



Maple solar

A Lincoln farm brings the best of sustainable energy to the maple industry. See Arts + Leisure.



Court stars

A Commodore senior leads the 2017 Independent Boys' Basketball All-Star Team. See Page 1B.



Sweet home

Maximize value and efficiency in your spring home projects with tips in our special section.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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A MIGRANT worker preps a cow for milking on a Vermont dairy farm. Organizers at Migrant Justice estimate that 90 percent of the state's dairy workers are migrants and most are undocumented. Increased deportations threaten a vital Vermont industry. Photo credit: Vera Chang

Feds could ICE-out dairy economy

Deporting workers would 'devastate' farms

By GAEN MURPHREE

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont dairy farmers and farmworkers are in an increased state of alert as federal immigration authorities begin enforcing President Trump's immigration policies. What the White House described as taking "the shackles off" Immigration and Customs Enforcement (known as ICE) and other agencies has resulted in shifts in policy that more aggressively target deportation of foreign workers — including farmworkers who have overstated their visas.

What would happen if migrant farmworkers weren't here milk cows, or feed them or clean out their

barns?

From a purely dollars-and-cents perspective, it would have a huge impact on an industry that is a huge driver of the economy of Vermont and — to an even greater extent — Addison County.

"One of the challenges today and why everybody is so concerned is that were there to be either a mass deportation of workers or, what might be more likely, a mass exodus of workers where they feel threatened

and they feel they need to move — that would be devastating to our farm economy statewide and in Addison County," said Dan Baker, a University of Vermont professor

The Open Door Clinic has begun teaching Mexican farmworkers key English phrases such as "I would like to remain silent" and "I would like to call my lawyer."

in Community Development and Applied Economics.

For farmers on the state's 868 dairy farms, this Hispanic workforce is irreplaceable. "They keep the farms going," said Bridport dairy farmer Cheryl Connor. "If we didn't have migrant workers, we wouldn't have dairy farms."

Dairy cows bring more than just pastoral beauty to the Vermont landscape.

Dairy pumps an estimated \$2.2 billion into the state's economy every year — \$1.3 billion directly from agriculture products (milk, cheeses and other by-products), \$360 million in wages, and the rest in the multiplying affect of the dairy industry — everything from vet bills and grocery purchases to impacts on real estate and state tourism.

Dairy creates an estimated 6,000-7,000 jobs in Vermont and provides around \$360 million in wages. Indeed, only two other industries surpass or equal dairy as an employer: grocery stores and (See Dairy, Page 12A)

Bristol lauds its departing administrator

By GAEN MURPHREE

BRISTOL — Bristol Town Administrator Therese Kirby will not be renewing her contract when it runs out at the end of the fiscal year. Instead, Kirby, informed the selectboard late last month, she and her husband would be moving to Brookfield to be closer to friends and family and build a home there.

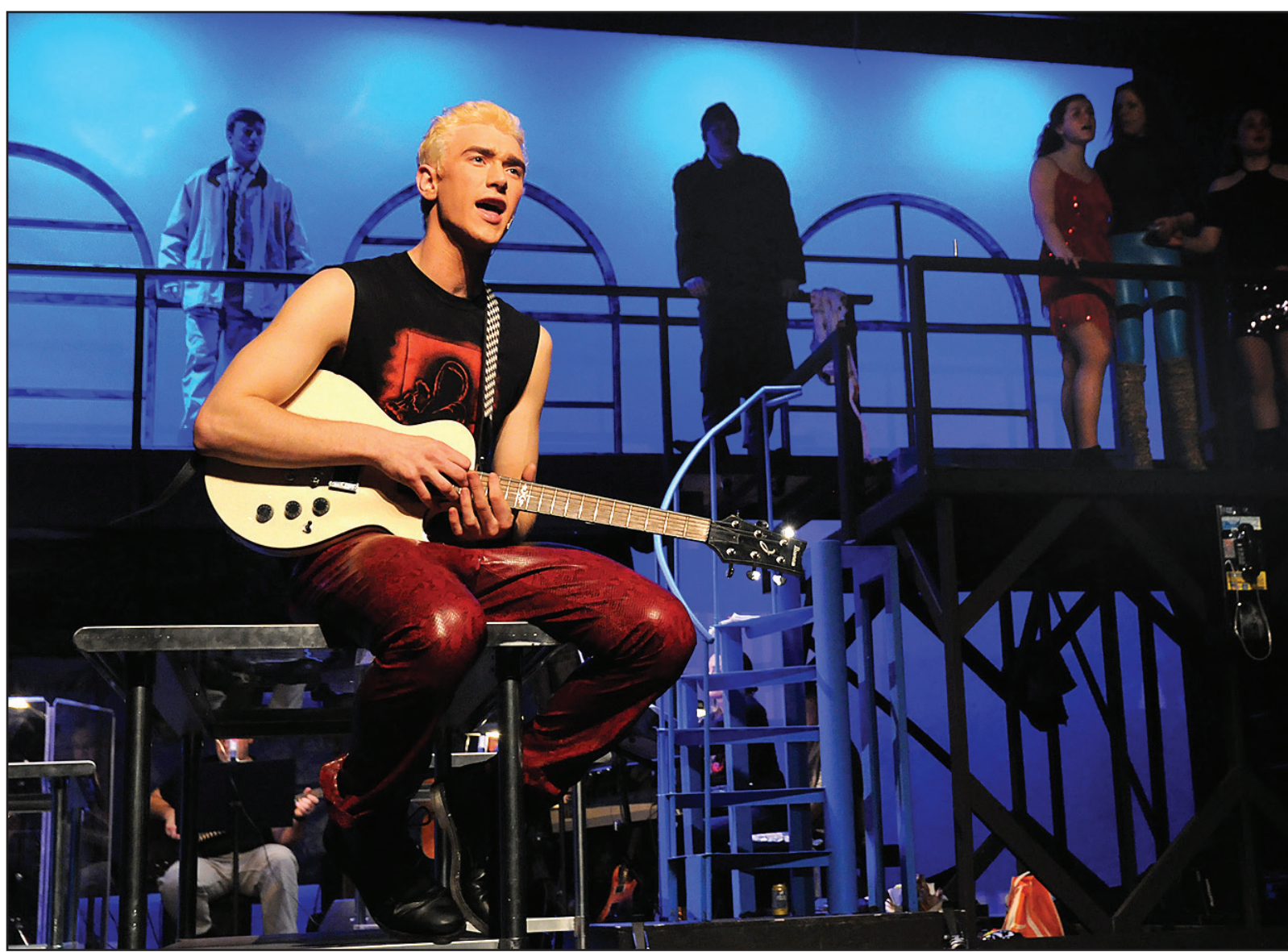
"Bristol is a wonderful place to raise a family. My husband and I have raised three children here in our 23 years as Bristol residents. It is a great town with an amazing sense of community, and is filled with some of the best people I have ever known," said Kirby, 50. "It has been an honor and a privilege serving the residents, and one that I have tried never to take for granted.

"When I leave Bristol, I will leave a piece of my heart here, but I think that's a good thing — it means I really cared."

Kirby plans to start her own business doing title services for mortgage companies, attorneys, engineers and surveyors: East Hill Title Services LLC.

Apparently, Kirby will be missed in Bristol: When former selectboard chairwoman Michelle Perlee announced Kirby's pending resignation at town meeting, the entire assembly rose spontaneously to its feet for a standing ovation.

Bristol's new selectboard (See Bristol, Page 12A)



Seasons of love

MOUNT ABRAHAM UNION High School student Owen LaBarr rehearses a scene from the school's annual spring musical Tuesday night. The show runs Thursday through Saturday. For more photos and more information, see Page 2A.

Independent photo/Trent Campbell

Expansion, renovation plan seeks to lift Ilsley

Library proposal could cost up to \$10 million

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — A proposed renovation and expansion of Middlebury's Ilsley Library was unveiled at Tuesday's selectboard meeting that would remove two older additions and increase the library's square footage from around 19,000 square feet to more than 25,000 square feet.

It would also, according to Ilsley Library Building Committee representative John Freidin, solve critical space needs, especially for children's and youth programs and technology offerings; fix water filtration problems; create safer, more accessible and welcoming entries; retain all parking and keep Ilsley's 170,000 annual visitors downtown; fix dated heating and ventilation systems; and enhance the original 1924 building's architecture.

The addition as proposed would include ground-level entry plazas at both the front and rear that could be monitored from the circulation desk, include extensive glass to offer natural light inside the (See Ilsley, Page 7A)



By the way

Get your questions about Vermont's wildlife answered this weekend. Biologists will give presentations and answer questions about animals in the state and what's being done to conserve species and their habitats during a "Wildlife Open House" this Saturday afternoon at the Middlebury Union (See By the way, Page 11A)

Discarded TVs helps a recycling firm rebound

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Like most of us, Robin Ingenthron spent Tuesday weathering a major winter storm.

Actually, he's had a lot of experience surviving storms of both the natural kind and those endemic to the business world.

Major setbacks threatened to bury his Middlebury enterprise, Good Point Recycling, several times during the past three years.

But Ingenthron refused to give up, and Good Point has emerged stronger than ever in a recycling industry that has chewed up and spit out many of his former competitors throughout the country.

His business has found its salvation, oddly enough, through the flat screen TV.

Ingenthron, during a Monday interview, pointed to three specific

"bad times" in Good Point's recent history.

First, there was the economic crash of 2008 that occurred soon after Ingenthron bought his company headquarters — the former CPC of Vermont building at 227 Pond Lane. Two months after Ingenthron closed on the property, a major tenant announced its departure, leaving Good Point without a substantial revenue stream and a surplus of space.

"Scrap steel, copper, plastics and all of the stuff we harvest went to World War II (recycling value) levels. That was the first of many sleepless nights."

— Robin Ingenthron

(recycling value) levels," Ingenthron said. "That was the first of many sleepless nights."

But Good Point was able to survive by separating and reclaiming recyclables that other companies didn't want to bother with. Most of the industrial-sized recyclers were



NATHAN HILL, V.P. of operations at Good Point Recycling, stands next to a stack of discarded flat screen televisions that will soon be mined for reusable parts at the Middlebury business. Flat screen televisions have become a lucrative commodity for Good Point.

Independent photo/Trent Campbell

shredding items and picking out salvage.

Good Point also delved into foreign markets, as nearby as Mexico

and as far away as Africa.

"I had to grow into the building, and do it through re-use," Ingenthron said. "We got through it."

DODGING A BULLET

The company had found new financial stability in part by winning (See Recycling, Page 11A)

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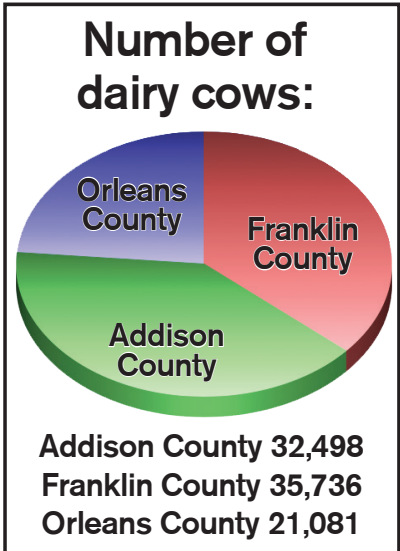
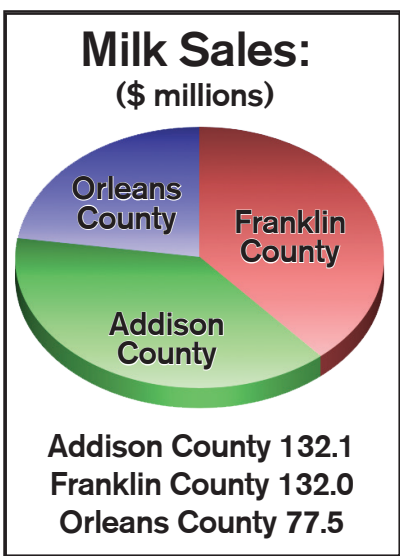


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Dairy

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computer/electronics manufacturing. Over half the milk produced in New England — 63 percent — comes from Vermont. Dairy occupies 15 percent of the state's landmass at 900,000 acres. And, in many ways, this vital and iconic industry rests quite literally in the arms of migrant workers. Most of our dairy farmworkers are from Chiapas, Mexico's southernmost state near the border with Guatemala, Baker said. Most send over half of their wages home to support family in Mexico and build toward a better life when they return. Most are undocumented. "Our estimate is that about 90 percent of hired workers in Vermont's dairy industry are immigrant workers," said Will Lambek, an organizer with the advocacy group Migrant Justice. "That doesn't mean that all of them are undocumented, but the majority are. That's our count from our years of working with dairy farms." Baker explained that the shift to the migrant, Hispanic workforce began about 15 years ago in response to an ongoing shortage of farm labor. Local workers, said Connor, "love running equipment," but don't want to work in the barn milking cows, keeping them fed, shoveling manure. While dairy farmers are all too aware of the importance of this migrant labor force, the state's migrant dairy workers are equally important to non-farmers. They provide the lifeblood of an industry that is near synonymous with the state's landscape and central to the economic vitality of local communities. Perhaps nowhere is this truer than in Addison County, which by the numbers is the state's dairy leader.

PORTRAIT OF A COUNTY
Addison County is the state's top county for all agricultural sales combined: \$191 million a year, (others range from \$12 million for Essex County to \$190 million annually for Franklin County). Addison County is the state's top county for number of farms of all types and for acres in agriculture. Addison County is also the state's leader in milk sales — \$132.1



million a year — and accounts for 26.2 percent of the state's \$504.9 million in annual milk sales. (Franklin is a close second at \$132.0 million a year in milk sales. Orleans is third with \$77.5 million).

Though the leader in milk sales, Addison County is in third place for number of dairy farms, specifically, having 124 (first and second place go to Franklin (184) and Orleans (131), respectively. Those 124 farms house 32,498 dairy cows (24 percent of the state's 134,132 dairy cows), making Addison County a close second to Franklin County (35,736) in its size of herd. Those 32,498 cows provide one easy handle on the value of dairy to Addison County's economy. In a 2014 study from the Agency of Commerce, analyst Kenneth

Data used in this article comes from the most recent (2014) USDA Agriculture Census as updated for the Farm to Plate 2015 Annual Report and updated in 2015 by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, Agency of Commerce and Community Development and by the Vermont Dairy Promotion Council in the "Milk Matters" study. These figures were used throughout the article unless otherwise noted.

Jones estimated that each Vermont dairy cow provides the equivalent of \$12,500 in economic activity. Using the 2015 herd size of 32,498 dairy cows, Addison County's Holsteins, Jerseys and assorted dairy bovine bring the local economy an estimated \$406,225,000 a year, from the combined impact of value of products sold, impacts of wages and profits as spent in the local economy, and wider benefits to tourism, real estate, etc. Ag officials don't have exact numbers for the current picture, but one researcher said the number of dairy farms in Addison County has dropped 5 percent to 118 today. That implies the economic benefit of dairy in Addison County is currently \$385,913,750 a year (see a broader explanation in this story on addisonindependent.com).

INCREASED ENFORCEMENT
ICE's increased deportation activity has been seen across the country, including here. Just last week in Burlington, Grand Isle dairy worker Cesar Alex Carrillo was arrested outside the Chittenden County courthouse en route to a hearing related to a 2016 DUI arrest. The hearing proceeded without Carrillo and charges were dismissed. However, Carrillo (who is married to a Vermont resident, has a young child and a baby on the way) is now in ICE custody in a New Hampshire detention facility facing deportation proceedings.

In a joint statement issued Tuesday, the Vermont Congressional delegation decried this and related arrests. Sens. Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders and Rep. Peter Welch said that they are "reaching out to ICE about the potential impact in Vermont of President Trump's executive order calling for increased immigration enforcement. "Instead of focusing on removing those people who pose a threat to public safety or national security, the Trump Administration is targeting all undocumented persons, including the people that help keep our dairy farms and rural economy afloat." While UVM's Baker sees a big downside to the loss of Mexican farm laborers, he offers a caveat, emphasizing the resiliency of the state's farmers.

"It would throw our farms into a crisis. I believe that our farmers are resilient and they will adapt," Baker said. "But it will be extremely stressful and extremely difficult and some won't be able to survive. But I do believe our farm economy will survive."

LIKE FAMILY
Open Door Clinic Outreach Nurse and Nurse Case Manager Julia Doucet said that local farmworkers are reporting increased levels of stress and anxiety and are increasingly reluctant to leave the farm for groceries or other errands. The clinic has begun a new study documenting how the current climate is affecting workers overall. They've also begun teaching key English phrases such as "I would like to remain silent" and "I would like to call my lawyer."

Just back from a visit to a local dairy farm, Doucet also emphasized that the cost to Addison County goes far beyond dollars. "One of the farmers today said, 'You know, what scares me the most is that they're going to come and take these guys away.' He said, 'It's not because my farm would stop dead in its tracks. It's not because I would be losing income out my eyeballs. But because I care about these guys. They've been on my farm for three years, and they feel like family. And I'm terrified of losing my family.'"



Therese Kirby, far right, is leaving her position as Bristol's town administrator at the end of June. Kirby is seen here in the town office with Zoning Administrator Eric Forand, far left, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer Peter D. Ryan, Administrative Assistant Pam Correia and Town Clerk/Treasurer Jen Myers. Independent photo/Trent Campbell

Bristol

(Continued from Page 1A)
chairman, John "Pecker" Heffernan, explained why. "I haven't talked to anybody who hasn't been impressed with the job she's done through the years and how she's handled herself and how she has come to be a strong administrator," said Heffernan, adding, "I know that she's going to be terribly missed, both her personality, you know, and the way she deals with people is really going to be missed."

He also described Kirby's work with the selectboard. "Since she first showed up, she's been very good at moving forward and bringing us up to speed. "She is very well informed, any decision she makes," Heffernan said. "She researches everything, she doesn't make a move without researching it and knowing what she's doing. It isn't something she does off the cuff."

Kirby broke ground in 2014 as Bristol's first female town administrator. She began working

for the town in 2006 as assistant to then-town clerk and treasurer Penny Sherwood.

Kirby said that she came to the town office at a time of great change. In 2006, Bristol lost three longtime employees within the space of a few months: administrative assistant Shirley Emilo died of cancer, town administrator/zoning administrator/solid waste supervisor Bob Hall retired, and Sherwood, clerk/treasurer since 1988, retired and moved to Maine. "All institutional memory left," said Kirby.

With Sherwood's retirement, the selectboard appointed Kirby to fill the vacancy. She was first elected as town clerk and treasurer in 2007 and was re-elected for the next seven years. In March 2014, then-town administrator Bill Bryant announced his retirement and Kirby threw her hat in the ring. "I wanted a challenge. I'm that type of person," said Kirby.

Kirby won the position against 12 other applicants, four of whom were interviewed.

As town administrator, Kirby has overseen a number of banner projects for Bristol, notably construction of the new fire station, closing of the town landfill, and the multi-pronged, still-in-progress process to build a business park. That last project included the town's negotiating and selling the designated site to Stoney Hill Properties, creating a public/private task force to plan for the park, and holding a successful vote to extend the town's water system.

Kirby will continue to serve as town administrator through June 30, but the Bristol selectboard has begun its search for a new town administrator. At Monday night's meeting, the selectboard fine-tuned its ad for a statewide search and approved a job description that Kirby drafted. It is available at www.bristolvt.org.

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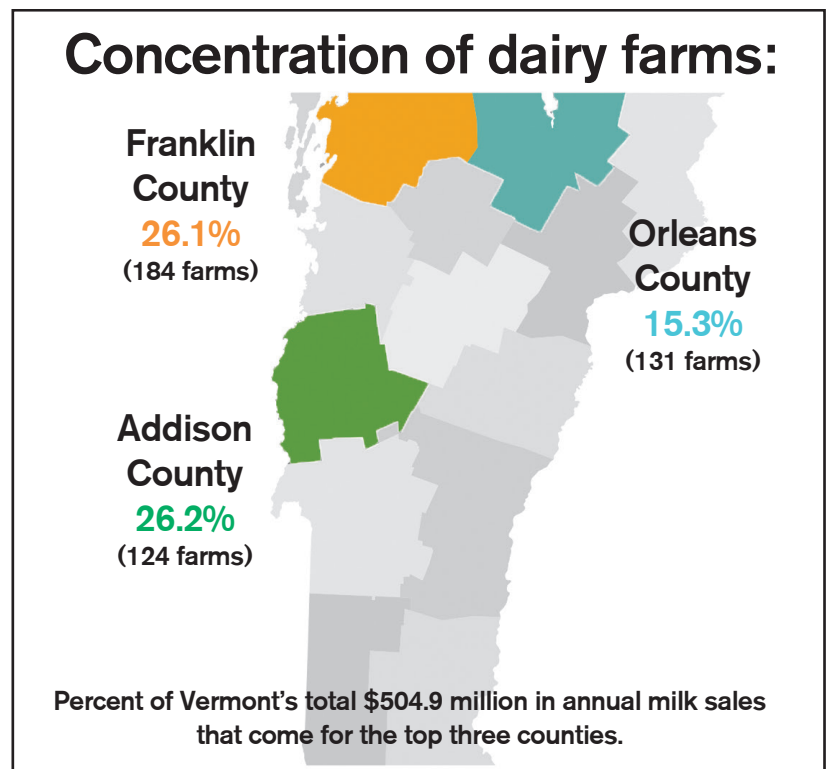
MUHS jazz group to perform March 30

MIDDLEBURY — As part of St. Stephen's Lenten Recital Series, The Middlebury Union High School Jazz Ensemble, also known as "Midd Jazz" will be performing a concert on Thursday, March 30, at 12:15 p.m. The auditioned ensemble meets daily for 40 minutes and is made up of students from grades 9-12. The ensemble has performed for 25 years at the Vermont Association for Jazz Education, placing first the past 10 years. The ensemble recently competed at the Berklee College Jazz Festival,

a national competition, placing first in their division and the fifth highest score out of 208 ensembles. The ensemble has several students who have performed in the Green Mountain District Festival, with 12 performing in both Concert Band and Jazz Districts this year, and the following to perform in May with the Vermont All State Ensembles — four in Jazz Ensemble, three in Concert Band and two in Orchestra. Two students were selected to perform at the Eastern Honors Festival this April — one each in

Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble and one student performed this fall in the National Honors Band Festival. The Ensemble is directed by Anne Severy, who has been a music educator for 36 years, teaching at MUHS since 1986.

The Ensemble will be performing their selections from the Berklee and VTJAE Festivals from composers John Coltrane, Jimmy Van Heusen and Dave Brubeck as well as other charts. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St., Middlebury. The event is free.



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