



Hall of Famer

Former Middlebury College athletic director Tom Lawson earns a big honor. See Page 3A.



Star players

A well-rounded Eagle midfielder leads the Independent's boys' soccer all-stars. See Page 1B.



Deer season

This Cornwall teen was one success story from Youth Deer Hunting Weekend. See Page 2B.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Koenig picked to replace Klopfenstein on city council

By ANDY KIRKALDY
VERGENNES — After a brief closed-doors session on Tuesday, the Vergennes City Council opted for a newcomer to city government, South Water Street resident Mark Koenig, to replace soon-to-depart Alderman Joe Klopfenstein.

Council members picked Koenig over a candidate with more experience in Vergennes, former alderman and current Vergennes Development Review Board member Peter Garon.

Koenig and Garon were the only two residents who put their names forth in letters to Mayor Bill Benton before the Nov. 5 deadline.

Klopfenstein will step down at the end of this month to take a job teaching veterinary science for Oregon State University, and Koenig will serve from December until Town Meeting Day. He must decide whether to stand for election at that point.

After the council discussed the choice privately at the close of its regular business meeting, only Alderman Mike Daniels voted against the motion to appoint Koenig once the members returned to the table in public session. Council members did not discuss their decision in the open session.

Koenig and Garon opened the Tuesday meeting by making pitches to the council members.

Koenig, who is a member of the city's economic development task force that grew out of the 2014 Vermont Council on Rural Development Community Visit to Vergennes, discussed his background.

He told the council he and his (See Koenig, Page 20A)



CHILDREN IN THE Essential Early Education pre-kindergarten program at Mary Hogan Elementary School in Middlebury participate in circle time Wednesday morning. Act 166, passed into law last year, requires that all school districts offer 10 hours per week of pre-K education for children ages 3 to 5.

Independent photo/Trent Campbell

Vermont gets ready for universal pre-K

Cost to taxpayers still not finalized

By JOHN FLOWERS
ADDISON COUNTY — Parents of very young children and officials at schools around Vermont have an extra wrinkle to consider as they prepare for the 2016-2017 academic year: a state mandate that pre-kindergarten services be offered to eligible

students through public schools or private programs.

Act 166, signed into law in 2014, requires all school districts in Vermont to offer 10 hours per week — during the 35 weeks of the academic year — of pre-K education to children ages 3 to 5 who are not in

kindergarten.

Supporters of “universal pre-K,” as it is being called, argue that better access to early education will get children off to a better start and give them a better chance at success later in life.

“The research has shown that providing high-quality pre-K services to students gives them better outcomes

in the long run,” said Vicki Wells, director of student services for the Addison Central Supervisory Union (ACSU). “The rationale is, ‘Let’s give all of these kids an exceptional start, and hope the outcomes match down the road.’”

Universal pre-K was originally scheduled to debut this fall. But state (See Pre-k, Page 20A)

Middlebury reviews site for dog park

College offers 2 acres near Porter Hospital

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — It looks like Middlebury dog owners will soon have a two-acre, fenced-off park in which to recreate with their four-legged friends.

Barring unforeseen legal or insurance-related complications, the new dog park will be created on Middlebury College-owned land located near the Middlebury Regional EMS headquarters and Charter House community garden off South Street. A group of local dog owners has been lobbying for a safe, local, off-leash location for their pets to run and play.

Those advocates, including resident Jane Steele, approached the Middlebury Parks & Recreation Department and the college to see if an appropriate site could be made available.

Steele and fellow supporters checked out several potential sites before college officials offered up the two acres adjacent to the Porter Medical Center campus. Supporters reasoned it would be a great location for a dog park because it is removed from the road and is proximate to an existing driveway and spacious parking lot that serves Middlebury Regional EMS and Porter. Having to add those amenities would have significantly increased the cost of a dog park, they reasoned.

Middlebury College has offered to lease the property to the town for five years for \$1, with the potential for a (See Dog park, Page 18A)

Photo exhibit tells loggers' true stories today

Hard work, hard times and love of the woods

By GAEN MURPHREE
MIDDLEBURY — Lester “Tweeter” Felion left school after eighth grade and “began logging at 15 with a crosscut and ax.” Now 78, the Leicester native is still logging alongside his son and brother, who’ve been part of his close-knit crew for decades. Born the oldest of 11 siblings during the Great Depression, Felion says, “I know what hard times are.”

Felion’s logging ethic, “leave the woods better than you found them,” and his love of forests and hard work are chronicled along with the working lives of six other men who are part of Addison

County’s logging fraternity in an exhibit at the Vermont Folklife Center.

“Portrait of a Forest: Men and Machine” profiles seven men who make their living from the Vermont forest: loggers Barry Burnham, “Tweeter” Felion, Mike Quinn and Steve Weber; Jim Lathrop, who combines logging with processing logs into around 50,000 tons per year of wood chips for heating; sawmill operator Tom Lathrop; and forester Tom Yager.

Photographer-writer George Bellerose has worked on the project over the past five years, photographing the men during a hard day’s work,

“It’s hard, it’s dangerous, but they see the result of what they do, they really enjoy what they do. It’s a way of life and a hard way to make a living.”

— George Bellerose

conducting interviews, reading up on logging in trade magazines like “Northern Logger” and “Northern Woodlands,” even hanging out with forest and forestry policy-makers and spokespersons.

“I always start with photographs in the field,” says Bellerose, of his working process. Over the years, the Weybridge resident has chronicled the working lives of Vermont dairy farmers, Nova Scotia fishermen, Yellowstone rangers and now Vermont loggers. He’s planning

his next project on Vermont’s quarry workers. For Bellerose, “Portrait of a Forest: Men and (See Loggers, Page 19A)



WEYBRIDGE PHOTOGRAPHER AND documentarian George Bellerose stands with some of his photographs currently on display at the Vermont Folklife Center in Middlebury. Bellerose spent almost three years photographing and interviewing local loggers for the exhibit. Independent photo/Trent Campbell



Rhyme time

CAST MEMBERS FROM Mount Abraham Union High School’s production of “Seussical the Musical” rehearse on the school stage Tuesday night in Bristol. The show opens Thursday night at 7:30 p.m. and runs through Saturday. For more photos see Page 16A.

Independent photo/Trent Campbell

Retired general shaped by 30 years in the Army

By BRIANNA MCKINLEY and JOHN S. MCCRIGHT
MIDDLEBURY — Brian Carpenter, 53, was first interested in the military as a way to get a college degree without being too encumbered by debt. What grew out of that was a very successful career in the Army and the National Guard and a life dedicated to service.

The Middlebury native, who owns and runs farm equipment dealership Champlain Valley Equipment in his hometown, served 30 years in the Army and Army National Guard, and retired a year ago as the second in command of Guard forces in Vermont and with the rank of general.

With Veterans Day upon us, Carpenter reflected back on his three decades of service in the armed forces and how it has shaped him.

“When I first went into the military I didn’t have a sense for how

much it takes to keep our country strong and free,” Carpenter said in the Exchange Street office of Champlain Valley Equipment. But he, and the public at large, have grown.

“In recent years when you walked down the street in a uniform people would thank you for your service,” he said. “People are strong in their understanding of why we need service in the military.”

As a young man, Carpenter was considering his options for after his 1980 graduation from Middlebury Union High School when his football coach and mentor Hubie Wagner encouraged him to enroll in a service academy. Carpenter wasn’t sure it was right for him.

“Compared to the liberal atmosphere of the Middlebury area, it just seemed too rigid,” he recalled. “The recruiter I was working with said the (See Carpenter, Page 22A)



By the way

Attention Monkton residents, the Monkton position on the Mount Abraham Union Middle/High School Board is still vacant. If you’re interested in serving your community and your community’s children in this capacity, (See By the way, Page 19A)

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LOCAL LOGGER MIKE Quinn is one subject of Weybridge photographer George Bellerose's new exhibit at the Vermont Folklife Center.

Photo by George Bellerose

Loggers

(Continued from Page 1A)

Machine" grew out of many things: his own great pleasure in being in the woods, his desire to reconnect the viewer to occupations once central to Vermont's landscape but now increasingly marginalized, and his desire to tell the men's own stories through words and images.

"My job is the people, not the view from 30,000 feet," said Bellerose, whose striking images take you directly to his subjects' obvious love of what the exhibit characterizes as the "grittiness of the contemporary logger's life, albeit a life conducted amidst the magnificent setting of the forest."

The exhibit largely presents the men in their own words, accompanied by Bellerose's photography. It is in many ways a kind of hymn to the integrity of work, physical labor, a job well done, and an often generations-old tradition of hard-earned expertise and deep camaraderie. Bellerose intentionally chose to highlight a range of approaches and differing economies of scale, as applied to logging and making one's living from the woods. More than 500 photos were winnowed down to 70 for the exhibit.

The first room of the exhibit in the VFC's Main Street headquarters in Middlebury is devoted to smaller crews, like Felion's own three-man crew or solo-logger Mike Quinn, that approach the forest with a chain saw, a bull dozer and a skidder, a lot of chains and cables — and a lot of perseverance and ingenuity.

The second room looks at larger operations, like Jim Lathrop's logging and chipping outfit, now being taken over by sons Justin and Jason. The Bristol business employs a variable crew of about seven guys and uses far larger and more expensive machinery like the 7-ton chipping wheel that effortlessly crunches an entire trunk into wood chips, a feller buncher (an enormous machine that literally grabs a tree and severs it from the stump in seconds) and grapple skidders, whose giant claws grab the felled logs and speed up and sim-

plify the job of dragging them out of the forest and right to the chipping machine. This last apparatus works onsite to reduce a giant tree to fuel and spit the chips directly into a massive truck.

"It's like this industrial ballet," said Bellerose, as he describes the way a feller buncher rotates in place, cut tree in hand, and "pirouettes."

The difference in productivity between the big crews and the small ones is remarkable. A feller buncher can cut a 1,000 trees a day, a chain sawyer can cut 100, according to Bellerose.

The second room of the exhibit also profiles Jim's brother Tom Lathrop's saw mill, which produces what the exhibit describes as "gold standard" hardwood flooring. In the Bristol plant the trees progress from debarking, to being expertly sawn into different lengths and dimensions, through the drying process and into towering stacks of prime lumber and flooring.

A smaller assortment of photos details the work of cutting roads and replanting trees and shows the glory of the trees themselves. A handful of historical photos show what logging looked like in Addison County circa 1875 and into the early 1930s.

WORKING LANDSCAPE
Bellerose characterizes the loggers he's profiled as problem-solvers.

"The forest largely calls the shots and they adapt with a Plan B, Plan

C," he said. "This flexibility and acceptance of man and machine's limits are a must and separate the good stewards from the irresponsible ones."

He also called loggers tree lovers said they see themselves as stewards of the land and want to leave the woodlot better than they found it.

"The forest largely calls the shots and they adapt with a Plan B, Plan C ... This flexibility and acceptance of man and machine's limits are a must and separate the good stewards from the irresponsible ones."

— George Bellerose

— it could have been 20 years ago, because some of them have gone back to the same woodlot a generation later. They have great stories, and they have this memory of trees."

He notes how many of the men profiled come from farming or logging families and how great a role family heritage plays in Vermont's working landscape. Vermont's forests are 80 percent privately owned, mostly by families, said Bellerose. Loggers work for small companies or for themselves and carry on traditions that often go back for generations. Bellerose contrasts the difference in scale and type of ownership to the Maine forests, which have been mostly owned by large corpo-

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)

submit a letter of interest to the Monkton Central School Board by this coming Monday. The board will meet with interested individuals on Tuesday, Nov. 17, a meeting that will take place at 8 p.m. at MAUHS. Send your letter of interest to kwheeler@anesu.org or by postal mail to Monkton Central School Board, c/o Catrina DiNapoli, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Addison Northeast Supervisory Union, 72 Munsill Ave., Suite 601, Bristol, VT 05443.

To those Bristol residents who would similarly like to serve their town, a spot on the Bristol Elementary School Board is also still looking for takers. If you are interested in serving your community's elementary school as a board member, submit a letter to the board by Monday. Like the Monkton board, the Bristol board will meet with interested individuals on Tuesday — same time and place. Send your letter of interest to kwheeler@anesu.org or to Bristol Elementary School Board, c/o Catrina DiNapoli, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Addison Northeast Supervisory Union, 72 Munsill Ave., Suite 601, Bristol, VT 05443.

UPDATE: The North Pleasant Street sewer project in Middlebury that was scheduled to begin this past Tuesday, actually began on Wednesday. Another new wrinkle, North Pleasant Street will NOT be closed to traffic overnight on Thursday as originally planned, but there may be periods when High Street will be closed to through traffic until the project is completed on Nov. 20. At these times residents will need to enter and exit at Stewart Lane.

Folks in the Parkinson's support group that meets in Bristol told us they have started a "dance with Parkinson's" movement class, led

by Sara McMahon, a fine dancer trained in the Mark Morris dance technique. Mark Morris has been very active in the Brooklyn Parkinson's disease community, and his dancers work with patients achieving unbelievable results. McMahon and the local group have two classes scheduled at Middlebury Fitness for people with Parkinson's and their caregivers on two upcoming Fridays: Nov. 13 and Dec. 18 from 9-10:15 a.m. All are welcome; no experience necessary. Group member Lindi Bortney said the group is extremely grateful to Middlebury Fitness for the donation of the studio for the class.

Tick, tick, tick. Friday is the deadline for businesses to apply for a \$500 grant from the Addison County Economic Development Corp.'s Green Energy Grant program. Five local businesses will win these grants for green energy projects. Examples of possible projects could be installing an electric car charger to attract customers or providing discounts on bus passes for commuting employees or gas cards for employees to carpool. Winning businesses must make a minimum 1:1 matching contribution to the project. Membership in ACEDC is not required. To apply, go online to addisoncountyeconomic.org and click on the link for "ACEDC Green Energy Grants" link.

If you didn't get a chance to check out the Sheldon Museum's recent exhibit "Warren Kimble All-American Artist: An Eclectic Retrospective," don't worry. The Sheldon has extended the show through Dec. 31. That means you'll be able to see Kimble's work — including themes other than the folk art he is renowned for — when you come to the Sheldon's annual holiday open house and electric train display on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 5 and 6, as well as any other day in December that they are open.

Folks in the Parkinson's support group that meets in Bristol told us they have started a "dance with Parkinson's" movement class, led

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OVUHS students to present 'Cinderella' over two weekends

BRANDON — Otter Valley Union High School's award-winning Walking Stick Theatre will present Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical "Cinderella," based on the beloved French fairy tale by Charles Perrault.

Fifty students will take part in the production, which will be presented at Otter Valley Thursday-Saturday, November 19-21 at 7 p.m., and on Sunday, Nov. 22, at 2:30 p.m.

"Cinderella" will provide wonderful entertainment for the whole family. The musical tells the story of a young woman forced into a life of servitude by her cruel stepmother and self-centered stepsisters. The kind-hearted Cinderella works hard, but dreams of a better life. With help from her fairy godmother, Cinderella is transformed into a princess who finds her prince.

Tickets are \$8 in advance and are available at Carr's Florist in Brandon. Ticket at the door are \$9 for senior, students and children ages 3 and up, and \$10 for adults.

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