

THE Hardwick Gazette

INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

\$1.00

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

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

Volume 131 Number 6

For Whom the Bell Tolls

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – At the Feb. 6 Hardwick Select Board meeting, 2014 Hazen Union alum Victoria Foster presented the idea that the old Hardwick Academy (HA) bell should be moved to Hazen's campus, an idea backed by many Hazen students, some faculty, as well as some alums of both Hazen and HA. Foster later said the idea originally was Hazen student Finn Royner's.

HA closed in 1970 and subsequently was demolished. Only its bell survives, installed in Memorial Park since 1976. Some HA alums vehemently oppose any attempt to move the bell. HA Class of 1970s Orise Ainsworth spoke for that constituency. Despite being on town-owned property, the town does not own the bell. The HA Alumni Association was sold the bell in 1970 by the graduating class.

snow after the meeting confirmed her story. She said the bells proximity to Hazen meant students could revive old HA traditions of ringing the bell for students' successes without moving it. Ainsworth said the bell "has always been moving with Hazen, and I support Hazen, but if Hazen feels they need a bell to ring they can take the three-minute walk."

She said "four of the five boys who removed the bell from HA" want the bell to stay where it is, and there is "no reason for it to be moved." She added in her five years of dealing with HA class reunions in the 1970s, "anywhere from 1,000 to 1,500 alumni... all wanted the bell in the Memorial Park" and not taken up by Hazen. "I strongly feel if Hazen wants a bell, they can buy their own. My classmates are willing to donate to it," she continued. Another Class of 1970 alum offered a more direct, though unprintable, response to those who want to bring the bell to Hazen. One HA alum said that the bell's adjacency to



The 15 inches of new snow brought many beautiful scenes to the area such as this one on Highland Avenue in Hardwick.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Pink Carton Campaign Raises Violence Awareness

by Emmett Avery

HARDWICK – Black Dirt Farm has kicked off its 3rd Annual Pink Carton Campaign. Throughout February, the farm's eggs will be sold in pink cartons at many local stores to help raise awareness of sexual and domestic violence. Each carton contains a message: "Together we can prevent domestic and sexual assault."

"It's sort of like a message in the bottle campaign," said Black Dirt Farm's Business Manager Dani Hoffman. The farm ships 150 cartons of eggs per week. "So, Hoffman said it was a unique way for the farm to get a message out and to use its product to do good.

For every carton sold, 25 cents will be donated to the local Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence affiliate. In Hardwick and surrounding towns, this organization is AWARE.

AWARE is a nonprofit organization providing services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, as well as training and resources for related issues in the greater Hardwick area.

Black Dirt Farm's website acknowledges that the quantity of money raised through the 25-cent donation will be modest. But, the website says, "The awareness we can raise together will be substantial."

One of the founders of the See AWARENESS, 4



Black Dirt Farm has kicked off its 3rd Annual Pink Carton Campaign. Throughout February, the farm's eggs will be sold in pink cartons to help raise awareness of sexual and domestic violence. Proceeds will go to AWARE, the nonprofit organization providing services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, as well as training and resources for related issues in the greater Hardwick area.

courtesy photo



The old Hardwick Academy bell sits in the Memorial Park. A group of students and alumni wants to resurrect this bell, in all its glory, at the Hazen campus. Ainsworth says HA alumni strongly oppose the plan.

photo by Doug McClure



The Hardwick Academy in an undated photograph.

Hardwick Academy and Its Bell

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – According to Hardwick Historical Society President Elizabeth Dow, Hardwick Academy (HA) was a grade 1-12 school constructed in 1892. By the mid-20th century, the school had become crowded, and the school built the Hardwick Academy gymnasium, auditorium, and classroom (The "Gym"), in 1940.

With the onset of the baby boom in the late 1940s, more and more kids began filling up the school to the point it was bursting at the seams. When the gym burned in 1959, "it was replaced immediately by the Hardwick Gymnasium and Elementary School (1960)," Dow said, which is now, with some expansions, Hardwick Elementary School (HES). HES sat in front of HA. Grades 7-12 continued in HA, according to the Historical Society's Lorraine Hussey.

She said the increasing number of students and evolving safety standards made the three-story wooden HA unusable. From the late 1960s onward, HA sent students to neighboring towns to try to ease overcrowding. Then, in April 1968, with the writing on the wall, Hardwick residents approved a bond for the construction of Hazen. Hazen opened in 1970, and HA was demolished that same year.

How the HA bell came to be rescued from that fate is a subject of local lore. The bell sat atop the HA building. According to an August 30, 2006 Gazette article, "bits of the building were to be salvaged or sold. It was the understanding of the class of 1970... that the bell that hung in the tower atop the school ringing students into class and heralding wins and special events would be sold for salvage also.

On a trip to Lake George before graduation, the class of 1970 decided that just wasn't going to happen. A June 1980 article stated that "three-quarters of the 52 graduating students were

See ACADEMY, 3

A Dock, Brochures and School Choice Discussed at OSUED

by Emmett Avery

HARDWICK – With FY2021 budgets warned, the Orleans Southwest Union Elementary District (OSUED) board discussed other issues at its Feb. 5 meeting.

The meeting started with a request by a constituent from Woodbury, Michael Gray, chair of the Woodbury Select Board, presented a request for permission to construct a dock which would be an eye hoping to replace. Gray said that the Woodbury Select Board was about to approve the project when they realized that Woodbury does not own the property, the OSUED does.

The dock would allow children to take water or vegetation samples for study, according to Gray. The presenters said the dock would be fully grant-funded, costing the town and school district there was a \$462,560 surplus in

nothing. After some questions and discussion, the board passed a motion supporting the project, though oversight specifics will need to be worked out before final approval.

Katharine Ingram, OSUED

See CHOICE, 5

Proposed OSUED Budget Warned

by Emmett Avery

HARDWICK – The Orleans Southwest Union Elementary District (OSUED) has officially warned its proposed FY 2021 budget. The proposed budget amount is \$7,110,165, a 1.54 percent increase from FY2020. The increase represents less than the national rate of inflation. Spending per equalized pupil increases to \$18,276, or 0.83 percent over equalized pupil over last year's expenditures.

All local income sources are expected to fall in FY2021. However, there was a \$462,560 surplus in

board chair, reported from the recent Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) meeting. As part of this discussion, board member Rose Mody said that the OSSU board was "really concerned about the budget requirements."

Town Manager Shaun Fielder and the board commented on Governor Scott's proposed budget for the Lamoille Valley Ball Trail (LVRT). Fielder had updates on

Yellow Barn Project Receives \$900,000 Grant

HARDWICK – The Town of Hardwick has been awarded a \$900,000 implementation grant from the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) for the purpose of developing an \$8.6 million agribusiness accelerator and supports campus. Commissioner Josh Hanford of the Dept. of Housing and Community Development said that "the Community Development Block Grant awarded through VCDP will support the creation of new jobs in the growing agricultural and agribusiness economy of the greater

The Hardwick Yellow Barn Business Accelerator and Corporate Campus (Yellow Barn) will strengthen Vermont's farm and food-based economy by allowing established businesses to grow and expand with other entrepreneurs, develop new products, and improve export to external markets. The project will consist of a two-story, 40,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose processing facility and an adaptive reuse of the historic 3,920 sq. ft. yellow barn – already an active presence along the Route 15 gateway to downtown Hardwick. The federal public-private partnership is supported by a mix of state, federal, and private grants and loans, including a \$2.1 million loan from Vermont Economic Development Authority.

Two long-term anchor tenants are already committed to approximately 70% of facility space. Hill is going to establish a cheese aging facility in the accelerator building and Cabot Creamery will occupy all of the historic barn to create a retail presence. Together, these high-profile projects will create a unique cheese

destination in Hardwick, leading to the creation of nearly 90 new full-time equivalent jobs in the next three years, and a first impact of 105+ jobs in the first five years.

The balance of space in the accelerator building is available for small and emerging farm- and food-based businesses, as well as research and development endeavors.

The Town of Hardwick already owns the site, and the center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) will handle day-to-day management of the site. CAE operates the Vermont Food Venture Center, a business incubator campus (Yellow Barn) in Greensboro immediately adjacent to the site, making Yellow Barn a possible next step for incubator graduates. The Northeast Kingdom Development Corporation, a 501(c)(3) that focuses on economic development initiatives in the region, is acting as fiscal agent for the project and is borrowing construction funds from the Vermont Economic Development Authority and the Northeastern Vermont Development Association's revolving loan fund. Yellow Barn is scheduled to commence construction in the spring of 2020 and will be ready for full occupancy in 2021.

The Yellow Barn Project Team is a public-private partnership among the Town of Hardwick, the Center for an Agricultural Economy, the Vermont Economic Development Authority and the Northeastern Vermont Development Association. Northeastern Vermont Development Corporation and Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Northern Forest Center, Vermont Economic Development Authority, and local business leaders.

Select Board Works Through Busy Agenda

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – At the Feb. 6 Select Board Meeting, the board heard from the audience on the proposed economic development coordinator position and fielded questions about the Yellow Barn project. Expected discussion included the ATYU's request for access to a right-of-way was postponed due to the receipt of new information about the Electric Department's (HED) requirements.

Town Manager Shaun Fielder and the board commented on Governor Scott's proposed budget for the Lamoille Valley Ball Trail (LVRT). Fielder had updates on

winter operations and the board also received a brief update on the current fiscal year's budget.

Resident John Manville had heard from the audience on the proposed economic development coordinator position and fielded questions about the Yellow Barn project. Expected discussion included the ATYU's request for access to a right-of-way was postponed due to the receipt of new information about the Electric Department's (HED) requirements.

Town Manager Shaun Fielder and the board commented on Governor Scott's proposed budget for the Lamoille Valley Ball Trail (LVRT). Fielder had updates on

Resident Orise Ainsworth questioned about the ownership of the Yellow Barn. In answer to Ainsworth's question, Renick said "part of the stipulation for funders" required the town to own the property, as some of the backing is "essentially a lien on

See BUSY, 5

Craftsbury School District Budget Warned

by Emmett Avery

CRAFTSBURY – The voters of Craftsbury have been officially warned to meet and act on the proposed Craftsbury School District budget for Fiscal Year 2021. The proposed budget totals \$4,014,055, up from last year's budget by \$63,606, an increase of 1.6%. This increase is lower than the rate of inflation in the US.

State revenue increases by \$275,900 in the proposed FY2021 budget, while all other revenue streams are expected to decline.

On the other hand, instruction expenditures are projected to increase by a \$12,842 increase in state revenue. General Ed sees a \$2,238 increase and Co-Curricular Ed Instruction sees a \$2,305 decrease. Total In-

struction costs are proposed to be \$1,932,558 in FY2021, up by \$12,824.

The Student/Instructor Support category sees an overall decrease, primarily driven by an \$83,577 decrease in Health Services expenditures. This apparent decrease is actually an artifact of restructuring. The Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union's Chief Financial Officer John Smith said that the decrease is due to a change in the school nursing model. In the nursing model, Smith said its own nursing program, but in the new model, Smith said its own nursing staff that can move between all three districts campus health-care programs. Smith said the new model will reduce the number and library media are up by \$17,213 and \$2,994, respectively. See CRAFTSBURY, 3

hardwickgazette.com

In Sports, 8

TWINFIELD TROJANS WIN WILLEY TOURNEY

In Towns, 2

LIBRARY EXPANSION COST COULD DOUBLE



In Meetings, 6

MAL MAZ COMING TO HIGHLAND CENTER