



Arts + Leisure

Image Farm owners Matt and Pam Heywood create memorable designs for business. See inside.



On the run

Mount Abe hosted MUHS and many other teams at a Tuesday cross-country meet. See Page 1B.



Fall Home

Architectural and interior design is the focus of our annual fall home supplement. See Section C.

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Middlebury business outreach at crossroads

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Almost four years into its five-year trial, the Middlebury Business Development Fund (MBDF) is struggling to achieve its goal of bringing substantial new businesses and jobs to town, in spite of the efforts of its energetic executive director.

That was the consensus opinion last week among several local officials and entrepreneurs who lobbied for creation of the MBDF back in 2012. It's been a joint effort by the town, Middlebury College and the

local business community to bring new enterprises to the community and help existing firms grow. The record shows that while the MBDF and its chief administrator, Jamie Gaucher, have courted a diverse crop of prospects, organizers' original hopes of landing some businesses with 40-or-more employees remains an elusive goal.

"We know Jamie has worked energetically to try to bring jobs to



GAUCHER

Middlebury and I think all of us, Jamie included, are disappointed with the results to date," said Dave Donahue, special assistant to Middlebury College President Laurie Patton.

"I will say that we knew when we took this approach that it would be a challenge, but that the only way to test a proposition such as this one is to try it," Donahue added. "We have no regrets about doing so."

Area MBDF boosters cited a still-thawing economy and the challenges of attracting young entrepreneurs to a rural area as among the obstacles that Gaucher has faced in his recruiting efforts. One official close to the process who requested anonymity said he had hoped to see more cooperation from the college in identifying and courting potential alumni prospects. Former Middlebury selectboard Chairman John Tenny believes the MBDF process would benefit from more exposure (See Middlebury, Page 11A)

Gaucher touts list of successes, prospects in recruiting effort

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Jamie Gaucher, director of the Middlebury Office of Business Development & Innovation, said he fields inquiries from an average of seven to 10 prospects each month exploring Addison County's shire town as a possible place to lay down roots.

He said some of those inquiries are "very serious," from entrepre-

neurs who already have a business plan in the works and who are seeking information about land availability in Middlebury and advice on financing and/or how to navigate the permitting process. Some of the calls come from folks who are simply putting out basic feelers, instilling little confidence that they might call back.

Gaucher invites some of these (See Gaucher, Page 12A)

Lincoln faces trash deadline

Casella seeking to renegotiate deal

By GAEN MURPHREE

LINCOLN — Casella Waste Systems said it will end or change its current waste collection arrangement with Lincoln on Oct. 1 and no new arrangement is yet in place.

The town's selectboard is still searching for affordable and workable ways to get Lincoln's trash and recycling picked up.

Selectboard Chair Bill Finger said that the volume of recyclables and trash that Lincoln produces is not enough to make it cost-effective for Casella to come up the mountain and collect it from an area with a dispersed population.

"And then the smaller haulers ... can only take on so many customers so to speak," Finger said. "But we think we're making progress at this point, actually. We're crossing our fingers."

Last May, Casella representative Dennis Poole informed the Lincoln selectboard that his company was losing too much money on its arrangement with Lincoln and needed to make changes. The arrangement had remained largely unchanged since 2008, said Poole, and Casella was losing around \$26,835 annually on its Lincoln account.

"This program was strictly built off of a plan that would have worked 10 years ago," Poole explained. "We had an older deal that was based on a flat monthly amount that didn't amount to what we needed to do to cover our costs."

What's changed, said Poole, is the recyclables market.

Eight or nine years ago — when contracts such as the one in Lincoln were arranged — Casella could expect to make around \$5 to \$10 per ton (See Casella, Page 14A)



MIDDLEBURY FARMER GEORGE Foster, right, stands with UVM Extension Agronomy Outreach Professional Rico Balzano during an Addison County farm bus tour Monday. The tour highlighted conservation efforts in the county to improve water quality.

Independent photo/Trent Campbell



CHERYL CESARIO, LEFT, listens to Orwell farmer Josh Lucas discuss the many conservation practices he has implemented on his farm to improve water quality.

Independent photo/Gaen Murphree

Ag tour highlights farm efforts to improve lake

By GAEN MURPHREE

ADDISON COUNTY — Legislators, policy makers, representatives from state and federal entities and others got on the bus Monday to see what Addison County farmers are doing to improve water quality in Lake Champlain.

"It's exciting," said Tom Berry, Senator Patrick Leahy's lead advisor on agricultural and natural resource issues. "I've been at this work for a while, and the Senator for a lot longer, and I can actually see, visibly, a change on the ground. I'm seeing more of the ground is green than brown now as the corn comes off it, and in the spring I've seen the same thing."

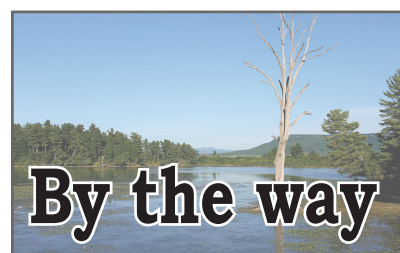
"So my takeaway is that we — the big 'we' of the farmers, the technical support,

etc. — are being successful in understanding how to make conservation work for farmers and providing some of the technical and actual physical tools needed to begin implementing these programs.

Water quality expert Ethan Swift came away similarly impressed.

"It's kind of the best of both worlds. It's nice to see the win-win of these practices and programs, fulfilling both the farmers' concerns and the environmental issues that we're facing," Swift said.

Swift, a watershed planning and restoration expert for the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, leads development of strategic plans to address phosphorus pollution for both the Otter Creek (See Farm tour, Page 14A)



By the way

Middlebury registered voters take note: General Election voting on Tuesday, Nov 8, will take place at the community's new recreation center/gym at 154 Creek Road. (See By the way, Page 3A)

Winter ticks plague state's moose herd

By GAEN MURPHREE

VERMONT — Archers will head into the woods on Saturday for the start of moose season and hunters with guns will get to take their shots beginning Oct. 15. But fewer hunters will be roaming Vermont's forest this fall on the lookout for one of the state's most iconic animals.

This year the Department of Fish and Wildlife issued 40 percent fewer moose permits (160 in total) and again restricted hunting in all but two management areas to adult males, in an effort to bolster a herd hit hard by a pesky arachnid that is also a growing nuisance to humans — ticks.

Moose, it turns out, are not good groomers. And that evolutionary detail, hitched to three-and-a-half centuries of landscape-altering Euro-

pean intervention, are behind the current challenges besetting the state's moose herd, according to biologist Cedric Alexander, Fish and Wildlife's Moose Project Leader.

After decades of record numbers and thriving populations as moose reclaimed their ancestral turf, for the past half-dozen years a "winter tick epizootic" (think "epidemic," but for animals) has put the herd in decline.

The damaging explosion of this parasite goes back hundreds of years to when Vermont's virgin forests were cleared for settlement. Two-hundred-fifty years ago the Green Mountain State was 95 percent forested.

"We changed all that," said Alexander. "We made this state into an (See Moose, Page 13A)



MOOSE IN VERMONT woods can brush against clusters of hundreds of ticks that infest the animal's coat and can suck its blood all winter.

Photo courtesy Vermont Fish & Wildlife

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