

## NEWS

**VTSU Johnson has its own campus cat named Frederic!**

PAGE 3



## ARTS

**Artist Joe Vyvial talks about a painting he made for his grandparents.**

PAGE 5



## SPORTS

**Track and Field team excels despite not having a track.**

PAGE 7



Castleton, Vermont

# SCASTLETON SPARTAN

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF VTSU CASTLETON

Friday, October 25, 2024

## Student workers upset at not being paid

By Maddie Lindgren  
Castleton Spartan

Vermont State University is experiencing significant difficulties in its student employment program. Many student workers have not been paid due to contract issues. Some students and faculty believe the problem stems from technical challenges and a need for more communication.

The delays have impacted both work-study and non-work-study positions, leaving students wondering when they will receive their money. Some believe the number of contracts overburdened existing systems, resulting in widespread confusion and frustration.

There is a lot of uncertainty surrounding this entire situation. Many student workers reported that the problem began with a payroll system malfunctioning that processed their contracts and payments.

Zoey Teal, a student tutor in the STEM department, said, "My boss told me someone had to reboot this computer system that renders our contracts, and for some reason, it took like a month to get updated, but I still don't know what that means."

Students were left waiting for their contracts to be renewed or even sent out, resulting in a backlog of payments. Teal claimed she had not gotten her contract renewal despite working for the department for nearly a year.

"Usually, every semester, you get sent a new contract to get paid through, and I hadn't been sent the contract until a week ago," Teal said.

Student Employment Coordinator Michelle Perry highlighted the process concerns that are causing these delays. Perry said contracts must be signed and submitted before student employees can be officially added to the UKG system, the University's payroll processing software.

"If you're not being paid, it means you have not completed something in the process; either you didn't complete onboarding if you're a new hire, or you haven't signed the contract," Perry said. "We cannot send the contract to UKG until it is signed."

Perry stated that the UKG software has often been crashing, adding to the complications. She handles many contracts, with 1,500 processed last year alone and 130 unsigned contracts this year.

"There's a lot of things that it doesn't do that we wish it did. It has been crashing a lot lately. So, it has been a problem, yes, but there's not a person in the whole system that's not going to say that UKG is a problem," Perry said. "I am sending them 300 contracts a day. And I think UKG doesn't like it."

Despite efforts to improve the system, the backlog continues. Perry, however, said UKG may change within a year or two. Returning students must sign new contracts each semester to continue working and receive pay.

The frustration among student employees is apparent. According to Teal, just a tiny percentage of the students in her department have been paid.

"It's only happening to certain people, which is weird," Steel said. There are 12 STEM tutors, and in the month of September, three people got paid out of the 12."

See 'Unpaid' on page 6.

## Fleming memorialized in Jeffords

By Pearl Bellomo  
Castleton Spartan

On Oct. 15, members of the VTSU-Castleton community gathered in the Jeffords Hall atrium to unveil a memorial for former Academic Dean Honoree Fleming, 77, who was fatally shot on the Rail Trail last October.

The memorial, comprised of a resolution passed by the Vermont House of Representatives, a picture of Fleming with a verse by Y.B. Yeats chosen by husband Ron Powers and a watercolor on easel by Vanessa Hampton, serves as a reminder of Fleming's outstanding contributions to Castleton.

"My hope is that when people see this installation that they remember Honoree not for the way that she died, but for the way that she lived. With love and compassion, with grit and determination, with brilliance. I think that's the legacy she would want to leave behind," said VTSU Special Projects Coordinator Meredith Fletcher, who served as Fleming's administrative assistant for 10 years prior to Fleming's retirement in 2012.

Fletcher noted her continuous advocacy for students, breakthroughs in biochemistry and love for her family.

"Being in the presence of such greatness every day was an enormous honor," she said.

Joe Mark, friend and 32-year Castleton Academic Dean who also worked with Fleming, recalled fine Italian dinners shared with his wife Nancy, Fleming and Powers, which inspired the ceremony's food service.

"She became a fantastic Italian chef," he said, also describing their conversations as "scintillating" and "highly opinionated."

Mark shared that he had confidently recommended Fleming's hiring as Associate Academic Dean following his retirement.



LEO RICHARDSON

People gather for Honoree Fleming's memorial installation in Jeffords, top, husband Ron Powers, left, and a framed picture of Fleming.

"Her scholarly credentials, her publications, her teaching experience at both Trinity College and Middlebury College, just made her resume the top of the pile. And it was a very, very easy decision to recommend her hiring," he said.

Adding depth to her impressive career, Fleming was also a first-generation college student whose mother immigrated to America from Ireland. It was these exact roots that helped

her identify with and support students.

"She was a champion of students, especially those who were struggling to overcome the challenges they faced... You didn't have to have rank or power or status to earn Honoree's respect and attention. Far from it. If anything, because of her Irish Republican heritage, which she wore so proudly, she particularly valued the underdogs," Mark said.

Powers eloquently recounted how they met, over 40 years ago, by chance on an airplane and how their love stood the test of time.

"Honoree radiated goodness and kindness and decency and love," he said. "She made me feel cared for and seen... She was the giving tree."

He reiterated his son Dean's statement at the memorial service following her death, referring to her as an "agnostic

## Students upset with voyeurism incident response

By Brandon Burmeister  
Castleton Spartan

On Monday, September 30, students and faculty were shocked by a news article from the Rutland Herald and posts on Yik Yak about an incident that occurred four days earlier.



## Expel the Intrusive Student and Enhance Privacy Measures at Vermont State University

Started September 30, 2024

121

Signatures

200

Next Goal

VTSU students are signing an online petition on YikYak to show their displeasure with school's actions.

Luke Kane, a student at the Castleton campus, was found hiding in a third-floor women's bathroom in Ellis the prior Saturday evening.

According to the Rutland Herald, the woman showering at the time saw Kane's fully clothed reflection in a puddle on the floor, and after warning

another woman who entered, pulled the shower curtain to find him standing there. He then claimed to be "testing the water." Soon after, the first woman's boyfriend decided to take matters into his own hands.

"I grab my stuff to go take a shower and then I hear arguing in the hallway, and I'm like, 'what's going on?' cause it's pretty loud," said student Frankie Young. "I'm overhearing someone's boyfriend confronting this guy about being in the women's bathroom."

Young added that "(Kane) was making excuses" to the boyfriend throughout the confrontation and that there are only two bathrooms, a men's and a women's, located on opposite sides of the floor.

The police have since arrested him and the case is ongoing. Kane has also taken a leave of absence from school and is seeking mental health treatment.

Most of the student body, however, were completely unaware of the incident until days later, when the Rutland Herald released an article and the information spread like wildfire on the social media app Yik Yak.

"A coward's app," remarked Association Director of Public Safety Keith Molinari, referring to the app's anonymity.

Students have since used the app to pour out their anger and frustrations, both towards Kane and the school. This has resulted in many slurs, accusations of other crimes, even spread-

ing the Facebook accounts of Kane's family members.

"It's supposed to be a student space where you can speak freely. But I do think people can go too far on it," said Billy Dornburgh, another student who lives in Ellis.

By Tuesday, Yik Yak and media outlets like WCAX and the Rutland Herald were the primary way most students had heard of the incident. This frustrated much of the student body, with students arguing that the school should have quickly addressed it.

"They obviously don't want our school to look bad," said Ruby Durfee, a student who lived right down the hall from Kane. "But stuff like this happens at Harvard, Yale and other big schools. So, I think that worrying about (their image) makes them look even worse than coming forward and acknowledging it."

Because of her proximity to Kane, she had fears about whether or not he might have been spying on her. With nearly a week gone by and no word from the school, she felt as if it was a poor reflection of the school looking after its students.

"If they're acknowledging it, then it actually shows that the adults at our college actually do care about us," she said.

On Thursday, Dean of Students Jamia Danzy released an email addressing the incident, giving resources for where students can find access to help at the facility. When prompted about why the school waited

saint." He emphasized how accurately it summed up her character.

"I was very nervous that I might break up ... but I didn't," he said in a follow-up interview. "Maybe the secret for me is I have a duty to this audience. They came to hear about Honoree and what we felt about Honoree. In a sense, strong emotion is self-indulgent, and I wanted the focus to be entirely on my wife."

He shared that he has been seeing a counselor and that the "intensity of the grief has let up." He commented on the eloquence of all the speakers and the large turnout.

"[Castleton] has a warm center, and Honoree extracted warmth from people. I think there was a lot of genuine wish to say farewell to her. It did account for a far larger crowd that I had expected."

He pointed out that "You cannot summarize a human life in a few objects," in reference to the memorial, but said it captured many of her great qualities.

Despite the killer not being identified and no publicized developments since November of last year, Powers defends that the person who shot Fleming must have been in a psychotic, schizophrenic state, which "kept [him] from wallowing in anger."

"In a strange sense, it wasn't personal. It was the disease that did that," he said.

He then posed the important question "Now what?" and urged further research into mental illness and gun violence.

"When combined, these two evils comprise a threat that makes it a menace to take a walk on a traditionally 'safe' walking trail in traditionally 'safe' Vermont-which is resembling the rest of tormented United States more each day," he said.

to respond, Danzy responded with the following. "I know there were some concerns about transparency, and it really wasn't about trying to hide anything. In this situation, there were victims involved, and we wanted to make sure that they were supported and had the resources that they needed. And in this situation, the individual was arrested, and because the individual was arrested and there was not necessarily an ongoing threat or someone who we didn't know who the perpetrator was, we didn't issue a timely warning," said Danzy.

While the situation itself is ongoing, Castleton students are demanding change with a petition for more enhanced safety measures at VTSU reaching over 120 signatures. Molinari said he supports the petition and that while Public Safety does their best with the resources given, they could use more help. He urged students to reach out with any concerns going forward.

"If there's an incident where you don't know if it's a crime, it's weird and it's bugging you, call Public Safety. We're 24/7 dispatched and our number is (802) 468-1288. That is my suggestion to any student here on campus. Please, please pick up the phone. Call Public safety."

With contributions from Pearl Bellomo



# More admin. transparency needed in Ellis Hall incident

A lack of transparency leads to a lack of trust. A lack of trust and transparency leads to a weak university.

A college campus should be a place where students feel safe, supported, and informed, but when communication breaks down, so does the foundation that holds its community together.

When Castleton student Lucas Kane was caught lurking in the women's showers in Ellis Hall, students were left feeling scared and confused. And understandably so.

Even worse, most students didn't hear about his arrest from the university.

In fact, most students only found out about Kane through word of mouth from their peers, or through posts on YikYak, an app where users are able to leave anonymous comments with other people in their radius.

YikYak, not the university, became the main source of information for many.

The Rutland Herald then published a report about Kane's arrest two days after the incident, followed by coverage from WXAC a day later. However, despite growing unease and confusion on campus, the university stayed silent for nearly a week.

It wasn't until Oct. 3, six days after Kane was reported, that the school finally addressed the situation.

In an email titled "Campus Incident Update," Jamia Danzy, dean of students for all Vermont State University campuses, wrote she was "legally prohibited from sharing any details about the incident due to privacy laws."

While this may be true, the delayed response and lack of transparency have only deepened students' mistrust in the administration. By the time the university acknowledged the situation, it was too late to address the growing concerns, leaving students frustrated, feeling unheard, and still with a lack of information or update.

No further updates have been provided about Kane since.

Yes, we can sympathize with the administration for finding themselves intertwined with this incident

as they navigate legal constraints, campus safety, and maintaining trust with students. But, the pressure VTSU faces does not change the reality of students' concerns, and their silence speaks louder than their words.

Students don't want to discover a student was arrested for lurking in the women's showers from an anonymous app. They don't want to rely on whispers from their peers to know what's happening on their own campus.

Students are asking for transparent, timely communication from their administration. They want to be informed, not just after the fact, but when incidents occur.

**They want to be informed, not just after the fact, but when incidents occur.**

They want to know that their university cares about their safety and well-being enough to keep them in the loop.

It's time for Vermont State University to step up and provide that transparency.

A stronger, more trusting community can only exist if the administration commits to being open and honest with its students. That's how we rebuild trust. That's how we move forward, because we truly are better together.

- Emily Ely



JOE VYVIAL

# It's vital to vote

This country has had a divisive political climate for some time now. In 2016, we saw an election between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton who at the time, were the two most disliked and divided presidential candidates to date. This comes from 30 years of recorded polling of registered voters from ABC news. The following elections we've witnessed since have not been much different. The American people have not been given a choice between two candidates but between the lesser evil. This in itself is a tragedy. The two-party system in America is failing its voters. As we near the next election date, it is our responsibility to take an interest in the future of this country.

If you have been following the presidential race you most likely tuned in to see the highly anticipated debate between Harris and Trump. There has since been much speculation on who came out on top of this debate, with both candidates claiming a win. However, this is less of a winner and loser situation and more so about who you can believe in.

This debate mimicked an SNL sketch, having many notable and at times comical moments like the "they're eating cats and dogs" tangent from Trump. The claim was about Haitian immigrants, and how they are supposedly eating domestic pets in Springfield, Ohio. Trump was fact-checked on this claim, as Springfield city officials have repeatedly said there have been "no credible reports" of this occurring in their city.

Trump is using his airtime to push a baseless rumour, and generalize Haitian people to polarize immigration further, an issue that's already a hot topic between Americans. In reality, Haitian immigration

has nothing to do with domestic pets being eaten. It contributes to a larger narrative for the Republican party that has been created to polarize immigration stances.

On the other side of the debate, Harris consistently avoided answering questions directly. This was interpreted by viewers in a negative light, and many found her question dodging annoying. She also repeatedly returned to her two main talking points; supporting women in America, and her personal ties to the middle class, which are her origins. This is a strategy Harris and her team implement, where she says less on certain issues while hammering her points on others. This strategy is rooted in a belief that if she lets Trump talk himself into circles while agitating him, he will eventually talk himself out of a presidency. So, if Kamala doesn't do or say anything out of place, Trump will continue to make impulsive mistakes.

Since the debate, the fact checking involved has been widely discussed. Whether you were pleased to see the candidates' points checked, or felt it was unjust for whatever reason the main take away should be to not take everything said at face value, even if it is coming from the mouth of a Presidential candidate. And this goes both ways. It's important to think for yourself and do your own fact checking despite the debate doing it for you.

While discussing the economy, it is essential to fact-check both candidates' talking points. In this issue, as with many others, there is often manipulation and intentional misinformation to misguide voters. Trump claims to have had the greatest economy during his tenure as President and promises to repeat this achievement.

The Joint Economic Committee (JEC), a government entity responsible for tracking and providing information on the U.S. economy, reported that the economy was indeed strong under Trump before COVID-19.

However, this strength began under President Obama, who inherited an economy weakened by the Great Recession; a crisis that the former Chairman of the Federal Reserve described as 'the worst financial crisis in history, including the Great Depression.' Over his two terms, Obama steadily rebuilt the economy, laying the foundation for the growth that Trump later continued. Contrary to Trump's frequent claim that he 'inherited a disaster,' the trajectory of economic recovery was already well underway when he took office.

According to the JEC during the last two years of the Obama administration, the annual median household income increased \$4,800. This is three times more than the \$1,400 increase during the first two years of the Trump administration. By the end of the Obama administration, the economy had experienced 76 consecutive months of job growth. Since Trump became president, the streak has been extended to 111 consecutive months. During the last 35 months of the Obama administration, non-farm job growth averaged 227,000 per month. During the first 35 months of the Trump administration, the average was 36,000 jobs per month less, averaging 191,000 per month.

All of this is to illustrate a claim that is not as it seems. It's not just important to look at issues on their surface level, but to know the history behind them and the claims sur-

rounding them. The common democrat argument is to look at the economy fall off heavily under Trump during covid, but to the Republican defend this was a global pandemic that effected the global economy, not just America. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that Trump publicly endorsed non-medical treatments, suggesting one might inject bleach to help fight COVID. This is an issue as he is the President, and people are going to heed his advice.

Though it may be hard and a bit boring, take the time to look at the tax plan put forward by Harris. Take the time to look at the plans put forward by Trump. Research tariffs, listen to experts, draw your own conclusions. Take this seriously. Understand each candidates claims and the demographics that they discuss. Decide where you want American tax money to go. Decide if you want it to stay where it is or go other places. Think critically, and vote.

We must consider how the policies of our next president will shape our communities, protect vulnerable populations, and safeguard the ideals of equality, justice, and opportunity. It's crucial to think beyond our individual preferences. We must ask ourselves what kind of country do we want to leave for future generations?

Now, more than ever, its vital to be engaged in politics, to register, and to vote. Vote with purpose, and vote for what you believe in. If you have questions or are wanting to register to vote, VTSU can help you do so.

- Jackson Edwards

Check us out online at [castletonspartan.com](http://castletonspartan.com)

# Humane society helps out with Helene

Unsurprisingly, Hurricane Helene caused serious damage to the United States. The hurricane hit Florida on Sept. 26, 2024.

NPR estimates that Hurricane Helene has wrecked tens of thousands of homes in the Tampa Bay region alone. Not only that, according to ABC News, Helene has killed around 230 people in the U.S. alone.

Even through all of this darkness facing us in our country, there are still glimpses of hope and kindness in communities all over the United States. One of these glimpses is occurring in a local community very close to this campus.

According to WCAX, The Rutland County Humane Society took in eight cats and two dogs from shelters in the Southeast region where the hurricane hit. According to WCAX some of the states that these animals came from include Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana before the storm hit.

They were flown to Vermont to create space for shelters to take on more animals. WCAX provides insight from the Rutland County Humane Society president Mei Brown. "We're happy to do our part and help out. I mean, there's an environmental crisis, other crises that are always taking place



around the country, so we're all part of a network to help one another when there is a time of need." Brown said in the news segment. "We're prepared for that. We always check to see how many animals we have already in the shelter before we take on more, but we were glad to take on this 10."

In addition, NBC news added more information to the Rutland County Humane Society's noble act.

"The Humane Society says they partnered with BISSELL Pet Foundation to help make space for shelters that are taking in displaced animals from Hurricane Helene."

In addition, NBC News was able to talk to Rutland County Humane Society Animal Health Technician Stephanie Babcock. Babcock explains to NBC News "We're not necessarily pulling the animals that are in danger, but they are making room for the animals that need to come into the shelter that have been displaced."

In addition, Babcock also added to NBC News, "Once they get here, I just give them a quick physical exam, make sure they're all healthy. I boosted any vaccines that may need to be boosted that hasn't been done recently. I boost their flea and tick prevention as well as

their dewormer. I run a fecal exam on everyone, make sure they're clear of internal parasites, and then I get them all labeled with their name tags and ready to go up for adoption."

Babcock also gave more information on the Rutland County Humane Society's decision to NBC News.

"If we can help in some way, we have people up here in Vermont who are looking to adopt these animals and need homes, and the situation is going to be dire in the shelters where they are. So, it is a win-win for all of us, including the animals."

- Gavin Bradley

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# Pulitzer winner inspires journalism students



DAVE BLOW

Lane DeGregory discusses her career to a class.

By Gabby Blanchard  
Castleton Spartan

Short story books, eventually revealed as sources of inspiration when she feels stuck, lined the huge bookshelf that sat against the yellow painted wall in the background of the Zoom call.

Pulitzer Prize winning Tampa Bay Times journalist Lane DeGregory visited VTSU Castleton Feature Writing class on Sept 30 after students had studied her prize-winning piece, "The Girl in the Window."

DeGregory told students she was known for being nosy and curious ever since she was a little girl, and it has followed her through her 57 years of living.

"Sometimes I have to tell

myself to shut up," she said with a long laugh.

DeGregory shared how she has known since kindergarten that she always wanted to be a journalist. She created a newspaper for her elementary school and was editor-in-chief of her high school newspaper located in Rockville, Maryland.

DeGregory continued to pursue her love for feature writing and received bachelor's and master's degrees before entering the profession.

Despite the amount of devotion DeGregory has for journalism, there was a point in time when she was up in the air about it all.

After being promoted to an editor, she realized that was not what she wanted to do. DeGregory decided to apply

to law school but before going realized that was not where she belonged either.

"I just wanna do journalism," she said, taking students back to her "ah ha" moment realizing that even though the lawyers were making a lot of money, it wasn't for her.

"I don't regret it," DeGregory said. "I still get to wake up and be the one to tell the story. It is such an honor and a blessing I get to do this job."

DeGregory shared some of her favorite and most successful note-taking tips during the class interview, when asked by a student.

Seconds after being asked, DeGregory pulled out a laminated sheet of paper that explains her process step-by-step in the neatest handwriting.

She said how she always starts with writing the date and time first, and every time she flips the page, she writes it again. Next, she makes a space where she writes down her observations using the five senses.

"It felt oily and heavy," DeGregory said as an example of the scene in Florida after Hurricane Helene.

"It helps you transport the reader there," she said. "Take notes on your notes."

DeGregory shared how she also makes timelines of each person she interviews, and then focuses on their highlights.

And when it is time to get

writing, she tells students she puts her notes somewhere out of sight, forcing her to actually just tell the story.

"It becomes so much easier," she said.

Another student asked, "What advice would you give to young reporters?"

DeGregory answered to aim for objectivity. She said how crucial it is to know yourself and be honest with who is partnering with you.

She said the longest she has worked on a story was three years and was based on homeless housing. She explained how she had to go back to the story every six weeks due to the operator's timeline of making new installations.

DeGregory then pulled out a huge stack of notes that she has been adding to since February and revealed it to the camera.

When asked how she deals with writer's block, DeGregory said, "I don't let myself get there."

She explained how when she feels herself lacking motivation on how to start a story, she will take a break... but not completely.

"Take a walk, bake, play with the dog," she said, adding that the needed time away is good to simply just think about your story and figure it out while doing other activities.

DeGregory said she leaves notebooks for herself every-

where. One spot she shared was in the bathroom, as it's the only quiet place from her husband and dogs, and while she is showering or getting ready, she can reach for the notepad when a creative thought hits her mind.

"A story is like making my bed," DeGregory said, once you start with the sheets, the rest just flows easily.

Throughout the whole interview, DeGregory also hinted at her love for Diet Coke. She continuously referred to how long something was going to take based on how many Diet Cokes it would include. She said breaks are just as important as sitting down and writing, and this is where she would treat herself to a Diet Coke.

DeGregory also expressed her feelings about how the internet impacted the journalism industry.

"In 2008 one third of revenue was lost when the internet came," she said, adding that most of the decrease was from Craigslist.

DeGregory also said how different her day-to-day life is now after the pandemic. She said how her company went from two floors to one to save money, as well as went from 400 people working to only about 200.

She explained how the newsroom was much more upbeat and there was much more

ability to converse and bounce ideas off one another.

"I really miss the newsroom," she said. "The collaboration was so exciting, and it felt nice to have a safety net of 100 smart people."

She explained how after the pandemic people were being asked to give up their desks and work from home to allow the newer writers to be in the newsroom. DeGregory decided to let her spot go and went remote, although she said, "there is nothing like the vibrancy of a newsroom."

During a follow-up conversation from the class, student Carly Centeno, shared how the way DeGregory talked about the newsroom and the experiences she had, gets her really excited for when it is her time to be in the hot seat.

"I LOVED the way she talked about being in the newsroom. It was hyping me up to like wanna be in a newsroom," she said.

As the class came to an end, DeGregory wanted to end with a helpful note. She emphasized how important it is to take care of what you need to do so that when it comes time to start writing, you can focus on it with ease.

"Take care of your shit," she said with empowerment. "Don't waste time sitting in front of a blank screen."

# Sir Frederic the feline clinical counselor at VTSU Johnson

By Dayne Bell  
Spartan Contributor

*Editors Note: This story was reprinted from the VTSU Johnson newspaper, Basement Medicine.*

In 2021, Moria Sheridan was in the second month of her practicum in the then Northern Vermont University Johnson Wellness Center when she'd begun fostering a litter of kittens, born in a barn and rescued by a local no-kill shelter.

Sheridan, the clinical counselor for VTSU Johnson, proposed the idea of bringing the kittens into the Wellness Center to her boss Kate McCarthy, VTSU's director of health and wellness.

"It was kind of magical from the very beginning," recalled McCarthy. "We've always done work with therapy dogs in Vermont and brought dogs to campus. And then Moria had the idea of bringing a cat."

With permission, Sheridan created "Animal Friends," a group educating students about human-animal relationships and roles that animals play in their lives, starting by bringing the two-month-old babies in for students to interact with. It was the first time that students were allowed to gather in an enclosed space on the campus since the pandemic.

Sheridan described these first interactions as "kitty chaos."

That semester, each visit with the kitties was the same. Students sat together, in a circle along the edges of a tight room in the back of Senators, never more than five at a time, almost always with a group waiting outside. Some sat in the available chairs while others had moved to the ground, cross-legged, wiggling their fingers and holding wooden dowels attached to string and feathers.

Crumpled newspaper and little plastic balls rolled across

the floor as three tiny felines darted around, from person to person, batting them in all directions. On one side of the carpet, a particularly orange one sat inside a cardboard box, swatting playfully at the hands reaching inside.

"Meeting with Frederic was always very nice," recalled Johnson alum Zoe Avent, a member of the first group of students who interacted with him.

"He made me miss my own cat a lot of the time... But I had a good time. It really made my day when I would get to see him," she said.

Because Frederic was a foster, Moria found homes for him and the other two cats. This would have meant the end of the campus' interactions with them.

"The person who adopted Frederic had a Chihuahua dog, and they picked him up on a Friday and I went away that weekend," she explained.

But the very next day, the adopter called Moria to say that she'd have to take him back. The cat was giving their chihuahua allergic reactions. According to the family, the animals' interactions resulted in the dog breaking out into hives. They loved Frederic, but they just couldn't keep him.

"I've never in all my years heard of a dog being allergic to a cat," Sheridan continued. "It could have been fear induced. Hives can be like that too."

She gave the adopter access to her house keys, and when she returned, Frederic was in her basement.

"I looked in the window of the basement and there he was just walking around, meow, meow, meow," she said.

Once "Animal Friends" was established, Moria Sheridan began sending emails to students who signed up for the group. She sent photos of him and other kittens she fostered, hosted contests to see

who could guess his weight, and made Frederic stickers and swag for students to hand out.

At first, students were only able to see the kittens by going down the sketchy, crumbling stairs and following the path beside Sterns Dining Hall, past the two brightly colored plastic lawn chairs to the back of the Senators residence halls where the Wellness Center was located. Then, McCarthy got the idea to bring Frederic to an upcoming open house.

Sheridan had an old stroller that she'd used for another cat in the past, and the two decided that taking Frederic out into the Johnson campus would be a great way to get involved.

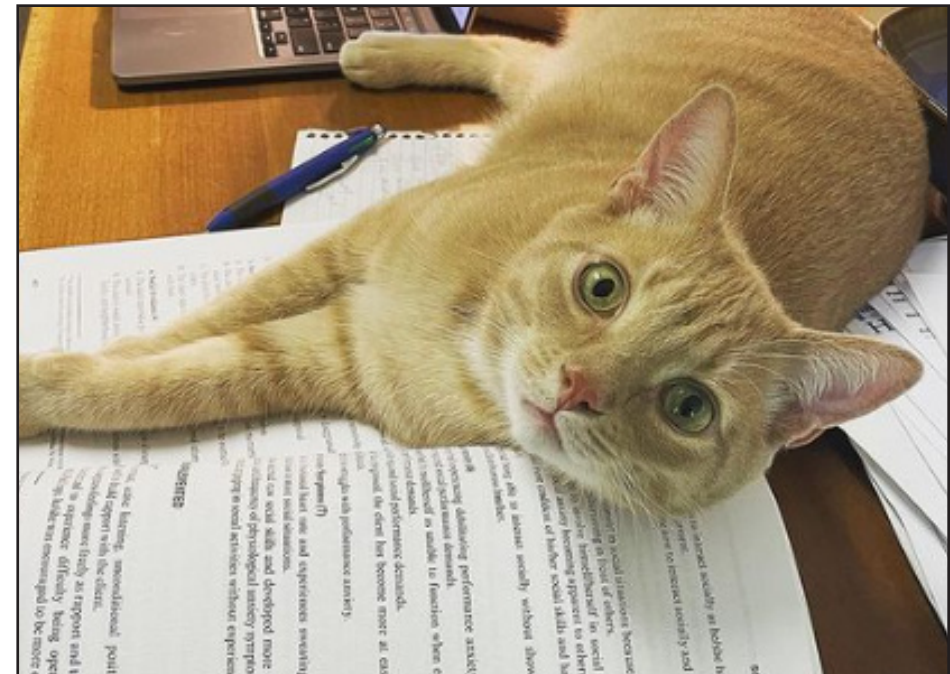
And it took off from there. Frederic became a campus celebrity; students knew what was coming every time they saw the stroller roll towards them, or sitting with Sheridan beside the Fireplace lounge.

Today, Frederic has been a full-fledged worker in the Johnson Wellness Center for almost four years now, sitting in both small group and individual sessions with students.

Initially, Sheridan worried about how Frederic would adjust to frequent interactions with groups. She says that with animal-assisted therapy, it's important that the animal wants to be a part of it. Frederic was an anxious kitten, and after long summers of not interacting with as many people, it was possible that he would grow unaccustomed. But every school year, she said Frederic is eager to get back to work.

"He hears the door to the carrier open and he gets right in," Moria said. "There's never been a day that I've had to go find him to bring him. He's ready to go."

Before she was a counselor for Johnson, Sheridan had been a veterinary nurse for 30 years. While there aren't any licenses for animal therapy specifically, after getting her masters, Sheri-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAYNE BELL

Frederic poses with owner Moria Sheridan and students at VTSU Johnson.

dan obtained a grad certificate in Human-Animal Interactions from Colorado State University, a program that teaches safe and ethical techniques for animal work in therapy and interventions. Frederic has spots throughout the group

room where he retreats should he need a break, a well-known cue to some of his regular visitors. He's known to be an escape artist, and often times he'll take breaks by standing in front of the door, meowing for someone to let him out. But

sometimes his cues are more "subtle." Sheridan said that while students are usually good with respecting his boundaries, there have been instances when she's had to intervene.

See "Frederic" on page

# Volunteers make care packages to ease cancer treatment effects

By Tori Raymond  
Spartan Contributor

"Everybody knows somebody... everybody knows somebody," said Jen Larson, a Castleton resident, describing the connection we all have with cancer patients.

She has worked continuously with patients for years - just not in the way you would expect.

Larson lost her father to Cancer in 1997, and the disease has seemed to follow close by with her mother and late husband also being diagnosed.

"I was looking for something to do that could involve the community on a local level while impacting the community on a local level," Larson said.

Since 2015, she's worked tirelessly putting together what she calls Comfort Packages for chemotherapy and radiation patients at the Foley Cancer Center at Rutland Regional Medical Center.

In these bags are self-care

products to help the patients with the symptoms that come along with these difficult treatments. She crowd-surfs on multiple social media platforms and receives donations to buy a patient a care package.

She makes it clear she only does this from the heart.

"We make the price point affordable, with each package being \$30 and that is the exact cost of the products with a minuscule amount in there to cover taxes and shipping and things like that," she said. "There's no profit taken."

Everyone knows someone who's dealt with cancer. You're probably thinking about that person now. Whether they have passed on, are still fighting, or have been cured, we can all agree that it's a difficult process.

However, most people don't know the toll that chemotherapy and radiation treatments take on patients both mentally and physically.

Alyssa Audet, who was diagnosed with a brain tumor



COURTESY PHOTO

Staff members at the Foley Cancer Center assemble Comfort Packages for cancer patients.

together the comfort packages and has been a strong advocate for them from the beginning.

"I saw a lot of people receive these packages and it would bring a smile to their faces," Audet said proudly. "The side effects from radiation can be pretty intense ... I did experience dry skin and chapped lips. I would also easily become very cold."

Audet also worked in the Cancer Center for a year and

witnessed the reactions of many patients receiving these comfort packages as well.

"Working at FCC, when patients received the comfort care packages it made their day so special. In such a dark time in someone's life going through chemo and radiation, a gift like that made them smile," she said.

Both Larson and Audet express how thankful the staff and patients at Rutland Regional Medical Center are for the packages that are donated every 12 to 18 months.

Janice Austin, an RN at Rutland Hospital for over 20 years, recalls an interaction with a patient who received one of these packages.

"She was so thankful she cried. Chemo patients are so grateful for all the care they receive and it makes your heart feel good about even the smallest gesture," Austin said. "I cannot express the gratitude the FCC patients showed when they received them."

Larson calls the act of kind-

ness a "paycheck of the heart" and is incredibly humble about the whole project. She also recalls her biggest year of donations, which was held in memory of a close friend, Scott Raymond, whose daughter has been involved with the project since the beginning. This particular year they donated 350 packages from over \$10,500 raised.

Larson speaks about how the local community comes together because of the common knowledge of the topic. She knows that it's a difficult time in someone's life while going through chemo and said she just wants to make the hardships better for everyone she possibly can.

"It's just a non-discriminatory disease. It doesn't care how much money you have, it doesn't care who you are, it doesn't care about anything, what kind of job you have, how educated you are ... It doesn't care," she said.



## Maddie on the street

By Maddie Lindgren  
Castleton Spartan



### Question:

What are you going to be for Halloween?



Emma Kirby  
Sophomore

"I am going to be Ginger Spice from the girl group Spice Girls. We have a group of five girls so it's perfect!"



Natalie Webster  
Freshman

"I'm going to be a cop. It's a duo costume though because I'm doing it with someone else, who is going to be an inmate from prison."



Tyler Mcalin  
Senior

"I am going to be Zac Eerriffic. He is a very funny influencer on Tik Tok that a like a lot."



Caitlin Flaherty  
Freshman

"For Halloween I am going to be a pirate. My two friends and I wanted to have matching costumes that wasn't too overused and something that was a little different."

Check out our website and socials!

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# How early college is affecting 'Slater Nation'

Reilly Marsden  
Castleton Spartan

The gymnasium bleachers were packed with people who were excited to start the day—except for one section. The senior bleachers of Fair Haven Union Middle and High School were notably empty for the first Principal's List assembly this past Friday.

Fair Haven, a school participating in the Early College Program, allows students to earn college credit while completing their senior year of high school. This opportunity's impact is felt by the entire student body.

"My upper-level electives are clearly shrinking every year. Look at all the extra books on the shelf," says Michael Bruce, a history teacher with a 24-year career at Fair Haven.

A graduate of the school himself, Bruce channels his passion for the institution into his teaching. As the teacher of AP Psychology, as well as two other upper-level electives, he is concerned for the longevity of advanced programs.

"If we continue the way we're trending right now with more kids going and less classes like

this, it will start to limit the opportunities for people that stay.

Benjamin Worthing, one of FHUMHS's co-principals, emphasizes how the lack of seniors within the building alters the process of how underclassmen integrate into the high school.

"One thing that happens at the school-level is that we lose some of our most mature students, who are the role models, so that's a tough thing to deal with," he said.

In a small-town school with roughly 600 students spanning grades 7-12, seniors are depended on to lead traditions. When 73 out of the 90 seniors do not attend all-school assemblies, there is a dramatic shift in culture.

"When I first started here, that [the senior bleachers] would be full. All the seniors were here all day long," he said.

Worthing's mention of a culture shift was also mentioned in an interview with Clarabel Redondo, an Early College student and current Fair Haven senior.

Redondo, who took three out of the seven AP classes offered her junior year, states that Early College was the most natural step in her education path. Both of her siblings also pursued

Early College during their senior year, she said.

"Fair Haven wasn't that bad. It's just that going to Castleton would be a shiny new experience for me," she said.

Redondo is not worried about spending her senior year off-campus, stating, "just because I'm not doing my last year, doesn't mean that my traditional high school experience is suddenly gone forever."

The Early College experience includes new people, new clubs, and new class offerings, students said. Fair Haven students want to further advance their education, and Fair Haven teachers are at a crossroads.

"I don't want to selfishly try to keep a kid here for the sake of Fair Haven when it would be better for them to go there," Bruce said.

Bruce, a prominent fixture of the Slater community, cherishes his relationships with students. Surrounded by two decades worth of photos with students and "forever family," Bruce said, "if there's an institution that's close to my love for this place, it's that place ... I just want what's best for the kids."



REILLY MARSDEN

The seniors section of the bleachers is pretty empty at an assembly at Fair Haven high school as a result of Early College student departures.

# Wrestlers bond on Killington hike

Logan Bruce  
Castleton Spartan

Step after step, climbing elevation rapidly, the Castleton wrestling team finally makes it to the top of Killington Mountain, the second tallest mountain in Vermont.

They started and finished as a team.

They got to the top following Bucklin trail, which covers 3.7 miles from bottom to top. Elevations vary from a low of 1,859 feet to a high of 4,204 feet. The trail has different terrain the whole way up, starting flat before leading to a marshy, muddy river bed. After conquering that you have a steep elevation filled with huge rocks, forcing you to climb on your hands and feet.

Why hike to the top of a mountain for team bonding?

"I personally just like hiking. It makes me feel at home like I am with my family, giving me that peace of mind. It's a good way to get to know the team and test unknown capabilities," said sophomore wrestler Jake Long.

The team's capabilities, by the way, are incredible this year, Long said.

Believe it or not, the smell in the woods climbing Killington Mountain earlier this semester was different from the usual outdoor smell, said sophomore wrestler Joe Kennedy.

"As you went up you began to see the incoming fall season. The smell you can't describe. It is just something you have to experience," he said with a slight smile.

Long also spoke about the smells along the hike.

"At the start, we walked through the marsh and you got

hints of earthy muddy smells. As you went up most of the trees were pine trees and evergreens and it brought me back to that Christmas smell, making me think back to my childhood," Long said.

Kennedy also spoke about the bonding that happened on the hike.

"The overall goal of the hike was opening up to each other, creating that team atmosphere, and getting comfortable in uncomfortable places," he said.

Kennedy was one of the first to reach the top of the mountain. Teamwork and team bonding are important among the coaches and staff members of the wrestling team. They are proud to see their wrestlers taking the initiative to bond and do activities as a team.

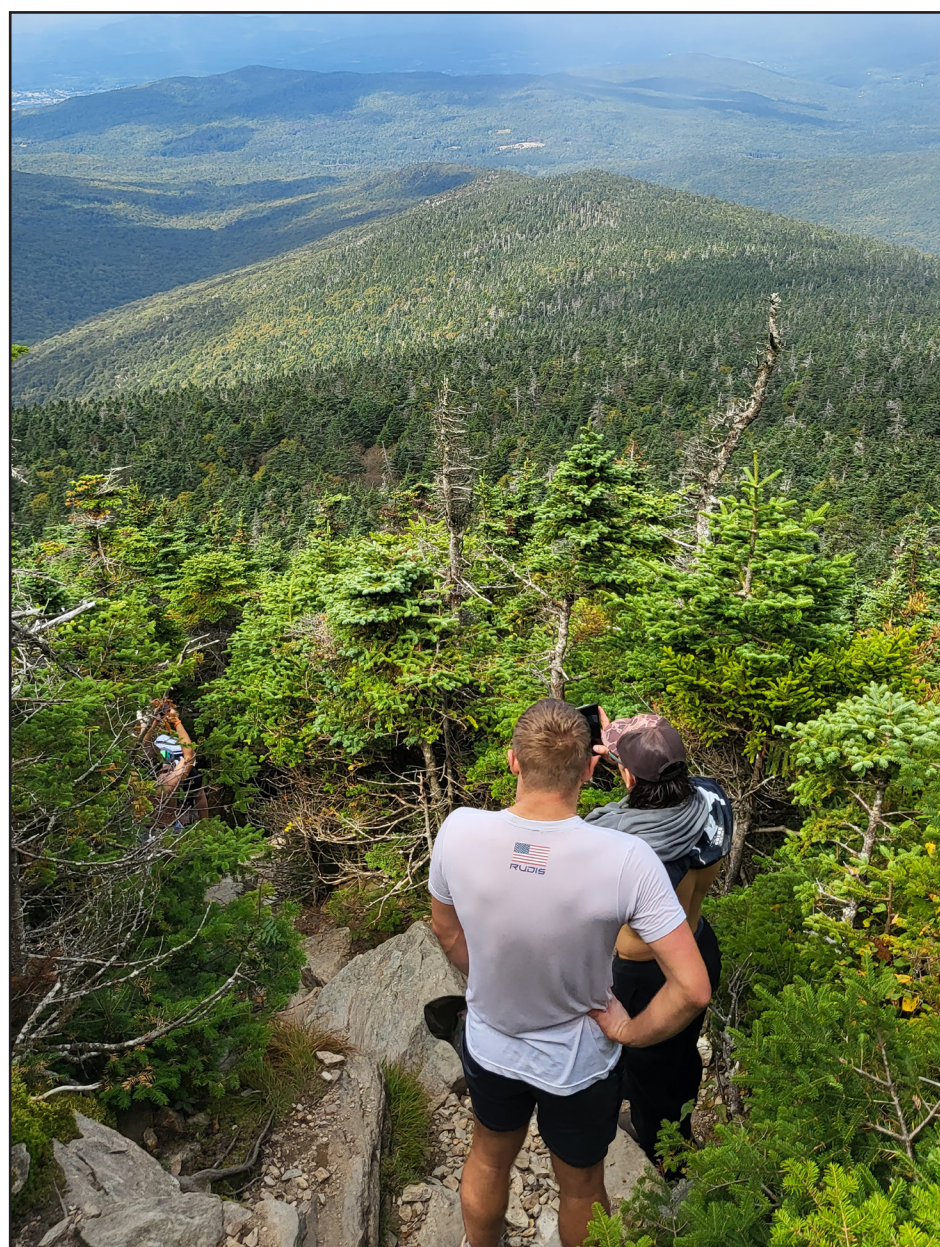
"I thought it was great for team bonding and getting out for physical activities. It helps take your mind off of a lot of things that you might be struggling with," said assistant coach Ryan Foutz.

As the final stretch was in sight, a couple hundred feet of elevation left to hike, the team kept moving and eventually reached the peak.

"We got to the top as a team and you looked back to see Rutland, Killington, and a little bit of Castleton. This is purely just because of how high up you are. It was cool experiencing this and also feeling the side of achievement when conquering a challenge like this," Long said.

Once at the top, everyone just observed the natural beauty in front of them. Everyone was quiet and felt at peace for a little while.

"Me and a couple of members of the team talked about life, deeper than just thoughts



LOGAN BRUCE

VTSU wrestlers hike Killington's peak earlier this semester.

about it. How no other team is doing this and how mentally the mountain challenges you," Long said happily.

Kennedy said the hike also

prompted chats about the upcoming season.

"The team talked about goals and what they planned to do for this upcoming sea-

son that is only weeks away," Kennedy said. "We're a powerhouse team that is expecting a monster season."

# Off-campus Living: The good, the bad, the ugly



A purchased putting green sits right in the middle of a VTSU Castleton students living room.

Jess Emery  
Castleton Spartan

Walking into the upstairs apartment on Elm Steet, one will expect to get hit with the strong scent of a Pumpkin Spice Yankee Candle. It's a welcoming space of earth toned throw pillows and fall patterned fuzzy blankets.

Artwork decorates the walls and the slanted ceilings with windows allowed for warm rays of sunshine to brighten the place up.

It's much different than the seemingly uniform dorm room.

Although campus life is one of the major selling points of VTSU Castleton and college in general, there usually comes a time in a student's life where they transition from living on campus to living off campus.

But the décor isn't the only thing that makes apartment living so special. There are many differences that are obvious between living on campus and having an apartment of your own, including access to food and cooking.

"A pro would be that we have a kitchen. We can cook. I think all my roommates and I love to be able to go grocery

shopping and cook and have actual meals. We do a lot for football Sundays. We like to do crockpot meals," said Jade Jamieson, the current resident living in the apartment on Elm Street.

Although Jamieson likes the aspect of at-home cooking, others have different thoughts.

"I just miss, like, having my meal plan. Like Fireside points. I just miss Fireside points, really. And not having to drive to school, like driving to campus sucks especially for morning classes," said Tyler Serrani.

There's also a familiarity and level of privacy within the apartment that is not so easily acquired in the dorm living, students say.

Several dorms on campus have communal bathrooms, adding some mystery to a simple bathroom break.

Sometimes that mystery is unwelcomed.

"Like in the dorms, if I walked out, especially in Ellis I was in a communal bathroom. I'd walk out and I'd see like five people instantly and I'm like 'alright I don't want this,'" Jamieson said.

"But now I walk out here, and I know who I'm expecting. I know who I'm going to see and they know who they're going to see so it's nice," she said.

The financial aspect is also something that must be considered when examining the two types of college living.

On-campus students have

their pick of Fireside and Huden, which is included in their meal plan. It's easy to scan your Student ID and not acknowledge how much money it costs to have these options.

However, when living off campus, that cost is not so easily ignored.

"One time me and Reilly went to Shaw's for eggs. Just eggs. We both spent like \$75. And all the stuff was gone like three days later," said Gya Barnes. "I was like, this cannot be my life. Like constantly going to buy stuff and it's always gone."

On campus, there are also a ton of activities for students to constantly be involved in. There's always a CAB event to attend, a play to see, or a game to watch. But living off campus, students find different ways to occupy their time.

"We've set up our own golf course in our apartment, Jamieson said.

"My roommates are big into golfing so they have cups that are holes, and our apartment is kind of slanted so it's kind of weird because the ball will roll back," she said.

Students living off campus are also exposed to a different side of Castleton, including taking part in activities in the town.

"One day me, Reilly and Hannah were sitting in the living room and we heard noise so we looked out the window and

there were people playing in the band at Third Place. So, we went over and we had drinks," Jamieson said.

People can have more freedom living off campus, without RA's, they said.

"It's also nice that we don't have RA's come knocking on our doors because we're laughing a little too loud or watching a movie a little too loud," Jamieson said.

Whiles Barnes and Jamieson are relieved there are no more RA's, Barnes is also thrilled to not be disturbed by the frequent fire alarms.

"The fire alarms. God, I hated them," she said.

Although it might be a little more of a costly experience, living off campus gives students a little bit more freedom and a different perspective of life in Castleton.

Being in the dorms is incredibly beneficial for underclassmen, but some students eventually find its time for a different scene.

"I feel like a lot of people say like 'oh when you get an apartment, you aren't going to see any of your friends, you aren't going to be able to experience any of the normal college experience,'" Jamieson said. "But it's like, now that I'm a senior, I've already experienced that for three years so it's time to move on and experience something different and having an apartment is helping me do that."





## 5 fall must-watch movies

By Jess Emery  
Castleton Spartan

As the leaves turn orange, red and yellow and the air drops to a cool crisp, we pull our wool sweaters out of our closets and replace sandals with boots and get ready for a season of movie watching.

I love movies, and entering fall and the spooky season calls for a few good movie recs.

There are thousands of lists with critically acclaimed horror movies that will leave you speechless for weeks.

I'm not particularly into that sort of thing. A little too masochistic for me.

During the fall season, I'm more inclined to enjoy something a little cozier, with less blood and such.

I'm also not planning on being pretentious with this list.

Let's save "Dead Poets Society" for another time. I'm here to have fun and not think a whole lot.

"When Harry Met Sally" is a classic fall movie. I watched it for the first time just recently (criminal, I know) and it encapsulated a perfect autumn, cozy romance.

The film follows Harry and Sally in their 10-year long friendship turned romance with a backdrop of gorgeous autumn imagery.

I couldn't make the trek to Central Park to see the foliage this year, so I got my fix via "When Harry Met Sally."

"Fantastic Mr. Fox" is another great fall movie.

Wes Anderson is a genius and has an eye for orange.

Everything from the fox's cozy, underground houses to the cider they steal just screams the fall season.

Wes Anderson movies don't exactly move at a speedy pace either, and when I think of fall, I think of slowing down and enjoying the things around me as the year comes to a close.

"Mystic Pizza" stars Julia Roberts in the '80s in a coastal town called Mystic.

How much more fall could we get?

The outfits and hair and setting of the quaint little town is perfect for a rainy fall day.

It's one of those films where I couldn't really tell you much about the plot. It just looked pretty.

And sometimes that's all that matters.

When it comes to the movies I like to watch during this season, I don't desire to be on the edge of my seat, clutching my blanket as if that will keep me safe from the horrors of some movie I'm forced to watch with my friends.

Not for me, no thank you.

"Lisa Frankenstein" is a newer release that I thoroughly enjoyed. It's as "scary" as this list is going to get.

I thought this film was hilarious and had a level of camp that I wasn't anticipating.

It's a romance between a girl, Lisa, and The Creature that she brings back to life and she helps retrieve some of the limbs he lost in the process.

This movie has some interesting twists and turns, and I immediately deemed it a fall favorite.

My last recommendation is "Practical Magic."

I just adore this movie. The soundtrack, the cast, the costumes, and the design are all top tier.

Basically, the plot consists of these two gorgeous witch sisters who kill a man with Stevie Nicks playing in the background.

Let's be serious. This is the epitome of fall.

Its witchy and fun, but not scary (my favorite). Plus, it always gives me good outfit inspiration.

These movies will leave you feeling absolutely fine. Not scared and not devastated (like any movie starring Robin Williams where he teaches young men lessons. Please I can't handle that kind of heartbreak).

# Professors' band channels the '60s

By Ashtin Bowden  
Castleton Spartan

Nearly every town in Vermont, no matter how big or small, values live music.

Whether a music festival, local jam session, or an evening at a local restaurant, Vermonters choose to share intimate parts of themselves through music. From the tops of the Green Mountains to the lows of the Champlain Valley, echoes of generational influences are heard to this day. In recognizing these richly diverse sounds, Castleton is honored to receive one of Vermont's everlasting echoes; The Green Brothers Band.

My first introduction to the band was a Friday in September at Third Place Pizzeria in Castleton, in which I sat down with two of the members, Philip Lamy and Andre Fleche, both professors on campus.

Lamy teaches Sociology, Anthropology, and Cannabis studies, while Fleche teaches History and serves as Faculty Representative.

I then discovered that current philosophy professor Brendan Bab and retired professor Bob Bizek are also a part of the band and have an abiding history to this community.

The band's history spans over 30 years, which Professor Lamy went on to explain.

Naturally, the band has



CURTESY PHOTO

The Green Brothers Band, which includes VTSU Castleton professors, performs a tune.

evolved over time; members have retired, and multiple horn players occasionally accompany the band for larger events. Steve Cahil, Bob Bizek, and Philip Lamy were the original band members.

Lamy moved to Castleton in 1992. Coming from a musical family, he grew up playing in all types of bands and events to put himself through college. He quickly met his neighbor, Cahil, who was an excellent guitar player, singer and composer, and they began playing together. Along came Bizek, a bass player connected

through a mutual friend of the music scene.

It was Bizek on bass, Lamy on drums and percussion, Lalor on vocals, harmonica and guitar, Fleche on guitar, Dave McKenzie on trumpet, flugelhorn and percussion, and Harry Drum on saxophone, flute and percussion.

Soul music, psychedelic rock, The Beatles, Steely Dan, and The Grateful Dead are a few musical influences of their generation. The Green Brothers Band play jazz with a Latin influence and past sets include R&B, Reggae, Rock, cover

tunes, and originals.

When I questioned the origin of their name, I was met with a candid laugh and an explanation that goes back the baby boomer era; a time mixed with social justice movements, protests for peace, war on drugs and the never-ending expansion of social norms.

Lamy said the band's name alludes to cannabis and its effect on music culture, and pays homage to Vermont, the Green Mountain State. The forested beauty throughout the state paired with the appreciation of music in Vermont is celebrated and valued by the professors.

Fleche is the latest member to join the band and uses his love and appreciation of music as a tool when discussing history. Music gives a historical context to what a society felt at the time, what issues were relevant and provides anecdotal evidence of their conditions. Music is art and a continuous storyteller, and one style of genre can expand ideas for another.

His musical influences are deeply rooted in Chicago style Blues; BB King, Jimmy Page, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton all serve as inspiration in Andre's musical career.

Lamy is deeply inspired by musical cultures and social movements.

Being a drummer, he is influenced by Afro beats, Latin music, Reggae and R&B. As

the Director of the Cannabis Studies Certificate Program, he has studied the connection between cannabis and music culture back in the 60s until present day.

We connected on the need for music education and accessible programming and touched on the threat of budget cuts to the music department during the VTSU merger. He emphasized the importance of music education for all ages.

"To be human is to be musical," says Professor Lamy.

It's this expression of self, and the connection felt when music is valued that enriches the human experience.

Local music is an integral part of the Vermont experience, which is something I felt during their performance.

I watched the band play and noticed members' subtle cues, prompting each other and communicating through the instruments. The band loves to give an audience a piece of what they experience when they play, and their feedback is very important. The audience indicates when they're on the right track and receiving the energy of the music in a positive way.

They receive the love of the song; they are inspired by what the musicians are presenting, and it feels like a breath of fresh air.



VTSU Castleton student Joe Vyvial is pictured with his grandparents holding a portrait he made them for their 50th anniversary, and recently recreated his grandpa's favorite photo of him and his brother as kids on a home-made tractor.

# Grampa's favorite photo

By Joe Vyvial  
Castleton Spartan

Last semester, in my Intro to Painting class, I've asked my professor for a clean canvas. My hockey season was over, all the sudden I had more free time and I just felt like doing some art.

I put the canvas on the easel, and it stayed there for good couple of days. I needed an idea, something good. Later that week, I remembered that my grandparents were going to be celebrating 60 years of marriage that following summer,

and I thought it would be good to paint something for them.

I did portraits of them for their 50th year anniversary when I was 12.

This time, I decided to do two paintings, one for each. For my grandma, I did this big caricature-like portrait of her, which she loved, and found very funny but wouldn't let me post it here, ha ha.

For my grandpa, I decided to paint this photo that I knew he really loved and was really proud of. Back home in Czech, we meet up as a family for a lunch or just a coffee every

Sunday. And every now and then, it leads to going through old photos and reminiscing.

I remember my grandpa spending more time looking at this photo than the others. It was a photo of me as a kid learning how to drive his homemade tractor, with him and my younger brother on the back of the tractor, on our little farm.

To me, it was an ordinary photo, one of thousands.

To him, it was the perfect photo. A tractor he built all by himself years ago, which to us it is a piece of crap some-

times. There is always something wrong with it. But he always manages to fix it. It is his creation that he will never give up on. He will never get a new one, a much better one, that would save him hours and hours of time just by not repairing it as much like the old one.

But it's his and he is very proud of it - as he is of us, his grandchildren and the whole family. He's proud of passing on his experience and knowledge to the future generation and of the farm that has been providing for us for years.

He sees that photo almost

as a "summary" of some of his achievements.

I don't think I have ever been this excited for a painting. I've covered the whole canvas very quickly. Throughout the whole time painting it, I felt different than usual. I was very excited about it, and I just couldn't wait to finish it, so I could show it to them.

The painting had a big success. It made some of us tear up a little bit. Now it's framed on the wall in the living room, right next to the drawing I did for their 50th anniversary.

# Bedazzling my dorm on a budget

By Carly Centeno  
Spartan Contributor

As a girl, I always dreamed of my perfect dorm room and how pretty and put together it would look.

But realistically, all those adorable decorations off Dormify or any other website are not cheap for any college student. The decorations can be over \$100, and it could literally be a painting you could do yourself.

I learned from being at school for three years that the best dorm decorations are the ones you create yourself.

A popular trend recently in dorms are these bedazzled paintings of very simple things like a ticket from a carnival or a margarita glass, but on websites, these cost around \$50 to \$60, which is crazy. After doing the math, if you do it yourself, you'll save \$35, which is

totally worth it for a budgeting college student.

These are super easy to make. All you need is a small canvas of your choice, paint, Elmer's clear glue, mod-podge, and a bag of rhinestones. Then all you have to do is find an inspirational picture for your painting.

I recommend looking on Pinterest, and you can either trace or freehand the design on the canvas. Once you have the design, I recommend painting the background colors in similar colors to what rhinestones you'll be using to make it pop more.

The rhinestone is the hardest part of this whole painting because it is so tedious. I used tweezers for the smaller rhinestones and the bigger ones I was able to place with my fingers. I recommend putting the glue on the back of the rhinestone and holding it in place

for a good 10 seconds, but they still might move a little the more you place. Once done you must let the rhinestones and the glue dry before added the cover top of mod-podge. If you don't you will mess up the rhinestones.

After the glue dries, do a decent layer of mod-podge. This will make it more secure and also give the rhinestones an extra shine. Be sure to get the entire painting or else it will look wonky because one part will be shining and the other part will look matte.

Once it dries, you can hang up on the wall using a thumbtack to hold the canvas and boom all of your suitemates and friends will be begging you to make one for them. You can make anything you want for one of these pictures and they do add a great touch to any dorm room.



CARLY CENTENO

A rhinestoned art piece by Carly Centeno.



# Swedish hockey player loves her roots

By Annika Nelson  
Castleton Spartan

Moia Carlsson is a junior on the VTSU Castleton Women's Ice Hockey team and hails from Huddinge, Sweden, 10 minutes outside of the capital city, Stockholm.

And before coming to Castleton, Carlsson had never moved.

"My parents bought this tiny piece of land and then they built a house and it was done in May, and I was born in September. They basically built their almost dream house, but on a budget," Carlsson said with a chuckle.

While Sweden has fewer mountains than Vermont, one of the biggest similarities between the two places is the forests.

She said 68.7% of Sweden's land is covered by forests.

Although she enjoys Castleton, one of the biggest struggles for Carlsson is the feeling of being stuck on campus. At home, she can take public transport, walk, or bike anywhere.

"I'm so used to public transportation... I don't even ask my parents for a ride, I just hop on the train and I'm there. It's also much quicker than taking a car," she said. "In sixth grade, my school was an hour away and I got there myself just by taking public transportation."

The biggest challenge for



Moia Carlsson with her friends from the Castleton's women's hockey team visiting Sweden.

her coming to Castleton has been the language and customs.

In Sweden, there is a word called "truga" that closely translates to the word "coax" in English.

Carlsson explained why

she chose that example. For example, if someone offers you cookies and there is only one left, you have to say no at least twice, and when someone asks you a third time you can say yes.

"I remember my freshman



COURTESY MOA CARLSSON

year people would be like 'Hey do you want to come do this with us?' and I would say no, waiting for them to ask again," Carlsson said.

Sometimes they didn't.

When asked about what she does in Vermont that re-

minds her of home, Carlsson discussed her Scandinavian-style clothes and the Swedish Pancakes that she makes in the kitchen.

Over the summer, Carlsson had two of her teammates, Amanda Vaughn and Megan

Ward come to visit her in Sweden to get a taste of the Scandinavian life and celebrate her favorite holiday, Midsommar.

Midsommar is her favorite holiday because it's warm outside, she loves the family gathering aspect and there is a ton of delicious food, dancing, singing and drinking.

"I was really excited to show them where I grew up, especially Stockholm," she said.

She also spoke about how in Stockholm, the sun only goes down for around two hours during the summer.

Anyone who knows Carlsson knows that she loves candy, and one of her favorite things about being home is the candy.

To her surprise, when she got home for the summer, there was none of her favorite candy.

"Everyone was hating on America since it was a trend to eat Swedish candy and a lot of American candy stores bought it all... There were so many rumors going around and people went livid," Carlsson said.

As Carlsson navigates her journey at Castleton, she continues to blend her Swedish roots with Vermont. And she is not just a student-athlete at VTSU, but a daily reminder to embrace our roots and our new experiences.

## Frederic:

Continued from page 3

He's known to be an escapist. "A lot of him being around people is being able to read his body language, because obviously, our connection with them is nonverbal," she said. She added that understanding his cues and acting on his behalf is a part of her job "as his partner."

Frederic can be rowdy and playful in group meetings, but when interacting with students in solo sessions, he takes a calmer approach. Moria says that when a student is in distress, he decides when and how to interact. Sometimes that looks like taking his time investigating, and other times, he sits with students to help them regulate.

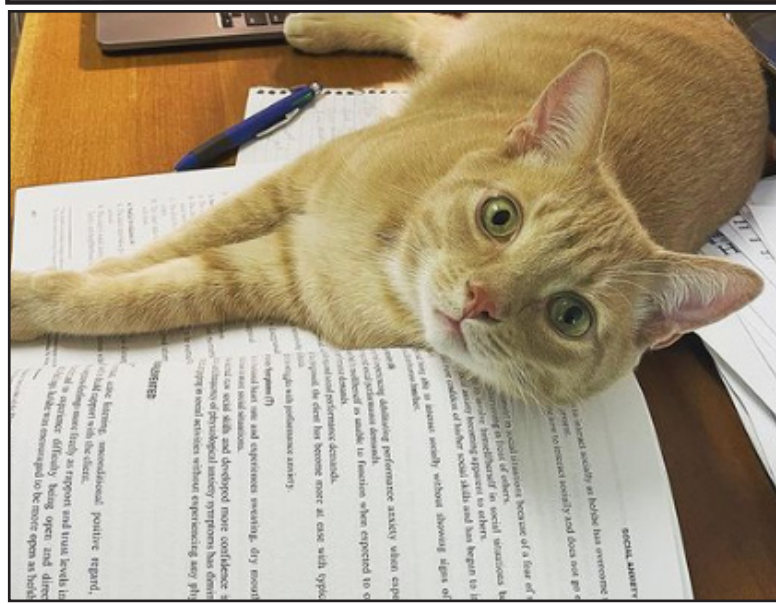
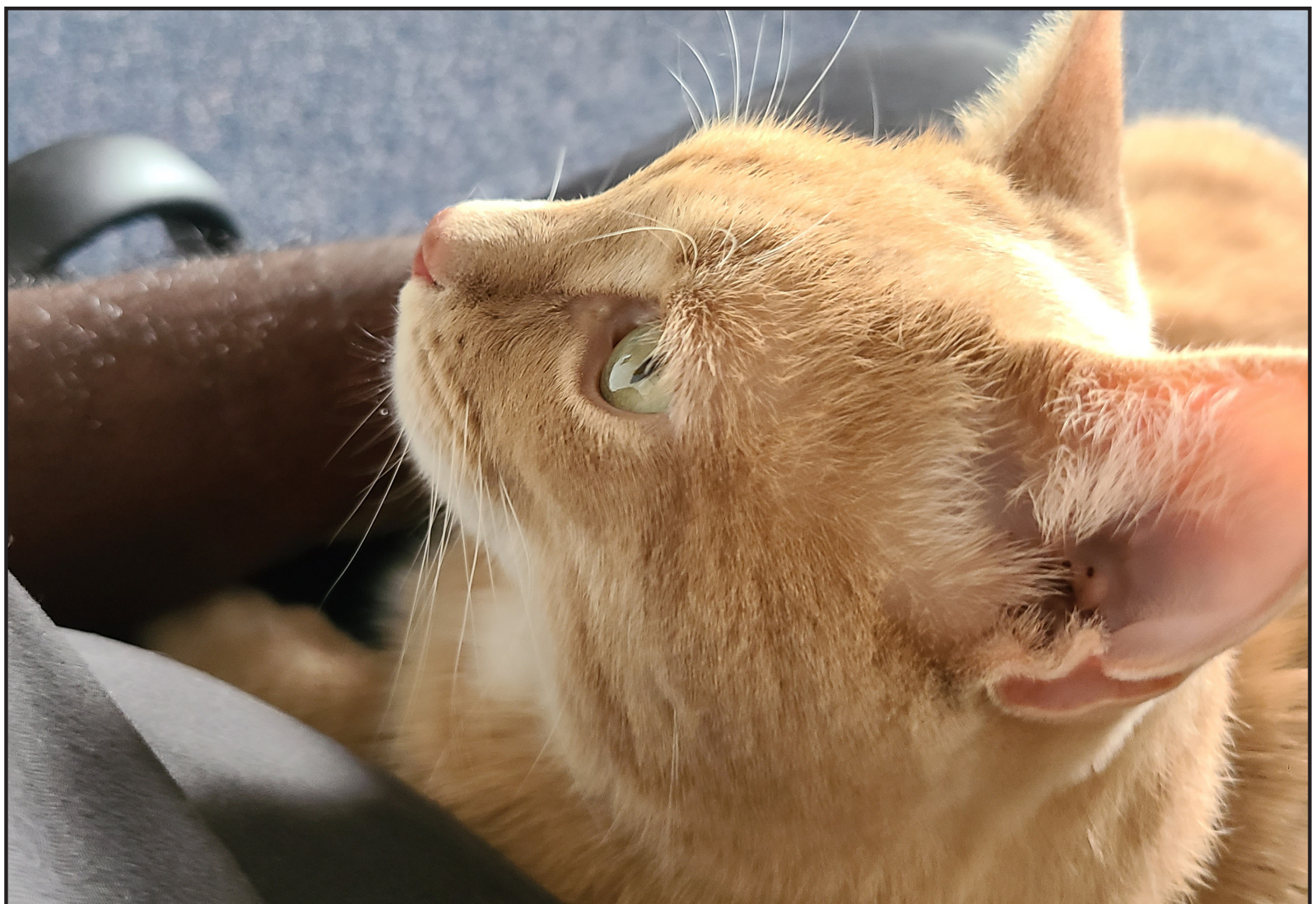
Before Frederic, Sheridan said that the Johnson Wellness Center had difficulty getting students to utilize their services. For many students, addressing mental health concerns can induce fear or anxiety. Interactions with Frederic may serve as a gateway through which the community gets comfortable with the Wellness Center, and mental health discussions in general.

While his presence is one factor for the increase in student interaction, McCarthy believes that mental health has grown less stigmatized within the past few years, as more of the students they interact with have greater knowledge about what mental health looks like.

"I think we are now working with a student population that has the vocabulary around mental health, has the experience with the mental health care system as well," McCarthy said.

She believes students are now more aware of their mental health needs, and are learning that they can access them through the Wellness Center. With that, and the recent spike in enrollment across the university, the demand for services is gradually increasing. In order to meet that demand, the Wellness Centers have had to get creative with the services and resources they offer, which has included the incorporation of therapy and service animal visits.

In April this year, Frederic won the Loudest 'Bork'



COURTESY OF DAYNE BELL

Frederic the therapy cat at VTSU Johnson strikes a variety of poses.

competition for the Vermont National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), making him their new mental health pet ambassador. The contest was

a part of their "Make Some Noise. End the Silence VT" campaign, meant to encourage young people to share stories about their struggles with men-

tal health.

He ran against animals all across Vermont, including fully certified therapy animals. For a long time, he was neck in

neck with Xander, a multicolored Australian Shepherd that had been traveling as a therapy dog for over nine years. With support from students, friends,

and family, Sir Frederic rose to the top, encouraging students everywhere to "end the silence."

## Unpaid:

Continued from page 1

Junior Becky Hannwhacker expressed frustration after being told she no longer has a job.

"I was told I was no longer eligible to work after I started working for five weeks. Then, I wasn't guaranteed I was getting paid. They finally sent an email saying I will get paid soon," Hannwhacker said. "It's still frustrating, though, because there was no communication. It took me weeks to get into the system, and then they told me I was not eligible."

Miscommunication seems

like a common theme, leading to frustration.

"If there are problems, and students or administration don't reach out and let me know, I can't help them get it signed," Perry said.

Multiple student employees in similar positions have been given the choice of not working, but many are now faced with a difficult decision. Teal added that students have been advised they can continue working throughout the delay.

"My supervisor has been accommodating. They claimed it was up to us if we wanted

to work because we would eventually be paid back. If we didn't want to work until it was repaired, we didn't have to."

Oliver Hope has worked in the communications department tech office since spring 2023.

"My boss Sam and I were both under the impression that since I had worked there before, I could just start working," Hope said. "However, when I tried to log my hours in UKG, it said I was 'suspended' from the job."

The situation at Vermont State University is compli-

cated and some students think it could be due to the recent merger with other state schools.

"Usually, it's pretty straightforward. This is the first time I've seen any issues. I think it's pretty telling since it's happening right after the transition and merger," Hope said.

While no formal statement has been issued linking the merger directly to student employment troubles, many students and faculty feel it has contributed to the current difficulties. The increased volume of paperwork and technical is-

ssues in the UKG system has resulted in delays and confusion.

As Vermont State University works to fix the delays, administrators encourage students to remain patient and complete all mandatory onboarding requirements. Perry advised students to ensure their tax forms and contracts are correctly submitted and signed to avoid future complications.

Those who have finished the process but are still waiting for payment can receive reimbursement.

"You can complete a back pay form, and you will be paid

for every hour you work," Perry said.

While the University hopes to clear the contract backlog shortly, the process is still ongoing. Students and officials at Vermont State University are navigating the new terrain of student employment.

"I found it pretty demoralizing that I couldn't log my hours and didn't know when I would get paid. When I came into work on Wednesday this week, I thought if it's not fixed and I can't log my hours, I'm going to quit," Hope said.



# A Q&A with field hockey grad assistant Alexis Ruiz

By Wyatt Jackson  
Castleton Spartan

Q. Coming from the NEC, what was your initial outlook on the LEC conference?

A. It was a change, but I knew what I was coming into. And most importantly, before coming here I wanted to be a part of a team with a great culture and a team that I know cares about winning their conference. With them winning the LEC in 2022, I knew there was a desire and commitment. So yes, it is different, but coaching-wise I knew I'd be able to adjust.

Q. How do you feel about the team going into conference play?

A. I feel confident within the season. I think we've developed and learned a lot. Having those four out-of-conference losses helped us going into the conference. If we continue to play how we are playing right now, I do think we could make it into the playoffs. In the out-of-conference games, we stepped into our strengths. We are watching more film, and the girls are understanding of the things we have been struggling with. I do think West Conn was a great game where



Alexis Ruiz

we were listening to the coaching staff on what we saw from the outside looking in.

Q. Will you be more intense

and fixated on the details of the scheme now that conference play has begun?

A. I'll be more intense, and we as a team will be, just because we can continue getting better. I think now the film will be more in-depth. We will be watching conference teams adjusting to their play. Letting our players know what players to watch out for on the opposing teams and also not taking any team for granted.

Q. In your opinion, how have you done coaching this season? And what do you want to improve upon?

A. I knew coaching would

be an adjustment for me, but having those non-conference games twice a week under my belt helped a lot. I would say I need to improve on not getting frustrated with the flow of the game. I need to understand it takes time, especially with our first-year players. Understanding patience when it comes to how to coach players with a little experience and not getting frustrated. So, being more poised throughout practice and within games.

Q. What do you think the key is going to be in winning the LEC?

A. Staying consistent and

coming out the gate with enough intensity because that is what we have not done enough this season. So, you know, starting from warm up, just coming out strong. I think more film study and coaching adhering to what the coaching staff says they need to work on is going to be key. Staying consistent from here on out because we do not want to drop any more games because there were some games earlier this season, we could have won but did not start out hot.

# Track team does more with less

## Despite not having a track, team is growing and excelling

By Isabell Lanfear  
Spartan Contributor

There's not a team that does more with less than the Castleton Track and Field team, as the absence of a track seems to do little to hinder the team's ability.

This year marks the 9th year of the Castleton track and field program, and Ian Sawtelle has been there since nearly the beginning.

Sawtelle had been the assistant coach at Castleton for six years and was recently promoted to head coach, making this his seventh year here at Castleton. He's seen the program change since he and previous head coach Jay Condon had taken over the program back in 2018.

Now, instead of only having two coaches, each event group has their own coach, giving them the specialization and coaching they need.

"I love coaching. I don't think there's been a time in history that good coaching has been needed more than it is now," he said.

The coaches' office has a cozy charm, filled with memorabilia from current and former athletes, such as a plastic princess crown with a printed image of Coach Sawtelle taped on.

"We really pride ourselves on making people change who they are as people, gaining that independence that a lot of this generation doesn't have, gaining that grit in life to overcome obstacles," Sawtelle said.

Sawtelle, who is the head coach as well as the throwers coach, dedicates his time between his new job as an investigator with the department of liquor and lottery, his home life, and being a track coach. It's a difficult balance, but one both he and Coach Mike Audette have nearly perfected.

Audette is the long distance coach of the track team, as well as the head coach of the cross country team. He had briefly taken up the role of head coach last season, however due to his new position as the principal of MSJ, his busy schedule got even busier so Sawtelle took up the position.

David Harvey was a previous athlete who broke numerous school records and is now the jumps coach.

The team also gained a brand new springs coach, as former coach Austin Beaugard left. Replacing him is Caleb Lisai, who comes from a football background.

Sitting in the small coach's office, Sawtelle paused for a moment, choosing his words carefully.



Track coach Ian Sawtelle chats with team members, above left. Former team member Harry Leombruno-Nicholson readies his javelin, above right. Team members pose after a meet, below.

"I have a goal in mind of what I want this program to look like before I'm done," he said.

He went on to explain that means consistent numbers, improved performance, and more qualifications in the LECs as well as New Englands. Last year, the team saw many successes with athletes such as Kalynn Stevenson, Taylor Ross, Carter Mackey and Harrison "Harry" Leombruno-Nicholson, all top-three finishers.

This year's team, which faced the loss of several key players including Leombruno-Nicholson, who was the national qualifier in javelin for the team, seems to have an open position for a team leader.

"The person Harry was, the teammate he was, we're not going to be able to find that replacement anytime soon," Sawtelle said.

Leombruno-Nicholson, whose record throw of 60.45 meters (or 198 feet) got him qualified for both New Englands and Nationals, was a key player on the track team.

"Everybody loves Harry right, and he was a big leader. Everyone listened to Harry, so it kinda opens up a leadership spot as a thrower," said Sidiki

Sylla, a second-year shot put thrower.

"It's hard to replace a national qualifier," Audette in agreement.

Sitting in a computer lab were Kalynn Stevenson and Katelyn Yerdon, throwers and friends on the track team. It was late so there was nobody there, which was a good thing, as cackling could be heard.

"I was gonna go to Plattsburgh," said Stevenson when talking about why she chose to attend Castleton and join the track team.

"I was like really not wanting to come here at all" she said, clasping her hands together. "I was really going down to it. I was like, Coach Ian, he gave me the attention I needed y'know, without the constant messaging and stuff. I was like you know what, he actually cares."

Others agreed it was the recruiting ability of the coaches that initially drew them to the team. Yerdon said Sawtelle's recruiting was top notch. Stevenson had also said that she had joined the team due to his recruiting. His tactics for recruiting have also evolved. Now Sawtelle posts photos and videos of the team on Instagram, to help reach more ath-

letes and gain attention.

Yerdon and Stevenson had been recruited the year prior without all the social media posting, and it seems as though this year had gone well for recruiting but it's not without its difficulties.

Track and Field is a different sport and is defined by the NCAA as a non-traditional sport. It's also the only college sport at Castleton that has to recruit both men and women and it's not just separated by gender, but by event as well. These factors, as well as the absence of a track, contribute to the difficulty of recruiting.

However, despite these hardships, the coaches still reach out to hundreds of athletes and successfully recruit a plethora of them.

"This year we have a team high ever, I think of like 45 or something like that. Trying to get 70 next and try and make it like look, we need a track," Sylla said.

"We still doubled our team," Yerdon added.

The absence of a track at Castleton often poses problems for the athletes to practice.

"There's only so much we can do in our gym," Sawtelle said. "Facilities absolutely do hamper us on our ability."



CASTLETON SPORTS



The team usually practices within Shape gym, sharing the gym with other teams like wrestling and baseball. Senior member of the team and long distance runner Jon Hendley said that it's unfortunate that they have to train in the gym. The runners especially have more difficulty with the absence of a track. The team, more specifically the sprinters, jumpers, and javelin throwers must travel to Fair Haven High School to use their outdoor track facilities. While Castleton does have throw circles for the throwers, they are not maintained and the cage around the hammer circle is definitely not up to standard.

"More people would know

about the program," said Stevenson about having a track.

"Having a track or hosting a meet could bring in a lot of money for the school," Yerdon said.

"I don't think there is a program in the Little East that does more with less than we do," Sawtelle said when asked if he believes the absence of a track affects the team's performance.

"I think it's all about how we have success even without that," Audette said. "You can still be very successful here, without having a facility on campus."

# Men's soccer team is back to winning ways after up and down start

By Lauren Fotter  
Castleton Spartan

This 2024 season has been up and down for the men's soccer team. The guys have played six games in the past few weeks, four of which were in the Little East Conference. Because they influence standings and whether a team will qualify for the playoffs, these games are crucial for teams. The Spartan men are currently in sixth place on the leaderboard and are hoping to move up as they play.

On Oct. 2 they matched up with Keene State at Dave Wolk stadium. It was a tense showdown and ultimately led to a 1-0 loss. The Owls secured victory early, by netting the only goal in the 14th minute. The match was a fierce battle,

particularly in the second half, where the Spartans dominated possession and outshot Keene 10-0. Despite several close attempts, including a near-miss from first-year Jacques Alfani in the final moments, the Spartans couldn't find the back of the net, leaving them frustrated as they searched for an equalizer.

The Spartans then defeated Eastern Connecticut State University 1-0 on Sunday, marking their first Little East Conference win after an intense match. In the eleventh minute, Tanner Curtis scored the game-winning goal after Adolphe Alfani's shot rebounded. In addition to ending Castleton's eight-game losing streak, this victory was the program's first ever against Eastern Connecticut.

Both teams recorded eight

shots in the evenly contested match. Xander Berthiaume, a rookie goalie, had an outstanding game, saving all four of the shots that were on goal for his second shutout of the year. Liam Cramer and Wyatt Robbie drove the Spartans' defense, which held firm as Eastern Connecticut tried to equalize, allowing Castleton to win.

"We believed that overall, we played strong defense and cut down on their opportunities in front of goal. We had excellent defensive communication in the second half, which prevented them from capitalizing," Wyatt said.

In-between playing Plymouth, the men played Paul Smiths College and VTSU Johnson. They emerged victorious in each of these games, which weren't particularly challenging for them as a team.

The team lost to Plymouth State 2-1 in Little East Conference game on Saturday in a tightly fought match. The Panthers scored the game-winning goal in the 73rd minute to give them their first conference win. Plymouth dominated the first half of the match at Ar-old Field, taking eight of their 13 shots before the end of the half. Xander Berthiaume, a rookie goalie, made a number of important saves that kept the score tied as the teams went into halftime.

Despite the Spartans' excellent second-half performance, Plymouth broke the tie in the 54th minute with a strike into the upper left corner. Alfani took advantage of a deflected shot from Toby Ritzkowski in the 61st minute, moving past a defender before firing home to equalize, prompting a swift

response from Castleton. Castleton tried for a go-ahead goal as they gained momentum. But just twelve minutes later, Plymouth's goal changed the momentum, giving the Panthers the victory and left the Spartans reeling as they continue their conference quest.

To finish off this weekend, the men gained a 3-0 victory against UMass Dartmouth in a strong effort at Dave Wolk stadium on Saturday in Little East Conference action. Twenty minutes into the game, Matt Spiller gave the team the lead with a strike into the top-left corner of the goal after Adolphe Alfani had set him up.

Junior Matt Spiller said that "This goal gave them just what they needed to set us up for our second LEC win of the season," said junior Matt Spiller. "We hope to continue

this so we can make playoffs this year!"

The Spartans kept up the pressure, and Castleton led 2-0 at the half thanks to a goal from first-year Nate Wood, who was assisted by Jacques Alfani. Seth Dube took advantage of a one-on-one opportunity in the second half, and the drive continued. With 35 minutes remaining, a Corsairs defender was sent off for a foul, stripping UMass Dartmouth of a player. With just over 30 minutes left, the Spartans swiftly capitalized on their numerical advantage when Dube scored again during a breakaway, increasing the lead to 3-0.

JP Maul took over in goal with 14 minutes remaining in the game.



# Women's soccer continues roller coaster ride of season

By Jackson Edwards  
Castleton Spartan

Let's catch you up on the women's soccer team. They played Keene State, a conference opponent in their first match since we last checked in with the girls. Emma Ezzo in the cage had 17 stops for another shutout. Maggie Mckearin had a pair of goals continuing to lead the charge offensively, and senior Rylee Pepin recorded two helpers. Mallory McKenna also scored her first goal of the season. A big bounce back win, in conference play for the team.

The Spartans then traveled again to play Eastern Connecticut State, a strong conference opponent. They fell short in this effort, taking a 3-0 loss. The Warrior's goals all came in the first half, and despite a strong second half our Spartans couldn't find their way back.

Out-of-conference opponent Westfield State was next

up on the schedule, and we came ready to play for this MASCAC powerhouse. An early goal for the Owls in the third minute put them up early. The girls kept composure though, and Maggie scored her eighth of the year to tie the game. Rylee Pepin followed up in the first half with another marker to take a 2-1 lead in front of the home crowd. The Spartans did a good job holding of the Owls pressure in the second half but a late goal from the Owls resulted in a 2-2 tie.

Another conference match against a rival in Plymouth took place on Oct. 12. The match was an exciting defensive battle, those are not mutually exclusive. A heated, chippy, and back and forth match took place deadlocked for 84 minutes. Maggie Mckearin who is putting together quite the year finally broke through for the Spartans when set loose for a breakaway on a stolen pass. Her fifth game winning goal secured them the win in

their Stroke Awareness game at home.

This past weekend we traveled to play UMass Dartmouth for their sixth conference match. Another hard fought deadlock took place for nearly 70 minutes, going back and forth. Alexis Billings made her way back in the goal column and scored first for her eighth of the year to take the lead. The Corsairs unfortunately responded well late scoring in the 77th minute and 84th to eventually win 2-1. This loss leaves the Spartans 3-3 in conference play thus far.

The girls hit the road again the next day to play Williams, one of their strongest opponents. We'll keep this game recap short. They fell handily to Williams 10-0, in an offensive onslaught.

Check back in for the next issue, where you'll read about how the girls finish out the regular season and position themselves for the post season.



PHOTO FROM CASTLETONSPORTS  
Freshman forward Megan Carson getting ready to receive a pass.

# Spartans stunned by Plymouth State

By Steve Stelzl  
Castleton Spartan

On a sunny Saturday evening with the Fall leaves falling the Spartans were kicking off against Plymouth State at Dave Wolk Stadium which saw the Spartans fall 21-6 and move to a 3-3 record on the season.

"It was definitely a tough game all the way around but dwelling on it won't change a thing. Time to get back to work this week and get back on track Saturday at Fitchburg," said captain Kevin McDonough.

The Spartans found themselves down quick to start off the game when the Panthers rattled off two quick plays to go up 7-0 on their first possession of the game.

McDonough led the Spartans defense to a few stops to close out the first quarter however, the second quarter would be a busy quarter for Plymouth as they would end up moving the ball quick and efficiently to go up 21-0 before the Spartans had the answer back.

The Spartans found themselves on the board with just over two minutes remaining in the half when Wes Courmoyer led the Spartans down the field with a six play, 75-yard drive that was capped

off with a Caesar Williams, five-yard touchdown reception to get the Spartans on the board. Unfortunately, the extra point would be missed, and the Spartans would go into the half down 21-6.

After halftime, it was all defense for both teams as each team shutdown the other team's offense leaving the entire second half scoreless.

The Spartans were led by Courmoyer on offense with 241 passing yards and a touchdown, as well as Leonard Brice with nine receptions for 116 receiving yards. On the defensive side of the ball McDonough led the team with 12 total tackles as well as a forced fumble.

"Offensively we just gotta finish drives. I need to find a way to come up with points once we're in the redzone. Our defense is good enough where we know we just gotta score a few touchdowns a game and we'll have a chance to win any game," said Courmoyer.

The Spartans look to get back on track on the road against Fitchburg State on Oct 26 for another conference match up. This match up could end up having major implication in the standings and could move them to sole possession on fourth place in the conference.



PHOTOS FROM AVERY BOUCHARD  
On the top Wes Courmoyer escaping the pressure in the pocket to extend the play. The offensive line, bottom left, gets set to snap the ball to kick off the drive. Kevin McDonough, bottom right, adding another tackle onto his Division III leading 82 tackles on the season.

# A Q&A with field hockey head coach Emily Douglas

By Wyatt Jackson  
Castleton Spartan

Q. Coming into the year, you guys were picked to finish 4th in the LEC. How do you feel that impacted the team?

A. I think it did impact the team. Last year, when we were picked to finish first, I didn't have a good feeling about it because it's not that we felt we couldn't win it, but I think it sometimes just gets to your head, the pressure of, you know, everyone expects you to win. And this year I feel like being placed middle the pack was fair because that is where we finished last season. So, it's not like it's an insult to us or anything like that, but I do think that having us in fourth just kind of shows that it can go either way, right? I was actually kind of relieved when they put us at 4th because the pressure of being at the top can sometimes get to people, even if you think it doesn't.

Q. How do you feel about the team going into conference play?

A. I mean, of course we have our leaps and bounds, but overall this team is really talented and there's just so many things that we can bring to the table. It's just making sure that we have consistently. These last couple games we've figured out how to be a cohesive unit and be more consistent altogether. So, I think we've kind of found our groove, which is really exciting and it's kind of perfect timing now that we're in conference play.

Q. What teams do feel will be your biggest competition in the LEC?

A. Keene State. We play them home on Tuesday night which is exciting. I think there are other teams that I still think are a threat. But I will say Keene is going to be the biggest competition we'll have within the conference. Keene has a lot of different goal scor-

ers, which we also do. And I think that's exciting, but it's also really hard to defend that, because there's not just one threat. You don't have that one top scorer, so you have to shut down their entire forward line and midfield. I think they're really scrappy as well. We've been watching a lot of their film and we also see a lot of weaknesses that we can exploit when we do see them and it's just capitalizing on those and bringing up our strengths. At the same time. If I'm being honest, I just think that we're a very equally matched team with the same strengths and weaknesses. So, it could go either way and that's why I think it's going to be our biggest competition.

Q. Do you believe the LEC is stacked with a handful of good teams or do you believe the conference is wide-open?

A. I believe the conference is wide open this season. I mean, of course there's



Emily Douglas

a couple teams that are solid, good teams, but I would say the conference has been very unpredictable this year. Like USM, for example, was pre-season picked number one, lost to East Conn last week, who was picked to finish in the bottom tier of the LEC this season.

So, like, you just don't know what's gonna come, depending on who shows up on what day.

Q. What is going to be the key to continuing this hot streak you guys are on right now? A. I feel like we've kind of figured it out, which is good. The resiliency part of it. I will say the way that we've started this season of coming out and the other team scoring on us first and then us still coming out and beating them. Like we've gone from a 2-0 deficit three or four times this season, so I think that's really helped us boost our confidence and recognize the resiliency that we have. And I think that just that has to continue for us to keep going on this winning streak. But I also think we can see and recognize the extra time that a lot of our players are putting in, whether it's in film or staying after practice and dropping some shots or inserts or whatever it is that all comes into play.

Q. Will preparation and intensity increase now that you're in conference play? If so, how will that look?

A. So, film is going to be more important when it comes to conference play. At the beginning of the season, we don't really emphasize a lot of team film as much as we do now because we're focused on ourselves more than the opponent. But once we get into the conference play, I feel like we've transitioned more into focusing on our opponent because there's always room to grow. We've kind of figured out our rhythm and groove and structure on the field so we just have to figure out how our group will work against the other teams. But other than that, the same intensity and preparation goes into every practice whether it's a Middlebury that we're playing or it's like a bottom-seed team, we act as if it's the same for everybody.