

Denial
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the Chronicle

THE WEEKLY JOURNAL OF ORLEANS COUNTY

TWO SECTIONS, 48 PAGES

VOLUME 44, NUMBER 5

FEBRUARY 1, 2017

ONE DOLLAR

Governor's freeze gets a cold shoulder

by Tena Starr

Governor Phil Scott's plan for education, delivered last week as part of his budget address, hasn't met with enthusiasm in Orleans County.

The plan calls for a freeze on school budgets, and in order to give districts time to rewrite their budgets, every district would vote on them on May 23. Also, teachers would pay 20 percent of their health insurance premiums. Most pay 15 percent now.

Local school districts are basically ignoring the proposal, which lacks legislation behind it at this point.

Orleans Central Supervisory Union (OCSU) Superintendent Donald Van Nostrand said Lake Region Union High School will go ahead and hold its annual meeting and budget vote on February 15 as planned. The elementary schools are also moving forward as they would any other year. Glover, Albany, Brownington, and Irasburg hold their school meetings and budget votes on Town Meeting Day, or in the case of Irasburg, in the evening. Orleans and Barton vote later in March, and Westmore votes in May.

(Continued on page twenty-six.)

Willoughby claims ice fisherman

by Tena Starr

WESTMORE — In the wake of Richard Leblanc's death last week, officials are warning ice fishermen to be leery of thin ice.

Mr. LeBlanc, 62, of Orleans went through the ice on Lake Willoughby on the morning of Thursday, January 26.

Sue LeBlanc, his wife, said that he usually fished the ponds, like Parker in West Glover, which tend to be frozen harder than deep and unpredictable Willoughby. But he'd caught a huge trout in Willoughby earlier and was tempted by the prospect of more.

"We devoured that down, and
(Continued on page twenty-seven.)

Kingdom County's creator dead at 74



Irasburg author Howard Mosher, who died Sunday, struck this pose for *the Chronicle* in front of the bank in Orleans where a robbery provided him with material for one of his many novels. Appreciation for Mr. Mosher and his work fills our letters pages this week, and continues on page twelve thought fifteen.

Photo by Tena Starr

Former addicts discuss routes to recovery

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — A panel of a dozen people, all with experience in the field of opioid addiction and treatment, engaged in a freewheeling discussion Monday night. The two-hour conversation, moderated by Judge Howard VanBenthuyzen, was the second part of a program called Conversations of Hope, sponsored by the HealthWorks Coalition, a project of Northeast Kingdom Learning Services.

In the course of the lively evening, Orleans County State's Attorney Jennifer Barrett announced her intention to start a new drug diversion program that will allow some defendants to avoid a criminal record if they get treatment for addiction problems.

Three panel members: Gilles Gentley, associate pastor at New Beginnings Christian Church; licensed vocational nurse and graphic artist Savannah Bradshaw;

and Community College of Vermont student Mitt Lyman, testified to the possibility of freeing oneself of drug dependency.

Another six panelists spoke of ways that goal can be accomplished. These were: Jason Goguen, director of Bay Area Addiction Research and Treatment (BAART) clinics in Vermont; Laura Cooley from the Vermont Acupuncture Association; substance abuse counselor Shari-Lee Ryan; Marcia Stricker, a licensed alcohol and drug counselor who works with Northeast Kingdom Human Services (NKHS); Sarah Munroe of the Vermont Recovery Network; Pete Cudney, a therapist from the Northeastern Family Institute; and Brandon Malshuk, executive director of Journey to Recovery, a recovery center in Newport.

Rounding out the group were Julie Raboin, a prevention consultant from the state Department of Health, and Newport City Police Chief Seth DiSanto.

In Superior Court Diaz takes Fifth then testifies

by Elizabeth Trail

NEWPORT — Immediately after she took the witness stand in Orleans County Superior Court on Monday, Cynthia Diaz invoked the Fifth Amendment.

"Hadn't you better hear the questions first?" Judge Howard VanBenthuyzen asked Ms. Diaz, who appeared in court without an attorney. "Some of them might be to your benefit to answer."

The Coventry town clerk, treasurer, and delinquent tax collector was back in court to answer a motion for contempt. It was filed on behalf of the town by attorney Paul Gillies after she allegedly failed to meet a December 30 deadline to turn over all original town documents in her possession.

Ms. Diaz brought a thumb drive and a foot-thick stack of papers to court on Monday but that didn't even come close to being what the town of Coventry believes is missing.

After a lengthy recess to allow Mr. Gillies, forensic accountant Jeff Graham, and Coventry Selectman Scott Morley time to look over the documents, Mr. Gillies pronounced them "insufficient."

"The missing records we asked for would fill a six-foot by six-foot square about six feet tall," Mr. Graham told Judge VanBenthuyzen, (Continued on page sixteen.)



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Shat Acres cow and calf named Grand Champions



Ray and Janet Shatney took seven animals to the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colorado, earlier in January and came away grand champions. Shat Acres Raisin Brandy and her calf, Shat Acres Apple Brandy were named Grand Champion Cow and Calf. Raisin Brandy's mom, Cinnamon Raisin, who won this title three times – more than any cow in NWSS history – must have told her daughter to do her proud. Shat Acres has now won the NWSS cow and calf class four of the last six years. There were 180 animals registered for this show. No other farm has ever won this award more than twice, and no cow/calf champion's offspring has ever won the award. Ray Shatney is pictured here parading Apple Brandy after being named grand champion.

Photo courtesy of Janet and Ray Shatney

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the Chronicle's AMAZING PHOTOS!

This week's Amazing Photo is "A moose admiring our ATV one morning."

Photo submitted by **Valerie Gaboriault** of Sheffield.

Submit your amazing photos to our weekly Amazing Photo Contest! At the end of the month, viewers can vote on their favorite and winners receive a prize!

Send your photos to: **Amazing Photos, c/o the Chronicle, P.O. Box 660, Barton, VT 05822** or e-mail it to: **thechronicleinc@gmail.com** with "Amazing Photo Contest" in the subject line.

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Old dispute ties up restaurant expansion

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — Dena Gray just wanted to expand a restaurant and add a couple of rooms to the adjoining inn. She received permission from the Newport Design and Review Board (DRB) with one small requirement — her water line needs to be upgraded to provide higher water pressure.

That may sound like a simple thing, but it's something that has put Ms. Gray and her project squarely in the middle of a long-running dispute between the city of Newport and the village of Derby Center over who can be served by the water main the city built under a 1997 agreement between the two communities.

And that has left Ms. Gray waiting for an answer before the expansion can begin.

The main was proposed as a way to provide an adequate supply of water to the city's industrial park. Newport has no shortage of water, but its geography means the parts of the city nearest Derby, which are on a hill, do not get good water pressure.

Newport officials negotiated the agreement with Derby Center, which operates its own water company and owns a portion of the Newport sewage treatment plant's daily capacity. Under what is known as the interlocal agreement, the city gave Derby Center ownership of the portion of the 400-foot-long water main that was built along Route 5 in Derby.

The city also signed up to receive a 10,000-gallon-a-day allocation of water from Derby Center. The industrial park uses only about a third of that amount.

All seemed peaceful between the two communities until 2006, when the Derby Center trustees voted for a new payment schedule that required Newport to pay a "ready-to-serve fee" for its entire allocation, rather than just the amount it uses.

City officials paid the higher water bill under protest, saying that the village was violating the

interlocal agreement by changing its payment terms. Derby Center fought back, claiming that Newport violated the pact by hooking up city businesses and residents outside the industrial park.

In 2009 the issue went to court. In 2013, Judge Howard VanBenthuyzen, sitting in the Civil Division of Orleans County Superior Court, ruled in Newport's favor.

The village appealed the question to the Vermont Supreme Court, which in 2014 reversed Judge VanBenthuyzen's decision, saying that the village did have the right to change its method of charging for water.

The justices did not render an opinion on whether the city had gone beyond its rights in connecting customers other than those in the industrial park to its line. They sent that question back to the lower court and Judge VanBenthuyzen.

In October the judge ruled in favor of Derby Center and said the city had violated the terms of the interlocal agreement by selling water to city businesses outside the industrial park.

That is where Ms. Gray comes into the picture. She owns the Tavern on the Hill, located directly across Route 5 from the new Walmart.

Currently the restaurant on the first floor seats 48 guests. There are also several hotel rooms on the upper floors of the building.

The Newport DRB granted permission for Ms. Gray to build an addition that will almost double the restaurant's capacity to 88 seats. She will also be allowed to add two guest rooms above the new restaurant area.

There is a catch, though. In order to expand, Ms. Gray must get a letter from Newport Director of Public Works Tom Bernier approving the water connection for the new building.

Ms. Gray said Friday that the expanded restaurant will need more water pressure, meaning a larger connection to the city's water main. That seems to be prohibited under Judge VanBenthuyzen's interpretation of the interlocal agreement.

The Newport City Council has gone into executive session several times over the past few months to discuss negotiations between the city and the village over the water issue. No information about those discussions, other than their existence, has been forthcoming from city officials.

On Friday, Ms. Gray said she was looking forward to a positive discussion between the two sides as they work to resolve the issue.

Construction on the project needs to begin by spring, she said, and she hoped the matter could be settled by then.

By Monday, though, her attitude had changed. Ms. Gray said she spoke with an alderman in the interim and was told that negotiations had broken down.

She said her strategy has changed. She plans to speak with officials in Derby Center to see if she can buy the water she needs from the village.

City Manager Laura Dolgin said Tuesday that she cannot comment on the status of talks between Newport and Derby Center, but did say the lawyers representing both sides are in contact. She refused to say whether that means they are negotiating.

When she was asked if Ms. Gray would be able to buy water from Derby Center, Ms. Dolgin said, "That's a good question."

She refused to say more on the subject.

Elizabeth Bumps, the village's clerk and treasurer, echoed Ms. Dolgin Tuesday, saying only that lawyers for the two communities are talking to each other.

She said Ms. Gray had already contacted Derby Center to see if she can buy water for her restaurant.

Ms. Bumps said there is no easy answer to that question. She said the matter would have to go before the village trustees and she is not sure what they can do or what they might decide.

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Editorial

Who will speak for the Kingdom now?

About a month ago we learned that Irasburg author Howard Frank Mosher had terminal cancer. Modest and self-effacing to the end, he asked then that we not mention his illness, either personally or in the paper.

Last Sunday, he posted his own announcement of impending death on Facebook. A week later, this past Sunday, Mr. Mosher died at home with his family by his side.

It's a blow, as was the recent death, also from cancer, of another great Orleans County writer, poet Leland Kinsey of Barton, who died in September of last year.

Both men were not only notable writers, but also wonderful people. Kind, funny, devoted to their profession, to their communities, and humanity as well. They exhibited so many acts of kindness and generosity — which they kept quiet about because they were that sort of men.

Mr. Kinsey, through his poetry, beautifully documented a way of life that I'd like to say is rapidly passing, but more realistically, is likely already gone. The world of small farms and big families, close knit, clever, hard-working, and tolerant people.

Mr. Mosher was not a Vermont native, but he embraced the Northeast Kingdom as soon as he and his wife, Phillis, arrived here in 1964 as schoolteachers and, in the search for their school in Orleans, were guided by a couple of young drunk men, who were in the midst of a fistfight but piled into their car when asked for directions — an introduction that Mr. Mosher found entirely amusing.

Howard was immediately drawn to the Kingdom's rogue element and rapidly made friends with loggers, farmers, former rum-runners, bank robbers — every kind of character he ran across. He loved this place for its beauty, for its independence, and for its good trout fishing, but especially for the quirky people who inhabited it.

In the fall of 2015, he invited this writer to go for a ride with him, to visit some of the places he'd loved, places that held important memories. He asked me to take a picture of him with a gun in front of what was the former Howard Bank in Orleans, once robbed. He seemed a bit regretful that he'd never been a bank robber himself and was left only to impersonate one.

That was Howard, an irreverent man who laughed a lot, who loved life and his children and his wife, and the downtrodden, and oddballs and fellow irreverants — and fishing. Who loved Irasburg and the Northeast Kingdom at large.

He wrote 14 books, 13 of them published, the last, Points North, coming out posthumously. He was happy about that.

When I learned he was dying, I wrote to him and said, if you get out of this, Howard, you need to get a couple of goats. The Northeast Kingdom is getting entirely too civilized for you. Goats are born troublemakers, as I've learned in the past year, and you do seem to love troublemakers. He said, yup, if he got out of it, he'd get himself some goats to keep entertained.

Well, he didn't get out of it, and we both knew he wouldn't at the time. But he kept his sense of humor to the last. This is a man who, years ago, showed me the shed wall where he shot, with a shotgun, rejection slips for his work.

Howard Mosher was a generous man. He's given his personal library to the library in Irasburg, which appreciates the gift and will make a special place for it. But it was his spirit, more than any tangible gift, that he offered the world. He encouraged and supported many a writer, this one included. He coached young baseball players, and he and Phillis took in people who needed to be taken in, or at least who needed the support and love they were so generous with.

He did his best to memorialize all he loved, and all the great characters he ran across, in his books.

My favorite book, however, may be about Howard himself. *The Great Northern Express, A Writer's Journey Home* is a memoir about his journey across the country, visiting independent bookstores to promote his latest book, in a 20-year-old Chevy following his battle with prostate cancer.

It's a hilarious book that captures the nature of the writer, who doesn't complain when he shows up for a book-signing event but is chased out of the parking space reserved for the Visiting Author. When a counter man in an Oakland breakfast spot mistakes him for a street person and offers breakfast in exchange for cleaning, Howard picked up the broom.

It's that previous bout with cancer, and the radiation treatment, that ultimately killed him, he said. But he added that he was grateful for the nine good years he'd been given.

In his last days, he was honored by the state Legislature and was awarded one of the state's highest honors for writers. Both are included in this issue. Also, he wrote his own obituary. And we are re-running the 2015 story of Howard's trip down memory lane.

With deepest sorrow, we want to say just how much we will miss both Howard and Lee, and how fortunate we were to have them in the first place. — T.S.

Chronicle office hours

We are open for business:

Monday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 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.

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Death notice

Paul Stanley Winship

Paul Stanley Winship, 81, died on November 25, 2016, at his home in Lowell.

A memorial for family and friends is being considered for a date to be announced later.

Correction

The headline on page 19 of the January 25 story on a new parking area planned for Lake Willoughby was incorrect. The revised plan calls for two smaller 40-car parking lots. We apologize for the error.

January 24-30, 2017

		High	Low	Prec.	Snow	Snow on Ground
T	1/24	32	24	0.44"	0.30"	10.30"
W	1/25	33	24	0.37"	0.70"	11.00"
Th	1/26	30	25	0.03"	0.20"	11.20"
F	1/27	36	27	0.16"	2.00"	12.80"
S	1/28	30	22	0.35"	6.00"	18.00"
S	1/29	30	22	0.01"	0.30"	16.00"
M	1/30	33	6	0.05"	1.30"	16.00"

T = Trace

High and low temperatures, precipitation, snowfall, and snow depth are for 24-hour period ending 7 a.m. of the day listed.

Site is in Sutton, elevation 1,500 feet.

About letters, editorials, and opinions

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

The deadline is Tuesday 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. 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. Length aside, 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.

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

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

Tribute

Howard Mosher's imagination of Vermont

by Jay Craven

Like thousands of Vermonters who have been touched by Howard Mosher and his writing, I feel a deep sense of loss at the realization of life without him. No one has produced a larger body of work exploring the distinctive character and culture of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. No one has been more generous to fellow writers, taking time to chat, read their work, and help them. No one was more tirelessly committed to his readers, through his cross-country sojourns in his 20 year-old Chevy Celebrity (named the "loser cruiser") and his frequent signings at independent bookstores throughout New England.

In reflecting on what it is that Howard has contributed to my life, I'm awash in a stream of feelings. I never thought about Howard not being close at hand, to share a story, grab a quick laugh, or imagine how defiant old logger (and *Where the Rivers Flow North* protagonist), Noel Lord, might react to the work-related obstructions we both routinely endured. Then, I received a note from writer Craig Nova, within minutes of his learning of Howard's death:

"When you are with someone you care about," Mr. Nova wrote, "you get to be a certain way that you can only be when you are with them, and when they die, you can't be that way anymore, which means of course that they take some of you with them when they go. And I think that is what is so difficult with Howard, in that he seems to have taken some of me with him."

But I also remember a realization I had while making a film based on Howard's novel *Disappearances* — how we live for as long as the person who last remembers us. Both ideas feel right to me. Howard will endure in our memories and imaginations.

Soon after arriving with his cool wife, Phillis, in 1964, Howard set out to find characters still rooted in rural Vermont's late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He struck a rich vein that yielded log drivers, whiskey runners, farmers, con men, cock fighters, strippers, live-in housekeepers, suspected bank robbers, and an assortment of indomitable rebels who populated dusty back roads, resisting change and needing plenty of elbow room. With his keen eye, fly-trap ears, and vivid imagination, Howard captured

their essences before these people vanished forever.

Howard trusted me to render these richly detailed characters on film. And literally thousands of Vermonters pitched in to help me fund and produce these pictures, inspired by Howard's singular vision. Yes, his characters were flawed and often dark but they were deeply human. They could be simultaneously heroic and their own worst enemy. And, quite significantly, they attracted a slew of gifted actors, including Rip Torn, Tantoo Cardinal, Genevieve Bujold, Kris Kristofferson, Bruce Dern, Ernie Hudson, Henry Gibson, Martin Sheen, Tom Aldredge, Jessica Hecht, Rusty Dewees, and many others. I'll always remember getting my first call from Kris Kristofferson who was cracking up on the other side of the phone, reciting lines from ever-optimistic Quebec Bill to his son, as their world was falling apart around them. "Ain't this the greatest trip you ever imagined, Wild Bill?"

In reading Howard's stories I saw elements from Shakespeare's *Henry IV* and *King Lear* and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. But I also found something in them that resembled the western. After all, isn't Reverend Walter Andrews in *A Stranger in the Kingdom* a bit like Shane, striding into town to stand his ground and rid the place of outlaws? And don't *Where the Rivers Flow North* and *Disappearances* explore themes similar to John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* where John Wayne's aging gunslinger Tom Doniphon, faces the extinction of his way of life?

Still, while Mr. Mosher's frontier tales resembled westerns, they were unique. Westerns were set in places where white settlers were staking their claims for the first time. They were places without law, community, transmitted culture, or any real past. On Howard's Vermont frontier, family, community, and culture loomed

(Continued on page six.)

A good man is gone

To the editor,

With the passing on January 29 of Howard Frank Mosher, the Northeast Kingdom he so loved has lost a remarkable man and a great literary light. His many books telling the stories of the area are an outstanding accomplishment. When someone compared him to Mark Twain, I thought it apt but for Twain's mean streak. I don't believe I ever knew a man with less meanness to him than Howard.

We shared a fondness for fiddle music, and many times he and Phillis joined us in our kitchen for some tunes. His delighted laughter would ring out when we played his favorites — "Devil's Dream" and "Maple Sugar Time."

I always felt that I had achieved the highest literary honor when I noticed one of my poems on his refrigerator door.

He left us with one more book to look forward to. *Points North* will soon be published.

A while ago I wrote a song that he liked about old-timers telling stories. He particularly liked the last two lines:

"Still the stories linger somewhere in my mind,

A good story is the best thing a good man can leave behind."

A good man is gone. Rest in peace, my friend.

Burt Porter
Glover



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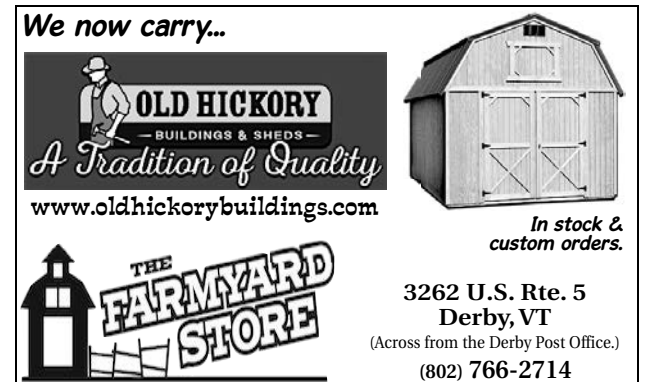
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A generous man of great humor

(Continued from page five.)

large and, to quote his favorite writer, William Faulkner, "The past is never dead. It's not even past."

Think of the unresolved murder of the black schoolteacher, Pliny Templeton, in *A Stranger in the Kingdom* and Elijah Kinneson's closely held secret about what drove his father to madness. Or Quebec Bill Bonhomme's decades-long search for his abandoning father in *Disappearances* and schoolteacher Cordelia's recitations of Shakespeare, Milton, and that great New England transcendental poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who trusted intuition and imagination over "rational" thought. Howard imbued his worlds with rich and resonant textures that distinguished his frontier from the old west.

Howard's stories provided an uncommon but abundantly cinematic connection to nature. I've strangely found urban critics who consider a story that treats the natural world as inherently nostalgic — as if nature were inert or already past. But in *Where the Rivers Flow North*, Noel Lord cannot let go of this spectacular Eden that has both tortured and rewarded him. But neither can he tame it. In *Disappearances*, this same raw setting was a place of magic, mystery, even ghosts.

Howard was funny. Think of the steady flow of ironic quips from Bangor, in *Where the Rivers Flow North* — in her floppy hat and ill-fitting clothes. Or scoundrel Resolved Kinneson in *A Stranger in the Kingdom*, with his insatiable appetites drawn from the side streets of old Italy when commedia del-arte reigned. An actor I didn't mention earlier, leathery old Oscar winner Jack Palance, agreed to play Resolved. "They'll never forget a son of a bitch like Resolved," said Mr. Palance. "He's damn funny. Of course, I'll play him." After we made our deal, according to his agent, Mr. Palance then vanished on a drinking spree into British Columbia. Just like Resolved would do.

Writer Jeffrey Lent said it best during a conversation. "Howard Mosher is simply the funniest writer — then he paused and completed his sentence. "Anywhere." But Howard also

summoned the courage to reveal the Kingdom's shadowy corners, as he did in *A Stranger in the Kingdom*, based on Vermont's most notorious racial incident. He took plenty of heat for it.

I love women — and I love Howard's distinctive, powerful, and dimensional women. Again, I think about Cordelia in *Disappearances*, Athena Allen in *Stranger*, and Abiah Kittredge in *Northern Borders*. And, of course, Bangor in *Where the Rivers Flow North*, a character that even picky *New York Times* film critic Caryn James praised for "a freshness rarely seen on screen. She is so tough and blunt," wrote Ms. James, "that when she begins to cry about the children she never had it becomes clear that emotion has been a luxury in her hardscrabble life."

Even with his many accolades, Howard occasionally got bad reviews. And even though he said he secretly thought the negative reviews were probably right and he was suspicious of the outright raves, Howard reserved a special place for his bad reviews and rejection notices — on his Irasburg garage door, where he blasted them to smithereens with his shotgun.

The 29 years I spent working with Howard Mosher have been the most challenging and satisfying period of my professional and creative life. Indeed, it has been the core of it. I couldn't be more grateful to this remarkable man, toiling each day in longhand over his yellow legal pads, breathing life into stories that have become so much a part of us.

We love you, Howard. We'll miss you. But you'll remain with us.

Filmmaker Jay Craven worked closely with Mr. Mosher since 1985 when he optioned the story rights to his book Where the Rivers Flow North. Mr. Craven has made five films based on Mr. Mosher's stories. He and actor Rusty Dewees, who appeared in all of Mr. Craven's Mosher films, will appear Friday and Saturday nights at the Stowe Town Hall, to talk about their collaboration with Mr. Mosher and screen Where the Rivers Flow North (Friday at 7:30 p.m.) and A Stranger in the Kingdom (Saturday at 7:30 p.m.).

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Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

The answer is on page 2B.

A remembrance of Howard Frank Mosher from Edward Hoagland

To the editor,

Howard Mosher was the sweetest man on earth and my best friend for many decades. Like his hero, William Faulkner, he spent his life celebrating the wealth and mysteries of his home region, Kingdom County, for all of us to know forever. I will miss him very sorely. They don't make them like him anymore. We came to the Kingdom at the same time and explored its magic side by side, from trout streams to commission sales. Love was the basis of his life and all of his work.

Edward Hoagland

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Letters to the editor

Perhaps the Craftsbury Outdoor Center has expanded beyond Hosmer's capacity

To the editor,

As a property owner on Great Hosmer in Albany, I just wanted to add my perspective on the discussion on the use of the water. At the present time, I have no power boat but am not opposed to their use on Hosmer, including water skiing. While the Craftsbury Outdoor Center (COC) brings jobs and revenue to the area, they have also changed the atmosphere. They are ever expanding programs and facilities and in a rural neighborhood, that cannot go unnoticed or without tradeoffs. The COC is on the water daily conducting group classes that can be heard on shore. This is quite early in the morning and really shows little regard for landowners, vacationers, or nature watchers who desire peace

and quiet. This is actually what most entities that share a resource do as a common courtesy: They observe quiet hours generally from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. When I walk to the lake, as I generally do well before 8 a.m., they are on the water and conducting business.

Yes, the COC is a nonprofit as we are continually reminded. The programs they offer to community and schools, etc. are often pointed out as well. As a nonprofit, making use of its neighbors' land for ski trails, etc. and monopolizing the water for sculling on a regular schedule in the summer, I would expect nothing less. That, I believe, is what a nonprofit *should* do.

My hope is that the COC can show good faith as a neighbor and hear what the long time

property owners and other Great Hosmer users are saying: More flexibility in its schedule on the water in the summer. On the Albany end of the lake, it is rare to see people water skiing or tubing. It's the sculls out there in numbers. (The COC's videos of a day on the lake even support this.) Even a nonprofit is a business and the COC is using the lake to generate revenue. Most locals who use the lake work elsewhere to make a living to be able to go to the lake, generally on the weekends. Is it too much to ask that the COC use another body of water from Friday noon to Monday noon for their business? Maybe a local person on Little Hosmer could offer scull storage so that it would be convenient for them. Moreover, the COC has many other programs that they could concentrate on Saturday and Sunday.

Thank you for letting me share my perspective. Until someone is on the lake and sees for him- or herself a large sculling group and the impact of that presence, it is hard to understand the issue. While time goes forward and nothing stays the same forever, etc. etc., the feeling on the lake is that the COC, in conducting its business, has perhaps expanded beyond Hosmer's capacity.

Mary Peters
Albany

A fond farewell to a stellar man

To the editor,

Aside from his marvelous writing, I would just like to add that Howard Frank Mosher was an over-the-top human being. He had so many outstanding attributes. He had a sharp sense of humor and loved to hear others' stories. He was a keen listener and a kind man. He was a wonderful critic of others' writing and devoted his precious time to critique their writing when

asked. When he received rejections for his own writing, he would attach the letter to his barn door and shoot holes in it with his twelve-gauge shotgun. As the end drew near, I wrote and told him to shoot holes in his door and then to aim skyward and shoot at the moon and stars. A fond farewell to a stellar man!

Lindsay Knowlton
Glover

Thank your highway crew workers

Dear *Chronicle*,

I am writing today to encourage your readers to thank your local state highway crew workers. These men and women often are out plowing and salting at 3 a.m. so when we wake up we can get to work, to the VA, our grandchildren's birthday party, or anywhere else we need or desire to go. If we have snow or freezing rain on Christmas, they sacrifice their time with their families so that we can be with our families. Without the hard work and commitment of these dedicated

men and women, Vermont would shut down with every snow or ice event. Given that that freezing conditions can occur for seven months out of the year, I strongly applaud their efforts and encourage you to do the same.

I was also pleased to see many Agency of Transportation (AOT) workers and their families at the Women's March in Montpelier on January 21. As union members within the Vermont State Employees' Association (VSEA), they are not only committed to maintaining our roads, but also to

fighting for the equal rights, respect, and dignified working conditions for all working Vermonters.

So next time you have the pleasure of meeting one of our Northeast Kingdom AOT workers, by all means shake their hand, buy them a coffee, and say "thanks." I know they deserve it and I know they would appreciate the gesture.

Solidarity,
David Van Deusen
senior union representative, AOT/VSEA
Cabot

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Letters to the editor

We have to take care of our own

Dear editor,

January 20, 2017, is now an important note in our American history. That was the last day in office for Barack Obama, the first African American President of the United States. It was the first day for the brash and bombastic new President Donald Trump to be in office after all the inaugural ceremonies, including the swearing in on the holy *Bible*, strangely enough. I write that as so many of the *Bible* references are nowadays being questioned with the church and state separation controversies.

The American people endured a long and crazy wide open primary, with 17 Republican and five Democratic wannabees vying in the race for the White House. A whole lot of name-calling and other shenanigans were done, and little dealings with the real issues concerning so many disgruntled American citizens. The General Election was not that much better with Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton carrying so much baggage; the issues being like afterthoughts for both of them. I am quite sure Trump is smiling, because while polls and the media were toting Hillary as the winner with so many electoral votes in her column, there was no way Trump could become President. But when it happened, people, including Clinton, woke up the day after

election day to the reality that Trump had garnished enough electoral votes to win the election and become our forty-fifth President. What a letdown for Hillary and company, who touted all those American popular votes.

Now the whole wide world waits to see how American precedent will change after eight years of Obama world. Trump has promised to unify America, but with it will come changes he campaigned on and must deliver, or else the wrath of the people will be down on his shoulders.

We Christians know he can do it, but only with the help of God, as God is always in control, even when we wonder about it sometimes. We also know we need to pray for Trump, as we needed to do for the other Presidents ahead of him, as no one, even Presidents, can carry their heavy loads alone. They should not even try, as God is there for everyone, even for Donald Trump, when he asks for help or advice.

President Abraham Lincoln kept an open *Bible* on his desk in the White House, referring to it for help and guidance, and sometimes, just for peace and solitude. What a good example for the Presidents coming after him.

Some people and the media have criticized Trump for his appointments to his Cabinet posts, because some are billionaires like himself. But

why? When politicians get to the presidency, don't they appoint their politician friends to Cabinet posts? It will be refreshing to have some non-politicians running the government, as our present day politicians have not done such a wonderful job for us. In fact, quite a lousy job, getting our national debt close to 20 trillion, without any ideas how to get it paid off, or even reduced. Maybe the billionaire businessmen can do more to help us ordinary citizens. They cannot do much worse.

Most of the world, except Putin and Russia, are worried that America will no longer support it, and I, for one, think that is a good thing. We have done too much to always bail out the needy nations, but what have we gotten in return? Isolationist, or not, Trump has the right idea with his America First! We have to take care of our own here in the United States. It is about time the world starts to take care of their own as well. A precious few of the nations we have helped, have really shown any development to a Democratic government, so why do we keep bailing them out anyway, when they falter. Remember the age-old saying: God helps those who help themselves!

Jacob Kokaly
Newport

Hoping policymakers factor in what Vermonters have invested in ensuring quality land management

Editor:

I'm not sure if I agree with Bobby Starr's concern about the Current Use penalty being too onerous or not. I certainly see arguments on both sides. But there was one point made in the January 18 *Chronicle* article that is definitely NOT a valid argument for easing off on the Plum Creek cutting violation on the former Champion Lands now owned by Weyerhaeuser.

The article states: "Mr. Starr...said he fears that Weyerhaeuser might split its holdings into small parcels if the state makes life too difficult. That, he said, could result in a loss of land for fishing, hunting and other outdoor recreation."

I'm a little surprised that Bobby would forget that Vermont invested \$4.5-million of taxpayer dollars through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) to make absolutely certain that such a loss of recreation rights or subdivision into small parcels could never happen under any circumstances as part of the complicated conservation deal in 1999 when Champion liquidated these lands.

To refresh the collective memory, the deal sent 22,000 of the 132,000 acres to the state as the West Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMWMA), 26,000 acres to the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and the remaining 84,000 acres (not 56,000 as the article suggests) back into private ownership with, to quote from the WMWMA management plan: "permanent conservation and public access easements to, ensure, in perpetuity, that forest products will be harvested in an ecologically

sustainable manner and the public will continue to enjoy access for compatible recreational pursuits. State funding was used to acquire the conservation easement and the public access easement on the Private Timberlands."

That public access easement should hopefully alleviate Bobby's fears of loss of recreational opportunities. As for the details of the conservation easement, believe me, that is one dense, boring document to digest. But one principle that is enshrined in it promises a decided enhancement of the level of care expected in forest management plans and activities. We Vermonters paid handsomely for that enhancement and I'm sure a corporation as sophisticated as Plum Creek factored those requirements in when they decided on a purchase price from the initial buyer, Essex Timber. My point being, that harvesting expectations on these lands really should be higher than your run-of-the-mill Current Use enrollee. High enough to justify the penalty proposed? I'm not sure; I'll leave that to the courts and the policymakers. But I hope those policymakers factor in what we Vermonters have invested — in addition to the Current Use program — in ensuring high quality management of these lands.

Paul Hannan
Calais

The author was the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board director of conservation programs from 1997 to 2006.

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Opinion

Let's end religious restrictions, have true school choice

by the Reverend J. Loring Carpenter

When is school choice not really a choice? This week editorials and letters applaud educational choice in Vermont. However, in a state that celebrates freedom and independence, why do we eliminate choice, in its fullest definition, for families desiring an education for their children that is consistent with their values? Anti-religious families insist they have a right to education without religious overtones, yet families wishing education with a foundation of religious values are discriminated against unless they can afford the extra expense of tuition. What reasons allow this limited definition of choice to continue?

Is it due to a concern our children get the best education? Recently Rob Roper wrote how vital a private school education was for his unique needs. His was not an indictment of educators or public schools, but testimony to varying learning needs of many. Religious schools as an alternative choice is another way of meeting the unique needs of a large segment of our society who are religious.

Is it because Christian schools are considered exclusive fortresses? United Christian Academy hosts students from other nations, religions, and a large percentage not involved in a church. UCA's foundation is Christian, its culture expects behavior consistent with Christian values, yet the school does not mandate a specific religion to attend or graduate. More about this another time.

UCA is also not exclusively for those with funds to attend. Over 50 percent receive financial aid. School founders sought to establish an educational alternative allowing for Christian values in support of families seeking an environment of academic excellence, Biblical values, and Christian unity. UCA is committed to finding a way to educate all who choose this alternative. The school regularly seeks individual and church contributions to help fund needed financial assistance for families.

Is restricting choice due to a concern over educational quality? Most Christian schools, UCA included, have outstanding graduation results. Students are accepted at the finest secondary institutions in the country. One recent alumna on a return visit shared that she was so

prepared that she was considering working on three degrees in her four years. Religion may be the foundation of UCA values, but academic excellence is valued as highly. Hard work, family encouragement, and teachers who lovingly refuse to allow students to fail, have resulted in the last two graduating classes being offered an average of \$100,000 per student in scholarship offers, a record to celebrate.

Is limiting choice due to a false belief that religious values are not compatible with educational excellence? Do we forget that most higher educational institutions, even Ivy League schools, were founded as religious institutions? Christianity has been at the forefront of education in every nation including ours, offering a loving, uplifting, encouraging environment for students to grow and mature in mind and soul. Christians have always viewed education as a way to improve a person's life and society as a whole.

Do we believe those wishing education with a religious foundation is inconsistent with our nation's founders? My understanding of history is that most founders were people of faith, even if having a variety of religious styles. Plymouth Colony and Providence Plantation were founded around issues of religious freedom, seeking a place to exercise religious choice freely.

First Amendment writers intended to ensure all people freedom OF religion, not freedom FROM religion. Yet schools now prevent families the choice to have their children educated in a school that allows religious discussion without bearing the hardship of the extra cost of tuition. They are forced to pay the same taxes as everyone without receiving education that meets their needs. Instead the choice for educating and instilling values for their children, their exercise of freedom of religion, is made for them; they must attend schools refusing to allow religious discussion or find the funds to attend a religious school.

Representative Scott Beck recently wrote, "school choice is good for Vermont." Yet, for nearly a third of our state's families, there is really no choice in the truest sense. They could choose a school with a religious foundation, but are refused this option unless they find extra funds. A tuition voucher without restrictions is the only way any state can boast of school choice.

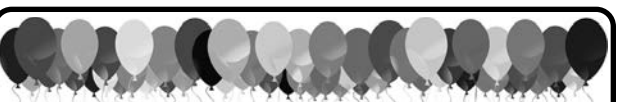
If Vermont values independence and freedom, does it really mean freedom for all except religious? Let's end religious restrictions for Vermont and have true school choice. Do it for the benefit of every family's right to choose an education in line with their family values, and model the intent of our nation's founders. Our society will be better for it. What we have now is really not school choice.

The Reverend J. Loring Carpenter is interim head of school at United Christian Academy in Newport.

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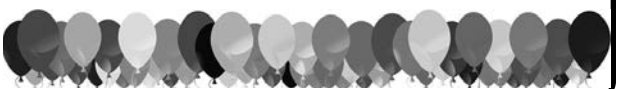
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Energy, gender, family share screen in *Denial*

by Tena Starr

ST. JOHNSBURY — The day back in 2015 when Christine Hallquist decided, finally, to tell the world, and importantly, her management team at the Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC), that from here on she was Christine rather than David, a lifetime of anxiety and insomnia vanished.

“Immediately,” she said Friday night following the showing of the film at Catamount Arts that her son Derek has made about energy, and about his father’s transition from male to female.

The documentary, called *Denial*, has been shown around the state recently, and Ms. Hallquist has been there to answer questions — about both energy and gender — when the movie ends.

By now, Ms. Hallquist’s gender change is not news, but the film intimately documents just how tough it was to get to where she is — still the brilliant and knowledgeable CEO of Vermont Electric, but a person who confidently goes to work in women’s clothing rather than a suit and tie.

Derek Hallquist set out to make a documentary about climate change and energy use, wisely using his father as one of his main sources. Somewhere in the making of that film, he was blindsided by his father’s disclosure that he was, internally, a woman.

Rather than abandon course, Derek proceeded with his original idea and incorporated his father’s personal struggle, and the family’s, into the story. The movie is cinematically beautiful, entirely coherent, and a powerful story that is ultimately about courage, honesty, love, and intelligence — and energy, of course. Sometimes it’s darkly funny. For instance, who would consider prostate cancer and the need for surgery a gift from God?

Christine Hallquist herself is pretty funny, and often had the audience at Catamount Arts laughing out loud during the question and answer



Christine Hallquist (left) chats with an old friend, chemist Merideth Angwin, after the showing of *Denial* at Catamount Arts Friday night. Photo by Joseph Gresser

session. But she’s also a forward thinking person who is obsessed with energy — how it’s made, how it’s distributed, and how it’s used — as well as remedying climate change, firm in the belief that we have the knowledge.

“Everything about this story is as it happened,” Ms. Hallquist said, introducing the film. “There’s no acting. I was simply trying to get through life, but this is what happened.”

The film opens with David Hallquist playing the piano, a metronome by his side. “My Dad has always been a little obsessive,” Derek observes.

He goes on to say that he’s developed an obsession of his own — the debate about energy, climate change, the planet’s failing health, and what to do about it all.

Among other things, the documentary illustrates just how much Ms. Hallquist thinks,

and knows, about the business of efficiently and effectively providing energy — and how humanitarian she is. At more than one point, she noted how many low income people are in VEC’s territory and that cost must be a factor to be considered in the energy equation. If you have only \$11.58 in your wallet, you aren’t going to be thinking about the environment, she said.

Derek obviously has inherited at least some of his father’s sense of humor. One scene in the movie shows David Hallquist shaving, then flossing. David wryly says: “I’ve got to believe that flossing my teeth is not going to make the final cut.”

Wrong.

At some point, Derek says his father called him to say he’d be picking him up at the airport because he had something to tell him. Cancer? Derek wondered. That would happen, but not on

(Continued on page eleven.)

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Beautiful, well-told story is stranger than fiction

(Continued from page ten.)

this day. This day the news was something far from what Derek had anticipated.

“He said I suffer from gender dysphoria. I didn’t expect that. I said, so you’re gay? He said, no I just feel more comfortable as a woman. I’m a woman inside.”

David Hallquist’s wife had known for some time that her husband liked to dress in women’s clothing, but she feared for his job, among other things, and wanted it kept a secret.

Derek had a different reaction. “We didn’t really know how to handle it,” he says in the film. “I started wondering how my dad could have hidden this for so long.”

For a very long time, David/Christine Hallquist lived a double life — Christine at home, David in the outside world, and especially at work.

One of the striking things about Derek’s film is the willingness of both Christine and his wife, as well as Derek himself, to be shown at their most vulnerable, even in embarrassing situations. There are painful moments, and inadvertently hilarious ones. One can only imagine what courage it took to be shown on film in both.

Talking to Derek, Christine Hallquist says he knew he was different when he was in first grade and smelled a female classmate’s perfume and loved it.

“I was always acting,” she says.

But when she approached her fifties, her thoughts turned suicidal, and the need to be her real self developed an urgency. She explains to Derek that, if she’d announced her gender preference at 15, she would have been put in a mental institution. That’s what happened then. If she’d announced it in her twenties, his wife would never have married him. They would never have had children. As a middle-aged person, she worried that “if I go to work in a dress, I would be unemployed.”

As David Hallquist, she felt secure and confident as a leader, she said. As Christine, she feared that no one would take her seriously.

In the middle of all that, there’s the Lowell

wind project, which VEC’s CEO believed in, but is maligned by opponents. In one scene, an irate resident calls him a son of a bitch and suggests he live where he lives. Shouting protestors line the road.

Once an advocate of commercial wind in Lowell, Ms. Hallquist has rethought the ultimate value of wind projects on Vermont’s ridgelines.

And then, David Hallquist learns he has prostate cancer, which leads to one of the funniest, and darkest, scenes in the film. Over the dinner table, he says he will have to have surgery to remove his testicles, that he knew testosterone was killing him emotionally but not physically. Derek’s mother calmly says that Christine considers the situation kind of a gift from God, a “God wink,” as she puts it.

“This is stranger than fiction,” Derek says.

The film ends with Christine’s first day showing up for work as a woman. Her son films her from the parking lot as she walks through the door dressed in women’s clothing and cheerfully says, “Good morning” to her employees.

She was the first CEO in the country to transition gender at work. She and her wife separated, but are back together, living as “five-star roommates” now, Ms. Hallquist said.

It appeared, at first, that members of the audience were hesitant to address her gender change. The first questions were about energy, a subject Christine Hallquist is only too happy to talk about. She can rattle on about new forms of batteries for renewable storage, the grid and how it works (or doesn’t), and her own efforts to get Congress to allow utilities to monitor personal utilities in order to save energy, an effort that raised too many concerns about privacy.

“This was meant to be a climate change movie,” she said. “In the middle of it I complicated it.”

Although she’d told Derek not to tell anyone her secret, he did. He told fellow producers, and one of them said, “This is a story about you and your father.”

And it is. But it’s more than that.

One woman asked what happened after that

first day when Christine, rather than David, showed up at work.

“Why couldn’t I have been the CEO of an artists’ colony?” she said to laughter.

Yes, the first day was tense, in fact the first month was tense, she said. But that first day a supervisor broke the ice by saying, “Christine, I noticed you’re a little late this morning. Does it take a little longer to get dressed?”

She said there was a period where she thought she might die of cancer and told the management team about her condition. “It was harder to tell them I was transgender than to tell them that,” she said.

Asked whether she has lost respect in the field because of her gender change, she said, “I’m not aware that I’ve lost respect. I feel well accepted.”

But she added this caveat. “I started out as a white male. What if I’d been a black male from Detroit?”

Before Christine went into work in David’s place, she said, “I was not aware of it, I swear I was not aware of it, but women are treated different from men.”

She recalled a meeting where she made a point in the morning, and no one seemed to hear it. Later in the day, when someone else made the point, a man mentioned that Christine had made it earlier.


They heard her, she said, but not the same way they would have heard David Hallquist.

“Nobody ever told me to smile, as a man,” she said. “We have a caste system here, and the white male is at the top of it.”

One woman said she’d heard a story about a person who had transitioned the other way, from woman to man and been told he finally grasped physics. “Do you still understand physics?” she asked.

“How would I know?” Ms. Hallquist asked amidst laughter.


The movie is on Amazon. Watch it. It’s beautiful, informative, startling, funny, and astoundingly brave.



















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Howard Mosher on the Kingdom and its characters

Editor's note: This story originally ran in September of 2015.

by Tena Starr

Writer Howard Mosher landed in Orleans County in 1964. He and his wife, Phillis, were in their twenties, schoolteachers looking for work, and they both ended up with jobs at what was then Orleans High School.

They were in the village searching for the school, their new place of employment, on a day when the streets were all but deserted when they noticed two men engaged in a fistfight on the railroad tracks. Mr. Mosher, astonished today at his audacity, interrupted the fight by rolling down his car window and asking if the gentlemen could tell him where the school was.

They could do better than that, they said. They could show him. Blind drunk, Mr. Mosher said, the pair piled into the back seat of the car and proceeded to take them on a meandering tour of Orleans,

eventually finding the school.

Mission accomplished, the two men got out and wandered off, arms around each other like the best of buddies. A few minutes later, they were back at it, re-engaged in the fistfight, whatever it was about, as the Moshers watched through their rear view mirror.

"Welcome to the Northeast Kingdom, sweetie," Mr. Mosher recalled his wife saying, as they glanced backward at the fight.

He told this story on a chilly day in August. We were on something of a tour, an Orleans County road trip. Mr. Mosher had extended an invitation to visit some of the places he associated with his stories.

Howard Mosher is a man who arrived in the right place. Originally from the Catskill area of New York, for about 40 years he's been writing about the Northeast Kingdom, which he rapidly, and fiercely, came to love.

It's a place that has little obvious to recommend it to many — harsh climate, poverty, often a

hardscrabble life for even the more fortunate.

But Mr. Mosher has embraced the Kingdom's virtues, in particular its characters, the kind of tough, hardy people who appeal to his affection and respect for individuality, strength, and defiance of convention and authority.

He's now written 14 books, with his latest *God's Kingdom*, due out next week. His first book was *Disappearances*, published in 1977. Nearly all of his books are based in the Northeast Kingdom, and Jay Craven has made several of them into movies.

Mr. Mosher said he was a troubled youth — or maybe not that so much as just plain trouble, he clarified with a typical big laugh.

That information could surprise many people who know him. He's a genial, big-hearted and generous fellow, who one would never surmise had been the kind of teen who drove his parents nuts.

His family, he said, was, for the most part, "Scots-Irish rascals and rogues." They were great storytellers with an aversion to gainful employment, he said. They also had a tendency to go mad.

For instance, his great-grandfather Levi Gleason tried to blow up his family.

"Fortunately, his huge, homemade bomb went off prematurely," Mr. Mosher wrote in a letter following the road trip. "Grandpa Gleason was the only casualty, though he blew the family homestead right in two.

"Now here's the really diabolical part of the story," he wrote. "Just before Grandpa Gleason planted the IED in the farmhouse cellar, he trotted it around the neighborhood in a big, gift-wrapped box.

"Levi, what do you have there?" his cronies said.

"Oh, Grandpa G said, it's a present for my little grandson."

The grandson was Mr. Mosher's then four-year-old future grandfather, who fortunately survived the incident.

The vilest of villains in his books are based on old Levi, Mr. Mosher said.

On this day, we started out in Irasburg, where Mr. Mosher lives. Our first stop was the Irasburg Common.

(Continued on page thirteen.)



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Better a writer than a robber

(Continued from page twelve.)

There, he explained that the fictional Kingdom Common is actually a composite of Irasburg, Newport and Orleans. That's why readers of his books who live in the Northeast Kingdom, can't quite identify it.

Consider it literary license.

Being a novelist is no easy task, Mr. Mosher emphasized. For one thing, it involves writing page after page — and then having the guts to throw away on Thursday morning what you spent Wednesday doing because it just doesn't work.

Writing requires patience, and he doesn't consider himself a particularly patient man.

But he's clearly underestimated himself in that regard. His "office" is stacked with paper — manuscripts written out in scrawling longhand. They're later typed. It's a laborious process even for an experienced writer.

From Irasburg's Common, we hit the back roads — some I'd never been on, though I was born in Orleans County and have lived here most of my life.

Back roads are Mr. Mosher's territory. He's a man interested in a good fishing spot, among other things, and we made a few detours to check out a fishing hole.

Just outside Irasburg, we stopped at a covered bridge somewhere near Kidder Hill. Jake Blodgett was his initial story mentor, Mr. Mosher said.

In the late sixties, Mr. Mosher and his wife went to the University of California, Irvine, where he was considering re-engagement with academia. Eight days later, they returned to

Orleans County. The critical moment was when they stopped at a red light and a telephone truck driver stopped at the same time.

"He rolled down his window and said, I'm from Vermont, too," Mr. Mosher recalled. "Go back while you still can."

"Were it not for that, perhaps we wouldn't be taking this walk," he said as we strolled across the covered bridge.

After the misguided trip to Irvine, he returned to Orleans County without a job. It was

"He rolled down his window and said, I'm from Vermont, too," Mr. Mosher recalled. "Go back while you still can."

the fall of 1969, and there were no teaching jobs available. But he'd heard that Mr. Blodgett, who logged with horses, was looking for a helper.

"He lived in a shack outside of Evansville," Mr. Mosher said.

He presented himself, and Mr. Blodgett asked what he'd done for work before. Mr. Mosher suspected he wouldn't look favorably upon a teacher, but named his profession anyhow.

"He said, well, teacher, that ain't going to

help you much in the woods.

"He was a big guy with snowy white hair and piercing blue eyes," Mr. Mosher recalled.

Asked what he'd like in the way of money, Mr. Mosher suggested Mr. Blodgett try him out for a few days and see what he was worth.

"Well, teacher, that ain't going to be that much," Mr. Blodgett replied.

He did take him on, though, and eventually the two became friends. Mr. Mosher learned to work with the horses, pulling logs out. He wasn't, perhaps, all that good at it, since the horse was continuously getting away from him.

"Schoolteacher, your horse has run off on you again," his employer often said.

"He told me a lot of stories that ended up in *Disappearances*," Mr. Mosher said.

And he told Mr. Mosher this story, which was why we were at the bridge.

To earn a little money during Prohibition, Mr. Blodgett ran liquor from Canada. He probably never made much money but liked the adventure, Mr. Mosher said.

One night he noticed red lights behind him.


"He got to Coventry and looked in the looking glass — he always called the rear view mirror the looking glass — and he saw red lights coming up behind him. He knew it was revenuers."

He made it around the first corner just before the Orne Bridge, but not the second. His car went into the river, the Black, where he doused his lights. And there he sat while the revenuers went by him, returned, then left again.

"He said he could hear the bridge boards

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An example of our business profile format.

From troubled youth, a genial, big-hearted fellow

(Continued from page thirteen.)

rattling," Mr. Mosher said. The revenueurs eventually departed for good, unable to locate their target, and when Mr. Blodgett noticed a nearby farmer's lights come on he set out for the place and gave the farmer two bottles of Seagrams in exchange for getting a pull out of the river.

What did he do for two-three hours sitting in the river? Mr. Mosher wondered.

The answer to that was obvious: He pulled a bottle of Seagrams out of the bag and drank it.

"I needed to come back to Vermont to live," Mr. Mosher said as we walked back to his sedan. "I needed to come back and learn about life and the Northeast Kingdom."

It was his graduate school, he said.

Mr. Mosher credits his first landlady with what he calls his "moment of truth" when it comes to storytelling.

She was a motherly woman, he said, who invited them down for coffee and cake one evening and told the following story:

She and her husband and children were farming in Brownington when the Great Depression hit. Her husband, who she appeared to have dearly loved, died, and her future was precarious, indeed.

So she made what she called a hard choice and employed the one skill her father had taught her — making moonshine. One night as she was at it, she described what she called "a pair of city shoes and a city suit standing in them" appearing behind her.

"She said, you can arrest me, but if you do we're going to lose the farm," as Mr. Mosher tells it. "When she turned back, the man had disappeared."

Some years later, the woman had moved into the village of Orleans and heard a knock at the door. It was the same man who'd caught her making moonshine in Brownington.

Mr. Mosher said she asked if the man had come to arrest her again.

"He said, no, ma'am, I've come to marry you."

And that's what happened. They were, indeed, married and apparently lived happily until he died. She'd always wanted to see the ocean and go to a Red Sox game, Mr. Mosher said. Her second husband took her to both.

"She said, Howard and Phillis, I don't want you to think I'm feeling sorry for myself. I've had a good life, but I haven't had good luck keeping my husbands alive."

"It was an epiphany," Mr. Mosher said. "I thought, I have to write these stories of the Northeast Kingdom."

Also, back in his early days in the Kingdom he inadvertently ran across Marjorie Moore, a feisty force of nature who was fiercely protective of her own.

While living in Orleans, the Moshers' driveway snowed up, then iced up and they couldn't get their car out of the garage. Following the advice of their landlady, they called a fellow with the machinery adequate for the job. He declined to help.

The Moshers once again consulted their landlady, who said she knew someone who might be of assistance, a woman who got things

done. She called Ms. Moore, and it wasn't long before the Moshers' drive was cleared by the man they had called in the first place.

Marjorie had apparently given him a call and laid down the law.

Not surprisingly, many of Mr. Mosher's stories come from Orleans where he taught.

In Orleans Village, we stood on the bridge, where he told a fishing story. Howard Mosher is a compassionate man who has taken in troubled youth over the years. In his early days in Vermont, he worked for OCCSA, the much wilder anti-poverty agency that preceded NEKCA, and its controversial director, Tom Hahn. He worked with young people who had dropped out of school and needed a place to live (many of them ended up living with the Moshers), a job, or both.

One day he brought a young man to Ethan Allen in Orleans where the boy was given a job. Shortly after, Mr. Mosher saw him fishing off the bridge in the village.

"He'd lasted about an hour or so" at the job, Mr. Mosher said, chuckling.

But in lieu of gainful employment, he'd managed to hook a big rainbow. So there he was, at the top of the bridge with a good-sized trout on his hook and no way to pull it up that far.

Mr. Mosher offered to help, so the youth played the fish until it was tired, while Mr. Mosher went down by the riverbank ready to grab it. He nearly managed, but the trout came unhooked, and though Mr. Mosher made a mighty effort to hold onto it, it escaped.

"I said, oh, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry."

"He said, that's okay, that's the story of my life."

Laughing again, Mr. Mosher said: "And he was right."

He recalled another youth, who told him he'd got a deer.

"At night?" Mr. Mosher wondered.

"Yeah, with my father's machine gun."

Another time, he was with a young man who repeatedly told him about good fishing holes in Feed Sack Brook, which apparently appeared in numerous towns.

"How can all these brooks be

called Feed Sack Brook?" Mr. Mosher wondered.

"That's just what I call 'em cause every time I go fishing I bring back a feed sack of trout," the young man replied.

The observatory on Prospect Hill in Brownington, with its stunning view of Memphremagog and Mounts Pisgah and Hor, brought back other memories, as well as some reflection on the writing process itself.

While writing is pretty much a right brain exercise, it's also necessary to be analytical, to be willing to look closely at the work and be level-headed about it, willing to admit when it doesn't pass muster, Mr. Mosher said.

From the observatory, he mentioned that a new character in *God's Kingdom* is based on his wife, Phillis, as is an old character, Marie Blythe.

Last week, I told Mr. Mosher that I needed to take a picture of him, his choice of where and when. He had me meet him at the former Howard Bank building in Orleans, which was once robbed.

He explained that he'd had two aspirations as a youth. One was to be a writer; the other was to be a bank robber. It's fortunate, for both him and us, that he was successful in the first endeavor, which likely prevented him from pursuing the second.

He said he had a couple of props he'd like to employ, and would I walk with him to his car. There, he pulled out two guns. I wasn't paying enough attention to them to notice if they were shotguns or rifles, but we headed back to the bank building with Mr. Mosher's guns in tow.

I snapped a few pictures while he stood in front of the former Howard Bank with a gun in each hand. We got barely a glance.

And that's symbolic of what Mr. Mosher so very much likes about the Northeast Kingdom.

He was going to an event that night where he'd been asked to wear "cocktail attire."

He planned to wear one of his more worn flannel shirts. He certainly wouldn't be rushing out to buy a tie.

"Can you imagine anyone telling Marjorie Moore what to wear?" he said, shaking his head.

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Mosher receives Herb Lockwood Prize

Burlington City Arts has named Howard Frank Mosher of Irasburg the fourth recipient of the Herb Lockwood Prize. Mr. Mosher was presented with the \$10,000 prize at his home on Friday, January 27. His wife, Phillis, and his daughter Annie were present. Mr. Mosher died of cancer on Sunday, January 29.

The Herb Lockwood Prize recognizes artists who produce significant work while also having a beneficent influence on the Vermont community.

Mr. Mosher is a Vermont literary institution. A resident of the state for 53 years, he has published 11 novels set in Vermont and two memoirs.

His titles are iconic and instantly recognizable: *A Stranger in the Kingdom*, *Where the Rivers Flow North*, *Disappearances*, *Waiting for Teddy Williams*.

His subject is always Vermont, but not in

a postcard way. Rather, he brings rough and tumble hill folk to life, exposes racism and narrow mindedness, and finds generosity and humor in the most modest of places. He is the bard of the Northeast Kingdom, although in his books it is called Kingdom County.

After he was diagnosed with cancer in 2008 (and underwent 46 radiation treatments), Mr. Mosher embarked on a literary tour of America, covering 20,000 miles in his aging Chevy Celebrity as he visited the 100 best independent bookstores in the country. His book on that trip, *The Great Northern Express*, was hailed as hilarious and poignant, half memoir and half an American road book classic.

His craft and character have been widely recognized, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts Award, an American Academy of Arts and Letters

Literature Award, the Vermont Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, and the New England Independent Booksellers Association President's Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts.

Mr. Mosher's works are landmarks, but his personal style is modesty personified. At one writers conference, in which the instructors were given 150 words to deliver their biography, his entire bio read: "Howard Frank Mosher is a writer in Vermont."

On his blog, Mr. Mosher uses his words to praise books by other Vermont writers worthy of greater recognition, to celebrate small bookstores, and to support small publishers — always the ones based in Vermont. He has helped many a Vermont writer with words of encouragement, even those yet to be published. — from Burlington City Arts.

State Legislature honors Howard Mosher

S.C.R. 5. Senate concurrent resolution honoring Howard Frank Mosher, the Northeast Kingdom's special chronicler and literary ambassador.

Whereas, the fictionalized, but inherently authentic, stories and voices of Vermont's fabled Northeast Kingdom (NEK) are preserved in the writings of the author Howard Frank Mosher, and

Whereas, the three essential writing principles that his eighth-grade teacher, Mrs. Earla Armstrong, taught him (to read the classics, revise your work, and write about what you know), have remained with him throughout his illustrious career, and

Whereas, in 1964, upon his graduating from Syracuse University, Howard Frank Mosher and his wife, Phillis, left their native upstate New York and headed for the NEK, which he immediately recognized as an author's gold mine of stories, and

Whereas, during his early years in Vermont, Howard Frank Mosher taught at the former Orleans High School and Lake Region Union High School, and

Whereas, in a collaboration with NEK filmmaker Jay Craven, four of Howard Frank Mosher novels, *Where the Rivers Flow North*, *A Stranger in the Kingdom*, *Disappearances*, and *Northern Borders*, have been transformed into movies, and

Whereas, Howard Frank Mosher's talent as a writer has been recognized through his receipt of a Guggenheim Fellowship, the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Literature Award, the Vermont Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, and the New England Independent Booksellers Association's President's Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts. The Vermont College of Fine Arts' Howard Frank Mosher Short Fiction Prize is a lasting tribute to the author and his published works, and

Whereas, he has written that Kingdom Common, the quintessential NEK town central to much of his writing, is located approximately where Orleans is situated, although infused with elements from other NEK communities, and that his favorite protagonists, the Kinnesons, are based on his own "pretty strange outfit" of a family, and

Whereas, for 40 years, Howard Frank and Phillis Mosher have resided in Irasburg, and in December 2016, he donated his beloved personal book collection to Irasburg's Leach Memorial Library, writing in an accompanying Christmas letter, "I love to write...But I live to read," *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors Howard Frank Mosher, the Northeast Kingdom's special chronicler and literary ambassador, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Howard Frank Mosher.

David Zuckerman
President of the Senate
Mitzi Johnson
Speaker of the House
Attested to:
John H. Bloomer, Jr.
Secretary of the Senate

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
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“This case is very complicated”

(Continued from page one.)

“not the small pile she brought to court today.”

“Are these all the town documents you have?” the judge asked Ms. Diaz.

“All the original town documents, yes,” Ms. Diaz replied, stressing the word “original.”

Judge VanBenthuyzen ordered Ms. Diaz to hand over all town records in her possession, whether she considered them original or not.

“You mean copies of the copies of the copies?” Ms. Diaz asked.

“You’re saying that this is redundant but you don’t object to doing it?” the judge clarified.

“No,” Ms. Diaz said.

In the motion for contempt filed on behalf of the town on January 5, Mr. Gillies writes:

“As the enclosed affidavit shows, Ms. Diaz defied this order and has provided the Town with no document, thumb drive, or other electronic record.”

“She has defied this as well,” the motion for contempt says. “The Town is exasperated with Ms. Diaz’ behavior, and seeks the assistance of the Court in obtaining her compliance with its order.”

The town did not ask that any penalties be imposed on Ms. Diaz for contempt.

“Would you like me to suspend her from office?” Judge VanBenthuyzen asked Mr. Gillies.

“Your honor, it’s not at all clear that you would have that authority,” Mr. Gillies replied.

“Would you like me to appoint a special master?” the judge asked.

A special master is a trained observer who would be in the Coventry town office all the time that Ms. Diaz is in the office, Mr. Morley explained later.

The town would bear the expense, but it could be a possibility in the future, Select Board Chairman Mike Marcotte said.

Mr. Gillies said that he’d talk the idea over with the selectmen.

Ms. Diaz had some requests of her own for documents and

disclosures from the select board.

“You would be well advised to consult with counsel to understand the rules governing discovery,” Judge VanBenthuyzen told her.

It was not the first time that he’s suggested that Ms. Diaz get an attorney.

The first time she appeared in court as part of the current civil suit, Judge VanBenthuyzen warned her that she needed an attorney. Court-ordered attorneys aren’t assigned in civil cases.

Despite the warning, Ms. Diaz appears to have written her January 11 response to the town’s complaint herself. And she appeared in court on Monday representing herself.

“This case is very complicated,” Judge VanBenthuyzen told her. “Given the amount of money that’s said to be missing, and the fact that potentially the case is going to appear in several court venues, you really need counsel.”

The FBI and the Orleans County State’s Attorney are also looking at the case.

On the witness stand, Mr. Graham said that his audit found at least \$62,000 missing over a two-year period in 2014 and 2015. And amounts mentioned in reports by previous auditors may bring to total to \$150,000 or more, he said.

“How much money are you accusing me of stealing, \$30,000, \$60,000, or \$150,000?” Ms. Diaz shot back.

“Those are your words, not mine,” Mr. Graham said.

Ms. Diaz and Mr. Graham also gave different accounts of the morning when Mr. Graham says that he and Mr. Morley arrived early and saw Ms. Diaz carrying a large plastic tub out the door.

“When she saw us, she turned around and carried them down the hall into the boiler room, where she hid them,” Mr. Graham said.

“I wasn’t hiding them,” Ms. Diaz said. “That tub was on the floor in the vault and there’s not much space in there. I knew you wanted



Coventry Town Clerk and Treasurer Cynthia Diaz takes the oath on the witness stand in Orleans County Superior Court on Monday. Photo by Christopher Roy

to work in the vault that day, and I was making room.”

Mr. Graham has said in the past that many of the documents in the tub were records that he had asked Ms. Diaz for many times and had been told did not exist.

On Monday in court, he also testified that he had twice seen Ms. Diaz carrying sacks of documents out to her truck.

“If they were in bags, how do you know what was in the bags?” Ms. Diaz asked. “You don’t know what I was carrying.”

The bags appeared to contain papers, Mr. Graham said. And when he asked Ms. Diaz what was in the bags, she refused to answer, he said.

The December 30 court order also required Ms. Diaz to provide receipts and records of all new town financial transactions on an ongoing basis.

The select board alleges that Ms. Diaz is still not providing weekly treasurer’s reports and cash receipt reports that clearly tie the transactions shown in the summary to original documents like checks, cash receipts, and deposit slips.

Ms. Diaz claims that she is submitting full and complete

reports.

“We already have the reports,” Mr. Gillies told Judge VanBenthuyzen. “We have reviewed them and we deem them insufficient.”

As an example, Mr. Graham says that a December 30 treasurer’s report shows a \$200 check deposit made on December 28.

When he spoke to Community National Bank on December 30, he learned that there had also been \$7,433.50 deposited that morning.

It took him several days to get photocopies of the deposited checks from the bank.

“The reason, in my mind, for the non-disclosure of the \$7,433.50 deposit was the length of time she held many of the checks,” Mr. Graham said.

In court on Monday, he said that one check went back as far as August.

Ms. Diaz disputes the town’s contention that she is not providing proper records and reports of ongoing financial transactions.

She turned over two documents to the court that she said prove that she is providing accurate and properly-documented treasurer’s reports.

(Continued on page seventeen.)



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Ms. Diaz still has two years to go on her terms

(Continued from page sixteen.)

At Mr. Gillies' request, she agreed to allow the court to furnish the select board with a copy as well.

Judge VanBenthuyzen once again ordered Ms. Diaz to comply with the select board's request for weekly reports documenting all of the financial transactions that she handles in her various roles.

He gave Ms. Diaz two hours to get a copy made of the key to an upstairs storage room and

hand it over to select board Chairman Mike Marcotte. Ms. Diaz brought him a copy of the key just before 4 p.m., Mr. Marcotte said in an e-mail.

The court did not rule on whether Ms. Diaz will be eligible to run for the office of delinquent tax collector at Town Meeting.

Ms. Diaz still has time to file a response to a motion to that effect that Mr. Gillies submitted in early January.

The basis for the motion for immediate relief is a section of Vermont law that says, "Annually, on or before February 1, the collector shall pay

over all monies collected by him or her to the treasuries to which they belong and settle his or her account with the treasurers. When he or she refuses or neglects so to do, he or she shall be ineligible to reelection for the ensuing year."

An item in Coventry's Town Meeting warning would allow voters to give the select board the authority to appoint the delinquent tax collector instead of keeping it an elected position.

Delinquent tax collectors are elected for one-year terms. Ms. Diaz still has two years to go on her terms as town clerk and treasurer.

Coventry selectmen finally unlock closet

by Elizabeth Trail

COVENTRY — At the end of Monday night's meeting, the select board finally got a look at the upstairs closet where Town Clerk and Treasurer Cynthia Diaz keeps older records.

At first glance, it was disappointing, Chairman Mike Marcotte said.

But it was pretty much what he expected. "She wouldn't have handed over the key if there was anything important left in there," he said after briefly inspecting the room.

Ms. Diaz has said several times that there was nothing of significance stored upstairs, though she hasn't let the board or forensic accountant Jeff Graham into the room despite multiple requests.

Earlier in the day, Orleans Superior Court Judge Howard VanBenthuyzen ordered Ms. Diaz to have a copy of the key to the storage room made. He gave her two hours to deliver it to Mr. Marcotte.

Ms. Diaz brought the key to Mr. Marcotte's

Jimmy Kwik store in Newport just before 4 p.m.

In addition to old curtains and "vote here" signs from Election Day, the boxes on the shelves were mostly old school records and accounts payable.

"We're looking for documents about money that was coming in, not going out," Mr. Marcotte said.

A pile of boxes on the floor made it impossible to actually step into the room.

Select board clerk Amanda Carlson is familiar with the types of documents that the town is looking for in trying to fill in gaps in the town's financial records.

She will be delegated to go through the boxes, looking for tax and license receipts and the like.

It will take time, Mr. Marcotte said.

Coventry property owner Karen Hamelin came to the meeting to ask for the select board's help in getting information about when and how taxes were paid on her property between 2009 and 2013.

Her former husband was supposed to have

made the payments, but the property ultimately went to a tax sale, she said.

"You need to ask the treasurer for those records," Mr. Marcotte said.

"Been there, what's my next step?" Ms. Hamelin said.

She said she was not sure what date she had asked Ms. Diaz for her records, but it was in December or early January, and she's never received anything.

"The board can't do that," Selectman Scott Morley said. "There's an elected official whose job that is."

Ms. Hamelin had also been in touch with Mr. Graham in hopes that he has copies of her tax records.

"Mr. Graham has copies of town documents for the purpose of his audit," Mr. Marcotte said. "He isn't authorized to release them."

He asked Ms. Hamelin to request the records in writing from Ms. Diaz, and to send a copy to

(Continued on page eighteen.)

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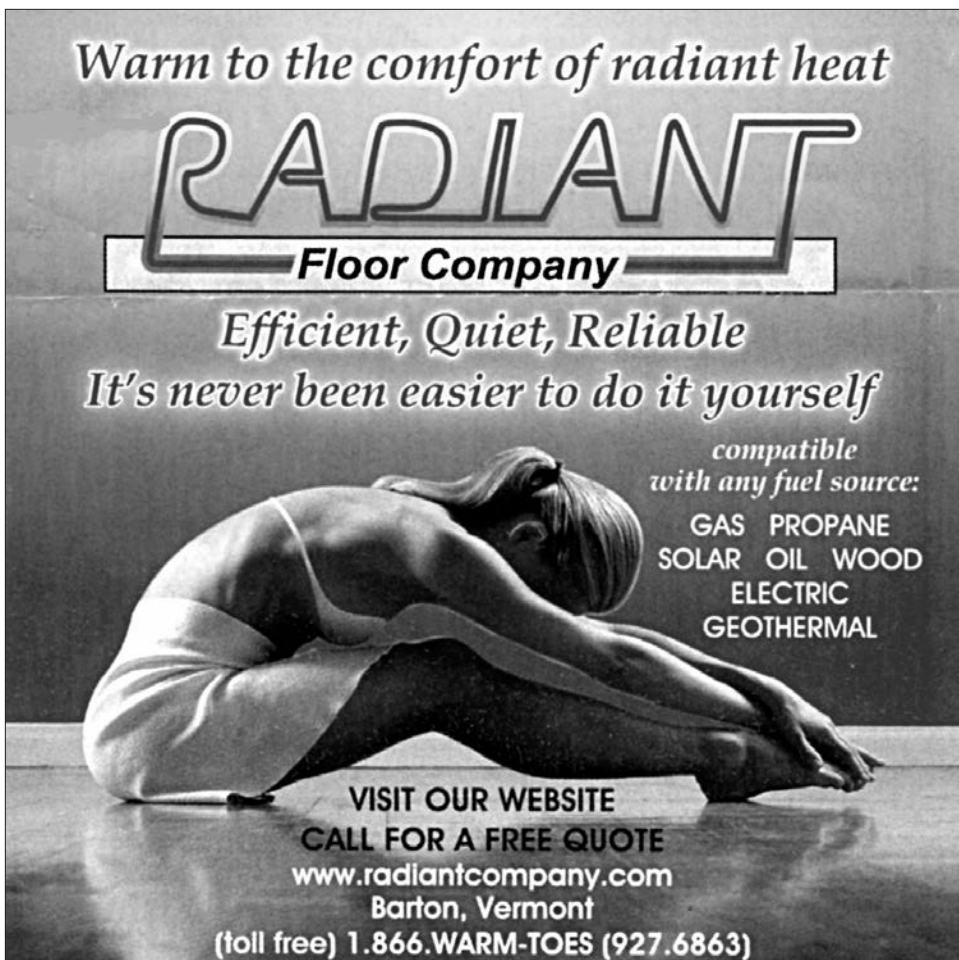


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“We have no authority over her”

(Continued from page seventeen.)

the select board. But he wasn't sure what the select board could do about it.

“We have no authority over her,” he said. “If we did, we wouldn't be in this pickle.”

The select board approved a proposed budget of \$674,254 to go in the town report. That's much less than the \$869,798 budget for the current fiscal year.

This year's budget is lower than last year's, Mr. Morley said, because last year's budget, prepared by Ms. Diaz, was an “overinflated” number.

“None of it was real,” he said.

It took a while to prepare the new budget, Mr. Morley said, because there were so many inaccuracies in previous years' budgets that Ms. Diaz had prepared.

This year's budget numbers have been audited by Mr. Graham, he said. But it's still not perfect.

“There are some obvious errors, numbers inexplicably high or low,” Mr. Morley said.

Right now the town has \$1.6-million in its checking account.

The select board voted to move \$830,355 from the 2015 to the 2016 fiscal year, and into the reserve fund at Community National Bank.

The select board will be calling for proposals and getting that money invested very soon, Mr. Morley said.

Another \$579,000 that's designated for the

reserve fund in the current budget will be moved as soon as the January payment from Waste USA is posted.

“We need to be sure there's enough in the checking account to move that amount,” Mr. Marcotte said.

“It's pretty tootin' close,” Mr. Morley agreed. According to some of his figures, there's only \$302 in excess revenue after expenses until the Waste USA check comes in.

But because of the state of the town records, it's hard to be sure, he said. Weekly treasurer's reports are still being presented in a form that's hard to match to source documents.

“We want to be running budgets and keeping them,” Mr. Morley said. “Rather than just having a lot of money in checking and hoping we don't run out.”

Ms. Carlson was originally envisioned as a part-time assistant to the select board. In addition to acting as clerk, she was supposed to come in for ten hours a week and enter figures from source documents into the NEMRC software.

Now she's been hired for a 40-hour week at a salary of \$45,000.

“We're planning for a worst-case scenario,” Mr. Morley said. “We're getting no help from the treasurer.”

“We're still not getting what we need in source documents,” he said. “A lot of what we're getting, we're creating from bank records.”

That's a tedious process, but it has to be done

in order to avoid the greater expense of having Mr. Graham reconstruct the books at the end of the year, he said.

In other business, the board signed the warnings for the 2017 Town Meeting and school board annual meeting.

Both will be held on the first Tuesday in March, despite the urging of Governor Phil Scott that towns delay school budget votes until May.

The select board took a moment of silence to remember former Town Clerk, Treasurer, and Delinquent Tax Collector Peggy Rackleff, who died on Saturday.

A lunch for family and friends will be held in the Coventry Community Center on Saturday after Ms. Rackleff's 11 a.m. funeral.

There's no charge for town residents to use the community center for this type of event. But the select board will offer to pick up the tab for the food, too, if the cost is reasonable.

“We try to do that for town officials,” Mr. Morley said.

Ms. Diaz defeated Ms. Rackleff by a single vote in 2006, he said. During Ms. Rackleff's tenure, the town passed every audit without a hitch and there was never any concern about the accuracy of town records.

“So all of this,” he said with a wide gesture that encompassed this year's forensic audit, the appearance in court earlier in the day, and Ms. Carlson's new desk in the listers' office, “happened because of a single vote.”

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Watch out for Super Bowl scams

The teams competing in this year's Super Bowl have been chosen—the New England Patriots vs. the Atlanta Falcons. With all the hype surrounding the game day on Sunday, February 5, scammers will be eager to take advantage of fans.

The BBB warns those participating in Super Bowl '17 to play defensively when purchasing tickets, hotel rooms, and NFL merchandise.

At this point in the game, coming across tickets to the Super Bowl may require going through sellers and brokers, and consumers need to be cautious when doing so. If you need to go through a seller or a broker to buy your tickets to the Super Bowl, make sure to look them up on bbb.org to see what other customers have experienced.

It is also a good idea to check to see if they are members of the National Association of Ticket Brokers (NATB). NATB members offer a 200% guarantee on tickets that don't arrive in time for a game, concert or show.

Other tips to keep in mind when shopping for tickets are:

Know the difference between a ticket broker (a legitimate and accredited reseller) and a ticket scalper (an unregulated and unlicensed ticket seller).

Look for secure websites when buying tickets. Look for a website with the padlock on the page and 'https' at the start of the page's web address.

Ask the seller where he or she is located. Also, ask how he or she can be contacted after the sale. If the seller is elusive, don't pursue the offer.

Ask for a picture of the tickets so you can confirm the tickets match the venue. Check out the seats ahead of time to avoid obstructed view seats or seats that do not exist.

Always use a credit card so you have some recourse if the tickets are not as promised. Never wire money or pay with a cashier's check.

Super Bowl '17 will be hosted in Houston, Texas this year. Look for BBB accredited hotels in Greater Houston and Southern Texas to find trustworthy last minute bookings.

According to BBB San Francisco, counterfeit sportswear is a \$200-billion a year business.

There's a high demand for NFL merchandise during the playoffs, and consumers become desperate to not only find the exact item they are looking for, but to find it at a reasonable price. Scammers bank on consumers turning to fake merchandise from third-party websites once popular apparel starts running out.

Visit a BBB accredited sportswear store or shop directly on the NFL website.

If you believe you have purchased a counterfeit ticket, immediately report it to the NATB at (630) 510-4594 and file a complaint with your local BBB at bbb.org.

For more information, visit the regional BBB website at bbb.org/boston or on Facebook. — from the Better Business Bureau.

North Country Chorus invites singers

North Country Chorus began its spring season with weekly rehearsals on January 31, at 7:15 p.m. in the band room of the Morse Center for the Arts at St. Johnsbury Academy. New members are invited to join through February 14. The chorus welcomes all singers who are willing to commit to its standards of attendance and musical excellence. Auditions are not required.

Concerts will be held on May 5, 6, and 7 at locations in the North Country. The featured

piece will be Felix Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah*.

The North Country Chorus is a community chorus of about 75 members serving the Upper Connecticut River Valley of New Hampshire and Vermont.

To learn more about the chorus or to register online, visit northcountrychorus.org, or contact musical director Alan Rowe at arowe@stjademy.org, or at (802) 748-5027. — from North Country Chorus.

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ANSWER: SUGAR

Healthy Heart Word Find

Find the hidden words in the puzzle.

ARTERIES	EXERCISE	PULSE
BEAT	HEART	PUMP
BLOOD	MUSCLE	RHYTHM
CHEST	OXYGEN	VEINS

Z F L G P E B R E A W P
R H G A L T J L R W U R
R T Z C V W A T O L L F
L I S D V B E E S O F H
A U R D E R M E B N D L
M H T S I E J H E A R T
P N Y E N B L S T P C O
M E S A S C R Q J Y H L
U G E S I C R E X E H R
P Y M N I T R D H O J R
C X T S E H C Q E W V C
C O G J P N P U Y T L X

THIS DAY IN... HISTORY



- 1790: THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES CONVENES FOR THE FIRST TIME.
- 1861: TEXAS SECEDES FROM THE UNITED STATES DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.
- 2003: THE SPACE SHUTTLE "COLUMBIA" DISINTEGRATES AS IT TRIES TO REENTER THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE.

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

O T C O R D S V T I I

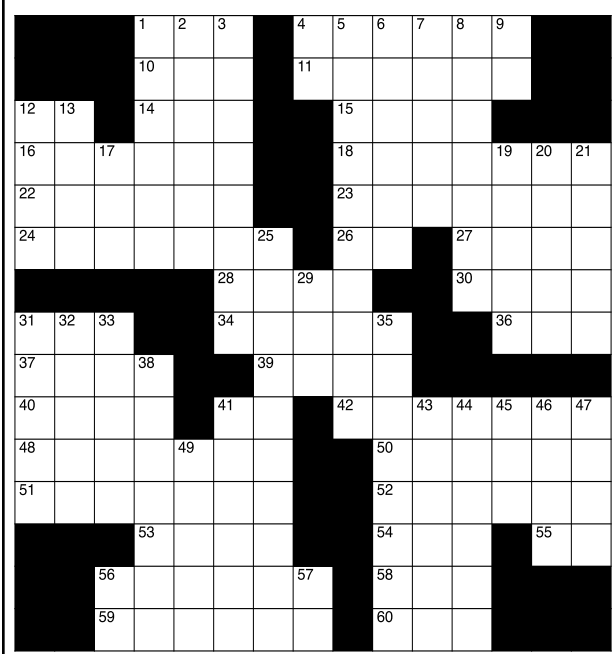
ANSWER: Doctor Visit

New Word

FIT

in good health

Chronicle CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

1. Part of a can	36. Midway between south and southeast
4. A form of discrimination	37. Of the mouth
10. Doctors' group	39. Capital of Yemen
11. Expression of joy	40. Branches of a bone
12. Spanish "be"	41. Very much
14. A mongrel	42. TV host Leeza
15. Helen was from here	48. A way to change integrity
16. With many branches	50. Plants with dark green, glossy leaves
18. Fussy	51. Seedless raisin
22. Male fertilizing organ of a flower	52. Agency
23. Trap	53. Wear this when eating ribs
24. Long, angry speeches	54. Martial artists wear this
26. For instance	55. Peanut butter
27. Sticky, waterlogged soil	56. Drinkers sit on these
28. Fasten	58. Pie ___ mode
30. Card game	59. Hebraic
31. Seaport (abbr.)	60. River in India
34. Dresses worn in S. Asia	

CLUES DOWN

1. City in Washington	29. Small constellation in the Milky Way
2. Entertained	31. Categorizes
3. Nakedness	32. Malaysian boat
4. Exclamation of surprise	33. Natives of Sri Lanka
5. Instinct	35. Type of vessel
6. Making a mistake	38. Prescribe
7. "Borgias" actor Jeremy	41. Ranking
8. Phrases	43. Knickknack
9. Millihenry	44. Funeral
12. Long ago	45. Mineral can be extracted from this
13. Self-immolation by fire ritual	46. Tide
17. Disfigure	47. Lump in yarn
19. Horseshoe extension	49. Food on a skewer
20. Regions	56. Letter in the Albanian alphabet
21. Philippine Island	57. Midway between south and west
25. Appropriate for particular time	

ANSWER: E IN SECTION 6

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Heart

SPANISH: Corazón

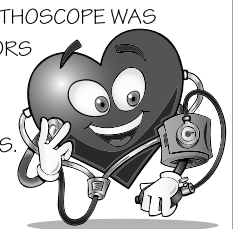
ITALIAN: Cuore

FRENCH: Coeur

GERMAN: Herz

Did you know?

BEFORE THE STETHOSCOPE WAS INVENTED, DOCTORS PUT THEIR EARS TO THEIR PATIENTS' CHESTS.



GET THE PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: STETHOSCOPE

School consolidation survey shows mixed results

by Elizabeth Trail

On election day in November, 1,376 voters in the Orleans Central Supervisory Union filled out a survey that asked how they felt about some of the key issues surrounding school district consolidation.

Although there was talk at the OCSU carousel meeting in November of getting the survey tabulated and making the results public, nothing has been announced and there's no mention of the survey on the OCSU web site.

"It hasn't been a topic," OCSU Superintendent of Schools Donald Van Nostrand said in an e-mail.

The supervisory union decided that a poll was the best way to get more public feedback as OCSU regrouped from the resounding defeat in June, when all of the OCSU towns except Barton said no to forming a consolidated district under Act 46.

The supervisory union rushed to get the survey finished in time to print it and get it distributed before election day.

That was the best way to get a high response rate, Mr. Van Nostrand said at the time.

Although the survey wasn't handed out along with ballots for the state and national elections, it was available only steps away from the voting booths.

There were eight questions on the survey, including a single question broken into multiple parts.

At least 826 of the respondents were parents, and 523 weren't. Only 92 said they were confident in their knowledge of Act 46, although 377 said they knew "enough."

That left a vast majority of voters who said they didn't know much about Act 46, with 462

respondents saying they knew "little," and 408 choosing "don't know."

About 340 went to the polls to vote yes or no on district consolidation in June, they said. At least 981 didn't vote in June. Another 46 people left that question blank.

Only about 20 people out of the 1,376 who responded wrote in comments. Most of the comments were critical of the local schools. A few criticized the survey.

One simply wrote "Repeal Act 46. It is a terrible law for Vermont's rural schools."

But when asked whether they were satisfied with the quality of their local schools, 952 people said yes and 291 said no.

Lake Region got an even more enthusiastic response — 1,030 people said they were satisfied with the high school and 201 said they weren't.

When asked whether they were concerned about equity in educational opportunities for children in neighboring communities, 802 said yes and 443 said no.

But when people were asked virtually the same question in another format — did they consider it important for children to have equal educational opportunities across districts, 950 people rated it "very important" and another 200 said it was "important."

Question eight asked voters to rate a number of concerns on a scale of one to four, with four meaning "very important" and a one meaning "not important."

The concerns included keeping local schools and school boards; lowering taxes and sharing costs across districts; improving academic offering and after school programs, and offering equal opportunities across districts.

In the survey 970 people rated keeping their local schools a four, or very important. And 731

gave keeping local school boards a four. Over 80 percent of responses said that keeping local schools was either "important" or "very important."

Lowering taxes was important to a lot of people with 860 giving that question a four.

One person who gave it a four added the comment, "But not if it means consolidation."

But even more people wanted to see that children had equal opportunity across districts, with 950 people rating it very important. Another 833 wanted to increase academic offerings while 708 wanted to see more after school programs. School choice got 588 fours. Sharing costs across districts was very important to only 473.

Among the 92 people who said they were confident in their knowledge of Act 46, over half — 56 responses — said that lowering taxes was very important and a similar number — 57 responses — said that equality of opportunity was important. Just over half — 51 people — favored keeping local school boards. And almost two-thirds — 63 people — wanted to keep their local schools open.


That means that people who said they knew the most about Act 46 were a little less likely to worry about lower taxes or equal opportunity, both issues that the Act 46 study committee presented as benefits of district consolidation.



But the number of people who said they knew a lot about Act 46 who thought that keeping their local schools and school boards was very important also dropped a little bit.

In the meantime, a new Act 46 study committee has been formed to decide how to move forward on another try at district consolidation.

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Lake Region Fall Baseball Signup Notice

What: Registration for Youth Baseball and Softball Season
When: Saturday, February 4, and Sunday, February 5
Where: Lake Region Union High School lobby
Time: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Who: Girls/Boys, ages 5-16 residing in the OCSU School District

Registration forms will be delivered to OCSU Schools prior to February 4th and will be available at the time of signups.

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Most heroin users started with prescription meds

(Continued from page one.)

people were treated for opioid addiction issues in 2015. Does anyone think that number has gone down?" he asked the 60 or so people gathered in the auditorium of North Country Union High School. No one did.

Judge VanBenthuyzen said whenever he speaks with high school students, he asks them to identify Vermont's biggest problem. For years the correct answer had been alcohol, he said.

"You know the line has been crossed," he said. "The number one problem now is opiate addiction."

In concluding his introduction, Judge VanBenthuyzen asked, "How do we support those on the front lines? We can't just throw money at it, but is there enough money being spent? I submit the answer is probably, no."

His first, a request for Mr. Goguen to explain drug assisted treatment of addiction, started a thread that went through the whole meeting.

Mr. Goguen said BAART provides methadone, buprenorphine and, for some patients, Vivitrol. The last is a relatively new drug that cuts users' craving for drugs.

A person who comes to BAART for treatment must first have his condition assessed, so a decision on what medicine, in what amount, is a proper treatment, he said.

Patients not only receive medication, but also meet with counselors who assist in their recovery, Mr. Goguen said.

Treatment can last for as short a time as three months or can stretch out over years, he said.

"What is success?" Mr. Goguen asked.

Answering his own question, he said that if a person who has been using ten bags of heroin a day is off the drug and employed after six to ten months, that is a success.

He said that Maine tried to set a time limit for drug assisted treatment, requiring that patients taper off their use of methadone after a set period. That was a disaster, Mr. Goguen said.

Mr. Goguen acknowledged that many people are suspicious of a treatment that, in their minds, simply substitutes one form of addiction for another. Medically assisted treatment is appropriate for some people, but not for others, he said.

"I don't judge what path people should take," Mr. Goguen said. "It doesn't always have to be medication and counseling."

He said other methods, such as gardening and acupuncture, have proved useful in treating some people.

"I don't care if it only works for only one person. If it works for that person it's a success," he said.

He said about 80 percent of the people who have started using heroin came to the drug

through prescription pain medication.

"No one wakes up in the morning one day and says I want to start injecting drugs," he said.

Ms. Bradshaw said she took methadone for a long time, but now sees it as a crutch. She is now drug free after pursuing other routes, such as working out and learning to control her breathing. Ms. Bradshaw says she still suffers debilitating pain, but can get through it without medication.

She said the Department for Children and Families (DCF) almost took her daughter away after she experienced an overdose last August while her child was with her. Things are better now, and she has gotten help from a supportive DCF case worker, Ms. Bradshaw said.

Later on in the conversation, Mr. Goguen took up the metaphor of crutches. He noted that a person who breaks her leg may be put in a cast and given crutches.

"Sometimes a crutch is appropriate," he said.

Mr. Gentley also attributed his recovery to his faith, but said he tried almost everything but acupuncture as he worked to give up his addiction.

He explained his aversion to acupuncture saying, "If I'm going to be stuck with a needle I want something behind it."

He said it is possible to bring someone to a realization of her situation before her life goes completely off the rails.

"You can hit rock bottom before you hit rock bottom," Mr. Gentley said.

Ms. Cooley is strong advocate of acupuncture in helping wean people off drugs, including those used in medical treatment.

She said the method that she uses to treat people was first tried in the Bronx in New York City by the Black Panthers and Young Lords. They worked with Lincoln Hospital, which had the biggest methadone program in the city, she said. Acupuncture proved to be successful in helping people to taper off their medication.

Ms. Cooley plans to offer treatment in the Newport area in the near future.

Ms. Raboin said the Department of Health strongly supports evidence-based treatments. A great deal of Medicaid money and state funds go toward medically assisted treatment, she said, but the state is open to faith-based and 12-step programs as well.

Prevention is of vital concern to the Department of Health, Ms. Raboin said. That means supporting education programs that have been proven to work. Those designed to scare kids away from drugs, such as the DARE program, have not been terribly successful, she said.

Mr. Cudney agreed that taking care of young people is essential. He traced the beginning of many people's addiction problems to childhood trauma. When children are mistreated and not given the proper amount of love and affection, bad things, including addiction, can happen over time, he said.

On the law enforcement side, Ms. Barrett said the public mistakenly believes that drug users are often sent to jail. She said courts tend to save incarceration for dealers and people who commit serious drug-related crimes.

She said no one thinks it will be possible to deal with the drug epidemic by arresting and imprisoning people.

Chief DiSanto said he is often asked why, if police know who is dealing drugs in the community, they don't just go out and arrest them. The problem is that courts require probable cause before a charge can be brought to court.

If a person can be found who can purchase drugs from a dealer, police will typically send the buyer back several times to show the court that the person didn't just sell a small amount of drugs to buy diapers for his child, but is engaged in dealing as a business.

Unfortunately, dealers do not want to be arrested and are very careful about who they sell to, he said.

Both Ms. Barrett and Chief DiSanto urged members of the public to share information with the police.

Ms. Barrett said she is called whenever someone dies outside a hospital. Often people who have loved ones who overdosed on heroin don't cooperate with law enforcement. Even allowing police to look at the person's phone can be very helpful, she said.

Chief DiSanto ended his remarks by urging members of the community to tell legislators they don't want marijuana legalized.

He said doing so would set back efforts to eliminate the community's drug problems.

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In Superior Court

Corrections officials thwart alleged drug smuggling

by Brad Usatch

NEWPORT — Tricia Bisson is under a 24-hour curfew order at her home in Craftsbury Common as the result of a charge that she violated probation by trying to smuggle drugs into the Southern State Correctional Facility in Springfield.

Ms. Bisson, 28, denied the violation at her arraignment before Judge Howard VanBenthuyzen on January 24 in the Criminal Division of Orleans Superior Court. She was serving a deferred five-year sentence on probation after pleading guilty in May of 2016 to aiding in the commission of a felony. Conditions of her probation included that she not have or use any regulated drugs and that she not engage in criminal behavior.

State Police Sergeant Eric Albright said in his affidavit that on November 17, 2016, he was alerted by staff at the correctional facility of a plan to smuggle buprenorphine to an inmate. The plan allegedly was to mail buprenorphine strips to the prisoner in a stack of bogus legal documents with a false return address so as to appear that the envelope originated from a private investigator working on the inmate's behalf.

Staff at the facility uncovered the alleged plot through intercepted phone calls between Ms. Bisson and the inmate. The affidavit further states that the package did arrive at the correctional facility with materials that tested positive for buprenorphine.

Brandon Pavelchak, 24, of Holland, pled innocent to one felony charge of eluding a police officer following a high-speed chase on December 27 that started in Charleston.

In his affidavit, Orleans County Deputy Sheriff Jesse Testut said he used his blue lights to try to pull over an ATV that was traveling east on Route 105 in Charleston. The operator failed to stop and allegedly sped up Dane Hill Road, passed a number of vehicles, and blew through a stop sign. Deputy Testut said he had lights and sirens going as he chased the ATV at speeds that

reached 75 miles per hour. The ATV initially eluded the officer, but Deputy Testut said he caught up with the operator where the snowmobile trail crosses Ticehurst Road. The affidavit says that, after some initial resistance, Mr. Pavelchak admitted he was the ATV operator and he was taken into custody and cited into court to face the charge.

In Superior Court

Assault nets 20 days on work crew

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — Kelsey L. Davis, 29, of Irasburg admitted punching another woman and smashing her head onto concrete pavement outside the Evansville Trading Post. Ms. Davis pled guilty to a felony charge of aggravated assault Tuesday in the Criminal Division of Orleans County Superior Court.

Judge Howard VanBenthuyzen handed down a one-to-three-year sentence, but suspended all but 20 days of that time. Ms. Davis will spend those days on a state work crew.

The state dropped a charge of retail theft against Ms. Davis.

State Trooper Steve Fauteux learned of the assault and went to the trading post on July 22, 2015. According to his affidavit, Trooper Fauteux spoke with two waitresses who heard Ms. Davis and the other woman arguing.

They then saw the woman on the ground while

Ms. Davis punched her repeatedly. Both said they saw Ms. Davis' foot on her victim's head and throat.

A third woman told Ms. Davis to stop and left with her in a car.

The victim said she had just gotten out of her vehicle when Ms. Davis knocked her to the ground and started punching her. Ms. Davis grabbed her hair and banged her head on the concrete.

She said the third woman participated in the attack, but also called a halt to her assault.

Both Ms. Davis and the third woman blamed the victim for starting the altercation, Trooper Fauteux said.

Man admits illegal driving and heroin possession

After an accident on Interstate 91, a Lyndon Center man blew an alcohol test that was well below the legal limit. He still found himself in big trouble.

(Continued on page twenty-three.)

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Robin Ballinger ~ Stylist: Fridays
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Driving on suspension is just the beginning

(Continued from page twenty-two.)

On April 7 21-year-old Chandler C. Walters hit a guardrail on the interstate in Brownington, says State Police Corporal Owen Ballinger's affidavit. When Corporal Ballinger got to the accident he found that Department of Motor Vehicles officers Derek Fenby and Benjamin Shelp had arrived ahead of him.

Officer Shelp said he smelled alcohol on Mr. Walters' breath and gave him a breath test, which read .028 percent. The legal limit is .08 percent.

Nevertheless, Mr. Walters' license had been suspended for an alcohol-related offense, which meant his driving was a criminal matter.

Corporal Ballinger arrested Mr. Walters and before putting him in his cruiser asked if he could pat him down for weapons. Mr. Walters said he had nothing on him that could cut or stick the trooper.

He denied having any needles on him.

Mr. Walters took an orange hat from inside his jacket and tried to put it on the front seat of Corporal Ballinger's cruiser.

In it were several syringes, a spoon, and a plastic bag containing a packet of heroin.

Mr. Walters pled guilty to possession of heroin and driving with a suspended license (DLS). He received a suspended three-to-six-month sentence.

Sentencing deferred for violating abuse order

Although Derrin J. Roberge, 26, of Derby was prohibited by court order from approaching or communicating with a former girlfriend, he drove past a house where she was staying and yelled at her.

Mr. Roberge pled guilty to violating an abuse prevention order in the case. Judge VanBenthuyzen deferred sentencing for two years.

Trooper Debra Munson's affidavit says Mr. Roberge passed the house in Derby on January 22. He was in his work truck and the company that employs him had no calls in the area that day, Trooper Munson said.

Morrisville woman pleads innocent to DUI

Miranda A. Small, 40, of Morrisville pled innocent to a felony charge of driving under the influence (DUI-4) and was released on \$1,500 bail.

In his affidavit, Trooper Mark Pohlman said that on January 27 dispatchers told him to be on

the lookout for an erratic driver headed east on Route 58 in Irasburg.

Trooper Pohlman saw a car he believed to be the one he was seeking turn onto Route 5 without signaling. He turned on his blue lights, but the driver of the car failed to respond.

He said he then tried the siren, which had more than the desired effect. Both the car and a tow truck ahead of it pulled over.

The tow truck began to pull forward and the car followed. The tow truck driver then stopped and got out of his rig.

Trooper Pohlman told him that he was not the person he was after.

"I know," said the driver, "but every time I start going, so does she."

Trooper Pohlman sent the truck on its way and went to talk to the driver of the car. He said he smelled alcohol on her breath and saw an open beer bottle in the cup holder.

Misdemeanor charge denied

Jarrame W. Rollerson, 18, of Derby pled innocent to assisting a 16-year-old runaway. He was sent to Northern State Correctional Center for lack of \$5,000 bail.

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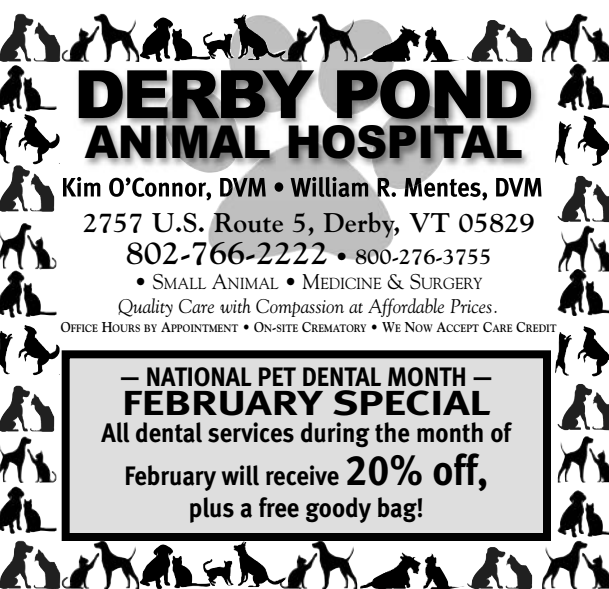
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- **Pope-Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter - Feline Spay/Neuter Clinic:** Monthly/bi-monthly spay/neuter clinic for cats. The \$45 fee includes rabies and distemper vaccinations. Call 334-8197 for appointment.
- **Northeast Kingdom Spay-Neuter Program:** Provides a voucher for a spay/neuter procedure at a reduced fee for either a cat or a dog in Orleans or Essex counties, for use at participating local veterinarians. For more info, call 334-7393.
- **Vermont Spay Neuter Incentive Program** is available to help Vermonters unable to afford the cost of spaying/neutering cats & dogs for which they provide care. Send a SASE (self addressed stamped envelope) to: VSNIP, P.O. Box 104, Bridgewater, VT 05034 for an application.
- **Felines & Friends Foundation:** Provides spay/neuter assistance for barn cats, unowned, or loosely owned cats. More info at FFFVT.org or call 323-4793.
- **VT-CAN!** is a stationary, reduced-cost, high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter clinic located in Middlesex, Vermont. More info at http://vt-can.org. You can also e-mail info@vt-can.org or call 223-0034.
- **Providing Ethical Treatment for Strays (P.E.T.S.) of the Kingdom:** Focuses on animal cruelty investigation and other animal welfare issues. More info at petsofthekingdom.weebly.com or 673-3791.




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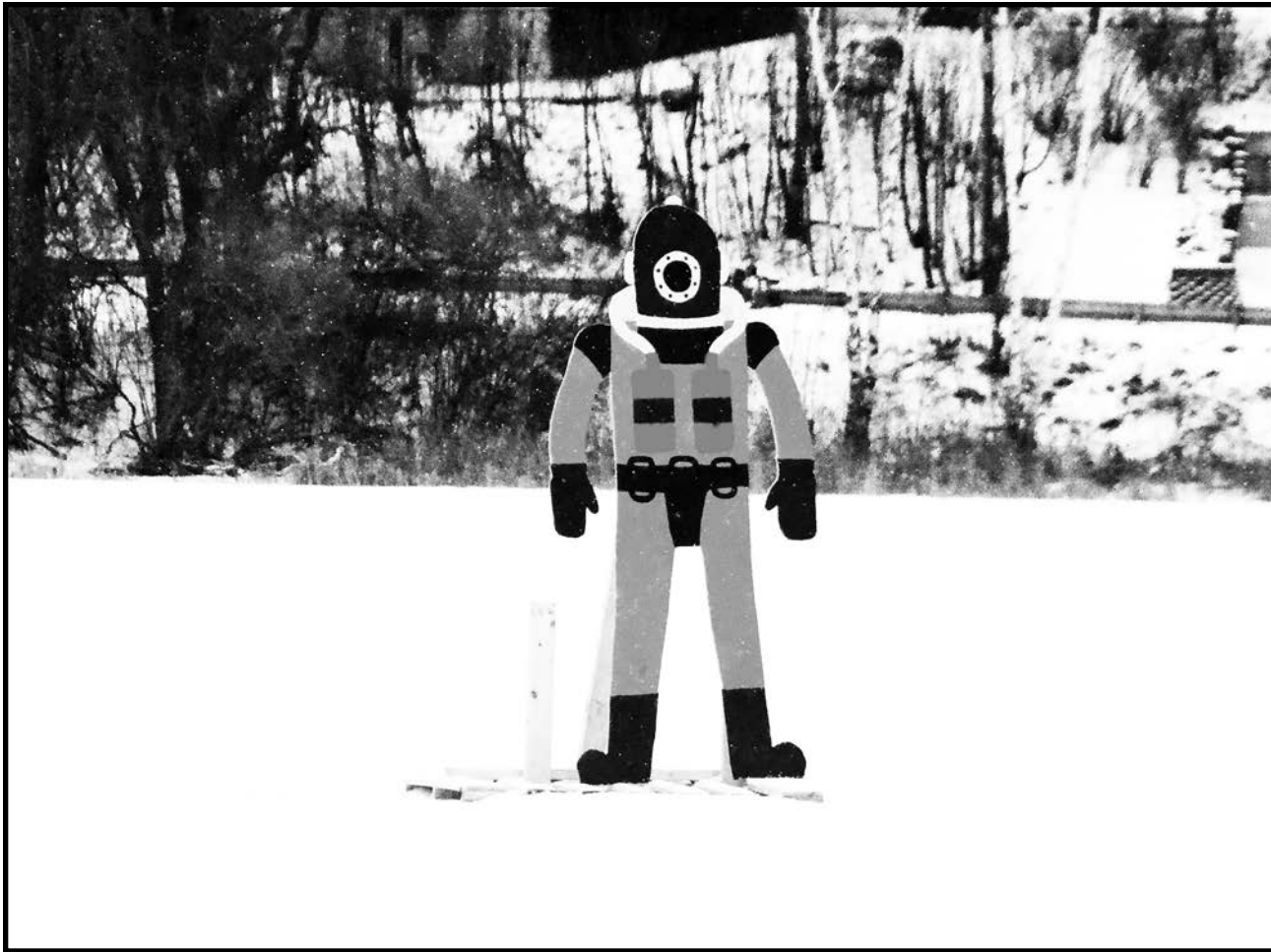
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It's tooth time!



Diver replaces *Titanic*



A deep sea diver stands on the spot recently occupied by a model of the *Titanic*. Newport City Director of Parks and Recreation Andrew Cappello said his department got complaints from people who thought using the ill-fated ship as the icon for this year's ice-out competition was in bad taste. The diver now waits for the ice on South Bay to melt. Those wishing to take a chance on the day he will take the plunge have until March 20 to buy a ticket from the rec department. Photo by Joseph Gresser

Barton Senior Center meals for February

The Barton Senior Center meals are served on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The menu for February follows. All meals are served with whole grain bread, and a choice of various beverages, including juice. The Vermont Food Bank enables the use of fresh vegetables. Currently fresh oranges are offered at each meal.

Thursday, February 2 — Macaroni and cheese, chicken, coleslaw, and apple dessert.

Tuesday, February 7 — Scalloped potatoes with sausage, artichoke dip, and mixed fruit (oranges).

Thursday, February 9 — Salmon burgers, potatoes, mixed veggies, and cream pies.

Tuesday, February 14 — Hot turkey sandwiches with gravy, corn, carrots, Valentine's cake.

Thursday, February 16 — Vegetable soup, bacon sandwich, cookies, and fruit.

Tuesday, February 21 — Tuna pea wiggle, peas, and peanut butter pie.

Thursday, February 23 — Chicken, potatoes, cabbage, and pineapple fruit cup.

Tuesday, February 28 — Beef, potatoes, squash, and birthday cake.

The Valentine's dance (senior prom) is Tuesday, February 14, beginning at 10:30 a.m. The McKinney Brothers will provide the music, and a line dancing group from West Burke will be demonstrating and teaching some dances. All are welcome. Photographs will be available.

On June 8 through 12, the Barton Senior Center will host a motor coach trip to Boston, Salem, and Cape Ann, with four nights lodging, eight meals, and guided tours of Boston, coastal Massachusetts, and Lexington and Concord. The total cost of the package is \$499. Call for reservations at 525-4400. All are welcome. — from the Barton Senior Center.

EMPLOYMENT

LAKE REGION UNION HIGH SCHOOL

Head Coaching Position for Spring 2017:

SPRING OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Interested persons should contact James Ingalls, Director of Athletics.

Applicants must submit three letters of reference, resumé and a letter of interest.

Mail all documents to:

ATTN: James Ingalls, Co-Director of Athletics
Lake Region Union High School
317 Lake Region Road
Orleans, VT 05860

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Manfred Rieder's whimsical sculptures show at Gallery 99

Gallery 99 on Center Street in Newport will host a show of whimsical sculptures and drawings by Newport artist Manfred Rieder. Most of Mr. Rieder's sculptures are based on railroad plates that are 70 to 90 years old and were collected in the Eastern Townships and in the Newport to Richford area.

"My little pieces have been created in memory of those who rode on them over a very long time," the artist said.

There will be an opening party on Friday, February 3, at 5 p.m. to see these 14 delightful pieces accompanied by some of Mr. Rieder's equally delightful line drawings. — from the 99 Gallery.

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Salary & Benefits: As per Support Staff Agreement.

Submit letter of interest and resumé listing 3 references (or 3 current letters of reference) to:

Jessica Applegate, Principal
255 Center School Road
West Charleston, VT 05872

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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Keira Butler wins state hoop shoot



Keira Butler of Newport was the top girl in the 12- to 13-year-old age group at the Vermont Elks state Hoop Shoot on January 28, at Spaulding High School in Barre. Along with the other winners, she will go on to the regional shoot in South Portland, Maine, on March 24 through 26. The state champs are pictured here with their trophies. In the front row from left to right are Brennon Crossmon (12-13) from Rutland, Jacobi Lafferty (10-11) from Burlington, Ethan Whalen (8-9) from Rutland, Meghan Thompson (8-9) from Burlington, Natalie Norcia (10-11) from Brattleboro, and Keira Butler. In the back row from left to right are Robert Campo, the Vermont Elks Association president, Steve Edgerley, Vermont State Hoop Shoot chairman, and Earl Cavanagh, past grand tiler and special deputy grand exalted ruler.

Photo courtesy of Ann Edgerley

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E.O.E.

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Opening for the Remainder of the 2016-2017 School Year
North Country Supervisory Union, Early Childhood Special Education Program

Early Childhood Paraprofessional Part-time (up to 20 hours per week)

Early Childhood Special Education Program has one part-time position providing one-on-one classroom support for a preschool student. The opening is located at the Island Pond Head Start. Responsibilities include:

- Providing one-on-one support to a special needs, preschool student within an early childhood classroom. The position falls under the guidance and supervision of a licensed early childhood special educator.
- Functioning as a team member within the early childhood classroom to support students and the curriculum as needed and directed.

Candidates must meet minimum qualifications for paraprofessional educational position:

Evidence of successfully completing the Para Pro Test
or
Completion of 48 college credits

Knowledge of early childhood development and/or special education, as well as prior experience with young children in preschool settings strongly preferred. Salary and benefits as set forth in the Employment Policy Manual for North Country Supervisory Union Paraprofessional Staff.

To apply, please send letter of interest, current resumé, three current references with contact information, and evidence of eligibility as stated above to:

Diane Nichols-Fleming, Coordinator
North Country Supervisory Union
Early Childhood Special Education Program
121 Duchess Avenue, Suite A
Newport, VT 05855

Items listed above may also be faxed to 802-334-6528, or e-mailed to: diane.nichols-fleming@ncsuvt.org. Please note that a criminal background check and Child Abuse/Neglect Registry check is required.

North Country Supervisory Union is an equal opportunity employer.

Docket Clerk B (job #17003)

A permanent, full-time position, involves specialized clerical work and data entry involving one or more docket areas. Located in Newport, VT. High school graduate and two years of clerical or data entry experience required. Starting at \$14.75 per hr. Open until filled. Go to: www.vermontjudiciary.org for a full job description and application.

EMPLOYMENT

Community Education Teacher Needed

Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, Inc. (NEKLS) is looking for a motivated, enthusiastic, educator interested in joining the NEKLS Adult Education and Literacy program located at the Newport Community Education Center. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree and prior teaching experience is strongly preferred. The program serves adult students age 16 and older. Currently, NEKLS is looking for one 40 hour per week Math and English Language Arts teacher. The successful candidate will be able to teach general English and math, algebra 1 and 2, and geometry, in one-on-one or small group settings. This is a benefited position. A background check is required. Please forward resumé to: Sunday.Frascoia@neklsvt.org.

AA/E.O.E.

Immediate Openings PARAEDUCATORS

Orleans Central Supervisory Union
Barton, Vermont

Job Details:

- **Application Deadline:** Posted until filled
- **Posted:** January 26, 2017
- **Starting Date:** Immediately

Job Description:

1 Full-time and 1 Part-time Paraeducator
Paraprofessionals to provide direct services per student(s) IEP for the 2016-2017 school year. Full-time paraprofessional is for grades K-8. Part-time paraprofessional is for Preschool. Preferred Qualifications:

1. Effective communication and interpersonal skills.
2. Experience working with special needs students (such as autism, emotional, behavioral, and intensive special education needs).
3. Ability to work collaboratively in a team environment.

Job Requirements:

- Please send a letter of interest, your resumé, and 3 letters of recommendation along with any certifications, licenses, and transcripts.
- A background check is required.
- Associate's degree preferred.
- Citizenship, residency, or work visa in United States required.

Contact Information:

Kathy Poginy, Director of Special Services
130 Kinsey Road
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Phone: 802-525-6255
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at our office, located at
193 Gosselin Drive in Derby, VT.

“I know the school boards are really nervous”

(Continued from page one.)

There have been no school board meetings since the Governor's budget address, Mr. Van Nostrand said. “And we have not called any special meetings to talk about it at this point.”

North Country Supervisory Union officials were hung up Tuesday interviewing candidates for a new North Country Union High School principal and couldn't be reached for comment.

Local legislators aren't embracing the Governor's proposal either. Instead, they sound a little befuddled.

“I think he might have got some misdirection from somebody,” said state Senator Bobby Starr of North Troy.

Mr. Starr said he's received about 25 e-mails from people “denouncing the thing.”

“If any school directors call me, I'd say plan your budget just the way you've always done it,” he said. “I really can't see where we're going to implement all that education stuff he put forward.”

State Senator John Rodgers of Glover said he thinks the Governor must have received some bad advice. You can't expect school districts to put off their annual meetings and start work on their budgets all over again from scratch, he said. At least not without making them good and mad.

Also, Governor Scott's plan doesn't address the elephant in the room — property taxes — Mr. Rodgers said.

“One of the most prevalent complaints I hear is that property taxes are too high. We've got to start thinking out of the box.”

He said he does hope the Governor's proposal starts a discussion, and he appreciates the goals, if not the method.

“One of the things this proposal brings to light is how do we do a better job with early childhood and state colleges? Two missions I believe in. I don't necessarily believe with how he got there. I keep hoping he's going to make some adjustment. Quite frankly, the whole piece about level funding and a second meeting is going to be a moot point. It's too damn late in the game.”

Mr. Rodgers said that he, too, has been getting a lot of e-mails from people who don't like the Governor's plan.

Representative Mark Higley from Lowell said he's trying to put together a letter for all the school officials who have contacted him and expressed concern.

“I appreciate that the Governor has said he's going to do his best to level fund the state budget,” Mr. Higley said. “I support what the Governor is trying to do, and while it may not turn out that way in the end, I think it's important to hold the line on taxes and fees.”

Representative Vicki Strong of Albany is taking a similar stance.

“I know the school boards are really nervous,” she said. “It seems a bit harsh and hard. On the other hand, we should take a breath. I'm kind of waiting to get feedback from our schools.”

There will be an OCSU meeting in a couple of weeks, she said, where the proposal will likely be discussed. “Right now I'm just being cautious and looking for input from the schools.”

One of the biggest concerns legislators

expressed is about the budget freeze — not because they favor higher spending — but for fear that a freeze punishes low-spending schools, such as those in Orleans County, locking them into that low-spending pattern while per-pupil spending at schools in more prosperous areas is significantly higher.

“You're basically punishing the most responsible people,” Mr. Rodgers said. “Those of us in the Kingdom should not have to subsidize those who spend \$20,000 a kid.”

According to the Public Assets Institute, 2016 per pupil spending in Brownington was \$12,578; in Irasburg, \$12,017; in Barton; \$13,099; and in Derby, \$12,912.

In Thetford, it was \$18,213 and in East Montpelier, \$17,763.

Mr. Higley said he finds it frustrating that so many budget conscious schools in this area make every effort to keep spending as low as possible, while others spend much more.

Mr. Starr said he doesn't see how a freeze would be fair.

“If you come from a district with a twenty, twenty-five million dollar budget, there would be more room to have some money sitting around.”

Orleans County school budgets are pretty bare bones, he said.

“Last week it was really crazy down there because nobody heard a word until Tuesday,” Mr. Starr said, referring to Governor Scott's education plan, which he had not mentioned on the campaign trail. “I'm not saying that schools shouldn't be tightening their belts, but you have to plan way ahead for something like that. To be fair about the whole deal, you've got to look at the regulations that we and the feds have imposed on schools and get rid of the ones that aren't applicable. You can't just say we're going to freeze your budget. I don't even know that we have the right to do that. The closer we can keep that stuff to the people the better off you are.”

“If he'd said we're going to lock all schools in at \$16,000 (per pupil), or something like that... but locking it in, just freezing it with no prior notice, us low spending districts are going to get hammered. It doesn't take a very bright person to figure that out.”

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT, ORLEANS UNIT IN RE: THE ESTATE OF: Wilfred A. Paquette LATE OF: Craftsbury, VT	PROBATE DIVISION DOCKET NO.: 271-8-16 Ospr
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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the creditors of the estate of Wilfred A. Paquette, late of 376 Paquette Road, Craftsbury, VT 05826.

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 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: January 26, 2017
Name of Publication: *the Chronicle*
Publication Date: February 1, 2017

Address of Court: Vermont Superior Court
Orleans Probate Division
247 Main Street
Newport, VT 05855

Executor/Administrator:
Marc H. Paquette
471 Paquette Road
Craftsbury, VT 05826
mcn_paquette@yahoo.com
(802) 586-9924

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twesoja@ocsu.org.
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**Barton Incorporated School District
Barton, VT
Board Vacancy**

The Barton Incorporated School Board of Directors is seeking interested candidates to fill a vacant seat.

Candidates must reside within the voting area for the Barton Incorporated School District.

Those interested in serving are invited to send a letter of interest to:
David Doucet, Board Clerk
c/o Office of the Superintendent
130 Kinsey Road
Barton, VT 05822

INVITATION TO BID

NORTH COUNTRY SUPERVISORY UNION,
On behalf of,
TROY TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

BUS LEASE/MAINTENANCE

Contact Theresa Wilkens,
North Country Supervisory Union at
(802) 334-5847, ext. 2012, or e-mail:
Theresa.Wilkens@ncsuvt.org
for a copy of bid specifications

Bid should be submitted
no later than 2 p.m. on March 2, 2017, to:
Glenn Hankinson
Director of Business & Finance
North Country Supervisory Union
121 Duchess Ave, Suite A
Newport, VT 05855

Bids will be opened at that time and presented to the School Board at their regularly scheduled meeting on March 14, 2017.

The NCSU reserves the right to accept any proposal, which it deems most favorable to the interests of the NCSU 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 NCSU. The NCSU also reserves the right to waive any technicalities in the bid process not in the best interest of the NCSU.

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at (802) 334-5847, ext. 2012 or e-mail:
theresa.wilkens@ncsuvt.org
for a copy of the bid specifications.

Bid should be submitted
no later than 3 p.m. on March 15, 2017, to:
Matthew Baughman, Principal
Coventry Town School District
P.O. Box 92
348 VT Route 5
Coventry, Vermont 05825

Bids will be opened at the time they are due and will be presented at the Board meeting scheduled for that evening.

The Coventry Town School District reserves the right to accept any proposal, deemed most favorable to the interests of the 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 Coventry Town school district also reserves the right to waive any technicalities in the bid process not in the best interest of the district.

Willoughby claims ice fisherman

(Continued from page one.)

then he caught another one and said I'd like to save that for mom and dad. And I'll get one more to share," Ms. LeBlanc said.

But it never came to pass. He fell through weak ice that day, and efforts to save him were too late.

His wife said she's heard varying information, but either carpenters or loggers saw him walk across the lake and fall through and called 911.

"He can't swim," she said, "but in cold water there's nothing you can do anyway."

A game warden who lives in Barton tried to rescue him, Ms. LeBlanc said, and he fell in, too,

"but he grabbed him. The fire department was there; they worked on him as much as they could. But it was too cold."

She said her husband has been ice-fishing probably since high school. He usually left about 6:30 or 7 in the morning, and the family wasn't worried about him when he didn't quickly return.

Ms. LeBlanc, who works at Glover school, said she got a call around 10:30 that morning about her husband. "I left school and went up there."

"They were saying it had snowed, so you couldn't see the ice," she said.

She had bought her husband a new auger for Christmas because he so loved ice-fishing. And

fly-fishing, too, which the couple both enjoyed.

She said she couldn't believe he loved the water so much but couldn't swim. He'd told her, though, that farmers don't float.

Richard LeBlanc was a man of few words, but he was excited about life, Ms. LeBlanc said.

"The joys of his life were the children and also his grandchildren, laying on the floor with them, let's go for a walk, always doing grandfather things. We are trying to keep him alive but the smell goes, the face kind of fades.

"I can't believe my Richie is gone. He was a good man. I've lost a husband. A whole community has lost something."

Fish and Wildlife offers tips to stay safe on the ice

Following the death of an ice fisherman who fell through thin ice on Lake Willoughby and several recent ice water rescues, the Vermont State Police, Vermont Fish and Wildlife, and first responders across Vermont remind all who venture on or near open water ice this winter to be extremely cautious and prepared for variable ice conditions.

Here are some safety suggestions:

Always keep your pets on a leash if walking near a partially frozen waterway. If a pet falls through the ice do not attempt to rescue your pet, go for help.

Reach, throw, go. If a companion falls through the ice and you are unable to reach that person from shore, throw them something (rope, jumper cables, tree branch, etc.). If this does not work, go for help before you also become a victim.

If you fall in, try not to panic. Turn toward the direction from which you came. Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface, working forward by kicking your feet. Once out, remain lying on the ice (do not stand) and roll away from the hole. Crawl back to your tracks, keeping your weight distributed until you return to solid ice.

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department notes that thousands of Vermonters safely take to the ice for recreation every winter, but also

cautions that anglers and others should never drive on the ice or venture out on foot without checking ice conditions first.

"We are urging all outdoor enthusiasts — people going ice fishing, cross-country skiers, hikers, and snowmobilers — to be extremely cautious and prepared if they are going to venture out on any ice," said Vermont Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter. "Ice conditions can vary dramatically on different parts of a lake. Remember, even though it may look thick enough on the surface, moving water from currents, rivers and springs can cause ice to form unevenly."

The Department of Fish and Wildlife also offers the following tips to help keep ice fishing safe:

- Leave your car or truck on shore. Every year several motor vehicles go through the ice on Vermont lakes, and some people have drowned.
- Leave information about your plans with someone.
- Wear a personal flotation device and don't fish alone. Having a partner with you increases both the fun and the safety.
- Ice varies in thickness and condition. Always carry an ice spud or chisel to check ice as you proceed.
- Be extremely cautious crossing ice near

river mouths, points of land, bridges, islands, and over reefs and springs. Current almost always causes ice to be thinner over these areas.

— Avoid going onto the ice if it has melted away from the shore. This indicates melting is underway, and ice can shift position as wind direction changes.

— Waves from open water can quickly break up large areas of ice. If you can see open water in the lake and the wind picks up, get off!

— Bring your fully charged cell phone with you.

— People should carry a set of hand spikes to help work out onto the surface of the ice if they go through. Holding one in each hand, you can alternately punch them into the ice and pull yourself up and out. They can be made at home, using large nails, or purchased at stores that sell fishing supplies.

— Carry a safety line that can be thrown to someone who has gone through the ice.

— Heated fishing shanties must have good ventilation to prevent deadly carbon monoxide poisoning. Open a window or the door part way to allow in fresh air.

More tips on safe ice fishing can be found at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. — from the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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Meals on Wheels drivers needed

The Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging has new volunteer opportunities to deliver Meals on Wheels in the greater Newport-North Troy area.

"We are looking for licensed drivers who enjoy keeping their community connected by providing this valuable and nutritious outreach to the elderly who are homebound, many of whom are unable to prepare their own meals," explained Karen Budde, RSVP volunteer coordinator. "The reward

of connecting with grateful individuals is immeasurable."

The council's volunteer roster includes veterans, retirees, husband and wife teams, and could, Ms. Budde added, include homeschool teachers and their students who are looking to fulfill a volunteer unit in their curriculum.

Ideal substitute drivers are those whose employers support community service, Ms. Budde said, and allow their employees the time to make deliveries in an emergency

situation.

"Volunteers who need a flexible schedule find route substitution ideal," she continued. "Some do it on their days off from working their regular jobs. Others do it when their kids are off from school and bring them along to help deliver the prepared meals to the waiting seniors who count on these visits."

There are four routes that go out twice a week from the Cornucopia kitchen, which is accessed from the municipal parking

lot off Coventry Street.

"We reimburse 50 cents a mile and the delivery time is about 90 minutes per route," Ms. Budde said. "Every volunteer gets an opportunity to try it out first with an established driver."

Interested individuals can call Ms. Budde directly at (802) 751-0431 or via e-mail at kbudde@NEKCouncil.org. — from the Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging.

Vermont chamber seeks business of the year nominations

The Vermont Chamber of Commerce and *Vermont Business Magazine* are accepting nominations until March 4 for the Deane C. Davis Outstanding Business of the Year Award.

The award is given annually to

a Vermont business that has made exceptional accomplishments on a consistent basis and demonstrated success by continued growth in number of employees and/or sales; commitment of company resources including employees to community

projects; recognition of the environment as a natural and economic resource for Vermont; and creating a positive work environment for all employees.

The Vermont Chamber and *Vermont Business Magazine* created the award in 1990 to recognize and honor Vermont's best companies. Named for the former governor, this annual award honors a Vermont business that shows an outstanding history of sustained growth while displaying an acute awareness of what makes Vermont unique.

Last year's winner was PC Construction Company, and recent

award winners include Champlain Cable Corporation, Dealer.com, GW Plastics, the Foley Family of Companies, Small Dog Electronics, and BioTek Technologies.

Finalists for the award will be listed in the May edition of *Vermont Business Magazine*. The winner will be announced in May.

The deadline for nominating a business is March 4. Nominees and applicants are encouraged to complete the online nomination form: <http://events.vermontbiz.com/deane-c-davis-nominations/>. — from the Vermont Chamber of Commerce.

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Howie Cantor visits The Music Box

Blues and folk singer and songwriter Howie Cantor of West Glover will perform at The Music Box on Saturday, February 11, at 7 p.m. Mr. Cantor will bring his trademark songs with their humor, satire, and insight with the flavor of the Northeast Kingdom. He will be accompanied at The Music Box by guitarist Jeremy Harple of the Areolites. He celebrates his new CD, *Places*.

Mr. Cantor has been writing songs for over 40 years. His material celebrates the small joys of the everyday, as well as the great spiritual and political quandaries of the time. He has

performed in venues throughout the state as well as in New York City, at the Bonnaroo Music Festival, and in Puerto Rico. Currently Mr. Cantor organizes music night at Parker Pie Company every Thursday night in West Glover. His music can be heard on his website www.howiecantor.com.

For more information, visit www.themusicboxvt.org, or call (802) 586-7533. There is a suggested \$10 donation at the door. Kids are free. — from The Music Box.

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Whatever lets us be what's inside ourselves

by Elizabeth Trail

WESTFIELD — Most of the children in the audience didn't sit still for Steve Myott's nearly two hours of creative drama and puppetry here Sunday. But they didn't have to.

In place of front-row seats, librarian Mary Lee Daigle had set up the downstairs room at the Hitchcock Memorial Museum and Library with comfortable rugs and cushions so that the 20 or so children who came to the show could sit, stretch, curl up, or move around to their heart's content.

With no line between stage and audience, Mr. Myott drew the children into his stories, sometimes calling for volunteers, sometimes holding out paper-mâché masks to shy children and encouraging them to be part of the act.

Sometimes the children played their parts at the front of the room. But just as often, Mr. Myott moved them like chess pieces up and down the aisles and along the sides of the room, mixing the boundaries between audience and participants.

There was a sequence with bears, and one about fish, and one where a little girl got to feed imaginary corn to a pair of masked deer.

"Wipe your hands," Mr. Myott told the little girl afterwards. "They're probably sticky."

With a shy smile, she obligingly wiped off the imaginary deer slobber

on her red dress.

Behind the children were rows of seats that held about 30 adults.

Young or old, the audience was spellbound.

"I like creativity," Mr. Myott said simply.

As an only child, he'd grown up having to entertain himself.

"I made up little stories," he said. "I could play for two hours with a handful of pennies, giving them voices and making up things for them to do.

He remembers being one of the quietest kids in his high school class.

But all of that changed in his senior year when he donned a clown mask at a school event.

"I could do all sorts of crazy things as Igor the Clown that I never could have done as myself," he said.

He brought that lesson to his first job after college, when he was teaching math at Newport Town School in Newport Center, and it's been with him ever since.

Mr. Myott admired the energy and the spontaneity of Bread and Puppet's shows.

"I thought, why couldn't I do that with kids? Not politics, but something that original."

To Mr. Myott, the creativity and storytelling are the goal, not the means to an end.

"Whatever cuts through and lets us be what's inside of ourselves," he said.



Ila Emery, age four, looks up at Mr. Myott wearing a fish mask. Ila had been watching from the edge of the show for some time before stepping forward to get in on the act. Photo by Elizabeth Trail

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