

Diocese Releases List of Priests Accused of Abuse

by Doug McClure

BURLINGTON—Bishop Christopher J. Coyne of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington issued a list of forty Vermont priests "that had credible allegations of sexual abuse filed against them by victims who were under the age of 18 at the time of the incident."

With one exception the individuals named are deceased. In all but two cases the Diocese declined to provide any elaboration of what it described as "credible abuse" or where the incident or incidents took place. Three of the named priests were defrocked, according to the document.

Public pressure on the Catholic Church mounted in the fall-out from articles published in the Boston Globe in 2002, which led to criminal prosecution of five priests for "abuse of minors." Those articles led to investigations into alleged abuse in churches worldwide.

Coyne said in a release "While there has been significant action by the Church here in Vermont and in the United States to address the issue of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy and the cover-up of those crimes by those in authority, the resulting societal tale of what happened in decades ago is to the U.S. bishops' 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People has been fully aired. That is why I have asked that this report be covered and published in the Diocese." The Diocese stated that the production of the list was done by

lay people not clergy, including one non-Catholic and a "victim of clergy abuse," and according to a number of that seven-person committee, "Transparency was promised and received." In a presser, Coyne said the knowledge of the allegations had been treated as "our family secret" and described the effect of the alleged acts as "toxic."

The Diocese described the priests named in its report as "Credibly Accused" who "abused children here." There is no indication as to where the alleged incidents took place.

Of the priests on the list who served at churches in The Gazette's readership area, the only one still alive is Stephen J. Nichols, who was born in 1900. Nichols served as pastor at St. Elizabeth's in Lyndonville and at Our Lady Queen of Peace in Danville, then as a chaplain in Lyndon State College from 2000-2007. Nichols was later an administrator at St. James the Greater Parish in Island Pond and at a mission in Norton from 2003-07. He took leave of absence on April 3, 2006, before resigning as a pastor on June 7, 2007. He remains on leave according to the document.

Page Francis (defrocked) died on January 23, 2015. The other names with some local affiliation on the list (released by the Diocese): Raymond D. Walsh (1927-1965) worked as a "temporary administrator" at the St. Elizabeth's Church in Hardwick. He died this June in Rutland.

See ABUSE, 4



Left, Hardwick Elementary School first graders (from left) Alvia Hall, Raymon Shainou, Milton King, Koryn Dyer and in back) Zoey Cusabe wait to board the bus after their first day of school on Monday.

Students Look Forward to Big New Year

Hazen Union Holds Open House

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK—Just days before school opened, Hazen Union welcomed its newest members to an orientation. History repeated itself with students struggling with their lockers, typically followed by a helpful parent attempting to do well, and almost as often ending with a number of Hazen's staff finally finding the combination.

Bailey Shepard was one of the new ninth graders. One change is that World Languages Theater or Key Freedy is now his Teacher-Student Adviser. Shepard said more than a few times that he "really likes school" and today he was seeing about getting into a Spanish class with Freedy.

Tenth grader Lucas Whitaker

and twelfth grader Thank Bish-Thao have come a long way to study at Hazen. Whitaker's family just moved here from California's Bay Area. He said he expects two major adjustments: a drastically smaller school — "I'm looking forward to that," he said — and seeing snow for the first time.

Bish-Thao is an exchange student and Junior German Ambassador from Hanover, Germany. Whitaker's family is hosting her here. She's been in Hardwick just over two weeks and, unlike Whitaker, is quite used to snow. Like Whitaker, she comes from a school well over twice the size of Hazen. It's her first time in the United States, she said, and one of the first things she noticed was that air conditioning is everywhere.

For Bish-Thao another adjustment will be the change from the education system in Germany, known as Gymnasium (that), which focuses on students' strongest aptitudes whether it be trades or sciences and directs them into those areas more than the American system. "People are so nice," she said, "and nobody is stressed out here. I'm looking forward to meeting new people."

The students were not the only new arrivals. This year, Hazen has "a bunch of new staff." Perrygo said. Among the new staff are three middle-school teachers with over a decade of teaching experience each.

Lake Whitaker, Emily Williams is from halfway across the country, Wyoming, and brings 26 years of teaching experience to a new staff.

See HAZEN, 4

Cabot School Opens with New Structure

by Will Walters

CABOT—Cabot School is beginning its first school year in a new supervisory union, but the transition will have only a minor impact.

Mark Tucker, the superintendent of the dissolved Washington Northeast Supervisory Union, is the new interim superintendent of the Cabot School District Supervisory Union (CSU), which Cabot

was transferred to. Glenda Cresto continues as principal. They worked together when the school district and Tucker were under Washington Northeast, making the change in structure a minor matter.

The Vermont Principals Association approved a cooperative proposal on sports. The agreement allows Cabot and Plainfield students to play on teams covering both schools for fall cross-country and boys and girls soccer. Teams will be able to play on both school fields. Tucker said at the school board meeting that transportation arrangements are being studied.

There are some changes on how grant money is allocated in the enlarged Supervisory Union due to the size of Cabot School District increasing about 1,000 students. This will affect the availability of Title I money for schools next year. Cabot and Windfield, however, are not expected to be impacted by this because both schools have been successful in collecting free and reduced lunch

pluses over the past two years. Tucker will be reviewing the policies of the different schools new to the supervisory union to ensure that no school is missing any policies. He will bring his findings to the CSU board to tie everything together.

Tucker said the Agency of Education has an Integrated Field Review Process which will do a review of Cabot School District after January 1, 2020. Tucker said he is waiting for more detail on the review process but told the school board he did not consider it a big deal. He said it is meant to be supportive for the school district, and it will evolve around ways to improve policies and practices.

Cresto said planning is being done to have monthly parent gatherings which could include the entire pre-K to 12, or could at times be more limited to specific grades. The meeting will be designed to bring families into greater involvement with the school.

Cresto said she is very See CABOT, 4

ATV Ordinance Put on Hold

by June Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY—After the temporary All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) ordinance was defeated, the select board's consensus is to place on hold any further actions in changing the existing ATV ordinance. The current ordinance allows ATVs to travel on Collinsville Road and Hatch Brook Road. Board Chair Bruce Urie said the vote doesn't give the board any direction, because he has received phone calls seeking a more restrictive ordinance and phone calls seeking just the opposite. The feeling seemed to be to let "things ride" with the current ordinance remaining in place.

"(The temporary ordinance) failed," Urie said. "We haven't put a finger on who actually voted. I had people calling asking for more leniency and some asking for more restrictions. It took us six months."

"We are no further along unless we receive something. We aren't going to waste any more time. We are done for now."

In turning to more pressing matters, the board is facing a creek replacement on the Village Bridge with only a \$175,000 structures grant in hand. Three bridge designs have been received for the Village Bridge from Tyler Burdick of Hinesburg, all of which are costly.

The 1929 bridge design needs to be replaced. The new decking will be 22 feet wide with pedestrian walkways, the bridge will be higher than it is currently. The abutments are not being replaced and some cracks need to be repaired.

The three bridge designs involve precast, poured in place, or steel decking. Any change in the design will require an approval through Vermont Historical Preservation for approval. The price range has been between \$325,000 and \$725,000, with a \$75,000 structures grant.



Melinda Edwards, 5, of Woodbury, participates in the firefighter challenge at Woodbury Firefighters Club Center and Tyler Dyer (right) assists. Several activities were held in conjunction of Old Town Day held August 24.



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Discussions on Road Improvements Surprise Select Board

by Will Walters

CABOT—The future of Saw Mill Road in lower Cabot was a road, and its value to the Cabot Creamery's developing interests in expanding operations came before the select board at its meeting, Aug. 20. Members of the CCA board were not aware former Zoning Administrator Karen Deasy, residents Jack Daniels and Jav Westerveld had been in discussion regarding the road itself. She asked the select board for truck access by the Creamery.

Member Ruth Goodrich said improving Saw Mill Road and Creamery's traffic could come up. It had come up at the Cabot Community Association (CCA) meeting the previous night about bringing a road down to it on Creamery property and improving the road itself. She asked resident Ed Haslett, who was at the meeting, to bring the board up to date on the discussions.

Haslett explained that Westerveld and there were discussions

with a committee that was working on it, which he said he did not believe was a select board committee. He stated there was also discussion with the fire department about putting a new road across the land purchased for a potential new fire station. He said, "The context was the CCA wanted to help initiate economic development."

Haslett questioned "Who's aware of it, what's driving it?" As far as he knew, he never heard of it if remembered if anyone had brought information in the past year to the board about road improvements. Ducharme responded,

Haslett asked Chuck Marian, chair of the planning committee, "Did Karen ever submit the planning committee about road improvements?" Marian responded, "As far as I know, I never heard of it before" but said it may have come up at a meeting he was not at. He added that he never saw it in the minutes of previous meetings.

See SURPRISE, 4



Catch Cowen of Green Timber Works in Glover (right) sets "the compass" for a large wooden frame, to set the pulpit while Chad McLean (left) assists in the construction of the timber frame pulpit last week, on Akers Field in Hardsburg. Above road is owned by the Center for Agricultural Economy.

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In Sports, 8

Hazen Girls
Retool Under Bessett



In Towns, 2

Greater Greensboro
Focuses on Priorities



In Arts, 6

Le Vent Du
Nord Review

