

A show for the public



Above, St. Albans artist Cristin Dewar displays her intricate hand-made cards. Dewar was one of the artists on hand to talk with visitors during Saturday's Artist in Residence grand opening. The gallery was filled with guests during the three-hour event.

Right, artist Terry Rice, of Alburgh, poses with her work during the Artist in Residence grand opening on Saturday. Rice, whose work is on display for the first time, is among the 42 artists exhibited in the gallery.



MICHELLE MONROE, St. Albans Messenger



Cold Hollow to Canada
Wanted: Sightings of amphibians crossing the road to find water

By BRIDGET BUTLER
Special to the Messenger

Each spring amphibians like wood frogs, spring peepers and spotted salamanders make their way from deep in the leaf litter of woodlands to the chilly waters of ponds, wetlands and vernal pools. These amphibians will spend their evenings calling in the case of the frogs or congressing in the case of the salamanders, in order to mate and lay their eggs. Then, they'll move back to the woodlands once again until next spring.

Often the habitats where they hibernate and those where they mate in are separated by roads, putting them at risk. The frogs and salamanders move under the cover of darkness and on rainy nights, which make them almost impossible for a driver to notice yet alone avoid. Mortality rates due to vehicles can have a devastating effect on



Courtesy COLD HOLLOW OF CANADA

local populations. Understanding where amphibians are crossing can help us help them! We can organize people to help amphibians cross safely and better yet, install new signage to alert drivers or even design culverts specifically for amphibians at high volume sites. By joining the WildPaths project you can help Cold Hollow to Canada better understand where crossing sites are and how to reduce impacts.

When to look: Warm (above 42 degrees), rainy nights. Typically in late March through April.

Where to look: Anywhere a road with woodland on one side and wetland on the other. Beaver pond complexes are great sites.

What to do: If you find a crossing site, take photos of the animals you find, make note of where the location is either with a great description or by GPS and send your sightings to the WildPaths Project at <http://bit.ly/CHCWildPaths>.

The WildPaths Project is a program of Cold Hollow to Canada, which uses volunteers to gather observations about wildlife crossing roadways in the Northern Green Mountains. Learn more at www.coldhollowtocanada.org.

--- --

Twice per month, the Messenger will have updates on which animals are on the move and how residents can help to document their crossings.

Company that owns ex-chemical plant to fund water study

NORTH BENNINGTON (AP) — Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin says the company that now owns a closed chemical plant in North Bennington has agreed to pay for engineering studies to determine the feasibility of connecting more than 100 homes to public water supplies.

The Democratic governor says Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics is paying for drinking water sampling of more than 300 private wells in the Bennington and North Bennington area to see if the wells are contaminated with PFOA.

The Town of Bennington and the Village of North Bennington have secured separate proposals from engineering firms for about \$15,000 each.

Additionally, preliminary soil test results from around the former Chemfab facility in North Bennington, now owned by Saint-Gobain, found there is no significant risk of PFOA being drawn into plants and vegetables from garden soils.

Breezy Acres
GARDEN CENTER & PRIMITIVE BARN
Spring Florals!
1904 Sheldon Rd., Swanton • www.breezyacresvt.com
802.524.4141 • NOW OPEN 7 DAYS

Authentic Thai Food
Thai House Restaurant
333 SWANTON, RD.,
HIGHGATE COMMONS, ST. ALBANS, VT
802-524-0999 / FAX 802-524-0998
LUNCH: MON-SAT 11AM-2:30PM
DINNER: MON-SAT 4PM-9PM CLOSED SUN.
BRING YOUR OWN BEER & WINE. MUST BE 21 OR OLDER

Investigation into
Vt.'s role in EB-5
program sought

By MORGAN TRUE
VTDigger.org staff

All three Democratic gubernatorial candidates issued statements or held news briefings Monday to call for scrutiny of the state's role in a massive alleged fraud scheme at development projects in the Northeast Kingdom.

Republicans Bruce Lisman and Lt. Gov Phil Scott had previously issued statements critical of the Shumlin administration's oversight of the Jay Peak EB-5 projects. The developers of those projects, Bill Stenger and Ariel Quiros, were charged with fraud in state and federal lawsuits last week.

The lawsuits allege that Stenger and Quiros misused \$200 million of immigrant investors' money, and that Quiros pocketed as much as \$50 million.

Thus far, no one at the state or federal-level has said whether anyone will review possible negligence or wrongdoing on the part of state officials. U.S. Attorney Eric Miller has said his office is conducting a criminal investigation into the fraud allegations. He declined to say Monday if his investigation would include state officials.

Peter Galbraith, a former Democratic state senator, called for an independent commission to investigate the state's role in the alleged Jay Peak fraud. Matt Dunne, a former Google executive, and Sue Minter, Shumlin's former Transportation Secretary, issued statements Monday calling for the Shumlin administration — and in Dunne's case the administration of former Gov. Jim Douglas — to release emails relating to the Jay Peak EB-5 projects. Lisman, a former Wall Street executive, called for the release of emails in a statement Saturday.

The alleged fraud began in 2008, according to officials, when Douglas was still governor, but it's not clear if it would be possible for his administration's emails to be released, because the governor's office has said Shumlin will be the first governor to archive his staff's electronic communications.

"Vermonters are entitled to know that the public interest is the highest priority in decisions made by government officials," Minter said in a statement, adding that the fraud allegations highlight the need for "ethics reform and greater transparency" in government.

At a news briefing Monday morning, Darren Springer, Shumlin's chief of staff, said a request to

delete old email accounts was the result of a misunderstanding on the part of Shumlin's lawyer. No emails were deleted, he added.

Springer said the governor's office would be "very comfortable" releasing those emails, but Attorney General William Sorrell said the emails can't be released at this time due to the pending lawsuit against Stenger and Quiros.

At a press conference on the Statehouse lawn, Galbraith said the state needs to examine whether state government exercised appropriate oversight over the developers of the Jay Peak Projects. He also renewed his call for a ban on corporate political donations.

Galbraith said Stenger and Quiros — "two of the largest contributors to Vermont political campaigns" — used corporations they owned to circumvent limits on individual contributions, providing more than \$74,000 to Shumlin and the Vermont Democratic Party between 2010 and 2014.

"In these election cycles, Shumlin was the only candidate for top-tier office to have a seriously contested election. In effect, all this money supported the governor's elections," Galbraith said.

Shumlin said at a news conference last week, when asked whether he was influenced by those contributions, that it was telling in the matter that his administration set in place structures in late-2014 that helped bring the fraud to light.

For many Vermonters, that response from Shumlin "doesn't pass the laugh test," Galbraith said.

Scott Coriell, the governor's spokesman, said Monday that Shumlin decided over the weekend to donate \$15,000 to nonprofits in the Northeast Kingdom working to combat opiate addiction. That's roughly the amount Shumlin received directly.

Coriell would not address money given to the Democratic Party, and whether Shumlin had solicited donations from Quiros and Stenger on the party's behalf.

Any money left in the governor's campaign account when he leaves office will be donated to charity or given to candidates the governor supports, Coriell said.

Galbraith said the Legislature should pass legislation creating the independent commission that would examine if the state "exercised proper oversight" of the Jay Peak EB-5 projects. The commission

► See EB-5 on page 10A

The Automaster
AHEAD OF THE CURVE

HUGE INVENTORY = HUGE SAVINGS!!!

It's more than a car...

It's a legacy, and the Redesigned 2016 Accord is the latest Evolution.

2016 Honda Accord LX 4DR Sedan Automatic

Lease for only **\$199.00 per mo.**

- Rear View Camera • Alloy Wheels
- Multi Information Display • Much More

36 MONTHS/ 36,000 MILES

2016 Honda CR-V EX AWD Automatic

Lease for only **\$259.25 per mo.**

- Automatic • Rear View Camera
- Alloy Wheels • Power Moonroof...Much More

36 MONTHS/ 36,000 MILES

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR LARGE SELECTION OF NEW HONDA'S NOW... AND SAVE!!!

Honda Clean Garage SALES EVENT

Great Savings on Remaining 2015 Accord Coupes!!

RTE. 7 | SHELBURNE | 800.639.8033 | 802.985.8411 | theautomasterhonda.com

Includes: Vt. State Tax, Registration and fees, gap insurance, documentation fee and preferred customer savings package. Leases are with \$2350.00 cash or trade plus first payment. Subject to AHFC approval.