a roofer, then as a foreman and ultimately being a Project Manager for the largest commercial roofing company, A.C. Hathorne, in the state of Vermont. Terry also enjoyed playing softball and flag football in Burlington area leagues against some of the best teams and players in the state, where winning was important, but secondary to the life long friendships he would forge. In addition to being a NASCAR fan, Terry loved seeing his favorite teams, the Patriots and Red Sox play in Boston. But his favorite yearly sporting event was attending a Boston Bruins game in the Hospitality Suite with his family and friends, where he once had the opportunity to meet and converse with his favorite NHL player – Bobby Orr. Terry also had a special love for being on Lake Champlain, whether he was cruising on his own boat or sharing time with friends on theirs.

Terry is survived by his sister, Wendy Martin, his brother Bruce and his wife Jeanne, and his brother Brian and his wife Diane. Terry also leaves his nephews and niece, Brad and his wife Emily, Eric and his wife Laura, Bryan and his wife Kara, and Erin and her significant other Travis. He also had a special place in his heart for his twin grand nieces, Abigail and Katherine Martin. Terry was predeceased by his parents, Wendell and Marion Martin and his brother Jim.

The family would also like to express their gratitude and appreciation to Michaelanne Rowen, whose help with Terry and his medical challenges was invaluable.

Terry’s service will be held at the United Methodist Church in Grand Isle at 11 a.m. on Friday, May 10, 2024. After the grave side service is concluded, A Celebration of Life event will follow at a venue to be determined by the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the McClure Miller Respite House at www.uvmhomehealth.org/donate/make-an-online-donation or by calling (802) 860-4499 (X3812). www.minorfh.com

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Serving Grand Isle & Chittenden County.

Mulching & Mowing Estimates

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CLEANUPS**

Rene J. Fournier Farm Equipment, Inc.



**Rototillers, Box Blades,
Brush Hogs,
Finish Mowers,
Flail Mowers
and Rock Rakes!**

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www.rjfeq.com
rjfeq@rjfeq.com

109 North River Street P.O. Box 141 Swanton, VT 05488



Calendar of Events

SATURDAY, MAY 11

- Celebrating National Train Day at Clinton County Historical Association Museum, 98 Ohio Ave., Plattsburgh, NY; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 14

- Early Tourists Visiting the North Country in style at Meadowbrook Healthcare, 154 Prospect Ave., Plattsburgh, NY; 2:30 p.m.

Please email

islander@vermontislander.com for information on listing events in the calendar section.



GRILLING & CHILLING HEADQUARTERS

Fresh Fish, Black Angus Steaks & Burger,
Pork Tenderloin, Ribs, Chops, Sausages, Salads &
Desserts Gluten Free & Vegetarian Dishes

Truck &
Tractor Day
5/19th

Maple Popcorn Sampling this
weekend with Backwoods Maple.

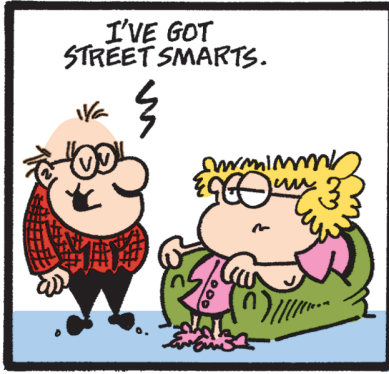
Black
Gold
Compost

HOURS: 10-5 PM THURSDAY - SUNDAY

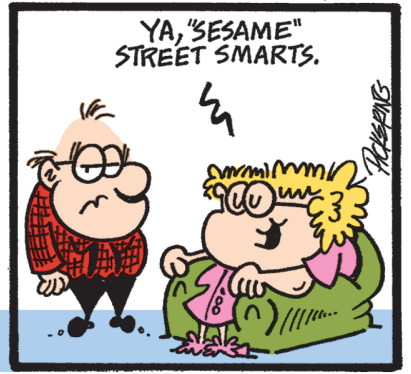
108 Allen Rd, Grand Isle 802-777-9934
dreamwalkerfarmvt.com

Take a Break

The Spats



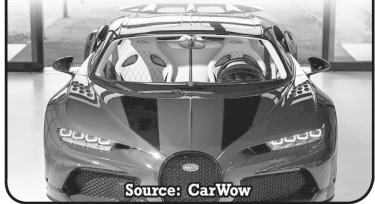
by Jeff Pickering



top ten

FASTEST CARS in the World, 2024

1. Bugatti Chiron Supersport 300+
2. SSC Tuatara
3. Hennessey Venom F5
4. Rimac Nevera
5. McLaren Speedtail
6. Koenigsegg Regera
7. Aston Martin Valkyrie
8. Pagani Huayra
9. Lamborghini Aventador SVJ
10. Koenigsegg Jesko Absolut



Source: CarWow

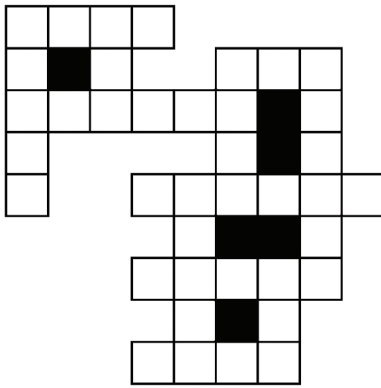
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FEAR & KNIGHT

By: rj Johnson

DOUBT? ... OR DARE!

- EFN
- ♥ TURSLE
- ♥ ARLIT
- ♥ WNSE
- LEFIAN
- ♥ SNU
- ♥ ALFE
- ♥ ARFSE
- ♥ RAE
- ♥ SIFTLE
- ♥ SELRA
- TSFO



Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: Which of the Great Lakes is smallest in surface area?
2. TELEVISION: Which sitcom has the theme song, "Where Everybody Knows Your Name"?
3. ANATOMY: Which part of the human body is involved with ACL surgery?
4. GAMES: What is the victim's name in the U.S. version of the board game "Clue"?
5. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is the world's largest species of frog?
6. SCIENCE: What do isobars indicate?
7. LITERATURE: In the novel "Don Quixote," who is the human companion to the title character?
8. MOVIES: In which movie did actor Bill Murray live the same day over and over?
9. THEATER: Who is believed to be the first actor in a Greek drama?
10. MUSIC: What is the name of Beyonce's 2024 country album?

Answers

1. Lake Ontario.
2. "Cheers."
3. The knee.
4. Mr. Boddy.
5. Goliath frog.
6. Atmospheric pressure.
7. Sancho Panza.
8. "Groundhog Day."
9. Thespis, 6th-century poet
10. "Cowboy Carter."

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GRIN and BEAR IT



"Someone from the Commission on Honesty in Government is on the phone. ... Are you here?"

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

1			4	3	
	7		1		5
		6		8	7
		7	2		8
8			9		2
	3			6	4
	8		5		1
		2	9		5
4				7	9

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

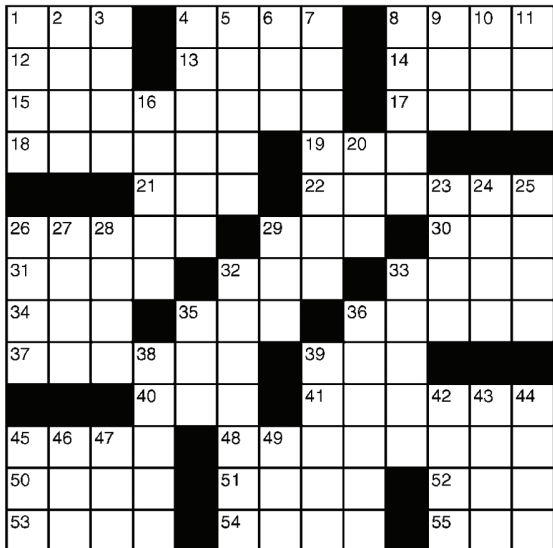
- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Scene stealer
- 4 Pilgrimage to Mecca
- 8 Auction
- 12 Carte lead-in
- 13 Pakistani language
- 14 Carrier's partner
- 15 Florida city
- 17 Clothing store section
- 18 Intimidates, with "out"
- 19 Apprehend
- 21 Shade
- 22 Pictures
- 26 Throat affliction
- 29 Sault — Marie
- 30 Fib
- 31 Cobra feature
- 32 IRS employee
- 33 Exceptional
- 34 Mornings, briefly
- 35 "Oy —!"
- 36 Duck down
- 37 "Pop Goes the —"
- 39 Evening hrs.
- 40 Chopping tool
- 41 Portugal's place
- 45 Apple computers
- 48 Hit song by Shawn



- Mendes and Camila Cabello
- 50 "Oops!"
- 51 Walked (on)
- 52 Standard
- 53 Infatuated
- 54 Bohemian
- 55 Swiss peak

DOWN

- 1 Door fastener
- 2 Regrettably
- 3 Creche figure
- 4 "Quiet!"
- 5 Stood
- 6 Banned pesticide
- 7 "Walk on the Wild Side" actress Moore
- 8 "The Lion King" lion
- 9 "Hail!"
- 10 Actor Cariou
- 11 Curved letter
- 16 Yearned
- 20 Soul, to Camus
- 23 Pleased
- 24 Green land
- 25 Crystal gazer
- 26 "Candida" playwright
- 27 Hefty book
- 28 Activist Parks
- 29 Covert agent
- 32 Piano's cousin
- 33 Stair part
- 35 Puzzle
- 36 Represent
- 38 Malia's sister
- 39 Wine grape
- 42 TV host Kelly
- 43 Slanted type (Abbr.)
- 44 Org. for seniors
- 45 Coffee holder
- 46 "Caught ya!"
- 47 Gear tooth
- 49 Goof up

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The Garden Bug

Thyme can grow indoors in a pot on a sunny kitchen window, but really does best outside, in sandy or rocky soils, with good drainage and full sun.

It is quite tolerant of drought, and can be a great addition to a rock garden or a dry embankment.

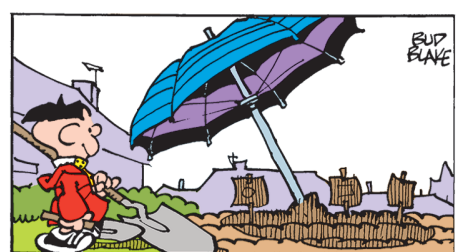
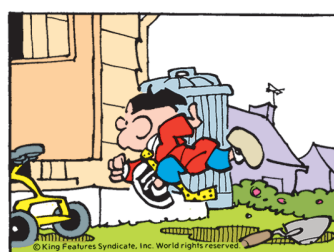
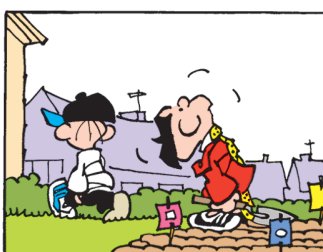
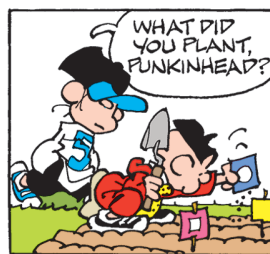
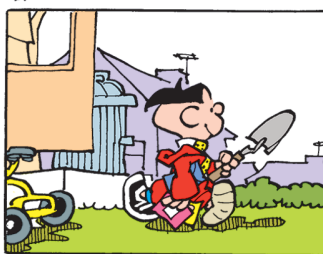
It is a perennial, with numerous woody stems that grow upward. Its stems have very aromatic gray-green leaves that reach their peak just before the plants flower, and are used fresh or dried to season soups, stews, sauces, meat and fish dishes. Its delicate lilac flowers are attractive to bees. — Brenda Weaver

Source: www.missouribotanicalgarden.org



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TIGER



Answers on Page 15



LEGAL

Notices

TOWN OF ALBURGH REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Town of Alburgh is accepting bids to clean the Town Office (1 North Main Street) to begin July 1st, 2024. Bids must be received by Friday, June 7th at 5 PM. To view the full request for bids visit alburghvt.org

OFFICIAL WARNING OF ANNUAL MEETING OF GRAND ISLE FIRE DISTRICT #4

The legal voters of the Grand Isle Fire District #4, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Grand Isle Fire District #4 Pump House at 204 West Shore Road, Grand Isle, Vt. on Monday May 13, 2024 at 7 P.M., to transact the following business.

- 1.) To elect members of the Prudential Committee to fill the following positions:
One (1) Three Year Term
One (2) Two Year Term
- CURRENT PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Andy Paradee, TERM 3 Yr., DATE CURRENT TERM EXPIRES: May, 2024.

Peter Riegelman, TERM 2 Yr., DATE CURRENT TERM EXPIRES: May, 2024.

NOTICE: NOMINATIONS OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION OF THE PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE WILL BE RECEIVED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.

(Andy Paradee is seeking re-election)

(Peter Riegelman is seeking re-election)

- 2.) To review and approve the Treasurer's Report.
- 3.) To receive a report from the Chairman.
- 4.) To transact such other business as may legally come before the meeting.

Adopted and approved at a meeting of the Prudential Committee of Grand Isle Fire District #4, held on April 8, 2024.

Received for record and recorded in the records of the Clerk of the Grand Isle Fire District #4 on April 9, 2024, and in the Office of the Grand Isle Town Clerk on April 9, 2024.

Dated at Grand Isle, Vermont: April 9, 2024.

Esther F. Blow
Clerk/Treasurer
Grand Isle Fire District #4

PROPOSED STATE RULES

By law, public notice of proposed rules must be given by publication in newspapers of record. The purpose of these notices is to give the public a chance to respond to the proposals. The public notices for administrative rules are now also available online at <https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/>. The law requires an agency to hold a public hearing on a proposed rule, if requested to do so in writing by 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members.

To make special arrangements for individuals with disabilities or special needs please call or write the contact person listed below as soon as possible.

To obtain further information concerning any scheduled hearing(s), obtain copies of proposed rule(s) or submit comments regarding proposed rule(s), please call or write the contact person listed below. You may also submit comments in writing to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802-828-2231).

Rules Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Education Professionals.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 24P018

AGENCY: Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators

CONCISE SUMMARY: The proposed rule revisions support the VSBPE's mission. Specifically, the VSBPE is: 1. Clarifying a Baccalaureate degree is not required for Driver's education in-vehicle only; 2. Allowing more flexibility for praxis testing requirements and waiver process; 3. Making various changes around School Psychology licensure requirements recommended by the National Association of School Psychologists; 4. Allowing additional Special education provisional licenses based on updated guidance from the US Department of Education; 5. Updating the Model Code of Educator Ethics (MCEE) based on revisions from national organizations; 6. Making routine revisions to the following endorsements: Early Childhood Education, School Counselor, School Psychologist, and Special Educator; 7. Establishing a new PK-12 Mathematics Specialist Endorsements; and, 8. Making various technical corrections.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Andrew Prowten, Agency of Education, 1 National life Drive, Davis 5, Montpelier VT 05620 Tel: 802-828-0768 Fax: 802-828-6433 Email: andrew.prowten@vermont.gov URL: <https://education.vermont.gov/event-location/vermont-standards-board-professional-educators>.

FOR COPIES: Katie Gagliardo, Agency of Education, 1 National life Drive, Davis 5, Montpelier VT 05620 Tel: 802-828-0699 Fax: 802-828-6433 Email: Katie.Gagliardo@vermont.gov

PUBLIC NOTICE

From April 22 – May 24

The Town of North Hero water distribution flushing.

The North Hero Water Department conducts a comprehensive water line flushing program throughout the Town. This process rapidly moves water through the Town's water piping system to scour the inside of the water lines. Flushing is a common practice to improve water quality and maintain the water distribution system. Minerals and other materials that accumulate in the lines are removed by flushing. This material is not harmful but can cause discolored water.

Customers may notice discolored water or a change in water pressure when flushing is conducted in their area. When flushing is taking place, we recommend that customers check to ensure their tap water is running clear before using it for drinking, cooking, or clothes washing. Customers who experience some coloring or sediment in their water should run the cold water faucet for a short time. This should clear up any discolored water.

If you have any questions, call the water plant at 372-6258 or email at watersystem@northherovt.com.

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT - PROBATE DIVISION

GRAND ISLE UNIT DOCKET NO. 24-PR-02477

IN RE ESTATE OF: RICHARD F. ROSE
LATE OF GRAND ISLE, VERMONT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the creditors of RICHARD F. ROSE late of Grand Isle, Vermont:

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: April 30, 2024

/s/ Cagney Hamblett
5 Adams School Rd., Grand Isle, VT 05458
802-233-3884
cagneyh13@gmail.com

Name of Publication: The Islander
Publication Date: May 9, 2024

Name and Address of Court:
Grand Isle Probate Court
PO Box 7, North Hero, VT 05474

PUBLIC NOTICE

INTENT TO APPLY HERBICIDES Selective Vegetation Control

Vermont Electric Cooperative, 42 Wescom Road, Johnson, Vermont 05656 has been issued a permit from the Vermont Secretary of Agriculture to apply herbicides. All herbicides will be applied by ground-based, hand-held equipment. This notice constitutes a notification to residents along the right-of-way that water supplies and other environmentally sensitive areas near the right-of-way should be protected from spray and that it is the resident's responsibility to inform the contact person of the existence of a private water supply near the right-of-way. The contact person at VEC is Sara Packer, Vegetation & Right-of-way Management Program Manager, (802) 730-1104, or 1-800-832-2667 (ext. 1104). Further information may also be obtained from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, 116 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2901, telephone (802) 828-2431.

Operations will commence on or about June 24, 2024 using one or more of the following herbicides: Escort® XP or Patriot® (metsulfuron methyl), Krenite® S (fosamine ammonium), Arsenal® Powerline™ or Polaris® (imazapyr), AquaNeat or AquaMaster® (glyphosate) and Garlon® 4 Ultra (triclopyr).

Maintenance will be conducted on transmission lines in the following towns:

Lines:	Town(s)
Line C31 Highgate/Enosburg	Highgate, Sheldon, Enosburg
Line C32 Enosburg Tap	Enosburg
Line H15 Irasburg	Irasburg
Line H16 Irasburg VELCO to Burton Hill	Irasburg, Barton
Line 463 Pleasant Valley	Cambridge
Pleasant Valley 463R Breaker	Cambridge
Switch 31M	Barton
Switch 11, 17N & 17S	Jay
418R Recloser	Eden
116R Recloser	Johnson
R343 Recloser	Fairfax

Maintenance will be conducted on select portions of distribution lines in the following towns:

Town(s):
Albany, Barton, Craftsbury, Glover, Greensboro, Irasburg, Sheffield, Lyndon, Wheelock
Berkshire
Brighton, Newark, Westmore, Warren's Gore
Canaan, Lemington
Derby, Holland, Morgan, Charleston
Fairfield, Fairfax, St. Albans Town, Swanton,
Highgate
Newport City, Coventry
North Hero
Norton
Richmond, Hinesburg, Huntington, Williston
Underhill, Jericho, Essex
Westford, Cambridge, Johnson, Waterville, Belvidere, Eden



Vermont Electric Cooperative, Inc.
42 Wescom Road
Johnson, VT 05656

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT - PROBATE DIVISION

GRAND ISLE UNIT DOCKET NO. 24-PR-02204

IN RE ESTATE OF: BRUCE JAMES PERRY
LATE OF GRAND ISLE, VERMONT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the creditors of BRUCE JAMES PERRY late of Grand Isle, Vermont:

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: May 6, 2024
/s/ Shauna Perry
83 Hyde Rd., Grand Isle, VT 05458
802-330-6487
smp02200@gmail.com

Name of Publication: The Islander
Publication Date: May 9, 2024

Name and Address of Court:
Grand Isle Probate Court
PO Box 7, North Hero, VT 05474

GRAND ISLE NOTICE OF LIVESTOCK ORDINANCE

Notice is hereby given to the residents of the Town of Grand Isle that pursuant to of 24 V.S.A. Section 2291(14) and (15), on May 6, 2024 the Selectboard adopted an Ordinance regulating Livestock Running at Large. The purpose of this ordinance is to abate and remove this public nuisance by prohibiting such conduct, establishing reasonable regulations for incidences of Livestock Running at Large and adopting potential penalties and other enforcement mechanisms to thereby protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public and the quiet enjoyment of Grand Isle residents' homes and property.

The Ordinance in its entirety is available for inspection at the Grand Isle Town Office during regular office hours, Monday-Friday 8:30am-3:30pm and Saturday 10am-12pm. The Ordinance is also available on the Town of Grand Isle website: www.grandislevt.org Any questions regarding the Ordinance may be directed to:

Jeff Parizo
9 Hyde Road Grand Isle, VT 05458 802-355-9398
grandisleselectboardperson5@gmail.com

This Ordinance shall become effective July 5, 2024 unless a petition signed by not less than 5% of the qualified voters of the Town requesting that the adopted amendment be submitted to the voters of the Town at an annual or special meeting is presented to the Selectboard of the Town Clerk on or before June 19, 2024.

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT - PROBATE DIVISION

GRAND ISLE UNIT DOCKET NO. 24-PR-02054

IN RE ESTATE OF: TERRENCE MARTIN
LATE OF NORTH HERO, VERMONT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the creditors of TERRENCE MARTIN late of North Hero, Vermont:

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: May 4, 2024
/s/ Brian D. Martin
125 Casey Lane, Williston, VT 05495
802-598-3521
bdbria@gmail.com

Name of Publication: The Islander
Publication Date: May 9, 2024

Name and Address of Court:
Grand Isle Probate Court
PO Box 7, North Hero, VT 05474

Dicker Den

Cash or Check Only | Prepayment Required | Deadline: Mon. 10 a.m.
Ads accepted by Mail, Email and in person
islander@vermontislander.com Phone: 802-372-5600 Office: 7 Ferry Rd, South Hero
MAILING ADDRESS: PO Box 225, South Hero, VT 05486

3. Calculate Your Rate!
Private: \$3 for 1st ten words, \$.10/per word after
Business: \$9 for 1st ten words, \$.25/per word after

1. Circle Category

For Sale Wanted Garage Sales For Rent Employment Free
Real Estate Services Offered Thanks Misc. Lost & Found

2. Write Your Ad

(Instructions: 1 word per line. Towns and phone #'s are one word. Please Use Pen)

Total: _____ x _____ (# of weeks) = \$ _____

To Determine Which Rate Applies:
For Sale-Personal Items/Private Rate; All others/Business Rate;
Employment Wanted- Business Rate; For Rent- Business Rate;
Garage Sales—1 per month at private rate; Business rate for more.
Wanted- Private Rate; Services Offered- Business Rate
Miscellaneous & Card of Thanks—\$3.00 1st 10 words, \$.10 per word;
Real Estate- Business Rate;
FREE or Lost & Found- 1st ten words Free, \$.10 each additional word.



All Private Classified ads are
FREE if placed 8 am to
4 pm every FRIDAY!
*Max of 30 words
*1 free ad per month
*No phone calls please!
For Sale Wanted
Garage Sales Thank You's
Free Lost & Found
SELL IT LOCAL!

-FOR SALE-

Rough Country Tri Fold Tonneau Cover. Fits 2020-2024 Chevy/GMC 2500 HD Crew Cab Bed. Used only two months. Great Condition. \$125. Cash Sale. Pick up in Grand Isle. Call with interest. 802-734-9612 5/9

Now taking pre-orders for Janine's 18th Annual PERENNIAL PLANT SALE! I will email my picture lists to you - you place an order and I dig it! We're dividing our overflowing gardens and selling a wide variety of both young and mature perennials that grow here in the islands. May 17, 18 & 25 9:30-4. 315 Route 2, Grand Isle. dbanks@together.net 802-372-8716 5/9

iRobot Roomba Vacuum cleaner \$20. Nilus Lecclerc Loom 24" web and supplies \$60. 802-372-3004.

-SERVICES-

Earth and Fire Masonry and Chimney Services: Chimney sweep/inspections, chimney and masonry repair, natural stone installations, chimney flue linings. Certified and insured. Call or visit our website! 802-999-2930 EarthandFireServices.com 6/13

Langlois Lawn Care, LLC - Call today for a free estimate on Lawn Care, Pressure Washing, Bark Mulching, Spring/Fall Clean Ups, Brush and Small Tree Removal, Lot Clearing, Landscaping, Property Management, Brush Hogging, Light Trucking and Many Other Jobs. We offer discount for veterans and active military! Call Brian at 802-363-4777 or LangloisLawnCare@yahoo.com 6/27

FINNISH TOUCH CARPENTRY - Remodeling, renovations and more. Fully insured. Over 40 years experience with knowledge. Call 802-233-2639 BTFN

Expert Tree Services: Tree removal, tree pruning, fruit tree and hedge pruning. Stump grinding. New trees and hedges planted. Heartwood Landscape and Tree Services LLC. 802-893-7371 maxheartwd@myfairpoint.net 1/8/25

Langlois Property Rental Management - Are you looking for someone to manage your rental property? We take communication with our clients to the next level! We guarantee full satisfaction with our 24/7 team that cares about your home as much as you do. We are respected business owners of Langlois Lawn Care, LLC for 20+ years! Let us help you get your property rented, cleaned, and fully taken care of so you don't have to! Call Beth at 802-497-4490 5/30

Electrician, licensed and insured. 30 years experience. 802-796-4610 8/14/24

HOT WATER PRESSURE WASHING - Call for free estimate to have your home, patio, decks, etc. super cleaned w/ hot water & biodegradable detergents (Portable Water Available). Insured & References Available. We offer discount for veterans and active military! Contact Brian at 802-363-4777 or LangloisLawnCare@yahoo.com 6/27

TURNBAUGH ROOFING- Slate, shingle, metal, rubber. Painting all flashings & metal roofs. Chimney repair. Free Estimates. Insured. 802-238-2994 John BTFN

MASSAGE THERAPY - Over 20 years of experience in massage and healing arts. Licensed and insured. 802-391-4016, NorthernIsleMassage@gmail.com BTFN

LANDRY CARPENTRY - Islands local trusted contractor. Call 802-734-9612. BTFN

Sewing machine service. Over 50 years experience. 802-372-4497 BTFN

TURNBAUGH CONSTRUCTION - Roofing and siding specialist. All types of roofing: slate, metal roofs, ribbed metal and standing seam, shingle roofs and rubber roofs, commercial & residential, barn roofs restored & repairs, and roof coatings, get rid of the rust. All types of siding: vinyl siding, wood clap board siding, wood shingle siding, masonry siding, Hardi Plank. Fully insured, local contractor. Call or text: 802 233-7031 or email at turnbaughconstruction@gmail.com 5/30

Coat your rusting metal roof with asphalt silver-brite roof coating. Free estimates. 802-735-6419 or northwoodsroofcoatings.com 5/30

-REAL ESTATE-

FOR SALE BY OWNER: 1900 American four-square colonial in Alburgh Village, Vermont; corner lot; 4 bedrooms, livingroom, dining room, family room, side porch; Recent furnace(HWH) and architectural design roof. Some TLC/Sweat equity needed. \$185,000. Call Rene Vallee at 1-802-372-8324 Email: vallee.denofantiquity1@gmail.com 5/9

View the Milton Police Log and Grand Isle County Crime Watch at www.TheIslanderNewspaper.com/features

-EMPLOYMENT-

Ruthcliffe Lodge & Restaurant
Lakeside Dining and Accommodations

Part-Time
**RESTAURANT SERVERS, DISHWASHERS
& BUSSERS.**

Call Mark or Kathy 802-928-3200
Old Quarry Road, Isle La Motte, VT
www.ruthcliffe.com

HIRING FOR 2024 SEASON

**Line Cooks
Servers & Hosts
Bussers / Dishwashers
Front Desk, Housekeepers
& More!**

APPLY ONLINE SHOREACRES.COM/EMPLOYMENT
802-372-8722 237 Shore Acres Drive, North Hero

JOIN OUR FROG FAMILY!!

The Green FROG

Seeking One or Two friendly, funny, motivated individuals to join our super team!

Job responsibilities include but are not limited to:
sales, receiving inventory, creating retail displays, and other various tasks as needed.

Skills: Computer savvy, outgoing, organized, helpful, kind, professional, creative, honest, reliable and fun!
Weekends required.

Thursday - Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Email sales@greenfroggifts.com or call Tonya at 802-372-5031 for more info.

PICTURE YOUR AD HERE!

CONTACT US TODAY TO LEARN ABOUT ADVERTISING!
802-372-5600
ISLANDER@VERMONTISLANDER.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters are accepted by mail to:
PO Box 225, South Hero, VT 05486,
or by Email - islander@vermontislander.com

Please include your name, town of residence and a phone number for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will not be printed.

To the Editor,
"Our Front Door to the World" was an outstanding example of what dedicated volunteers with a deep sense of community and history can accomplish with limited resources.

The renowned Ethan Allen scholar, Vermont historian and author, the late Professor, John Duffy, and his wife, Barbara, former Isle La Motte residents, were also deeply interested in preserving Burying Yard Point and its history. Many years ago they gifted the land and overlook on the north side of Route 129 to the town and did much to improve public access. The further efforts of the Isle La Motte Community Organization, its volunteers and donors reinforce the Duffy's vision to protect and preserve this most important area for the benefit of visitors and residents of Isle La Motte.

The plaque honoring the service of Captain Remember Baker, who was killed not far from Burying Yard Point early in the War of Independence, has been recovered from Canada by the Sons of the American Revolution and work is now underway to relocate it to Isle La Motte's "front door to the world".

Please add my congratulations and thanks to everyone who has and will continue to assist this most worthwhile project.

Respectfully,
George E. Spear, II, Esq.
Swanton

*The Islander offers 200 words per letter to the editor. Additional words are paid for by the signee.

GRAND ISLE NEWS

WATER LINE FLUSHING

By Les Gardner, Plant Manager/Operator
Grand Isle Fire District #4 Water District will be flushing the water lines and turning the valves between May 10 and May 31, 2024.

If you experience dirty water, turn on your outside hose and run until clear.



BBQ CHICKEN DINNER

Sat. May 18 • 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. or sold out.
MENU: Half chicken, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw and dessert.
COST: \$15.00
INFORMATION: Val Hunter, 802-372-7500

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FEAR KNOT answer

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King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

H	A	M		H	A	D	J		S	A	L	E		
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U	H	O	H		T	R	O	D		P	A	R		
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Weekly SUDOKU — Answer

1	2	8	7	4	5	3	6	9
3	7	4	1	6	9	8	5	2
5	9	6	3	2	8	1	4	7
6	5	7	2	1	4	9	3	8
8	4	1	5	9	3	7	2	6
2	3	9	8	7	6	4	1	5
9	8	3	4	5	2	6	7	1
7	6	2	9	3	1	5	8	4
4	1	5	6	8	7	2	9	3

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