Meet Miss Vt.: Firefighter Danielle Morse

Whiting woman also serves as a nurse

By CHRISTOPHER ROSS

WHITING — Danielle Morse is about to be the most photographed person in the state.

It comes with the territory. Late last month, just days after earning her bachelor’s degree from Castleton University’s nursing program, Morse, 22, was chosen as Miss Vermont 2021.

Over the next year, while working as a surgical nurse at Porter Medical Center, she’ll be traveling around the state, using Whiting for University of Vermont Children’s Hospital (formerly known as Fletcher Allen Children’s Hospital), inspiring young women as the ambassador for the Miss Vermont Scholarship Program, and posing for photographs at civic functions and other special events.

In December she’ll travel to Mohican Sun in Connecticut to compete for the title of Miss America.

For Morse, who grew up in New Haven, and now lives in Whiting, this is relatively new.

There are no photo albums to commemorate childhood or teenage pagans. But her Miss Vermont story does have its own optical photograph. It’s unusual in this context, and she has referred to it as “amusing.”

It depicts a 15-year-old girl recovering from surgery at a low-room at Fletcher Allen Children’s Hospital. Her arm pokes out from under the blanket just far enough to give a thumbs-up. The photo is grainy and the child looks somewhat weary, but she is obviously Danielle Morse. Just look at the smile.

GRATITUDE

It was the summer of 2012, in the middle of the night, Morse was transported to Fletcher Allen Children’s Hospital (See Miss Vermont, Page 11).

She happily did it her way at Agway

Bendar retires after 50 years at the store

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Fran Bendar has rubber shoulders with an untold number of people during her half-century as the bookkeeper, manager and jack of all trades at the Agway Farm & Garden store in Middlebury. So taking to people tends to come naturally.

Except last Thursday — and that’s only because the person in question was a reporter asking her to say good stuff about herself as she prepared to exit a business to which she has given her entire adult life.

But Bendar, 70, did what she’s done for Agway since 1971 — she rose to the occasion and got the job done.

She’s always had a mind for math, a yen for the business world, and advice to be other people.

So she tailored her education accordingly while at Vergennes Union High School, from which she graduated in 1969.

“I took office courses — typing, shorthand, running different machines,” she said.

Her first job upon graduating was actually at the old Kerr-McCellan fertilizer plant off Morse Road in the Little City, at the site of the former Fox Commodities barn that burned in 2016. Kerr-McCellan built a short-term bookkeeper, and Bendar fit the bill, starting in April of 1970.

Consolidation plans would close Mt. Abe

But elementary schools would stay

By CHRISTOPHER ROSS

MIDDLEBURY — The community-authorized proposals submitted to the Mount Abraham Unified School District board last month are any indication, the writing is on the wall for the district’s high school in Bristol. Mount Abraham Union High School currently educates students in grades 9-12 from the district’s five towns of Bristol, Lincoln, Monkton, New Haven and Starksboro. The 32-year-old building had required numerous repairs and renovations in recent years, at a cost of millions of dollars.

Since 2014 the district has these times tested to persuade town residents to support multimillion-dollar renovations. But the community rejected its overtures. Now, some residents are calling for the school to be demolished outright.

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Well, local environmentalists remind an eye out for deer that might cross at vtlawhelp.org/seniors.

Virtual Legal Advice Clinic by Phone. Vermont Legal Aid is hosting a virtual legal advice clinic by phone. Apply at vtlawhelp.org/seniors.

Artwork Submissions. Curators may select pieces from time to time, to see what new artwork has create your work. Spread the word, tell your friends and family. Stop by once a month. Delivery is typically to the public, but pre-registration experience. This is free and open to the rewarding, fun, challenging, build and build, and not

TAM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Jamie Brookside moves gravel to the Jackson Trail. She says that at MALT everyone is interested in a common goal of connecting people with the lands we protect.

MALT's educational programming has been so well received," Brookside said. It was Brookside who put the "Lunch 'N Learn" series in the direction they were heading — but always check for traffic first. If the turtle is colorful with red and yellow stripes, it is a painted turtle and you can move it safely. If the turtle is dark red, yellow, or orange colors, it is probably a snapping turtle. Snapping turtles are nervous of land and will defend themselves. Keep in mind that their tricks can reach just about as far as the length of their shells, so keep your hands out of that area to avoid a serious Bite. Small to medium-sized snapping turtles can be safely lifted by the back of their shells (head pointed away from you). It is best not to lift a snapper by its tail, as you can do damage to its spine. However, you can slide your hand under most of their spine. It is best not to lift a snapper by the back of their tails, or lift them by the back of their shells, or lift them by the back of their tails, or lift them by the back of their tails, or lift them by

The donation came in April, just as MALT officials were putting the final touches on the strategic plan. The gift was pure serendipity, according to Brookside.

"The donors came to us with the offer; we didn't seek it — which is the Mecca of all holidays for nonprofits," Brookside said with a hearty laugh.

"I cried, I laughed and I yelled," she added, candidly.

"Rather than trumpet the news impersonally through a press smack, Brookside procured to share the good tidings personally with as many MALT colleagues as possible. It was like chowing a stick of gum that never loses its flavor. At least 50% of the people I told were brought to tears," she said.

"This kind of gift is appreciated (for the Trail Around Middlebury)," said the donors want to remain anon. But Brookside is able to say they are a couple residing in Addison County, practically on the TAM. They are happy the gift is in memory of their respective moms — both of whom were avid outdoorpeople, according to Brookside.

The "common goal of connecting people with the lands we protect. It's shaping up as an interesting challenge. Brookside said of the current challenge. A common goal of connecting people with the lands we protect. It's shaping up as an interesting challenge. "It's hard for one person to cover 4,700 acres of conserved land," Brookside said of the current challenge. "It's hard for one person to cover 4,700 acres of conserved land," Brookside said of the current challenge.

The "Lunch 'N Learn" series is a big part of the Land's new strategic plan. The plan recommends that MALT strengthen its current assets into 2025 in order to build and build, and not

TRAIL FAIRS LEAVE notes of encouragement for the MALT who maintain nearly 20 miles of trail in Addison County.

As one might imagine, the TAM is a big part of the Land's new strategic plan. The plan recommends that MALT strengthen its current assets into 2025 in order to build and build, and not

LONGTIME MALT VOLUNTEER John Derick has maintained TAM boardwalks and mowing for 33 years. The recent gift will help ensure his wayfinding signs.

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The "Lunch 'N Learn" series of Homeward Bound (the Homewonber of Addison County) continues with "Barking Dogs Help Dogs" on June 17 at noon. This one-hour Zoom session will be led by Candy Fua, who has fostered three guide dogs now happily placed with people. She will share the rewarding, uplifting and heartwarming aspects of her experience. This is free and open to the rewarding, fun, challenging, build and build, and not

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