

In Brief

RUTLAND REGION

Rutland Creek Path gets \$295K

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STAFF WRITER

Vt. gas prices keep dropping

The price of gas is continuing to go down in Vermont.

The website Vermont-gasprices.com reports the price averaged \$3.68 gallon on Monday, down 7 cents in a week.

Nationally, the average price per gallon was \$3.46.

Vermont's gas prices are still 18 cents higher than they were a year ago, but 25 cents cheaper than a month ago.

The national average stands at 3.1 cents per gallon higher than the same day a year ago, and 32.6 cents per gallon lower than a month ago.

The website reports the lowest gas prices in Vermont are in the Springfield area where prices are about \$3.40 a gallon.

Man denies tattooing charges

A Brandon man who police say was tattooing people at his kitchen table denied criminal charges last weeks of running a tattoo business without a license.

Police arrested Adam J. Collis, 24, in September after receiving multiple complaints from people who allegedly received tattoos from Collis, Brandon police said in a court affidavit.

There were no com-

The Rutland Creek Path, a 10-foot-wide bicycle, pedestrian and wheelchair-accessible path through the city's Northwest neighborhood, recently tacked \$295,000 to its list of grants.

In its latest round of funding, the Vermont Agency of Transportation announced \$2.5 million in federal funding statewide for bike and walking paths, engineering work, sidewalks and signal improvements in 13 Vermont towns.

The 295,000 went to pay for two parts of the Rutland project.

Scoping of Segment 5 of the Creek Path that runs along Dorr Drive to the College of St. Joseph, received \$35,000 of the Rutland share.

The engineering and construction of Segment 4, which received \$260,000, runs along Otter Creek behind the softball fields at Meadow Street Park and to River Street, near the Mount St. Joseph Academy ballfield.

Nov. 3, the first segment of the path from Giorgetti Park past the Rutland jail to State Street, was opened for use.

So far, the Rutland Creative Economy, headed by Rutland resident and business owner Paul Gallo, has raised more than \$1 million in federal grants and local matches in the past five years, including private donations and free labor and supplies from local companies.

The majority of the money will be used to have the Meadow Street section of the path open by 2014.

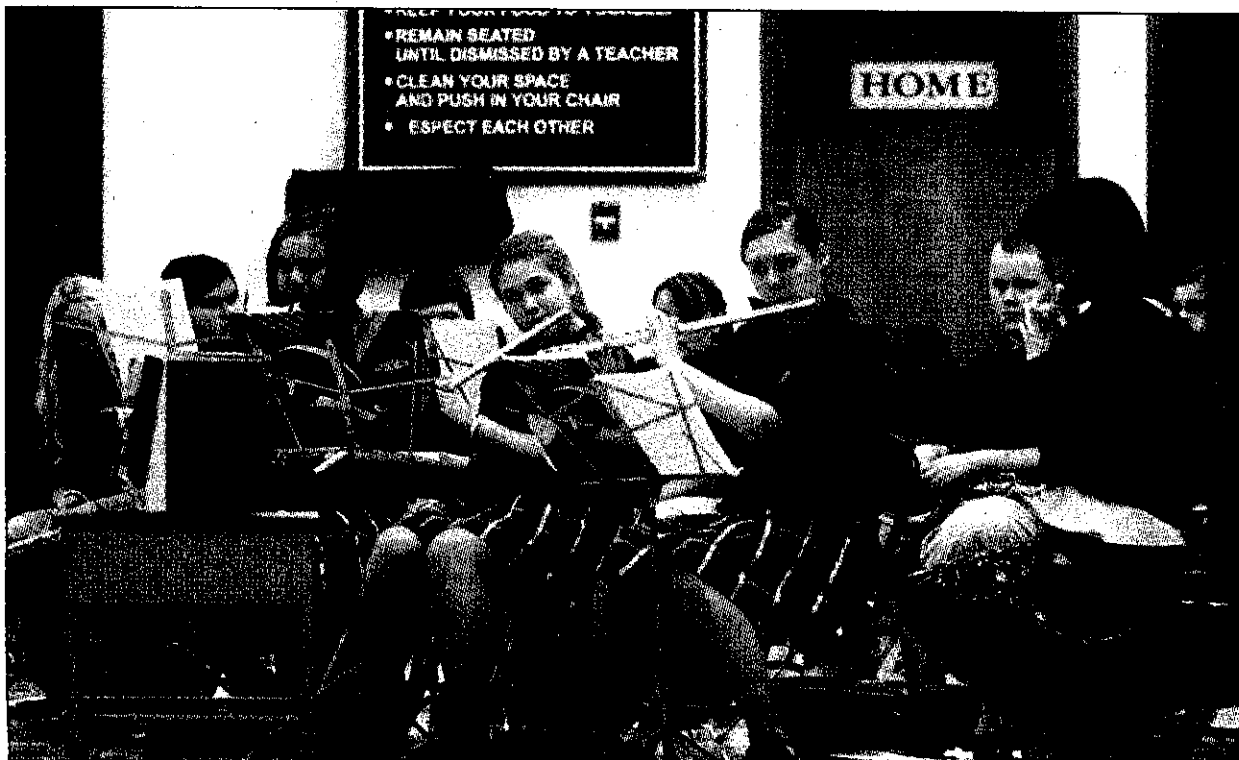
Segment 2 — running from the newly opened State Street section to West Street — is already funded and is expected to be open next year.

Gallo said Monday that the Creek Path is one of the top five open projects Vermont is supporting through VTrans funding. He said it is unlikely funding will dry up because of local momentum and local match funds used to secure the grants.

Wilk Paving, Belden Construction and vocational students all contributed to the match for the grant for the first segment of the path, including other donors who contributed time and money.

See Path, Page B4

SONGS OF HONOR



State budget forum tonight

STAFF REPORT

The first of two public forums occurs tonight to discuss the state budget process, revenues and expenditures.

As required by state legislation, public participation is required in the development of budget goals and general prioritizing and evaluation of spending and revenue initiatives.

"We hope to engage the public in a discussion about

Y

It started with some aggressively spiced pepperoni.

My mother got it from Singleton's in Proctorsville, thinking it would serve as a snack before Sunday dinner. It was sliced lengthwise for some reason (it looked cool)

and my goodness was it strong.

My father declared it inedible, which, as usual, was pure hyperbole. It was, however, a bit hotter than I liked for casual snacking. It was also wicked smoky. No, it needed to be used in

flavoring something, and immediately hit on an Italianized cassoulet.

Cassoulet is a classic French dish of white beans, andouille sausage and whatever hunks of pork fat and meaty bones the cook has on hand - duck is a favorite. Swapping the pepperoni for the andouille (which also tends to be hot and smoky) I decided to throw in tomatoes, whole garlic cloves, oregano and as



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vehicle for storing millions of gallons of water.

"They become their own micro-engineering team," Wallstrom said of the students.

And while the most pressing issue on Election Day with the city's water system was whether more cleansing chemicals should be added to meet federal water regulations, Wallstrom said it's only a side conversation for students.

Path

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Gallo said the project has received \$300,000 in cash pledges, absent any formal fundraisers. The biggest donor so far was Jane's Trust Foundation that donated \$130,000 in honor of a woman who supported Creative Economy projects in Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire, Gallo said.

Gallo is now starting to write grant applications for Segment 3 of the path and is seeking another \$300,000. He needs \$75,000 in pledges, cash

Budget

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upcoming budget recommendations, which will be submitted to the General

so important?

Some education experts say the American work force is falling behind intellectually and competitively in those technical fields and there's a perceived lack of qualified candidates for high-tech jobs.

According to a January U.S. Department of Commerce study entitled, "The Competitiveness and Innovative Capacity of the U.S.," the U.S. education system

or in-kind, to match it.

"Where the snag is, is there is only so much money you can apply for annually," Gallo said. "Segment 1 was the most expensive and that took three years of federal grant writing before we could get it started. We had a community hearing on this project five years ago and finally, we have a completed section."

Another reason the path is being done in sections and over time is because it has to be compliant with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act in order to get the funding. That includes a nearly seamless pitch and

Assembly in January.

Both meetings will offer live streaming.

The link will be posted on the Department of Finance and Management's main webpage, www.finance.vermont.gov.

the 21st century helped propel the economic rise of the United States as it became the richest nation on the planet. However, by many measures, the U.S. education system has slipped."

The report continues, "ongoing and new Administration initiatives are addressing these challenges by ... spurring classroom innovation at all levels, expanding the size and quality of the STEM teacher ranks,

with a website. The website has a mission statement: "To work aggressively to raise awareness in Congress, the Administration, and other organizations about the crucial role that STEM education plays in enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leader of the global marketplace of the 21st century."

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grade to the path to make it as accessible to wheelchairs as possible.

Gallo said it's not like Pine Hill Park, where dirt, ungraded multi-use trails are the norm.

"Our goal was to make sure we allowed everyone in the community to use

this, strollers and wheelchairs," he said. "We want high-volume usage and it runs along two waterways that are underutilized. We want to expose the community to the beauty of the streams."

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