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Welcome Voices



From left, Sue Parmenter, of Corinth, Kathleen Shepherd, of Norwich, and Sue Bridge, of Norwich, rehearse with the Evergreen Singers in Norwich recently. The group sings at the bedsides of hospice patients and at area nursing homes. They are looking for additional singers for an event on Sunday. See story, page C1.

VALLEY NEWS — SARAH SHAW

Moderators Balk Over Voter Photos

By MAGGIE CASSIDY
Valley News Staff Writer

PLAINFIELD — Municipal election officials in New Hampshire are raising concerns that potential cuts to the state budget may force town moderators to use their personal cameras or smartphones and printers to photograph residents who show up to vote without proper identification in order to comply with a new requirement of the state's controversial voter ID law.

Under New Hampshire law, would-be voters who show up at the polls without an approved photo ID card can have their identity vouched for by the town moderator, town clerk or supervisor of the checklist if they recognize them. Otherwise, or if another person objects to the verification by the local officials, voters without a photo ID have to sign an affidavit attesting to their identity.

But under staggered provisions of
SEE MODERATORS — A5

N.H. Senate Bill Would Add 30-Day Rule

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE
Associated Press

CONCORD — New Hampshire voters would be required to live in the state for 30 days prior to voting if a bill passed by the Senate on Thursday goes into effect.

The bill's supporters called it a reasonable effort to avoid "drive-by" voting and other voter fraud, but its opponents said the bill will disenfranchise some voters.

"We always say if you didn't vote you don't have any right to complain," said Democratic Sen. Lou D'Allesandro. "Well, if we don't allow you to vote then you have every right to complain."

The Republican-controlled
SEE 30-DAY — A5

Counties Ranked on Wellness

By NORA DOYLE-BURR
Valley News Staff Writer

WEST LEBANON — Upper Valley public health officials say an annual ranking of the health status of each county in the United States will help guide them as they create action plans to address the challenges area communities face.

The 2015 County Health Rankings released Wednesday by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is one of several reports utilized by public health officials to evaluate existing health systems and plot steps for the future.

"I think these are good because they tell us where we need to work," said Dr. Robert Greene, chief population health management officer at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center.

The report includes two categories of rankings for counties in each state: health outcomes, includ-

Health Data Will Guide Outreach

ing the length and quality of life, and health factors, including health behaviors, health care, social and economic factors, and the environment.

"Health is more than what happens with a doctor," said Jan O'Neill, an associate researcher and community coach with the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Program, which produced the report. "Income and poverty have a lot to do with health."

According to the report, social and economic factors are 40 percent of the reason a county is healthy or sick, while health behaviors such as smoking, alcohol or drug use and physical activity account for 30 percent of the reason for a county's health status.

Clinical care weighs in at 20 percent and physical environment, including air and water quality and housing, at 10 percent.

In New Hampshire, Grafton and Sullivan counties rank at nearly opposite ends of the spectrum, highlighting the variations in health among populations in the Twin States.

The report ranks Grafton County second for health outcomes and third for health factors among New Hampshire's 10 counties.

Sullivan County ranks ninth for both outcomes and factors, just above Coos County, which sits in last place.

In Vermont, Orange and Windsor counties both rank in the middle, between Chittenden County, which is first, and the Northeast Kingdom counties of Essex and Orleans, which are ranked last.

Windsor County, which is ranked fifth for health outcomes and fourth for health factors, is above
SEE COUNTIES — A3

How Vital Will N.H. Be in 2016?

By STEVE PEOPLES
Associated Press

NASHUA, N.H. — Few states have shaped presidential politics like Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina.

By hosting the nation's first presidential primaries and caucuses, the states have heaped political and financial rewards for decades on successful candidates and hastened the end for underachievers. Yet their clout may be declining in 2016.

Campaign aides and veteran political operatives expect the Republicans' next primary season to extend well beyond the first three states, thanks to an explosion of well-financed super PACs, a robust stable of candidates and changes in the election calendar that could make the 2016 GOP primary season one of the most competitive in history.

That drawn-out scenario is despite the wishes of the Republican National Committee, which recently

changed rules with the aim of giving the eventual nominee a quicker and easier path to the general election.

While there is little competition expected on the Democratic side, the Republican primary is "shaping up to be the ultimate political marathon," said Phil Musser, a GOP consultant and veteran of presidential politics. He suggested candidates might not get the "slingshot effect" from early state victories that they once might have.

Ronald Weiser, former finance chairman of the Republican National Committee, agrees. "The early states are still important, but they're not critical anymore," he said. "You're not gone if you don't do well in those first couple primaries."

By nature of being first, however, Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina will continue to consume much of the political world's attention over the coming 11 months. Those states, along with Nevada, are
SEE 2016 — A5

Frat Learned Chant at National Event

SUSAN SVRLUGA
The Washington Post

After investigating a racist chant sung by Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity brothers on their way to an SAE Founders Day event, University of Oklahoma officials have concluded that members of the fraternity learned the words at a leadership event hosted by SAE's national headquarters four years earlier.

The university found that the chant migrated to Oklahoma and had become "part of the institutionalized

culture of the chapter" and its pledging process, implying that it was not a song belonging to a small number of people and instead was part of the fraternity's recent traditions.

The university's report also said that as part of the chapter's typical recruitment process, a dozen high school students had been invited to the event on March 7 and had joined fraternity members on the bus, where the chant erupted. Many of the students were drinking before the event, the report claims.

David Boren, Oklahoma's presi-

dent, demanded answers from SAE's national leaders in a letter dated Friday.

A video of the chant, which included racial slurs against African-Americans and a lynching reference, lit up social media and prompted a national debate about race relations and fraternity culture on campus. One question that many people asked was whether it was an isolated incident or something ingrained in SAE traditions.

The fraternity is one of the country's largest, with some 15,000 current members and 200,000 alumni.

SAE leaders, who have adamantly denied that the chant is part of the fraternity's traditions, recently announced a sweeping national initiative to eliminate racism from all of its chapters, including a hotline for people to call to report troubling incidents, hiring someone for an executive-level position overseeing diversity issues, and an investigation into its more than 200 local groups to determine whether there are racist traditions there.

A student at Duke University
SEE FRAT — A4



Andreas Lubitz competes in a race in Hamburg, Germany, in 2009. The airline pilot appears to have hidden evidence of an illness from his employers.

Crash Highlights Gaps in How Pilots Are Screened

By CURTIS TATE AND LINDSAY WISE
McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Commercial airlines do not screen pilots for mental health issues as rigorously as government agencies, law enforcement and specialized branches of the military, and some aviation experts say that may need to change in the wake of the apparently deliberate crash of a German airliner with 150 people on board.

Investigators in France, where the Germanwings Airbus A380 went down Wednesday, said Friday that the co-pilot of the plane, Andreas Lubitz, had concealed his health problems from the airline and was aboard the plane even though a doctor had declared him "unfit for work." Investigators say Lubitz waited until he was alone in the cockpit before typing in a computer com-

mand that directed the plane to descend. He secured the cockpit door so that the pilot, who had gone to the bathroom, couldn't get back in.

The fact that the airline, which is operated by Lufthansa, the German national carrier, was unaware of his health problems raises questions about the sophistication of screening for pilots, not just in Germany, but in the United States as well.

Other occupations where a high degree of public safety is involved, including police officers and firefighters, astronauts and the Air Force pilots who are entrusted with planes carrying nuclear weapons, often require more thorough mental health evaluations than commercial pilots.

"It's probably time for the airlines to start doing background checks," said Thomas Daly, the dean of the avi-

ation program at Dowling College in Brookhaven, N.Y.

Daly, who spent 30 years as a police pilot in Nassau County, N.Y., said that government agencies, including the FBI, call and visit frequently to ask him about his former flight school students. A few hundred students at a time enroll in the four-year program, and Daly said he gets to know most of them.

He said not one airline has called as part of a pilot background check.

"I don't see that happening right now, today, with the airlines," he said.

According to audio from the Germanwings aircraft's voice recorder, after Lubitz set the plane on its fatal descent, the pilot tried but failed to break down the cockpit door, which was reinforced under requirements

SEE PILOTS — A4



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Dispatches From Africa
A reporter's travels to Sierra Leone.
www.vnews.com

WEATHER — A10
Cloudy and cold,
highs 27 to 33.



Evergreen Singers Branch Out in Search for More Voices



Harvest Hill residents Mary and Charles Harrington, right, and Bill and Phyllis Buck, center, join in the song with Sally Shipton, left, and Sharon Wight, of Lebanon, second from left, of the Evergreen Singers in Lebanon on Tuesday. The Evergreen Singers perform mainly by the beds

of hospice patients, but also sing at nursing homes. They try to connect with their audiences through a mix of songs that spark memories, entertain and are tailored to the audience's faith and taste in music.

VALLEY NEWS — JAMES M. PATTERSON

Music to Set a Soul at Ease

By DAVID CORRIVEAU
Valley News Staff Writer

*Just a few more weary days and then
I'll fly away
To a land where joys will never end
I'll fly away*

— from I'LL FLY AWAY
by Alfred E. Brumley

A few weeks before Buddy Pipes died in February, a group of Evergreen Singers encircled his bedside in the memory-care unit of Harvest Hill in Lebanon to serenade the retired Methodist minister toward home.

"Some of the songs they did were *Blessed Be the Ties That Bind* and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*," Pipes' widow, Grace Pipes, recalled this week. "It was absolutely delightful. They provided a very meaningful hour for us. He was not able to talk at that stage, but tears came to his eyes, and to mine as well."

Customer feedback occasionally comes in other forms during the three or four bedside missions a month that the group, in teams of four to eight out

of a roster of 26, provides at no charge.

"The goal is to be as unobtrusive as possible, to not make the person or the family anxious," Evergreen veteran Sally Shipton of Lyme said last week. "Once we went to a sing where we tiptoed in so we wouldn't alarm the person, and we sang fairly softly, until finally the person to whom we were singing sat up and said, 'Don't you know anything faster?'"

Welcome to the world of the Evergreen Singers, who on Sunday afternoon at 5 will hold an open house in the parish hall of Norwich's St. Barnabas Church for Upper Valley vocalists looking for an outlet for their talents that they might not have thought of before. Visitors will find a group that has grown from modest origins into a seasoned group of singers since its founding seven years ago. The Evergreen Singers recently hired a part-time music director, Anna Alden, a music teacher in the Rivendell Interstate School District. Alden will be present Sunday to talk to singers interested in bolstering the group's numbers.

"We currently have four men who sing bass and 22 women who sing all the other parts," member Margaret Jernstedt of Hanover said this week. "We

SEE EVERGREEN — C2



Musical Director Anna Alden, of South Strafford, leads the Evergreen Singers during a rehearsal at St. Barnabas Church in Norwich on March 16.

VALLEY NEWS — SARAH SHAW

House Designed by Honda Puts U.S. Power Grid to the Test



The house is programmed to put itself to sleep at bedtime by closing the blinds and adjusting the lighting

WASHINGTON POST — STEVE YEATER

By SCOTT SOWERS
AND MARCIE GEFFNER

Special to The Washington Post

DAVIS, CALIF. — There are no flying cars in Susan O'Hara and Stuart Bennett's garage, nor robot servants waiting to fetch their slippers and a martini when they arrive home.

But the experimental house where O'Hara, Bennett and their 9-year-old twin daughters live is designed to give researchers an opportunity to flash forward several years. The future envisioned has residences leaving no carbon footprint because they're nearly 100-percent composed of materials from sustainable sources and powered by the sun. Electric cars are the rule here, not the exception.

Here's what the postmodern house has that you won't find in a subdivision near you:

■ The house uses reclaimed wood for all the trim and furniture, as well as reclaimed nails. Even the concrete is sustainable. The foundation and polished concrete floors contain pozzolan,

which comes from volcanic ash and is used to reduce the amount of Portland cement needed. Making Portland cement requires lots of heat, and thus produces a considerable amount of carbon dioxide.

■ The house has the same type of circadian-rhythm lighting that's used on the International Space Station. It emits blue lights in the morning and orange light in the evening. The bedroom lighting produces a warm hue to help relax the family before going to sleep.

■ This being California, the house is designed with the state's high environmental protection and water preservation standards in mind. Run-off water goes into a bioswale on the property, avoiding sewers that eventually empty into the Sacramento River. The collected runoff is used to water plants in the yard, saving fresh water in this drought-ravaged state.

■ The house gets all its power from the sun, but remains connected to the grid. In a pinch, an electric car parked in the garage can power the house.

"We signed up for a year here and we're really hoping they let us stay on, because we don't think we can go back to a regular house," says O'Hara, 49, whose 12-month stay is scheduled to end in October.

□ The project is being driven by an unlikely manufacturer: Honda Motor Co.

Honda's long journey to sustainable home design started in 1946, when company founder Soichiro Honda got an idea about mounting a small engine onto a bicycle.

For years, Honda has been studying green housing at its demonstration site in Japan. The demo house in Japan uses a small engine that runs on natural gas to generate its electricity. Heat produced by the engine is captured and used to warm the house. In international markets, the system is called "micro combined heat and power." More than 130,000 units are in place in Japan, most of them made by Honda.

Now, with the Honda Smart House in Cal-

SEE HOUSE — C5

Evergreen Singers Branch Out in Search for New Voices

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

are especially looking for basses, but we are interested in new singers for all parts.

"The important thing for us is to add singers who love music and singing, and who also have an interest in singing for people who are experiencing significant changes in life."

People such as Edwin S. Rich, who died at age 96 while under hospice care at his daughter's home in Enfield on Dec. 26, a few weeks after an Evergreen team sang for him there.

"They came with a folder of music my father could read along with," said his daughter Martha Rich, former head of school at Thetford Academy. "He was a longtime choir member, so he sang with them when he could. It was wonderful. It was just so lovely. They were a wonderful combination of professional and yet relaxed — informal enough to be comfortable in your own home, but also beautiful music, from people who cared about singing well."

"They try to sing things that are

encouraging and uplifting, and they really succeeded with my father. One of the songs was *You Are My Sunshine*. My parents used to sing that to each other and to us. *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* was another. Their ability to move into a space with such care and respect for the person's dignity was such a help. It helped me and my husband, too. We're really lucky to have a group like that in our community."

Bobbi Trombly, activities director at the Valley Terrace assisted living complex in Wilder, counts herself fortunate to have such a resource to call, sometimes on short notice.

"We can go to someone in the family and say, 'We have this available to us,'" Trombly said. "They don't miss a beat. Nothing falls through the cracks with them. I'll call today, and they'll be here tomorrow. Some of them are still working people like you and me, but they still find the time. They'll call me or the family and say, 'What music do you want?"

What music does the person want? They can still hear music. They can still smile."

Take one bedridden woman who grew up down South.

"All she wanted was *Home on the Range*," Trombly recalled. "As they were singing it, she was as happy as could be. They made her day."

"Her life, at that point." Singing for such clients also makes the day, and a big part of the lives, of the Evergreen members.

"In 2007, a friend of mine in the Boston area, who leads a hospice singing group, asked me to look at the documentary DVD by Camilla Rockwell, *Holding Our Own*, that describes so well the work of the Hallowell Singers in Brattleboro," Jernstedt said. "I found it so moving that when I returned to the Upper Valley I asked Mary Ann Hagan and Milt Frye if they knew of any people in our area who were interested in hospice singing. They suggested I contact Mary Cay Brass, a music leader for the Hallowell Singers who was starting a 'Community Chorus' meeting in Quechee in the fall of 2008. Joan Shimer, a participant in that gathering, said she would like to bring

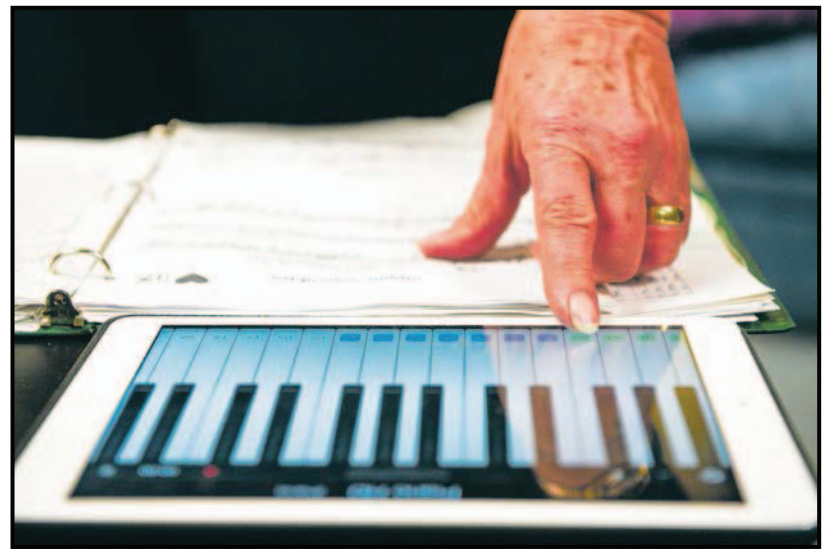
together people interested in hospice singing. She invited the people who signed up at that time to meet in her living room, and so we began what has been a most meaningful journey."

That meeting re-lit a fire in Sally Shipton, who had sung with the Hallowell Hospice Choir.

"After about two years, we got pretty confident, enough to work on our own repertoire, for the needs we were seeing in the Upper Valley," Shipton said. "We were testing our wings."

And early on, members noticed how, even with audiences with hours or a few days to live, their singing "evoked a kind of response," Shipton continued. "We watched their lips move, or their hands touched their bedsheets to the music. It gave us the sense that these songs might be heard on a cellular level."

When the Evergreen Singers join voices on hymns and spirituals and long-ago popular songs in the common rooms of assisted living facilities around the Upper Valley, most recently Harvest Hill this week, they evoke even greater responses, often full, verbatim recitation of every verse, from audiences who in many cases struggle to remember names



Above: Donna Nelson, of Thetford, plays a note for her fellow Evergreen Singers to tune to as they warm up at Harvest Hill in Lebanon. Right: Barbara Richardson, a resident in the Hughes Care Unit, takes in the music of the Evergreen Singers with her husband, Charlie Richardson.

VALLEY NEWS PHOTOGRAPHS — JAMES M. PATTERSON



and faces and whether they'd eaten breakfast that day.

"This music was so deeply ingrained in their past, it was making some kind of connection," Shipton said. "You are My Sunshine has been a big one. That's a finger-tapper."

Shipton added that the group also is gradually bringing its repertoire up to speed with songs in other languages and religious traditions, from Croatian lullabies to hymns of Sephardic Judaism.

"The idea is to listen to the music, don't focus on the words," she said. "We saw a need for music that was familiar to people for whom we were singing."

While none of them is wishing away her or his own time, some of the Evergreen singers can't help thinking about songs they'd want to hear in the dimming of their days.

For Jernstedt, they include David Dodson's *Farthest Field*, Pete Seeger's *To My Old Brown Earth* and Bill Staines' *River*.

•••••

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"(They) come to my mind immediately because of the images they suggest," Jernstedt said. "Rivers, mountains, green meadows, dear friends, voices lifted in radiant song, blue sky, our home, hearts filled with song, goodness and kindness, forever, world without end."

Shipton, meanwhile, cited Louis Armstrong's *Wonderful World*, "and of course I'll Fly Away."

"We have had group pot lucks around this topic," she continued. "We go around the room with our favorites. I would very much want this group when my time comes."

For more information about the Evergreen Singers, visit evergreemv.weebly.com. To RSVP for Sunday's open house at the St. Barnabas Church parish hall in Norwich, email kkshepherd447@gmail.com or call 802-649-5152

David Corriveau can be reached at dcorriveau@vnews.com and at 603-727-3304.

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