

# THE Hardwick Gazette

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## Should 16-Year-Olds Get to Vote?

by Doug McClure

**HARDWICK** – On the March, 2019 ballot, Brattleboro voters will choose whether to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local elections.

Students of this year's Hazen Union AP Government recently held a mock election "to create a realistic voting experience, so that when students become adults and can vote for real, they will know roughly what to expect and what to do on the ballot" (see story, page X).

Li Governor David Zuckerman supports the Brattleboro voting proposal, which would give 16-year-olds the vote on local matters, allow them to serve on the school board, and serve as representatives at Town Meeting. "In a time when political cynicism is at an all-time high, it is great to see young citizens active and engaged in their communities. Engaging youth in local decisions is a great way to instill a commitment to their community, bring in new ideas and energy, and to recognize the value they add to the region," said Zuckerman.

Hazen Union senior Elliott Kimball agrees. "While some might say that 16- and 17-year-olds aren't mature enough to vote, I would counter by asking them to sit in on one of our classes and see if that changes their minds. Although we're young, we have a passion for learning and, if given the opportunity and responsibility of making positive change, I know that my peers and I would rise to the challenge," said Kimball.

Opponents argue that 16- and 17-year-olds lack the judgment to process the issues, but adolescent psychology expert Laurence Steinberg wrote in a New York Times Op-Ed that young people's ability to process and understand issues is developed.

"By that age [16], adolescents can gather and process information, weigh pros and cons, reason logically with facts and take time in making a decision. Teenagers may sometimes make bad choices, but statistically speaking, they do not make them more often than adults do."

Junior Elijah Lee-Smith, 17, is not sure giving sixteen-year-olds the vote would make a difference. "Looking at the results of the recent neck election that we had at our school, it is clear that very few of the 16- and even 17-year-olds took it very seriously. It is

possible that they may take it more seriously if it were a real election, but from the evidence that I see, it is not an indication of that. In all honesty, I don't think that it would be a bad thing to let 16- and 17-year-olds vote, it is just really hard to say if it would add much to the electorate."

Hardwick resident Teresa Nielsen said of allowing 16-year-olds to vote "I don't see why not. The kids that want to vote, will. But probably none of us."

Tyler King, 17, said he hadn't given any thought to voting. He said if he could vote he would pay attention to politics more.

Hardwick's voter rolls show an average age of 59 for registered voters. Per the census, that number is at least 15 years.

See VOTE, 11



Craftsbury Fire Department Captain Steve Perkins (right) explains the correct way to use a fire extinguisher to Heather Line during a training session at the department's Open House Oct. 13. The ten fire extinguishers used for the training were donated by Healy's Supply of St. Johnsbury.

## Sterling College Celebrates Anniversary

by Jane Pichel Cook

**CRAFTSBURY** – Sterling College celebrated a centennial year of educating young people with the unveiling of a historical marker on Saturday and the return of alumni for a week-end of festivities.

From the alumni who attended Sterling School as high school students in 1958 to the present teachers, and Headmaster Ted Berningham shared anecdotes and memories of their shared past. The school, founded in Craftsbury in 1908, was started as a boys' preparatory school. It took its name from founder Doug Fidd's wife, whose maiden name was Sterling, due to the reputation of quality that the word carries.

The consensus throughout the week-end of festivities was that the school's values and basic principles are still very much intact after its transition to a four-year, degree-granting institution, Sterling College. The historical marker unveiled Saturday morning by Trustee Richard David Behrland (Class of 1960), and Sterling College senior Colin Netesley was funded through a grant from Vermont Historical Preservation. Behrland was awarded an honorary doctorate from the college in 2015.

Behrland noted significant changes have been made, but the school is still providing an excellent education for all students. "Something we have all needed."

"With a touch of humor, he said his boys in 1958 were sent by their parents, as opposed to the men and women who choose to attend today. He suggested the festivities had "the noise level of a big family reunion."

President Matthew Derr emphasized the college's connection to the Craftsbury community. "Craftsbury is our campus," he said. "There are no signs. The college is a part of the community. Sterling College and Craftsbury is the community."

The historical marker outlines a brief history of the college: "Sterling College was among the first colleges and universities in the United States to offer a liberal arts curriculum focused on the environment. It was founded here in Craftsbury Community in 1908 as a boys' preparatory school known as Sterling School. The Grassroots Project and Sterling Institute co-educational program followed in 1974.

"Continuing the Outward Bound Model of development by challenge," introduced in its early years, in 1982 the school was approved for degree granting authority by the State of Vermont. See ANNIVERSARY, 7

## Child Haven Holds Dinner, Fashion Show

by Michael Bielawski

**HARDWICK** – The annual dinner and fashion show put on by Child Haven International (CHI) was held on Saturday evening at the Hazen Union cafeteria. The goal of the event is to highlight the work of and raise funds for the charitable organization. The non-governmental organization (NGO) supports the livelihood of over 1,500 children and at least 100 women and 30 seniors through ten projects in four South Asian nations.

The charitable organization, based in Maxwell, Ontario, was founded in 1985 by Fred and Bonnie Cappuccino. The couple had raised 21 children – 19 were adopted – and one of their sons, Robin Cappuccino, has lived in Hardwick since 1972. The Cap-

puccinos decided they wanted to help other children and families, and so they created Child Haven International.

Andy Rush, a retired high school teacher from Kingston, Ontario, who hosted the event, noted it was largely through Robin's involvement in the community that this became an annual event at Hazen.

"He's a big part of the community. Everybody loves Robin around here," he said. "And they know he's involved in Child Haven and so we got this great community support for the event. It's incredible."

He added that he has known Bonnie and Fred and Robin since 1970, when he was a teenager. Both explained that the charities the organization currently

See SHOW, 10



photo by Vanessa Fournier Twenty-five people participated in the Fall and Winter Fashion Show at the 10th Annual Hardwick Child Haven International Dinner Show Oct. 13 at Hazen Union. Pictured from left to right are Niggi Sawyer, Michelle Houldcroft, Jeff Goldensome and Linda Rose Price.

## Local Schools Struggle to Fill Openings

by Michael Bielawski

**HARDWICK** – With state unemployment hovering around just 2.8 percent, employers are struggling to find qualified staff to fill positions. That applies to hiring teachers, too. The topic was raised at a recent Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) and the administration largely agreed that this is a real concern. OSSU Director of Student Services Heather Freeman noted that the supervisory union is having trouble filling qualified staff for specific education.

"We had planned to hire lower-cost teachers fresh out of college, but we can't hire staff that are fresh out of college," Freeman said. "They are not coming, and we're having to plan on higher salary rates for any qualified teacher who is not getting into our staff. That is a higher cost that we are budgeting for in hoping that we can attract that level of a person," she said.

Chloe Smith, a Financial Officer John Smith Jr. confirmed the challenge. "They are not coming, and we're having to plan on higher salary rates for any qualified teacher who is not getting into our staff. That is a higher cost that we are budgeting for in hoping that we can attract that level of a person," she said.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

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## Long-time Fall Foliage Festival Organizer Jane Johns Retires

by Michael Bielawski

**HARDWICK** – Another successful Fall Foliage Crafts Fair came and went again last week with one notable development: this was the last year that Jane Johns of Greensboro Bend will run the event. She has been its main organizer since the late 90s and has been involved in some capacity for three decades.

"It's time to retire," she said. "I'm not as able physically to do all the set-up work and marking up the floor."

The job requires not just managing this event, but also setting up the crafts fair portion of Spring Fest at the end of May.

One of the most important aspects is to ensure that the vendors who travel from near and far get the support that they need. Johns said the feedback from this latest fair has been mixed but generally positive.

"It depends on what the people are looking for that day," she said. "Some people had said this Saturday Oct. 6 was the best they've ever done, and some said sales were so low. They'll all be doing so for a long time and they know that some days are good, and some days aren't so good."

See JOHNS, 11



photo by Vanessa Fournier Sterling College student Colin Netesley (left) and alumnus David Behrland (right), class of 1960, unveil an historic marker as part of the College's 100th Anniversary.

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