

# THE Hardwick Gaze

INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

Wednesday, June 6, 2018

Hardwick • Cabot • Calais • Craftsbury • Greensboro • Marshfield • Plainfield • Stannard • Walden • Wolcott • Woodbury

\$1.00  
Volume 129 Number 22

## SPARK Incubator Holds Open House

**by Hester Fuller**  
**GREENSBORO**—Thursday evening, several towns representing curious and creative souls dropped by for a very soft "Open House" at SPARK, the new incubator space in Greensboro currently sharing quarters with WonderLab in the basement of the United Church. Guests nibbled on snacks and got a behind-the-scenes look at the future as SPARK unveiled its first round of high-tech tools for members: user, local entrepreneurs, business and artists will share convenient access to modern equipment that is typically beyond the financial reach of individuals and small businesses.

The tools on display at the open house included a couple of 3-D printers and supporting design software; these are useful for fabricating parts and prototypes.

SPARK also has a table-top studio lighting set-up that lends a touch, for example, tight photos to do catalog shoots of their wares. Over in another corner is a large-format printer capable of creating custom, high-quality graphics—signs, posters and images—up to four feet wide and as long as you want, on various media, including paper, fabric and vinyl.

"Being able to access high-end technology for photography and video production lets us develop aspects of my freelance business that might be prohibitively expensive to invest in on my own," said Beane Bern, a photographer and freelance business consultant in West Green. "Economics of scale can be challenging for small business owners, but even more so in the NEK."

See SPARK, 9



Members of the 18th Annual Blackfly Festival. From left to right: Nigel Dyson, Cecil Moore, Brian Favre, Kristin Davari, Emily Kimball, Sophie Davari, Kira Gascoyne, Jill Evans, Malissa Haggart, Ashley Groun, school teacher and running coach advisor, Anna Gascoyne. Kids' parade run every Tuesday and Thursday during recess to encourage physical activity.

## Agency of Education Releases Act 46 Proposals

**by Hester Fuller**

**MONTEPELIER**—Last Friday evening, the setting Secretary of Education released draft recommendations to the State Board of Education for restructuring school governance statewide as called for under Act 46. Changes in state demographics and overall declining enrollment and budget cuts have led to school district consolidation, and during the Shumlin administration the Legislature established a three-member advisory group for voluntarily restructuring school governance statewide. Districts unable to reach agreement with the state auditor would be subject to mandatory changes imposed by the Board of Education.

Under the first three (voluntary) phases, districts could qualify for

fiscal incentives by proposing and obtaining voter approval for plans that meet criteria the state sets and save taxpayers money by consolidating governance. Since 2014, easy-to-use Agency of Education, 161 Vermont districts have created 103 new, consolidated districts. There are now 114 fewer school districts in Vermont, and a supervisory union have been eliminated statewide.

Districts for whom consolidation proved elusive could also submit plans for "alternative structure" as described in Section 9 of the act. All but one of the 161 Vermont Supervisory Union (OSU) applications on which a joint proposal under Section 9. The document released their voters and the Agency of Education's response to Section 9 proposals to the form of the recommendations it plans to make to the Board of Education, whose authority over

See AGENCY, 7

## Agency Defers to State Board Decision

**by Hester Fuller**

**CHAFFSBURY**—The Agency of Education (AEO) will not recommend that the Craftsbury school district be merged with any other district or group of districts under Act 46 at least for the time being.

Craftsbury participated in the proposal for an alternative governance structure submitted jointly by all members of the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSU). On May 10, the Agency used its recommendations to the State Board of Education in the form of a draft plan for consolidating school governance statewide.

Rather than responding to the state's proposals, the agency has instead recommended that the OSU (OSU) union school district (Hazen Union and Lakewood) and merge the OSU schools into the State Board of Education's designated spokesperson on the matter that was reached before finalizing its classification.

The agency was part of AEO's draft recommendations to the State Board of Education, which

will rule this fall on a statewide plan to consolidate school governance. The Act 46 consolidation initiative is the latest in a decades-long attempt to address shifting demographics and declining enrollment in Vermont's rural schools.

The joint OSU proposal features administrative collaborations, including a unified transportation center and joint negotiation for staff and teachers across member schools. It also integrates administrative efforts in the region in the form of the Craftsbury Outdoor Center and Sterling College regional educational opportunities that would be open to all OSU students.

Regarding the Craftsbury School District, the report states that "... because the Secretary believes that it is not practicable to require merger at this time, the Secretary does not propose that the State Board of Education's designated spokesperson on the matter that was reached before finalizing its classification.

See DECISION, 7

## Crowds Enjoy Adamant's Annual Blackfly Festival

**by Doug McClure**

**ADAMANT**—Temperatures in the low seventies and bright sunshine brought an estimated two hundred people to the Adamant Co-Op on June 5 for the sixteenth annual Blackfly Festival. Fortunately for the visitors, the festival's nameplate did not make much an appearance.

"We thought the wind, which I'd like to keep the Blackfly away," joked fellow musician Tim Winkler, one half of an Adamant folk duo with Pat Gasey. "It seems to have worked. I think I've only seen one."

Among the events at the festival were a scavenger hunt, a walk along a Solum Pond with Richard Capelash, live music, a writer's slam, a fashion show. From 11:00 a.m. until 4 p.m., visitors could hop foot off the grill. There was a silent auction in which people could win art commissions, and "experiential travel, and more great stuff than you can shake a bottle of Bug spray at," according to the program.



David Sheets (left) congratulates Marissa Calk on her winning entry in the Blackfly pie contest at the 18th Annual Blackfly Festival on June 5.

Proceeds from the event will go to help the Adamant Co-Op keep up with maintenance on its building, which was purchased in 1940. The coop has served as a village hub, post office, and general store since 1985.

"The money raised goes to help with repairs, maintenance, and other things," said Adamant Co-Op manager Andrew Sereda. "Our plumbing system is a competing thing. The year this was the only coop with Wi-Fi and no running water."

Sereda and the co-op believe the Adamant Co-Op to be the oldest continuously operating coop, not just in Vermont but in the country. Geoff Hewitt, Vermont's poetry and music curator, was also one of the winners. The idea of the slam is for people to produce a piece of



Jeremy Michael (center) and his wife Leslie (left) of Kingdom Creamery of Green Mountain, give a tour of their facility, which makes soft-serve creamery milk, hard ice cream, butter and yogurt to farm. Hazen Union Supervisory Union. Pictured from left to right are: Volunteers Wilbur Carter, Phil Evans, Ben Gage, Joseph Gage, Scott Scholten, Mike Rennie, and Drew Agans.

## State Wants Cabot and Danville to Reconsider Merger

**by Michael Bielawski**

**CABOT**—This past Friday the Agency of Education (AEO) notified recommendations that 18 districts including Cabot and Danville merge with other districts in accordance with the 2015 school reform Act 46.

Cabot had applied for alternative district status as allowed for under Section 9 of Act 46. Alternative status can mean no merger with another district, but keeping the district independent while overseeing structure. The preferred district structure would be a merger with at least 900 students.

Cabot voters rejected a merger proposal in the summer of 2017, which would have closed it to high school students in Danville, Danville and Twifield school districts. Voters rejected the merger proposal by a ratio of more than 2:1 with 396 no votes and 193 in favor.

With Friday's announcement, the AEO notified the Board of Education. The Agency's findings are a recommendation to the State Board of Education to reconsider a final

statewide plan, which is due on or before the end of the year.

The Secretary believes that the best means of meeting the Act 46 mandate is to consider merging voluntarily and for the region - is the State Board of Education to do so.

The Secretary believes that the best means of meeting the Act 46 mandate is to consider merging voluntarily and for the region - is the State Board of Education to do so.

The Secretary believes that the best means of meeting the Act 46 mandate is to consider merging voluntarily and for the region - is the State Board of Education to do so.

See MERGER, 7

## Maussell Sentenced for Library Misconduct

**by Doug McClure**

**NEWPORT CITY**—David Francis Maussell was convicted of level 1 and less-than-serious conduct on 28 May and sentenced to probation, a \$147 fine and six days to serve by Judge Michael S. Koperowski of the Orleans Superior Court. The \$147 fine is due by August 12, 2018, according to a court filing.

The filing also requires Maussell to "keep the court informed of any change of home address within 3 days of such change" until the balance is paid.

With the sentencing, the previous

arrest warrant Koperowski issued against Maussell is lifted. In the presentment of the court, this conviction is for an outstanding public computer at the Greensboro Free Library, apparently involved in level 1 and less-than-serious conduct. This is the third such incident involving Maussell. In October 2016, a jury acquitted him of similar actions at the Judeville Library in Hardwick. That case was still at Chelmsford County Superior Court. Reports indicate that Maussell was also convicted of level 1 and less-than-serious conduct at St. Michael's Church library in 1998.

photo by Vanessa Fourrier  
Jeremy Michael (center) and his wife Leslie (left) of Kingdom Creamery of Green Mountain, give a tour of their facility, which makes soft-serve creamery milk, hard ice cream, butter and yogurt to farm. Hazen Union Supervisory Union. Pictured from left to right are: Volunteers Wilbur Carter, Phil Evans, Ben Gage, Joseph Gage, Scott Scholten, Mike Rennie, and Drew Agans.

hardwickgazette.com

In Sports, 10

WILDCATS FALL IN PLAYDOWN

0727 • 0031

In Towns, 2

SPEECH WILL BE GIVEN IN SIGN LANGUAGE

0727 • 0031

In Arts, 6

DOYLE EXHIBIT IS A FEAST OF FUN

0727 • 0031