THE Hardwick Gazette

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Wednesday, May 21, 2025 *hardwickgazette.org* **Volume 136 Number 21**

Fire Ignited by Crashed Car Destroys Iconic Red Barn

by Paul Fixx

WOLCOTT – The iconic red barn, close to Rte. 15, not far to the west of Wolcott village, caught fire and burned to the ground after it was hit by a small silver car whose engine caught fire, igniting the barn, according to Brian Fortmann.

Fortmann was driving back to Hardwick after an eventful day in Williston, when a very small fire caught his eye as he drove by, he said. It took him a few seconds to realize it was not normal.

He turned around and got back to the site of the fire, passing it and turning around to face Hardwick. It was then he realized a car had hit the western side of a barn and the engine compartment was on fire, he said.

A pickup truck and a car had also stopped by then. A woman near her car told him, "there's a guy in the car," he said. The car was partway into the barn and tilting into a level lower than the road. A man from the truck, who Fortmann later learned was named Nick and from Greensboro Bend, had reacted decisively to smash the rear window of the small silver car with a cinder block, said Fortmann.

NIck had already reached in, trying to help extract the driver, who Fortmann said "was pretty loud." The driver had been tossed to the vehicle's passenger side and wasn't very mobile, but Fortmann and Nick were finally able to reach him and drag him out. Fortmann said he was worried the car might tip into the barn if they climbed in too far to get the driver out.

The fire was still contained in the engine compartment then so they set down the driver who said he couldn't move his legs.

"The fire began to catch on the barn and it was getting warmer," said Fortmann, who noted a steep ledge to the right of the barn, so they moved the driver away "three or four times at 10 or so feet each time," until they'd dragged him across the road. He said, "the driver was situationally confused," and his loud voice

See FIRE, 6



A barn close to the road West of Wolcott, at 2214 Vt. Rte. 15, is fully engulfed in fire after it was hit by a car and ignited by an engine fire. The barn collapsed after fire departments arrived, but before the fire was contained.

photo by Brian Fortmann

Funding Secured for Pedestrian Bridge

by Raymonda Parchment

HARDWICK – The May 15 regular select board meeting had a mixed agenda that looked at final preparations to move forward with the pedestrian bridge project, emergency response preparations and the board approving several tobacco and liquor licenses.

The meeting began with Town Manager David Upson's report. "There's a lot going on in town, all good," began Upson. The town is currently working to get the final documents necessary to begin work on the pedestrian bridge project. Upson shared that the project will not

See FUNDING, 6



U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (center), in a blue jacket, dances with some of the more than 300 people who came to the spring dance he held in the Hazen Union Gymnasium, Saturday.

social media photo



Structures at 170 School Street and on Molleur Drive in East Hardwick that burned last year are being cleared from the site where Hardwick's Development Review Board approved a change of use, allowing development of pads for six mobile homes to be built, May 13. An earlier permit also allows construction of an additional storage structure near the one currently on the property.

photo by Raymonda Parchment

DRB Approves Mobile Home Park Expansion

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – The Development Review Board (DRB) cleared the way for two projects to proceed in decisions released Tuesday, May 13, after hearings held Wednesday, May 7.

The first decision permits an East Hardwick project to construct six additional mobile home pads to replace housing in structures that were damaged by fire in December last year, on the Michaud property between School

See EXPANSION, 7

Greensboro Grapples with Vote Against Housing Project

by K. Fiegenbaum, VTDigger

GREENSBORO — Two days before Greensboro voted on a contentious proposal to redevelop the town hall into affordable housing, longtime resident and brand-new select board member Judy Carpenter wrote a post on Front Porch Forum. "Residents and friends of Greensboro, the big decision is coming," she said. "No, I don't mean Tuesday's vote on the future of the Town Hall. I mean what we all do as community members after that vote."

The housing project saw more than a year of passionate debate, spanning meetings, some organized by the town and others organized by community members themselves, a petition, yard signs, letters, a community website, numerous information sheets and a myriad of internet postings.

In the end, residents delivered a clear message, voting 227 to 147 against signing a purchase and sale agreement with nonprofit Northeast Kingdom housing agency Rural Edge. However, the small community, which has the highest rate of second home ownership in the state, is left with a dire shortage of housing as well as a divided community.

"Greensboro has survived contentious

See HOUSING, 8



The Hardwick Gazette is free to read, not free to create.

The Gazette brought you updates during and after the July 10 flooding, just as we did during the July 10, 2023, floods and for 135 years before that.

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May 21 - May 27

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Stubb's BBQ Sauce or Marinade $3.79 11-18 oz.
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Hershey's 6 Pk. Milk Choc. Bar $5.49 9.3 oz.
Nabisco Graham Crackers $3.49 14.4 oz.
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Cabot Whipped Cream 2/$5 7 oz.
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Weather Watch



The crabapple tree blooms, the evening of May 18. to the left of a burned out and flood damaged Brush Street home, pieces of which have fallen into the Lamoille River. *photo by Paul Fixx*

Cool, Wet Weather Persists One More Week

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – The weather pattern shifted significantly over the last week with highs in the 80s dipping into the mid-50s to low-60s by the conclusion of the weekend. This is thanks in part to a low-pressure system that arrived Friday and Saturday, bringing several rounds of heavy rain and thunderstorms to parts of Vermont. Most of that activity was seen during the afternoon hours on Friday and Saturday, with heavier pockets of rain amounting to nearly four inches in parts of western Lamoille and western Washington counties. Flash flooding occurred in this region, along with parts of southern Vermont.

We largely avoided that catastrophe with this round of precipitation. However, some areas in our region reported pea- to moth-ball-sized hail, including Wolcott and Hardwick. Our total rainfall for the week was more on the order of three quarters of an inch to an inch, although some parts of north Greensboro and Plainfield were closer to two inches.

The current weather pattern shows a trough of low pressure lingering over the region from this weekend's weather event, with mostly cloudy conditions and cooler temperatures remaining. Highs this time of year should be in the lower 70s with lows in the mid-40s. We are continuing to see highs in the mid-50s with lows just slightly below normal.

Brief ridging will occur Wednesday, which will bring some breaks to the clouds and slightly warmer temperatures than we've seen in the last 72 hours. This will be short lived as a low-pressure system maturing over the upper Mississippi River Valley begins to lift north and translate its energy into the Great Lakes. A second low pressure system will develop off the mid-Atlantic coast by Thursday evening, with both features advancing slowly north. At the mid-levels of the atmosphere, cold air will get pulled into the northern regions of Vermont and New Hampshire, with areas above 2,000 feet potentially seeing some snow showers Thursday night and again potentially Friday night, with little in the way of accumulation.

Steady rainfall on the order of one inch will continue from Thursday night into the day Saturday for most, with the storm system moving into the Canadian Maritimes by Sunday. A lingering trough will also bring some scattered showers for Sunday although that will be mixed in with periods of clearing. Temperatures will largely remain below normal through the forecast period, although we will slowly inch closer to 60° for a high by the time we get to the end of the weekend. Here are the forecast details:

Wednesday: Partly sunny. High 56. Low 40. Light wind.

Thursday: Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers in the afternoon, then steady rain overnight. Snow showers possibly mixed in at elevations above 2,000 feet. High: 55. Low: 38. Northeast wind 5 to 10 mph, with gusts to 20 mph.

Friday: Rain. Snow showers possible mixed in at elevations above 2,000 feet. High: 54. Low: 39. Northwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday: Rain. High: 52. Low: 40. Northwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers. High: 58. Low: 44. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

Police Report

Hardwick Police

Media Log

Chief Henry advises that increased traffic stops on Wolcott Street are due to citizen complaints arising from observing a significant number of vehicles turning right from South Main Street onto Wolcott Street fail to stop before making the turn.

May 11: Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St./Cottage St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Cottage St./Lower Cherry St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 14/Vt. Rte. 15; DLS, Hillside Ave.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Wolcott St.; Citizen Dispute, Houston Hill Road; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; DUI, Wolcott St.

May 12: Alarm, Blizzard Way; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Suspicious Event, Richardson Road; Wanted Person, Mill St.

May 13: Citizen Dispute, Hideaway St.; Fire Alarm, W. Church St.; Vandalism, Richardson Road; Accident – Property Damage Only, Craftsbury Road.

May 14: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Assist – Public, Slapp Hill; Assist – Public, High St.; Alarm, Depot St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Rte. 15; Welfare Check, Spring St.; Medical, Maple St.; Noise Disturbance, Elm St.

May 15: Parking Problem, S. Main St./Wolcott St.; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Trespassing, Dutton Road; Suspicious Event, Church St.; Accident – Property Damage Only, Slapp Hill; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Drive; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St./Cottage St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; 911 Hangup, Rail Trail; Assist – Agency, Dale St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St./Elm St.

May 16: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Assist – Other, Wolcott St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Threats/Harassment, Wolcott St.; Traffic Hazard, Craftsbury Road; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St./Cottage St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Assist – Agency, Skunk Hollow Road; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Alarm, Hopkins Hill Road; Suspicious Event, Pine Drive.

May 17: Assist – Agency, Vt. Rte. 15; Suspicious Event, Vt. Rte. 15 W; Medical, Maple St.; Information, Vt. Rte. 15 W; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, N. Main St.

May 18: Accident – Injury to Person(s), E. Church St.; Accident – Injury to Person(s), Vt. Rte. 15 E; Assist – Agency, Vt. Rte. 15; Fire Alarm, Maple St.; Citizen Dispute, S. Main St./Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15.

Hardwick Police

DUI, Single Vehicle Crash

On May 11 at 11:08 p.m., the Hardwick Police stopped a vehicle on Wolcott Street near Granite Street for a stop sign violation. Investigation revealed the operator, identified as Kathryn Hansis, of Cabot, was under the influence of alcohol. Hansis was processed for DUI and issued a citation to appear in the Superior Court of Vermont, Criminal Division, Caledonia Unit, on June 2 to be arraigned for DUI.

On May 13, at 7:06 p.m., Hardwick Police responded to Craftsbury Road in Hardwick for a report of a single vehicle crash. The operator, Roscoe Allen, of Craftsbury, was operating a Chevrolet Silverado. Allen advised he swerved to miss a deer that was in his lane of travel. Allen was taken to Copley Hospital for injuries.

On May 15, at approximately 12:55 p.m., the Hardwick Police responded to Church Street near the Hardwick Town House for a welfare check on a male who may have been unconscious. The male was okay and identified as Michael Ewen. Ewen was intoxicated and has pretrial conditions of release specifying he does not buy, possess or consume alcoholic beverages. Ewen was issued a citation to appear at the Superior Court of Vermont, Caledonia unit, Monday, May 19 to be arraigned on the charge.

On March 30, Breanna Young reported that she was sexually assaulted in her Hardwick apartment. The investigation revealed that Young was not sexually assaulted as she initially alleged. Young was issued a citation to appear in Caledonia Superior Court, Criminal Division, on June 2, to answer to the charge of False Information to Police Officers.

The Hardwick Police Report is based on information provided by the police and is not a comprehensive list of police activity. Individuals named in the police report are presumed to be innocent until they plead or are found guilty in court.



Smoke from a grass fire rises from the scene where a tree took down power lines, starting the fire on Rte. 14, north of Hardwick, Friday. courtesy photo

Hardwick Fire Department

Grass Fire

On May 16, at 4:25 p.m., the Hardwick Fire Department was toned to 1948 Vt. Rte. 14 in Hardwick for a tree that had taken down the power lines and had started a small grass fire. Engine 2 and Tanker 1 responded. The road was down to one lane for around an hour and half while repairs were completed.

Lamoille County Sheriff

Drug and Motor Vehicle Violations

WOLCOTT – On April 11, at 11:58 p.m., a deputy conducted a traffic stop in Wolcott which led to the arrest of two occupants for drug and motor vehicle violations. They were cited to appear in court on May 21 at 12:30 p.m. for Ignition interlock restricted driver's license or certificate and Driving with a Criminally Suspended License.

WOLCOTT – On May 17 at 6:10 a.m., Vt. Rte. 15 in Wolcott was back open.

Road Closure: Vt. Rte. 15 between North Wolcott Road and Elmore Pond Road in Wolcott was closed due to a structure fire. Motorists were to avoid the area or detour around by using North Wolcott Road to Gulf Road or Elmore Pond Road.

AWARE Report

HARDWICK – Twelve people used AWARE services between May 11 and May 18. The AWARE 24-hour hotline is 802-472-6463.

A non-profit established in 1984, AWARE serves Hardwick and the greater Hardwick area in preventing and healing the trauma of domestic and sexual violence. AWARE provides help during immediate crises, as well as advocating for on-going emotional and legal support for people of all ages and gender.

For more information about AWARE, including educational resources, programming and how to get involved as a volunteer visit awarevt.org.



Police Report



A fire burns ahead creating a glow in the sky, on Vt. Rte. 15 west of Wolcott, in this view through a vehicle window, early Saturday morning, May 17.
social media photo

Hardwick Fire Department

Mutual Aid in Wolcott

HARDWICK – On May 17 at 12:40 a.m., the Hardwick Fire Department was toned mutual aid to 2822 Vt. Rte. 15 in Wolcott for a vehicle into a barn, both on fire. Engine 1 and the tanker responded. Hardwick fire members were on scene for roughly seven hours before returning to quarters.



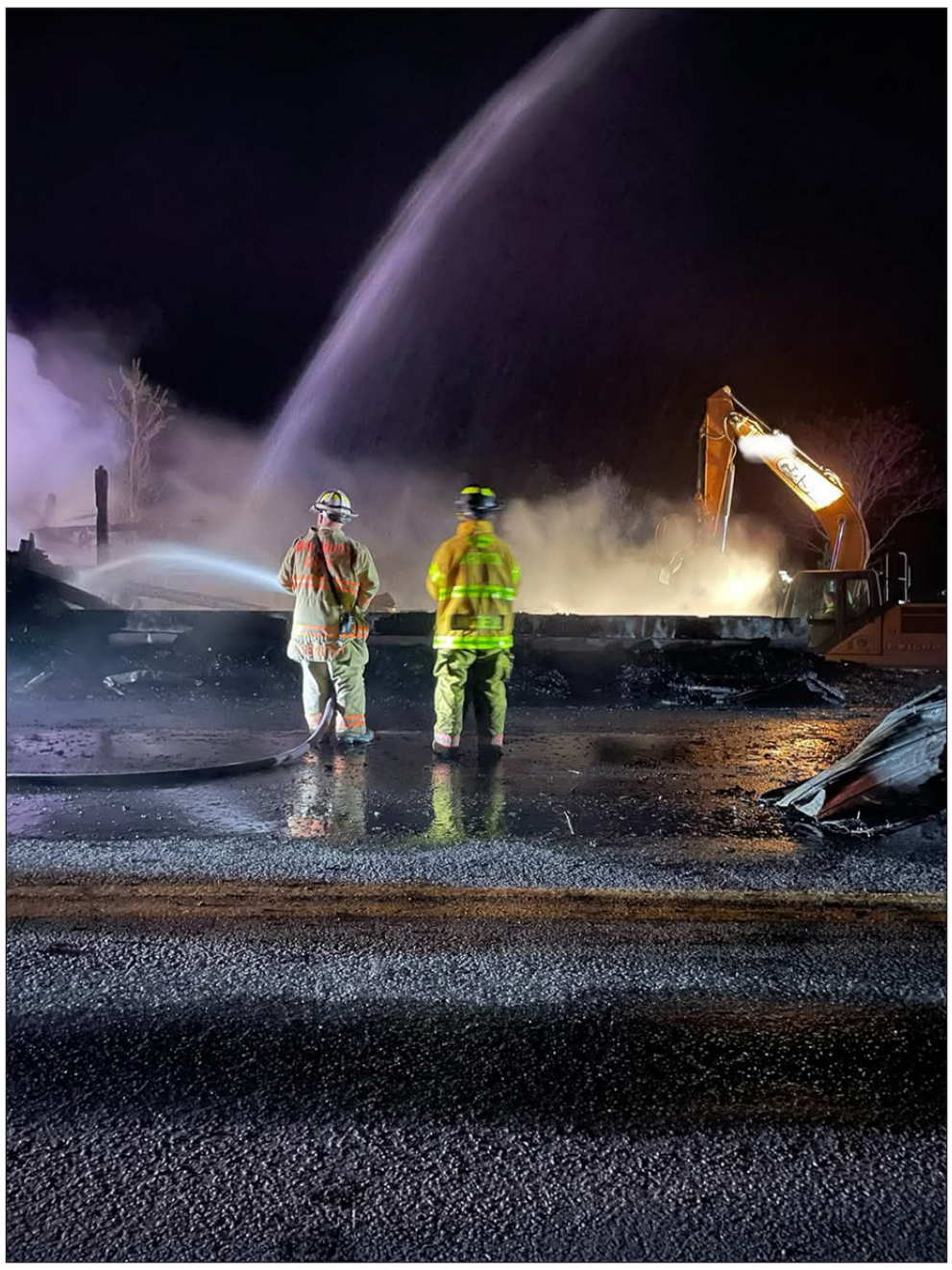
An early morning fire, Saturday, May 17, at 2214 Vt. Rte. 15, here looking west, drew fire, police and rescue service personnel from many area agencies who responded to the mutual aid call that went out at 12:40 a.m., according to the Hardwick Fire Department. *social media photo*

Wolcott Fire Department

Fully Involved Barn Fire

WOLCOTT – Wolcott Fire was toned to a fully involved barn fire at 2214 Vt. Route 15 in Wolcott at 12:38 a.m., May 17.

Other departments assisting in the incident included Elmore Fire, Morrisville Fire, Hardwick Fire, Hyde Park Fire, Greensboro Fire, Woodbury Fire, Hardwick Rescue, NEMS Ambulance, Morristown Ambulance, Lamoille Sheriff and Wolcott Auxiliary. JJ's Country Store opened the store in the middle of the night, Gravel Construction brought an excavator to assist in finding hotspots and Polarbear Towing assisted.



A Gravel Construction excavator works to find hotspots in the burned wreckage of the barn at 2822 Vt. Rte. 15, not far to the west of Wolcott, while firefighters train a hose on remaining embers and another hose is aimed from a distance away. *social media photo*

Greensboro Fire Department

Tanker Requested

GREENSBORO – On May 17 at 12:38 a.m., Greensboro's tanker was requested by Wolcott Fire Department to 2822 Route 15 for a vehicle crash into a barn resulting in a fire. The tanker provided water supply for two hours before returning to the station. The barn was heavily damaged by fire. Crews were back in the station at approximately 2 a.m.

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Aftermath of Wolcott Fire



The Sunday morning scene of an early Saturday morning truck crash, May 17, that started a fire and burned down a barn on Rte. 15 West of Wolcott village shows only the charred remains of the collapsed barn owned by Leslie Jean Ballentyne.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Woodbury Fire Department
One Car Crash

WOODBURY – On May 17, at 11:12 p.m., Woodbury Fire, East Montpelier fire and ambulance were called to a one car crash near 726 Sand Hill road in Calais. Four people were in the vehicle.

Hardwick Fire Department
Calls

On May 19, the Hardwick Fire Department had call No. 50. The breakdown for calls 26 through 50 includes 1 vehicle fire, 5 alarms, 2 brush fires, 6 motor vehicle accidents, 1 dumpster fire, 2 mutual aids, 1 structure fire, 1 power line fire-down, 1 medical assist and 2 CO2 alarm activations.



A winch was used to stabilize a vehicle that struck a tree in East Hardwick.

social media photo

Greensboro Fire Department
Car Hits Tree

On May 18, at 8:15 a.m., the Greensboro Fire Department was requested to assist Hardwick Fire Department with a one car accident on E. Church Street, East Hardwick. They experienced two calls at the same time and requested Greensboro for assistance with the second call. The vehicle struck a tree and had severe front end damage.

A winch line from the Hardwick's rescue truck was used to stabilize the vehicle while crews worked to extricate the driver. The driver was stabilized on scene and transported to the hospital by Hardwick Emergency Rescue Squad. Crews were back in station at 9:20 a.m.



The rear of the fallen red barn close to Vt. Rte. 15 west of Wolcott continues to burn, early Saturday morning. The Wolcott Fire Department praised Stephanie and Lisa with J.J.s Country Store "for coming in to open the store in the middle of the night," providing food and drinks for the fire, police and rescue personnel on hand from 11 area departments. *social media photo*

Fire

Continued From Page One

suggested to Fortmann he might be drunk.

At that point the woman said the police were on their way. They moved their vehicles because, "The whole barn was engulfed and it was super hot," said Fortmann.

He said, five or ten minutes later an ambulance arrived and the rescue staff loaded the driver of the crashed car into it. After some work to stabilize the driver, It headed west on Vt. Rte. 15.

Finally the fire department showed up, but the barn pretty quickly collapsed, before they had the fire contained, said Fortmann.

Fortmann said he reached home in Hardwick about 2 a.m., traveling through Elmore because the road was closed past the fire.

Wolcott Fire Department on social media, reported receiving a call at 12:38 a.m., Saturday, for a "fully involved barn fire" at 2214 Vt. Rte. 15, They said mutual aid members from 11 agencies assisted during the incident. Those agencies included the Elmore, Morrisville, Hardwick, Hyde Park, Greensboro and Woodbury Fire Departments.

Greensboro Fire Department reported its tanker "provided water supply for two hours before returning to the station. . . Crews were back in the station at approximately 2 a.m."

Hardwick Fire Department reported on social media "Engine 1 and the tanker responded. Hardwick fire members were on scene for roughly seven hours before returning to quarters."

Also on social media, The Lamoille County Sheriff's Department reported Vt. Rte. 15 between North Wolcott Road and Elmore Pond Road in Wolcott was closed due to a structure fire. Motorists were to avoid the area or detour around by using North Wolcott Road to Gulf Road or Elmore Pond Road. Later it reported Vt. Rte. 15 in Wolcott was back open at 6:10 a.m.

Wolcott's Fire Department said, Hardwick Rescue, NEMS Ambulance and Morristown Ambulance responded, as did the Lamoille Sheriff and Wolcott Auxiliary.

J.J.s Country Store was opened in the middle of the night by "Stephanie and Lisa," reported the Wolcott Fire Department. Gravel Construction provided an excavator to assist in finding hot spots and Morrisville's Polar Bear Towing assisted as well, they said.

The fire came at the end of a day that included Fortmann's graduation from VTSU-Willston where he had received a B.A. in Pilot Tech and Flight Tech earlier that day, he said. He'd also passed his FAA pilot's exam and moved out of where he'd been living to attend school that same day. To top that off, he said he planned to leave Monday, May 19, for a 10-day educational visit to China, where he'll be studying architectural history.



A truck parked near a red barn close to Vt. Rte. 15, west of Wolcott village, is surrounded by firefighter's foam behind firefighters who continue to attack fires in the remains of the barn. *social media photo*



Firefighters train a hose on the hotspots as steam rises from the remains of a barn on Vt. Rte. 15, early Saturday morning. Fire continues to burn behind a truck that appears to have been parked near the barn when the fire began. *social media photo*

Funding

Continued From Page One

fall under the Buy America, Build America requirements, being that the funds were obligated prior to the law's passing.

The town has received quotes for Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) trailhead construction, but they are waiting for a few more.

Upson shared they have been discussing options for moving fire station with FEMA, and met with an engineer last week on the sewer upgrade in Hideaway Acres. Upson said they also discussed the wastewater upgrade, and it appears USDA will be able to fund a substantial portion of the town's wastewater plant. FEMA has until July 14 to present the town an offer.

Chair Eric Remick acknowledged the current climate for grants may impact some projects future decision. The Rescue Squad has yet to decide whether they want to purchase the property where they hope to construct a new facility near the town garage, or lease it from the town. Upson said next steps will be taken after receiving their conceptual plans. Upson said public messaging and public engagement will be critical in the coming months. After several exchanges, board members agreed to add an additional agenda item for next month to continue discussions.

Road Foreman Tom Fadden said grading-wise, the Mackville and Hopkins Hill area is completed, as are Hardwick Farms and Porter Brook. They've been working in their own pit, to prepare for the arrival of the crusher, he said. They will start with the stone, then move onto gravel before making some mud season material.

Fadden said a broken water main has since been repaired on Main Street. Water access was only shut off for fifteen minutes, making it a quick repair job.

Next week, banners and flags will be hung and downtown painting will begin. Fadden said they faced some delays on painting the crosswalks due to weather. One crosswalk, located near the village parking lot remains. East Hardwick crosswalks will also be painted using the same color scheme, he said.

Fadden said the sweeper has been through, but the crew will do some regular clean-up in the meantime if necessary.

The board discussed flood resiliency and preparation with Helen Beatty, representing Hardwick's Neighbor to Neighbor (NtN) organization. NtN has helped supply and shelter impacted community members. Upson said the town has limited shelter supplies, donated from St. Johnsbury after the 2024 flood. "As we move forward with disaster response and recovery, we are seeing that there's less and less disaster relief at higher levels of government. So we're going to have to be able to do this stuff on our own," he said.

Upson requested a designated storage unit for emergency supplies, a 20-foot cargo box that would be located in the parking lot of the public safety building. Remick suggested a mobile storage solution, to which Upson agreed. After some discussion the board approved the allocation of $20,000 to be used for emergency response equipment, utilizing a portion of the $75,000 granted to the town from the governor's office.

Hardwick Electric Department manager Sarah Braese was present to provide some updates to the board. She said five months in, things are extremely busy and there is a lot of activity. HED has filed their integrated resource plant, which is a long-term planning document that encompasses project improvement and system improvement analysis. Braese said this was somewhat of a challenge, because they had just begun their power system engineering study.

The department expects to receive a comprehensive report in November that will help identify and prioritize system improvement projects.

Braese said the 13.24% rate increase, filed in April, was largely due to increased costs, in particular, power supply and transmission costs. Labor and personnel costs have increased, as well as healthcare across the board.

In the meantime, progress continues on the Wolcott Hydro Dam feasibility study. Braese said ideally once the study is complete, they will know the best path forward for future operations and what makes economic sense. Construction and design will follow.

The board moved on to approve tobacco and liquor licenses, for the Kwik Stop and Buffalo Mountain Co-Op. The approval passed unanimously. The board then approved renewal of the operating license for Gates Salvage Yard, necessary every five years.

In other business, the board discussed selecting an engineering firm for the design and engineering work for Fisher Folly bridge, and funding for repairing damaged lift stations at the sewage treatment plant.

The board signed the FY26 letter of intent for the municipal roads grant and aid program.

Remick was appointed as town health officer, a state requirement.

The June 19 meeting was rescheduled for June 26, as Juneteenth is a federal holiday.

The board continued to discuss the job description for a public works director, agreeing to authorize the town to post the offer and organize the hiring.

Expansion

Continued From Page One

street and Vt. Rte.16. It also allows a building for rental storage units that was previously permitted beside the current storage structure on the property

The second decision approved a Conditional Use and Floodplain Review request by the Civic Standard for repair work on the building's foundation, painting the exterior and a new roof.

Many East Hardwick residents and property owners attended the May 7 hearing to comment on the Michaud's application. Jeremy Michaud described the plan as being a way to replace the seven apartments that housed 20 people before they were displaced by last year's fire. Adding six additional mobile homes to the existing three will replace most of the lost housing, while keeping costs low because new construction is now so expensive. The application shows the cost of the planned project to be $75,000.

The Michaud's plan is to work with Fecteau Homes, who will sell new or used mobile homes to pre-qualified buyers, which will be placed on the pads they plan to construct..

The Michaud's have been working with displaced renters and will offer them the first chance to lease the new sites, said Jeremy..

The Michaud's already have the permit necessary to demolish and remove debris from the fire damaged structure, which cannot be repaired. That work could begin shortly after a permit is received, he said.

Michaud testified that they will install a buffer strip along Vt. Rte. 16 and on the School Street side of the property, being careful not to impact the VAST trail next to Route 16 and a water main next to School Street.

The Michaud's will provide all necessary site maintenance and remove trash and anything else necessary, and plow as needed. Michaud said Molleur Drive will not extend to School Street, which would create a through road with traffic he wanted to avoid having through the property.

The East Hardwick Fire District EHFD) provides water and an onsite wastewater system would be installed for the six new mobile homes and have additional capacity to handle the three existing homes. Dave Gross said the EHFD had met to approve the additional water allocation for the project and would soon be missing a letter to that effect.

The Michauds have been actively assisting these renters and will offer the impacted tenants the initial opportunity to purchase the



The rear of the Civic Standard's building on Main Street in Hardwick shows the need for paint and work on the foundation where it has been undercut on the right by the last several year's flooding. The Development Review Board has approved permitting required for a building in the Lamoille River Floodway.
photo by Paul Fixx

structures and/or to be on these locations.

A grant is in process to assist with the infrastructure component, said Michaud.

Dave Gross testified as a director of the East Hardwick Fire District (EHFD) that the board had a special meeting and approved the allocation. An allocation letter will be forthcoming.

Comments from those attending the hearing were primarily about upkeep of the property, specifics of the layout and design of the six new mobile home pads and concerns about activities of renters at the storage building from neighboring property owner Warren Hill. There was also concern about blocking the view as required by Hardwick's zoning, while not blocking the view of those exiting Molleur Drive onto Vt. Rte. 16, where the speed limit is 55 mph. Some discussion occurred related to that, about reducing that speed limit, and previous unsuccessful attempts to do so by East Hardwick village residents.

DRB Chair John Mandeville asked those attending if all their questions and concerns had been addressed before going through a checklist and ending that hearing, May 7.

The DRB approved the project, May 13 with four members voting on favor and one abstaining. Conditions accompanying approval of the application included that the "necessary state and federal permits must be in place before development can commence," and the work will meet requirements of the Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws. In addition, all water and wastewater permits will need to be approved prior to the start of any new construction .

The Michaud's are now required to "maintain all [mobile home] park buildings, roads, parking areas, paths, utilities, infrastructure, landscaping, open space and common areas in good condition, and shall provide for the regular collection and removal of recyclables, waste and garbage" and "remove snow from all park roads and service areas."

Each mobile home owner must apply for their own zoning permit before constructing a deck or other accessory structure and the future replacement of permitted mobile homes within park require a zoning permit.

The Michaud's must submit a landscape plan for approval by the town prior to installation of new mobile homes in the park.

Hill's concern was addressed by the requirement that "A mutually acceptable screen will be installed between the existing storage unit and the Hill property prior to the installation of the second storage unit."

Demolition of the damaged structures was observed to be underway, Monday and Tuesday this week.

The Conditional Use and Floodplain Review request by the Civic Standard for a substantial Improvement of the existing Historic non-conforming structure in the Central Business zoning district was considered next. The planned work was said to "be substantial Improvement in the Floodway in the Flood Hazard Area Overlay."

The Civic Standard's Rose Friedman discussed the planned work, saying the foundation is undermined from flooding and the insurance company is requiring exterior painting and a new roof roof for the organization to continue insuring the building.

No special conditions were required and the proposal was approve on a 5 to 0 vote.

In Vermont, a Development Review Board (DRB) hearing is necessary for specific development applications, including those involving conditional use, variances, site plan review and appeals from zoning administrator decisions. Essentially, any development proposal that deviates from standard zoning regulations or requires a specific review process by the DRB necessitates a public hearing.

There is a vacancy on the Development Review Board for which the Hardwick Select Board is accepting letters of interest

The DRB is a quasi-judicial board, which currently meets on an as-needed basis on the first and third Wednesday night of each month. Candidates are deemed qualified by being a Hardwick resident and by possessing a willingness to learn and to remain impartial in the interpretation and application of the Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws.

Interested parties may send a letter or email to the Hardwick Town Manager, David Upson, at david.upson@hardwickvt.gov or mail to P.O. Box 523, Hardwick 05843. Questions may be directed to Kristen Leahy, Zoning Administrator, at zoning.administrator@hardwickvt.gov or by calling (802) 472-1686.



Many people with concerns about the proposed additions to an East Hardwick mobile home park between School Street and Vte. Rte. 16 were at the May 7 Development Review Board hearing to comment on Jeremy and Leslie Micahud's request for a change-of-use allowing the project to proceed. It was approved May 13,
photo by Paul Fixx

Housing

Continued From Page One

changes in the past. Can we do it again?" Carpenter wrote. "No matter what the outcome of this vote is, we have many community projects in need of our efforts. Let's get back to work."

The seeds of the town hall redevelopment project were planted around 2019, when both the town plan and a housing needs assessment detailed Greensboro's "great need" for moderately-priced housing, especially for local employees. According to town documents, the planning commission's housing committee began a relationship with Rural Edge around that time to develop housing, but had trouble finding a feasible site.

In 2022, local non-profit WonderArts decided not to pursue renovating the town hall, a former high school, due to the expense. Town officials turned to the possibility of redeveloping their town hall into rental housing.

Rural Edge is proposing to build 20 apartment units at the Greensboro town hall. The units would be spread between the upper floors of the current building and an addition attached to the back of the building.

Had the plan been approved, Rural Edge would have bought the building from the town for $500,000 and created between 16 and 20 affordable one- to three-bedroom apartments split between the current town hall and an addition at the back of the structure. The current town offices would have been rented back to the town at operating cost and the Giving Closet, a free community donation space, would have been maintained in perpetuity in approximately half the space.

Shattuck said the town hall redevelopment would have been a really impactful project.

"One thing that struck me is just the amount of need in Greensboro for housing and people's willingness to share their personal stories of really being unhoused and the struggles that caused," he said. "And these are folks who work in the businesses that are so imperative to Greensboro being Greensboro."

Shattuck expressed regret that the need won't be addressed with a project that would have added a significant number of housing units.

"It's sad and frustrating, but you don't want to force something when it isn't necessarily the right time and place," Shattuck said. "Hopefully some of these folks who voiced their concerns, you know, it will mobilize them to continue to work for the change they want to see in their community."

Kent Hansen, current chair of the Greensboro planning commission and a member of the housing subcommittee back when things began in 2019, said last week he was surprised by the outcome of the vote.

"I thought that the vote would be closer," he said. "But you never know until you have an election."

According to Hansen, there were several distinct complaints about the project. One was the scale: A number of people would have felt more comfortable with 8 or 10 units. Another group, he said, thought the town should be holding on to the building and fixing it up for community use.

And a third group, he said, was upset with the process, feeling like the select board didn't build up community consensus before signing the initial option agreement with Rural Edge in May 2023.

David Kelley, a select board member at that time, disagreed with that characterization, stating in an email that there were "plenty of meetings and opportunities to learn" about the project before the option agreement was signed. However, he pointed to another complaint: that the concept of affordable housing "is not fully embraced by significant and influential segments of many communities."

One other struggle the select board faced? Rampant misinformation.

On Wednesday night, at the first select board meeting since the vote, Ellen Celnik, a current select board member and an original member of the housing subcommittee, spoke up. She was happy there was a vote and happy the town made a decision, she said.

"The one thing that I am truly saddened by is an anonymous mailer that was sent to voters that had an enormous amount of misinformation," Celnik said. "A part of me, who has worked on this since 2019, really was disappointed with the level of divisiveness that was put out there that was coming from other sources . . . I hate seeing a small town being hoodwinked by a very small group of people."

At the meeting, the board noted a need to think long-term about the town hall, what it's used for, and where the money is going to come from to make it useful; the building needs major repairs and the third floor is currently not usable.

Looking ahead, Hansen said the planning commission has received a $25,000 municipal planning grant from the state, which they applied for before the vote. The grant aims to help Greensboro build consensus on where they want to grow geographically and what types of housing structures townspeople support.



The Greensboro town offices, seen on Monday, July 8, 2024. photo by Kristen Fountain, VTDigger

The process is slated to include major public outreach and meetings, an expansion of a survey and several community conversations the commission conducted this past winter. Hansen expects the work to be completed around September.

"Hopefully people can pull together," he said.

In the meantime, other smaller housing projects and initiatives are in the works. For one, Shattuck said the very same morning he heard about the results of the vote, he signed a check to fund an accessory dwelling unit in Greensboro. Local businesses have encouraged such units, and a panel discussion about them held last fall in neighboring Craftsbury is thought to have generated at least six such dwellings.

The Greensboro Initiative, associated with Central Vermont Habitat for Humanity and whose steering committee is chaired by Hansen, is in the process of constructing a new duplex in Greensboro Bend. The proceeds from the sale of those homes are planned to be reinvested in constructing additional affordable homes.

One major local employer, Jasper Hill Farm, continues to take matters into its own hands. Mateo Kehler, co-founder of the artisan cheese-making business and an outspoken proponent of the town hall redevelopment project, wrote in an email that Jasper Hill currently provides housing for employees in eight houses.

Kehler said the business recently purchased an additional six housing units (currently occupied by inherited tenants) to support their team, and is in the process of subdividing and selling another house to one of its key employees. Following the vote, he said Jasper Hill is reassessing its ambitions for future growth, particularly in Greensboro.

"To make sure our efforts have the most impact, we will be shifting our direct support and investments towards surrounding towns that are more aligned with our mission," Kehler wrote.

Kehler said Jasper Hill also plans to continue its focus on housing by engaging local organizations, including Let's Build Homes, a pro-housing coalition (Kehler serves on its board), and the Headwaters Community Trust, a community land trust serving Greensboro and three neighboring towns, both of which were launched this year.

Kelley, when looking back on the rejected project, noted that Greensboro's struggle to create affordable housing is not unique. The problem is accelerating across Vermont and the country, he said, and the anger that has fueled recent national and local elections is not going to solve it.

"It is going to take education, communication and stronger leadership," he wrote. "And as a member of our select board, I think we failed on those accounts."

Bernie Comes to Dance in Hardwick



Andrea Heller (left) and Beth Awhaitey, both with Senator Bernie Sanders Burlington office, sit at a table greeting visitors to the Hazen Union School Gym for the Hardwick Spring Dance with Bernie Sanders. They said Vermont's senior U.S. Senator Sanders was "just coming to dance and have fun," Saturday.

photo by Paul Fixx



Bernie spoke briefly to visitors at his Hardwick Spring Dance, Saturday, May 17, in the Hazen Union School Gym. He stands on stage with The Peavine Boys from Rochester, Vt. who played mostly country radio standards that had many in the crowd of more than 300 on their feet dancing.

photo by Paul Fixx



U.S, Senator Bernie Sanders dances with guests who came to the Hardwick Spring Dance he held in the Hazen Union School Gym, Saturday, May 17.

social media photo



Standing for a photo op are (from left) Casey Lussier, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Rossano with Susie on her shoulders and her husband Griffin Lussier. During comments to the crowd of over 300 people, he said, "We live in a crazy world," and he held the dance because he knows people care about each other. "It's a value we need to restore in this day and age."

social media photo



Mary Gagnon stands on the North Main Street sideway near the Hardwick Memorial building, welcoming visitors to the Spring Dance with Bernie Sanders, Saturday, May 17.

photo by Norma Spaulding

HERVermont Mural Sends Big Women's Health Message

by Raymonda Parchment

MONTPELIER – U-32 high school juniors Ella Thomas and Annalise Eckhaus, both from Calais, have been discussing the next steps for HERVermont, after unveiling their mural for reproductive justice.

The project began in the fall of 2023 as an option for students to get health credits via a self-directed learning program in lieu of taking the conventional course. Eckhaus, Thomas and other students connected with Kayla Becker, a Montpelier-based reproductive health educator and independent psycho-spiritual bodyworker.

Founded by these five central Vermont students, HERVermont was created in an effort to share what they've learned, and more.

"We were working with Kayla Becker as a mentor for health and she was teaching us about anatomy, health, so we were learning a lot from that and we were inspired to share the information about our bodies because it was really amazing to learn more about that."

Thomas said they began to learn about the history of reproductive justice, and the untold horrors women endured decades prior.

"We just felt like we needed to share this information, so that's how the organization started. Then the mural project came about. We wanted to do something big, and communicate a message through art, and share the information we learned, and also memorialize the women who were affected."

Speaking of next steps, Eckhaus said "Our focus right now is education, we really want to get the word out about this history and the history of eugenics, and the forced sterilization of women, because it's so unknown."

According to Eckhaus, HERVermont is currently in correspondence with several schools to organize presentations on the sensitive subject, with an emphasis on female health. "Again, a lot of that is repressed knowledge due to the stigma surrounding women's bodies. We're also in correspondence with women on a native reservation, and doing some education there as well. A lot of the oppression was targeted at indigenous women, and that's a really important piece of it."

Eckhaus said she is personally very interested in art, and is considering gender studies as a prospective major. Thomas said she too is interested in continuing her gender studies. Both students commited to keep fighting for social justice and reproductive education.

The organization receives fiscal support from Mosaic VT. In late March, they hosted a mural opening ceremony at the Montpelier Arts HUB. Speakers at the event included Gov. Madeleine Kunin, Dottye Ricks of the League of Women Voters, Esther Charlestin, Patti Casey, and Jonel Beavis representing the Akwesasne. Congresswoman Becca Balint sent in a video, as well as author Scott Stern.

Described in the statewide publication Seven Days, Alice Dodge wrote, "The mural depicts a female figure kneeling at the edge of a body of water, raising her hands in what seems like a magical gesture. Three moons behind her represent the pagan triple goddess of Mother, Maiden and Crone; flowers and healing herbs grow up her body. A giant uterus floats above her as though summoned. Women's names, of actual people who were incarcerated and some representing unknown victims, are written in white on a black sky like little stars."

HERVermont's future plans include creating more educational materials, hosting educational events, facilitating peer-to-peer education, creating HERVermont factions at other high schools and colleges, and eventually becoming a nonprofit according to their website at hervermont.weebly.com

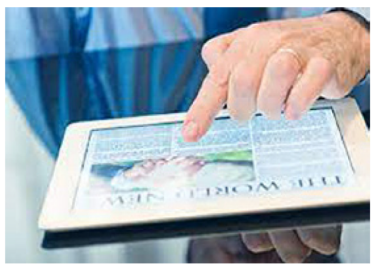


A female figure sits on her knees, with her hands raised as nature winds itself around her limbs. Created by five central Vermont students, the mural represents reproductive justice, memorializing those lost in the decades of unethical experiments. *courtesy photo*



The Hardwick Gazette's conversation with Greensboro drew over 20 people who learned how the paper does it's work, how its website allows online access and were able to make suggestions and get their questions answered, Sunday, May 19, at the Highland Center for the Arts. Hill Farmstead Brewery samples, Wilson Farm ice cream and Jasper Hill Farm cheeses were featured snacks for those attending. *photo by Norma Spaulding*

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Menard Road Culvert Replacement Work Delayed

CABOT – Road Foreman Sid Griggs shared an update on Menard Road, Thursday, May 15, saying, "I met with the engineer and contractor on Menard road this morning. . . Fenoff was supposed to start this Wednesday, but I found out today, the culvert delivery had been pushed back a week. . . Without the pipe, which is coming in five to seven pieces, there isn't much they can do but build a water bypass which won't take all that much time.

"They are planning to start constructing the project with pieces of the culvert showing up Monday of next week, May 19. That pushes the road closure back to roughly May 28, however I will give an update at the end of next week to double check that everything is going to plan."

Grigg described the new culvert. "This culvert is going to be a semi-squash pipe around 10 to 12 feet in diameter and close to 90 feet long. It will be quite impressive once in."

Loons Return to Nest on Caspian Lake

by Stew Arnold

GREENSBORO – On April 20, with the ice departing, the call of the loon returned to Caspian Lake. The next day a pair of loons were seen swimming among the remaining few ice floes.

Caspian Lake now has a steady number of loons each summer; between 12 and 18 seen during the annual count. The loons have made a good recovery, state wide, from very endangered low numbers of years past. In 2017, a pair attempted to build a nest on shore and was challenged by a raccoon. Eric Hanson, Vermont Eco-studies biologist, brought a raft with native foliage to assist with a safer nesting spot. The pair liked this option and quickly made it a home for two eggs. Just under a month later, Caspian Lake had its first pair of chicks in many decades.

This April 28, the raft was readied in position for the ninth year, under the watchful eye of the mating pair. While the pair gave the raft some interest by floating nearby, they typically wait until mid-May to climb aboard.

There may have been two different intruder loon battles in the past few years with one most likely changing the partnership. Thus far, the eight prior years has produced a pair of eggs each, totaling 16 eggs. One of the intruder battles occurred when eggs were on nest leaving them unattended for incubation for half a day, thus those two eggs never hatched.

The last eight years has produced 14 chicks.

The other intruder battle happened when the chicks were about one-month old. That battle resulted in one parent and one chick escaping to the other side of the lake. A chick did not survive and the other parent's fate was unknown.

Caspian Lake has thus seen 13 chicks raised to be juveniles. One year a juvenile went missing towards the end of summer, its fate unknown.

In the past eight years, 12 juveniles have left the lake before ice-out and traveled to ocean shores near Rhode Island and Connecticut. There they grow to adults on the ocean for three to five years before returning back in Vermont in the spring to spend summers, likely to waters within 25 miles of their birthplace.

A raft check on May 8 found no loon on the nest, so fresh moss was added to the approach side. Again the pair came by to watch this activity.

On May 14, the raft visit showed a single egg in the nest bowl. A parent returned in about five minutes, hopped it's way onto the raft. After a quick egg turn, the parent settled it's self down on the egg where they are known to sit for hours.

Loons are likely to lay an egg and follow with laying a second egg the next day. Loons are "biparental" meaning both male and female incubate and care for chicks equally.

To give the new parents safe space, four warning signs were set afloat around the small cove to protect the raft. The signs let boaters and kayakers know to keep clear of the area.



An artificial raft for nesting loons on Caspian Lake in Greensboro, was readied and in position for the ninth year, April 28. The watchful eyes of a mating pair of loons give the raft some interest by floating nearby on May 8.
photo by Stew Arnold

Two days later a parent was seen laying in the nest bowl. It was joined later by a partner. After an hour and a half, the nesting parent sat up with a clear view of two beautiful eggs.

Incubation time for loon eggs is 26 to 29 days before they hatch. These should hatch about June 9, or a bit later.

On June 10, the Greensboro Free Library will host a loon talk at the Greensboro UCC Fellowship Hall, 5:30 p.m., with Eric Hanson from the Vermont Loon Conservation Project and Eloise Girard who works with the Vermont Center for Ecostudies as a seasonal biologist.



A parent loon hops toward a single egg, May 14, on Caspian Lake.
photo by Stew Arnold



A loon parent rises from two eggs in the nest on an artificial raft placed in Greensboro's Caspian Lake. *photo by Stew Arnold*



One loon parent sits on the nest while the second circles nearby, May 16, on Caspian Lake in Greensboro. *photo by Stew Arnold*

EDITORIAL

Wide-Ranging Community Conversation Draws Older Crowd

We were pleased with the turnout at the Gazette's conversation with Greensboro this past Sunday at Highland Center for the Arts. Most who attended filled out a survey, giving us 21 points of view to help us better understand what appeals to those readers who came to talk with us.

While we didn't ask what was most important about the gathering, we suspect the Jasper Hill cheeses, Hill Farmstead Brewery samples and Wilson Farm ice cream and slightly rainy afternoon had some effect.

Northeast Kingdom Pubic Journalism Board Chair Stefanie Cravedi introduced herself, then talked about the brief history of its work as publisher of The Hardwick Gazette. Our nonprofit Gazette mission began in December 2023, just 17 months ago.

She then introduced me and I talked about how we collect information for the content that appears each week and how we structure the stories to give readers most of the information in the first three to five paragraphs, with background and other information following for those interested in the details and story behind the story.

I then gave everyone a walk-through of The Gazette website, showing what's where, how our paper can be accessed online and downloaded as a PDF.

Quite a few useful suggestions were made, particularly about creating easily accessed answers to frequently asked questions, which we will begin to work on, using the outline of my tour as a guide.

I'm glad one of our visitors asked about our finances because, though the gathering was primarily aimed at our news, events and editorial content, it was useful to share some of our ongoing financial challenges. Not unlike many nonprofits, we have lots more we could do than our funding allows at any given moment. We hope these gatherings build a relationship with the communities we serve and thus begin to set us on a more sustainable foundation as our board and organization matures.

It's significant to note that most of the people who came to talk with us were near, or past retirement age. That mirrors what we know about our audience from engagement on social media accounts. We did have one younger person who said they don't read the paper and volunteered to help, so perhaps we can gain insight into ways to appeal to that segment of the local population in further conversations.

A comment was made at the end of the gathering about the possibility of adding some sort of advice or etiquette column, which is an interesting suggestion, as I said at the time, because I find myself turning to that column at the back of one of the Vermont statewide printed papers first. Perhaps others do as well and today one of the folks who joined us Sunday stopped by the office and offered to work on a health column that might include advice.

We enjoyed seeing and hearing the reactions of people to old printed editions of the Gazette we handed out to peruse. Many took home our new euro-style magnet and we look forward to seeing area vehicles sporting them.

We haven't had time to look through the surveys, but heard from many at the event that it seemed valuable to them and look forward to sharing what we learn.

We'll have a tent near the Jeudevine Library at this weekend's Hardwick Springfest on Saturday where you can stop by to say hello and fill out a survey.

Paul Fixx, editor

LETTERS FROM READERS

Chronology, Details Aren't Always Right

To the editor:

We received a comment on the story I wrote recently about Meredith Holch, some of her history and her work, that was published in the April 23 edition, titled, "Holch Wins Animation Film Awards for "Brother Bird."

Valeska Populoh, of Baltimore, Md., wrote, "I found and read this article after learning that Meredith passed away very suddenly. I am so grateful that you wrote such a beautiful review about her work, which also offers glimpses into the kind of person she was and the kind of heart she had. 'She particularly enjoys showing her animations at community spaces such as grange halls, libraries, the walls of endangered community gardens, and the sides of old barns near her home in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom.' Thank you for honoring her work in this way.'

I responded, writing, "Thank you for reading it.

"Having read much that I could find about Meredith while writing it, I was surprised there wasn't much biographical information to be found about her. I was honored she spent well over an hour sharing her history and perspective when I interviewed her. I had an unexplainable feeling of the need to give great care and attention to what I wrote. Now I'm glad I did.

"She and I attended the same Connecticut high school, though she was some years younger than I am.

"We didn't meet until we both lived in East Hardwick and both became involved with the Grange. "I've known Meredith now for more than a decade and learned many new things writing the article. I'll have to go over my notes to see what I might have gotten wrong, and perhaps add more of what I learned.

"She saw the piece after I wrote it and said, 'Thanks Paul, a few people have enjoyed reading it. Nice job. The chronology and details aren't always right, but no one will notice that but me. Nice job weaving together gaps in what I said!"

"I send love to Meredith and all who know her, or ever had the opportunity to interact with her."

Paul Fixx, editor
The Hardwick Gazette

Editor's note: You may ask, as I did of myself, "Can an editor publish a letter to themself?" To that, I say, "This story didn't seem to be an editorial, an article or fit anywhere else. As editor, it's up to me, though within certain generally well-defined parameters, the derision of others in the newsroom and those elsewhere whose opinion I value. The first of those doesn't prevent it and I'm prepared to accept the second."

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Because we believe that accountability makes for responsible debate, we will print signed letters only. We might rarely withhold the writer's name with good cause. Letters are limited to 400 words and must be addressed to the Gazette's readers, not to individuals public figures or organizations. Opinions longer than 400 words on topics of current and local interest to readers in our 11-town coverage area may be considered for publication. Thank you notes are not considered to be opinions and will not be printed as letters from readers.

Letters to the editor require the writer's name, town of residence and phone number. Letters and opinions may be mailed, e-mailed or brought to our office. Letters and opinions are the opinion of the author. Editorials are the opinion of the editor and not the staff or publisher.

Submissions of Content and Deadlines: The Hardwick Gazette is published late on Tuesday each week with Wednesday's date. Submit your community event information, announcements, opinions, press releases and business news the Friday before publication by 5 p.m. Local news and sports items, letters to the editor and church submissions are due Monday by noon. Deadlines may be earlier for holidays. Obituaries may be submitted at any time. We make every attempt to confirm receipt of obituaries by noon the next day our office is open. Call to confirm receipt of any obituary submitted Tuesday if it is important it appears in that week's edition. When sending photos, please send unedited files in the largest size available to ensure the best page and web presentation.

We make every effort to include all submissions with timely content in the earliest possible edition. Call with requests to include submitted content in specific issues. Submissions may be edited for style and length. We cannot guarantee publication dates.

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Letters From Readers

Kick Out the Clowns

To the editor:

Join your neighbors in Hardwick on Saturday, June 14, at 11 a.m., at 101 S. Main St. (Front Seat Coffee) to protest the illegal suspension of due process, the destruction of our social safety net to provide a tax cut for the billionaires, and the Congressional Republicans who have abandoned their sworn duty to uphold the Constitution in order to avoid the wrath of their king [sic] Trump. The clown circus must stop.

The Hardwick event is part of a nationwide day of action at over 660 localities (and counting) across the U.S. in part, also, to protest the reckless spending by Trump on a military parade on his birthday that will cost U.S. taxpayers $45 million. That unnecessary expenditure to boost Trump's ego is an outrage when, at the same time, House G.O.P. legislators are advancing legislation to cut $300 billion from SNAP benefits!

Make your voice heard by making a large, readable sign and show up on June 14, and join the Indivisible Team and the Women's March in stopping the authoritarian power grab.

Bob Hawk
East Hardwick

Troubled by Trial Outcome

To the editor:

As members of the Religious Society of Friends, we grieve the tragic death of Fern Feather, a beloved transgender woman whose life was taken in April 2022. Fern was known for her kindness, joy, and strong connection to nature.

We are also deeply troubled by the outcome of the trial of Seth Brunell, which failed to deliver justice for Fern. This injustice was not merely an isolated incident. It is part of a broader, deeply rooted pattern of violence and neglect that transgender people face across the United States.

Our Quaker faith teaches that there is that of God in everyone. This belief calls us to affirm the dignity, worth, and spiritual gifts of all people. Our community is enriched by the presence of transgender and gender diverse individuals. Transgender people deserve not only affirmation, but protection. To honor Fern is to reject the negligence and prejudice that enable transphobia to thrive in courtrooms, police departments, and legislatures. It is to recognize that the criminal legal system is not only broken, but structurally incapable of serving the communities most impacted by violence.

Vermont has taken crucial steps towards creating a safe and inclusive environment for transgender people. However, we still must hold our public institutions accountable. When our system fails to uphold justice for Fern, it has failed all of us. We must allow ourselves to grieve, but it is equally important to transform that grief into courage, solidarity, and love towards the transgender community.

We recognize that honoring each person's self-identified gender is a spiritual practice rooted in love and truth. As Friends, we are called to speak out against injustice and to work towards a world where all people can live free from fear and violence.

Fern's life reminds us of the beauty and resilience of transgender people. Her death reminds us of the urgent need for cultural and political change across our society. We hold her memory in the Light, and we recommit ourselves to the work of creating a safer and more loving world.

Scott Rhodewalt
Craftsbury Common

Scott Rhodewalt is the peace and social concerns committee clerk for the Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting. The letter is also signed by Linda Schneck, clerk of Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting and Saloma Furlong, communications coordinator for Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting.

Another Opinion

Hardwick Farmers Market is Fun, Fresh and Free!

by Bethany M. Dunbar

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Farmers Market opens Fridays for fun, fresh food, and free stuff at Atkins Field on Granite Street starting May 23, from 3 to 6 p.m.

While no one has to buy anything, it's a great idea to do so because the wares on site are grown and produced by neighbors and friends. Buying directly allows customers to ask farmers how they grew that radish or microgreens, how they made that red raspberry jam, maple syrup or fancy pastry, and what's the best place to plant the baby tomato plant they started from seeds.

Dinner is available at one of the local food trucks or stands. Swap stories about the long cold winter with other neighbors and friends of all ages. Wander around the community orchard at Atkins Field and see which trees are in bloom.

The Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) occasionally offers free $10 coupons to shop at the market for the first 100 customers as an incentive to support local farmers and food producers. The market accepts Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards and multiplies them with matching coupons.

There are many studies to show good reasons to buy groceries at the local farmers market.

In 2016, the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont conducted a study on the price difference between produce purchased at stores versus purchased directly from local farmers. The study found that 55% of organic products and 24% of conventional products were priced competitively with grocery stores. According to a report from the national Farmers Market Coalition, farmers market prices vary by product, but a number of studies found that similar produce is typically less expensive at farmers markets than at nearby grocery stores.

A recent Economic Research Service report showed that less healthy foods tend to have a low price per calorie, increasing the difficulty of adding fresh fruits and vegetables into American diets.

However, one price study showed that most vegetables sold at the farmers market had lower if not comparable prices to their grocery store. One cost advantage that farmers markets can sometimes offer is the ability to buy fresh food in bulk at the height of the season and preserve or freeze it for later use, when the product would otherwise be more expensive, hard to find, or of lower quality.

Buying directly not only gives the chance to know farmers, it's better for the farmer and for the local economy, where those dollars will circulate.

In 2017, according to the Farmers Market Coalition, American farmers received only 17.4 cents of every dollar Americans spent on food. At farmers markets, farmers head home with upwards of 90 cents on the dollar.

The Hardwick Farmers Market has free live music every week, a youth booth with children's activities, such as games and face painting. On opening day, May 23, shortly after the market ends, the Civic Standard is putting on a free concert by the popular rocking harmonic bluegrass band, Beg Steal or Borrow.

To sign up for the monthly newsletter of the Hardwick Farmers Market, please sign up on the new website hardwickfarmersmarket.org/

Bethany Dunbar is the Hardwick Farmers Market secretary and Community Programs Manager for the Center for an Agricultural Economy.



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Another Opinion

We Cannot Move Forward Constructively

by Elsa Schultz

GREENSBORO – Now that the vote regarding the Rural Edge proposal is behind us, many have suggested it's time to move on. I agree. But we cannot move forward constructively without addressing the divisive tone and tactics that have shaped this conversation for far too long.

I'm not writing to rehash the outcome, but to offer a perspective that has been repeatedly misrepresented; at times in ways that have felt personal and deeply disheartening. The narrative that opponents of the project are simply "classist," "anti-housing" or "wealthy, white, and elderly" has been pushed forcefully across platforms, sometimes by individuals who have benefited the most from generational housing opportunities in Greensboro. These same voices, loud, persistent, and often dismissive, have dominated public spaces and social media with the argument that dissent equates to selfishness or bigotry. That approach extinguished any chance for real dialogue and, frankly, discouraged many from speaking up at all.

So when the vote didn't go as expected, there was shock. But perhaps that shock was rooted in a lack of meaningful civic engagement along the way. If there had been more honest, inclusive conversation, less browbeating and more listening, the result might not have felt so surprising. The truth is, opposition to this project was never opposition to affordable housing as a concept. Many who voted "no" did so because they believe it must be pursued responsibly, with infrastructure in place, transparency in process and respect for the character and capacity of the town we all share.

Throughout this process, the tone and conduct at public meetings, particularly from our elected town officials, have been condescending, rude and at times openly dismissive of concerned residents. Those who asked thoughtful questions were often met with eye-rolls, sharp rebuttals or outright accusations of bad faith. It has been disheartening to watch people in positions of public trust shutdown honest dialogue instead of encouraging it. And yet, somehow, that reality has been almost entirely overlooked by local media outlets. In their coverage, the complexity of this vote has been flattened into a convenient headline: "*Greensboro rejects low-income housing*," accompanied by catchy quotes from a select few. That's not only an oversimplification. It's a disservice to the truth and to those who participated in this process with care and integrity.

I know these concerns firsthand because I'm one of the people directly affected. The home my partner and I purchased just a few years ago has already sustained tens of thousands of dollars in water damage, caused by overburdened culverts and unmanaged runoff, more than once. These are issues that will only worsen with large-scale development if proper infrastructure isn't addressed first. We even explored partnering with Rural Edge to develop an accessory dwelling unit; a small, local solution we could contribute to. But the process was discouraging and overly rigid, highlighting the disconnect between those who need housing and those who actually qualifies under county AMI formulas.

Our town roads, storm drains and lack of public wastewater capacity are already stretched thin. The proposed development would have added no fewer than 30 to 50 new residents and paved infrastructure without the town having a real clear plan or budget to handle it. To complicate matters further, the proposed wastewater solution involved the use of private land associated with individuals connected to the broader planning conversation and decision making. While there has been no suggestion of wrongdoing, the arrangement raised understandable questions for some residents about transparency and whether all aspects of the project had been clearly communicated. Unfortunately, those concerns received little attention in media coverage or in commentary from outside the community.

Moreover, the glaring silence around short-term rentals throughout this debate has been baffling. We have homes sitting vacant much of the year or rotating through weekend visitors, while we scramble to build new units on unprepared land. Cities across the country have enacted sensible regulations requiring short-term rentals to be part of a primary residence, yet in Greensboro we seem unwilling to even acknowledge their role in our housing landscape.

And yes, generational housing is part of that landscape. It's not inherently a problem. Many families have deep roots here. Those who own multiple properties should recognize their position and influence. When those same individuals are also the loudest voices discrediting alternative viewpoints, it's worth pausing to ask whether the playing field has been fair or inclusive at all.

Housing is a very real concern. As a local business owner, I feel that impact daily. But we also listen to the needs of our team and take them into account when we talk about what the future of housing could and should look like for the low-income young people who want to build a life here.

Let's be clear: the "no" vote was not a blanket rejection of affordable housing. It was a call for better planning, greater transparency and mutual respect. And if we want to make real progress in Greensboro, we must replace finger-pointing with collaboration. We are neighbors, not opponents.

As a younger member of this community who chose to make Greensboro my home, I did so with the sincere hope of contributing to its long-term well-being. My partner and I aren't here to watch it fade, we're here to help it thrive, responsibly and with heart. All of that to say: the recent discourse, across public forums, meetings, and social spaces, has often felt combative, exclusionary, and out of step with the kind of community we chose to join. Greensboro deserves better, and we should all be willing to hold ourselves, and each other, to a higher standard.

Warmly submitted by someone who still has questions, held a green sign, and hoped for a two-sided conversation, I'm a concerned (and still hopeful) Greensboro resident. *This letter reflects the personal opinions and lived experiences as a resident and community member.*

Elsa Schultz is general manager of the Highland Lodge in Greensboro with Chad Sims.

Comfortable and Insensitive

by Sarah Houston

WALDEN – If you haven't read Chekhov's short story "Gooseberries" or haven't read it recently, now is the perfect time to do so.

It's a story about two brothers of rather humble birth. Ivan, the older one, becomes a veterinary surgeon, the younger Nikolay, a clerk whose work in cramped offices leads to a consuming ambition to have a little farm in the country. After many years by dint of penury and maneuvering he is able to purchase a modest estate where he proceeds to live a princely life lording it over the peasants. To complete his dream he plants a patch of gooseberries.

When Ivan visits he sees how (literally) fat and happy his brother has become, how he insists the villagers address him as "Your Honor," and how he finds ostentatious ways to demonstrate his piety. He exemplifies the social psychology idea that on achieving success the poor and down trodden either become more empathetic and want to uplift others or become exploitative, lording it over other people. The younger brother, of course, does the later.

Confronted with how happy Nikolay is and how oblivious to the plight of others in less comfortable circumstances, Ivan experiences a kind of conversion. He reflects that in fact people everywhere who are comfortable fail to see the suffering, misery and poverty around them and that "the happy man is at his ease only because unhappy ones bear their burdens in silence." Later Ivan watches his younger brother relishing his home-grown gooseberries, hard and sour, further suggesting his feelings about his brother's new life.

While Chekhov wrote this story against a backdrop of rebellion and revolutionary fervor in late 19th-century Russia, the story speaks to people of all times with regard to those who are comfortable by and large being insensitive to the suffering around them, and especially it speaks to us in our time when complacency and inaction may cost us our freedom.

You can perhaps find "Gooseberries" in your library or online, but if you're of a mind to purchase it, I highly recommend George Saunders' book, "A Swim in a Pond in the Rain." The title is derived from a deliciously sensuous scene in the "Gooseberries" story.

Billed as a "master class on what makes great stories work and what they can tell us about ourselves and the world today," Saunders, who teaches in the creative writing program at Syracuse University, has included stories by Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Gogol as well as Chekhov in "A Swim in a Pond in the Rain."

Sarah Houston is an artist living in Walden.

Voices of Spirit

Walking Through the Pastures of Psalm 23

by The Rev. Joe Welker

EAST CRAFTSBURY – Psalm 23 is one of the most famous psalms in the Bible, but how often do we get to savor in it, lying down in the green pastures of its poetry? Let us walk through these lines to see what may be in the grass.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Through God we have everything provided for us, even when it seems like we have nothing going for us, or when it seems like we're about to have it all taken away. A politician isn't my shepherd, a boss isn't my shepherd, my dad ain't my shepherd and, I am sorry to say this so close to Mother's Day, but my mom's not my shepherd either.

While I am called "pastor," a title that comes from the word "shepherd," the better way to think of my role is "under-shepherd," serving at the privilege of the chief shepherd, helping others have a relationship with him. So maybe I should be called "under-pastor." Honestly, I'd prefer local sheepdog.

"He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters." You might think, well, why does he need to make me lie down in green pastures? But then, how often do I really permit myself to fully let go and rest? The Sabbath is one of the most beautiful examples of how obedience to God is primarily a gift to enjoy life by entering into his rest. Apparently, some of us have got to be told to actually enjoy creation.

As for, "He leads me beside still waters," we are sheep who, left to our own devices, don't know how to get to God's peace. I have to stop bleating long enough to listen for my shepherd's voice so he can call me to water.

"He restores my soul." Hebrew scholar Robert Alter explains, the original word refresh does not mean "soul," but "life-breath" or "life," emphasizing the lushness of life in God here and now. Alter says, "The image is of someone who has almost stopped breathing and is revived, brought back to life."

"He leads me in right paths for His name's sake." Or perhaps more accurately, per Alter, "He leads me on pathways of justice for His name's sake." Now, you don't usually think of sheep particularly caring about justice. Here we begin to see how this passage is blending our humanity with the sheep image. We also see how Scripture visualizes the difference between doing right and wrong as an uneven path that goes all over the place and the path that goes forward in simplicity. It is not always easy to do the right thing, but it is often simple. Perhaps even when doing justice is simple, we need our shepherd because it is still hard.

Readers of the psalm might almost breeze past "for His name's sake." In the Bible, there's more to a name than a name. To pray "in the name of" God is not only what we call him by (and many of our Jewish friends still do not call him by his name out of reverence). God's name is tied to his nature and essence. So "for His name's sake" is like, "because of his essential nature." The psalm is saying that God loves us not because of what we do, but because of who he is. I can't do anything that makes him say, "Ah well, I lost a sheep, too bad." His very being expresses the free choice to love us even when we have freely chosen not to love him. God, in his nature, in his name, is "He Who Loves Us," whether we love him or not. So he leads us "for his name's sake," because loving us is just who he is.

"Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me," seems self-explanatory in parts, right? Like, no matter what I'm going through, no matter how dark it gets, no matter how bad it is. Got it. But that thing about rod and staff . . . are they the same thing? No, it's the psalmist expressing two different sides of the Shepherd's love. The staff, with its crook, can get sheep out of tight spots and guide us back, while the rod protects us from evil and wards off the wolves. It sometimes takes both the protection and the prodding to get us through the darkest valleys. That's how we know where to go, "Nope, not that way, my sheep, this way . . . Nope, not that way, my sheep, this way."

Next consider, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." Or as Alter says, "You moisten my head with oil," like God is giving us a luxurious massage. The psalm invites us to say, "Oh, God, thank you for just loving on me. I don't care whether I've got enemies when I've got your love." I know probably a lot of people don't really think of themselves as having enemies, but we all have at least some spiritual enemies threatening our well-being. It helps to remember when it gets dark that God is always providing for you and giving you every good gift, not only when life is peaceful. Even in contention and chaos, there is always grace spilling out all over the place.

And finally we read, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long." And so the psalmist prays and I pray: Lord, my shepherd, let your loving goodness pursue me. I know it does, for I know you do. That's in your Name. And I know no matter what, my whole life long, I can dwell in your house because you have made your house within me; somehow, even though a sinner I am, if I can remember to invite you in. I know you've got me.

And I know he's got you. Because the Lord is our shepherd; that is just who he is. And he loves you because that is just who he is.

The Rev. Joe Welker serves the East Craftsbury Presbyterian Church.

Legislative Report

Session Runs Later Than Normal

by Rep. Michael Southworth

MONTPELIER – The legislative session is nearing the end, although it is running later than normal. The budget bill has passed the House and Senate and has been sent to the Governor for signature. The budget shows approximately a 4% increase in spending. Although it is an increase, it is still significantly less than in years past and what was originally proposed for this year. A piece of the budget important to area schools is it includes funding for PCB remediation.

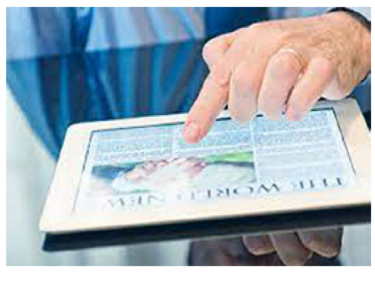
Senate bill S.51, is a bill enhancing earned income tax credits, social security tax credits and creating a Vermont Veteran tax credit. This bill also exempts military retirement and survivor benefits from state income tax. Although it isn't a full exemption as was originally proposed, the exemption will cover about 70% of military retirees and survivors in Vermont. The bill passed the House of Representatives and was sent back to the Senate where it currently sits.

The education bill is just completing its journey in the Senate and would be back to the House this week. I do not expect this to be done quickly, nor should it be. It is difficult to say what will end up happening. More than likely, this bill will end up going to a committee of conference prior to being voted on.

There have been attempts to deal with the clean heat standard. These attempts continue to be blocked. There is no desire to address the concerns of so many Vermonters. The ability to recognize when something isn't right for Vermont and to work to come up with a solution that does, is out of reach for many in the House of Representatives and Senate. Unfortunately, it does not look like this will be dealt with unless there is a willingness to do so by the majority.

Michael Southworth represents the Caledonia-2 District, which includes the towns of Hardwick, Stannard and Walden

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Yankee Notebook

There's a Bright Spot for Those of Us Traveling

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – It's difficult to complain about the length of a flight to Europe when you consider what our ancestors went through to get here. Their tears at the sight of the Statue of Liberty weren't just from inspiration; they were overjoyed to get off that boat. Still, the prospect of seven hours or more strapped into a seat grows more daunting over the years. But there's a bright spot for those of us traveling with a tour group. Because we can't check into our hotel until at least mid-afternoon, we take an overnight flight and arrive in a somewhat somnambulistic state in mid-morning.

What's great about that? you ask. It's this: late afternoon or early evening departure from the east coast of the states. No early-morning rush to get to the airport. That's saved for the return flight, which deposits you at your home airport almost exactly when you left it right in the middle of afternoon rush hour.

Austria exhibits an ambiance different from Germany's, a slightly wacky aura that I often compare to the difference between New Hampshire and Vermont. Or the difference between Bach and Mozart: When the angels in Heaven play music for God, they play Bach; when they play for each other, it's Mozart.

Thus it was that we debouched into the Munich terminal about 9:30 in the morning, found our way to customs and the baggage carousels, and shortly to our "private motorcoach" for the run to Salzburg. I don't know how Bea was feeling, she fell asleep on my shoulder, and the bus was pretty quiet, but I was pretty wiped. The driver was smooth as silk (as were all the drivers we had during our trip), and the highway pleasantly different from its counterparts back in the States. There were still German rockets flying by in the leftmost lane, but less apparent competition among the rest to be the first to wherever we were headed. The word, gemütlichkeit, appeared in my consciousness for the first of many times over the next 10 days.

Salzburg is celebrated as the birthplace of Mozart. I had a dream once in which the angel Gabriel came complaining to God about the excess musical talent he had on hand and needed to get rid of in the world below. It was the evening of January 26, 1756. God took a look, allowed there was indeed quite a pile, and suggested dumping it all at once that night on one child about to be born. He looked down from his cloud, spotted a woman in labor, and said, "Salzburg, Gabe. Frau Mozart." And so it was.

But to my surprise, Salzburg is famous for something far older: salt-mining, which began here as early as Neolithic times, when people discovered that the brine bubbling to the surface here could be used to preserve meat. Later, still hundreds of years before the Common Era, they began opening mines in the mountainsides. The name, Salzburg, refers to its origins; surrounding towns, Hallstadt and Halle for instance (from halite, the name of the mineral), likewise. In early days it was referred to as "white gold," and indeed for some time it was worth its weight in gold. Naturally, the local gentry, both political and ecclesiastical (in those days there was little difference), assumed control of production and distribution, and became extremely wealthy. Thus the proliferation of palaces, abbeys, and fortresses.

It's been showery and misty since we've been here, so our rides in cable cars and funiculars to see the magnificent views have instead showed us the fluffy interiors of thick overcasts. But better weather is on the way.

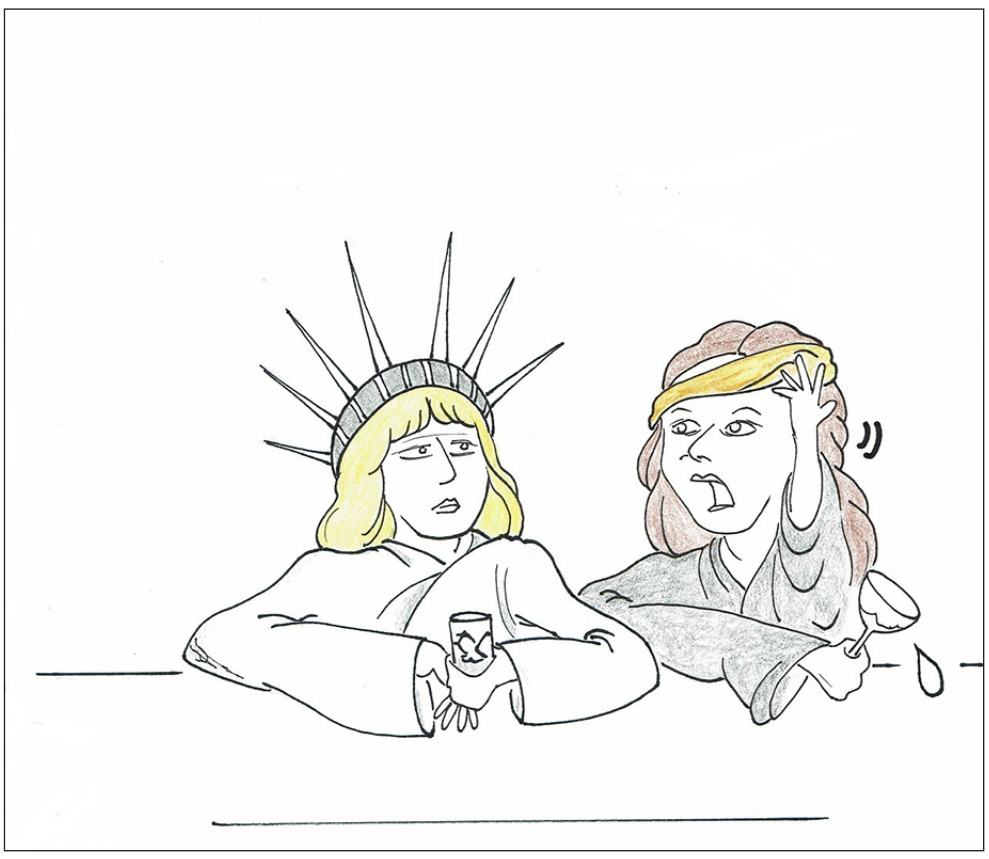
Austria exhibits an ambiance different from Germany's, a slightly wacky aura that I often compare to the difference between New Hampshire and Vermont. Or the difference between Bach and Mozart: When the angels in Heaven play music for God, they play Bach; when they play for each other, it's Mozart.

We dined this evening in a baroque ballroom. Between courses a lovely string quintet entertained us, most notably with excerpts from "The Marriage of Figaro," which was sung by a lively pair of singers as Count Almaviva and Susanna. All very light-hearted and beautifully done. Not to mention the dinner: capon in a perfect sauce. It was during the evening that I gave up wine for beer, at least as long as I'm here. If there's a mediocre glass of beer in Austria, I could spend a happy life looking for it.

Tomorrow we check out of our hotel and on our way to Vienna by bus we'll stop at the immense abbey at Melk. Just the cobbled courtyard of the abbey is large enough for a football field. Then we'll board a river excursion boat and cruise down the Danube for several miles, watching the vineyards and churches go by. I'll be forced to make the difficult decision between beer and espresso. It's a hard life.

The other folks on the tour are (except for two) old friends from past trips. We're all getting on a bit. I know this can't last. So I'm enjoying every minute while I can.

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH
"I NEED A MENTAL HEALTH DAY!"

Meeting Memo

Wednesday, May 21

Wolcott Select Board, third Wednesday of month, 6 p.m.

Monday, May 26

Calais Select Board, fourth Monday of month, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 27

Cabot School District Board of Directors' Special Board Meeting, 6-8 p.m., Cabot School Library and remote option also available

Wednesday, May 28

Caledonia Cooperative School District Full Board of Directors' Special Board Meeting, 6 p.m., Barnet School Room #126 and remote access also available.

Tuesday, June 3

Cabot Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.

Craftsbury Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.

Marshfield Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 5:30 p.m.

Plainfield Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 4

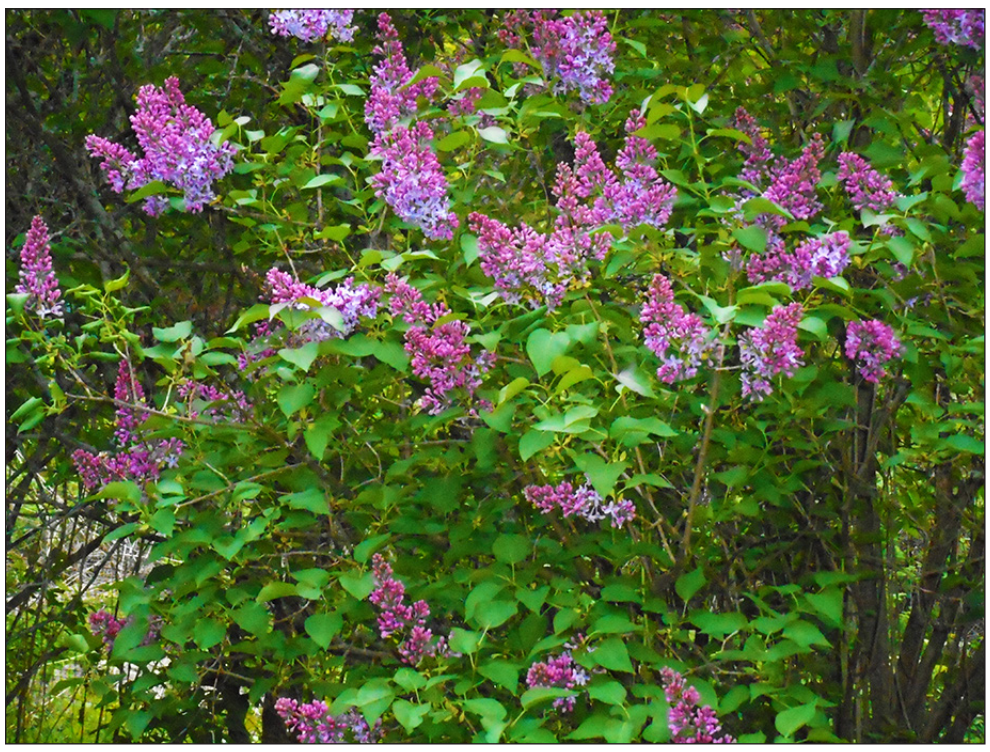
Wolcott Select Board, first Wednesday of month, 6 p.m.

Town Clerks

Cabot: cabotvt.us
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Greensboro: greensborovt.gov
Hardwick: hardwickvt.org
Marshfield: town.marshfield.vt.us
Plainfield: plainfieldvt.us
Stannard: Stannard town clerk: (802) 533-2577, open Wed., 8-noon, townofstannard@myfairpoint.net
Walden: waldenvt.gov
Wolcott: wolcottvt.org
Woodbury: woodburyvt.org

In the Garden

For the love of Lilacs



Lilacs are a low-maintenance, sun-loving shrub that can grow 12 to 15 feet tall and nearly as wide.

photo by Deborah J. Benoit



Native to Asia and southeast Europe, lilacs come in thousands of varieties with flowers ranging in color from the popular purples and pinks to white and blue, among other colors.

photo by Deborah J. Benoit

by Deborah J. Benoit

NORTH ADAMS, Mass. – Easily recognized by their sweet fragrance and cone-shaped clusters of tiny flowers, the common lilac (Syringa vulgaris) has been a part of America's gardens for much of the country's history. Lilacs arrived with colonists in the early 1700s, bringing with them memories of homes and lives left behind.

Native to Asia and southeast Europe, lilacs are cold-tolerant. Most varieties actually require a period of cold to produce flowers. They're hardy in United States Department of Agriculture Hardiness Zones 3 to 8.

Today there are thousands of varieties of lilacs available. Flowers come in shades of purple, reddish-purple, blue, pink, white and even yellow. They appear for about two weeks each spring.

That time can be extended by planting different varieties that bloom earlier and later in the season. There are even some varieties of reblooming lilacs that produce flowers in the spring, then bloom again in late summer or fall.

The common lilac, with its heart-shaped leaves, is a shrub that can grow 12 to 15 feet tall and nearly that wide. Dwarf varieties are smaller at four to six feet high.

Lilacs are a low-maintenance addition to the garden and can live over 100 years. Plant in full sun (six hours of sun daily) in soil that drains well. While they'll grow in clay soil, standing water can cause root rot.

Poor or heavy soil can be amended with compost, but a soil test can provide specific recommendations.

Lilacs often send out suckers from their root system. Prune or pull these unwanted shoots at any time. Alternatively, dig them up and transplant elsewhere to start a new lilac. It may take up to four to five years for the young plant to mature and flower.

When planting lilacs, water well at the time of planting and as needed during the first growing season to prevent the roots from drying out. There's no need to fertilize when planting. If desired, fertilize in early spring with a granular fertilizer according to package directions.

There are many reasons that a lilac might fail to flower. It can take several years for a young plant to produce flowers as it establishes itself. Too little sunlight could cause a lack of flowers. Over fertilizing can result in more foliage instead of flowers.

Occasionally, after a period of stress (drought, extreme heat, heavy pruning, defoliation), a lilac will produce flowers in the fall. There's no permanent damage to the plant, but as a result, the following spring there will be fewer flowers.

Deadheading faded flowers isn't necessary, but if desired, you can remove them immediately after flowering has finished. Do any needed pruning at that time. Doing so too late in the season can result in fewer flowers the following year. Lilacs bloom on old wood. They begin setting buds for next season's flowers soon after flowering in the spring.

If you have children or small pets, there's no need to be concerned about having lilacs in your garden. The flowers are edible. Just be sure they haven't been treated with pesticides or other chemicals before taking a taste.

Now that spring has arrived, step outside. Take a deep breath. If the lilacs are blooming, why not pick a bouquet to bring the fragrance inside? Maybe try a lilac recipe or two.

Deborah J. Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Mass., who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.

Maple Anthracnose is Common Spring Disease

by Ann Hazelrigg

BURLINGTON – Newly emerged maple leaves coupled with the recent cool, rainy weather provide perfect conditions for a common spring fungal disease called maple anthracnose.

There are several fungi responsible for the damage. All native and ornamental maples are susceptible including sugar maple (A. saccharum), red maple (A. rubrum), Norway maple (A. platanoides), silver maple (A. saccharinum) and Japanese maple (A. palmatum).

The symptoms of the disease can vary with the type of maple, but in all species, irregular, dark brown spots or blotches develop on the leaf margins and along and between the leaf veins. The damage often starts on the lower and interior branches of the tree.

In severe cases, defoliation and twig dieback can occur, but the tree will often flush out new growth. As the season progresses and temperatures warm, the foliage and shoots become more resistant to infection, and we rarely see new infections after May and June.

Although caused by different fungi, oaks (Quercus sp.), ash (Fraxinus sp.) and sycamore (Plantanus sp.) can exhibit similar foliar anthracnose symptoms in the spring and early summer. In sycamores, during rainy springs, 90 percent shoot dieback can occur that may result in abnormal branching despite a new flush of



Maple anthracnose is a common spring fungal disease.

courtesy photo

leaves.

All the anthracnose pathogens overwinter on infected fallen leaves and in twigs and buds. Raking leaves may help reduce the amount of the pathogen present in the spring, but we typically don't see the disease every year since some springs are warmer and drier.

With well-established trees that are in good health, the disease does not cause any long-term damage and is mainly aesthetic. Anthracnose can be a more serious concern in trees that are young or weakened due to insects or other stressors. In this case, trying to improve the vigor of the tree throughout the rest of the season by adequate fertilization, watering during periods of drought, mulching and pruning will help lessen the impact of the disease.

Dr. Ann Hazelrigg is the University of Vermont Extension plant pathologist and director of the UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic.

In the Garden

Native Dogwoods are Great for Garden

by Bonnie Kirn Donahue

NORTHFIELD – Dogwoods, in the genus Cornus, are among the most versatile native shrubs. With seasonal interest, tolerance of less than perfect conditions and benefits for wildlife, these shrubs are worth considering.

There are many benefits of planting native dogwoods. They flower in the spring, offering food for native insects and pollinators. They set fruit in the fall, which feeds many species of birds and mammals.

These plants also are attractive additions to the garden. The leaves have a quilted quality with highly visible veining and strong, green leaves. Depending on the variety, berries can be white, purplish-blue or black.

Unique clusters of tiny white flowers are supported on a bed of green leaves. Some varieties have bright red stems that lighten up the winter landscape. Some varieties have leaves that turn burgundy red in the fall.

Dogwoods require little maintenance. Pruning is not necessary unless you are trying to keep the shrub at a certain height. Make a mistake and cut back too much? Dogwoods are very forgiving plants that will persist in gardens in spite of it.

Several native varieties of dogwoods can be grown in Vermont, including red-twig dogwood (Cornus sericea), pagoda dogwood (Cornus alternifolia), grey dogwood (Cornus racemosa) and silky dogwood (Cornus amomum).

Each species has different uses in the landscape. Some may be found at commercial nurseries, while others may only be available at native conservation nurseries.

Red twig dogwood (Cornus sericea), also called red osier dogwood, is a landscape powerhouse species of the dogwood genus. This plant is tolerant of wet and dry conditions and partial or full sun. Deer tend to leave them alone though occasionally nibble the spring buds. This plant likes to spread, so it can be useful in areas that need erosion control such as riparian areas but can also compete with other plants if left unmanaged.

The straight species (plant species without cultivars) grows six to nine feet tall and seven to 10 feet wide. Red twig dogwood has many cultivars available, including some that grow smaller and others with more brilliant stem colors.

If you're trying to create a more ecologically authentic native garden, choose the straight species. If you are looking for a native plant with certain characteristics, there may be a red twig dogwood cultivar that works well for you.

Pagoda dogwood (Cornus alternifolia) is often found in nature on the edge of woods. This large shrub or small tree has a distinct, airy, horizontal branching pattern that helps it stand out from other plants at the edge of the forest.



The red twig dogwood (Cornus sericea), also known as red osier dogwood, is a popular choice for landscapes as it comes in many cultivars and is tolerant of both wet and dry conditions and partial or full sun.

photo by Bonnie Donahue

Growing 15 to 25 feet tall and 20 to 32 feet wide, the pagoda dogwood can grow in part or full sun with medium moisture requirements. Pink stems hold blue-black fruit propped upright above the dark green, horizontal foliage. The leaves turn a burgundy red in fall.

Grey dogwood (Cornus racemosa) prefers moist to wet soil and full sun to part shade. This plant would be appropriate closer to the water in a riparian buffer planting or in a rain garden. Round, white berries are presented on pink stems in the fall, giving this plant a unique natural look. The grey dogwood grows 10 to 15 feet tall and wide.

Silky dogwood (Cornus amomum) is another species of shrub that prefers medium to wet soil conditions. Similar to the grey dogwood, this species would do better closer to water like in a rain garden or wet area. Growing six to 12 feet tall and wide, it has more of a natural appearance, so may be better planted in areas left to naturalize.

Bonnie Kirn Donahue is a UVM Extension Master Gardener and landscape architect from Northfield.

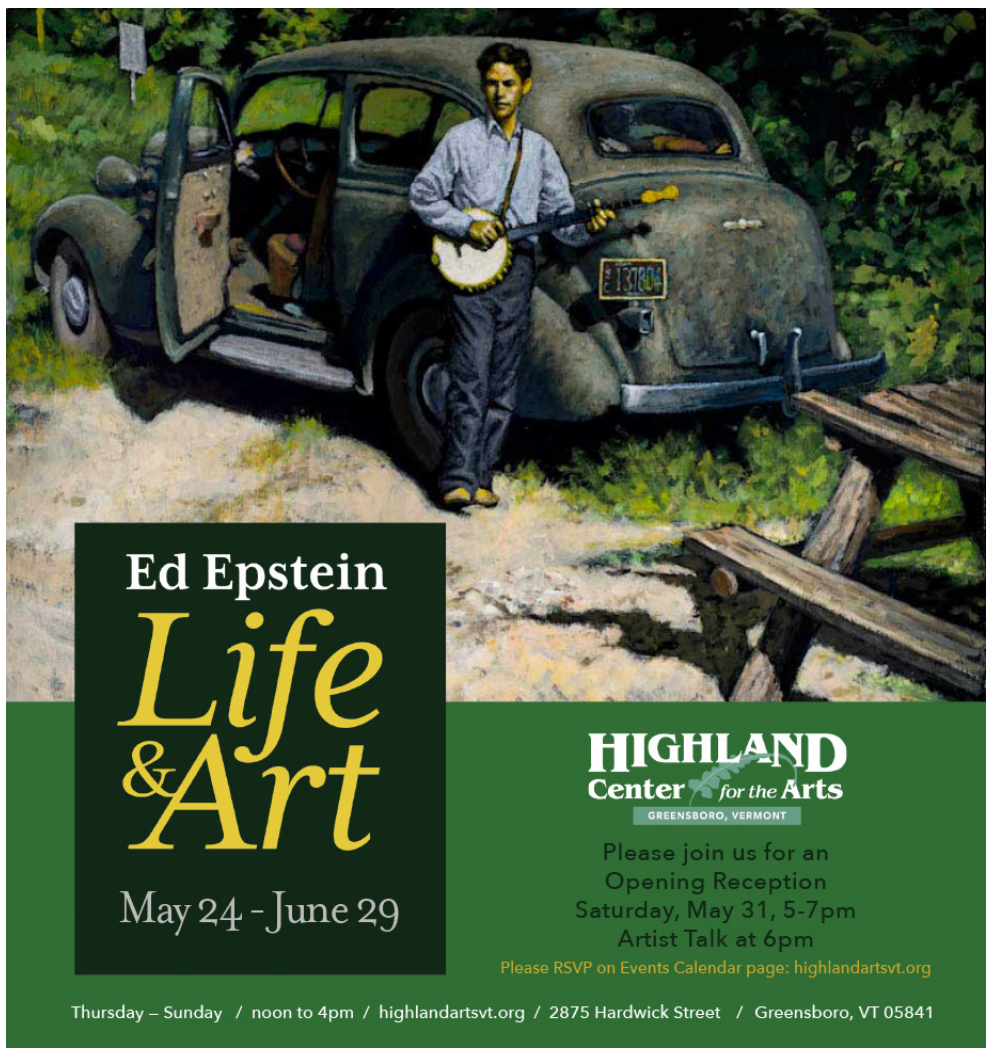


Gray dogwood (Cornus racemosa), which produces round, white berries on pink stems in the fall, does best in moist to wet soil and full sun to part shade.

Photo by Bonnie Donahue

OUR E-MAILS

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The Outside Story

Hepatica: Ephemeral or Evergreen?

by Catherine Wessel

BURLINGTON – As the days get longer and the sun warms the forest floor, hepatica flowers start emerging. These charming early bloomers captivated the writer and naturalist John Burroughs, who extolled their "winsome grace" in his poem "Hepatica."

Hepatica flowers close on cloudy days and when night falls to preserve their pollen for times when pollinators are most likely to be on wing. But when they're open, the flowers are easy to spot amid the brown leaf litter of the past fall.

Hepaticas vary in color from white and pale pinks to deep purples and, as Burroughs put it, "every shade of azure."

Like many plants in the buttercup family, their number of sepals (modified leaves, and in this case, petal lookalikes) ranges, with many flowers displaying five to seven sepals. Their stems and new leaves are covered in long, silky hairs, which are important for protecting the plant from the lingering cold.

Spring ephemerals, in the strictest sense, are plants that emerge in early spring and disappear from sight by the time the canopy closes, completing their whole life cycle before the leafed-out trees block sunlight from reaching the ground. However, the term is also used more loosely to describe flowers that bloom within this time frame but may bear leaves throughout the season, and sometimes beyond. "The definition is not always consistent," said Abby Yancy, who studied the biogeography and phenology of spring ephemerals at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History and is now completing her PhD at University of Pittsburgh.

Though hepaticas bloom early, their leaves last until the following spring, turning a reddish or purplish brown and become leathery as the months go by. By hanging onto these older leaves, the plant can jump start photosynthesis the following spring, providing the resources it needs to bloom as soon as things start to warm up. "Although they flower in early spring, the presence of overwintering leaves actually makes them evergreen," said Yancy.

The three-lobed leaves are the key to their name, which comes from the Latin hepaticus, or liver. The "doctrine of signatures," an idea that became popular in the Sixteenth Century, postulated that the healing properties of plants were divinely communicated through their appearance. In other words: if it looks like a liver, it must be good for the liver. Though some plants have been critical in the development of effective medicines, scientists have found hepatica to be toxic in large quantities.

Hepaticas were once in their own genus, though botanists now place them in the Anemone genus, with wood anemone and other windflower species. In the Northeast, we have two species of hepatica, which are delightfully easy to tell apart. Sharp-lobed hepatica (Anemone acutiloba) has, you guessed it, sharp lobes. Each of the three lobes on a leaf ends in a pointy tip, while blunt-lobed hepatica (Anemone americana) has rounded lobes. Because the leaves last year-round, both species can be identified in any season. Beyond morphology, the two species also have slightly different ecological niches. Sharp-lobed hepatica grows in deciduous and often rocky forests, where there is some enrichment in the soil, while blunt-lobed hepatica favors drier, less rich sites.

When hepaticas bloom in early spring, pollinators can be scarce. One theory for their color variety is that different colors attract different pollinators. Because resources are limited for pollinators at this time of year, hepaticas don't need to put any energy towards nectar production, when a pollinator finds a flower in a shade it likes, no extra incentives are needed. Hepaticas are also perfect flowers, meaning they contain both male and female parts, and are capable of self-pollination.

When hepaticas fruit, they bend under the weight of their achenes, dry, one-seeded fruits. Each achene has an elaiosome, an attached deposit rich in protein and fat, which makes it an appealing meal for an insect. Hepaticas rely on ant-dispersal (myrmecochory). An ant brings the achene back to its nest, consumes the elaiosome, and then discards the achene with other nutrient-rich waste, meaning it's in an ideal location to grow next year.

These achenes must be exposed to cold to successfully germinate, so we have our winters to thank for their success.

While you search the forest floor to for hepatica flowers this spring and enjoy what Burroughs called a "concert sweet without sound," remember that their namesake leaves will be here to remind us of the delights of this brief flowering season all year round.



Hepatica

Catherine Wessel is the assistant editor at Northern Woodlands who lives in Burlington. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.



Our Communities

Stop the Bleed Training, May 22

MORRISVILLE – Join emergency department staff from Copley Hospital, members of local Vermont EMS services and the Medical Reserve Corps for a free one-hour Stop the Bleed Training, designed by the American College of Surgeons to empower the public to respond to life-threatening traumatic emergencies such as uncontrolled bleeding.

Classes will be held twice on Thursday, May 22, at the Morristown EMS Building, 539 Washington Highway, in Morrisville. One session will be from noon to 1 p.m., with another session from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. No pre-registration is required for this event. For more information, please contact Tyler Molleur via email tymolleur@gmail.com

Miller to Read, May 27

HARDWICK – Author Nathaniel Ian Miller will read at The Galaxy Bookshop on Tuesday, May 27, at 7 p.m. Miller will share an excerpt from and answer questions about his new novel, "Red Dog Farm," a coming-of-age story set on an Icelandic cattle farm. He will sign copies of his book.

Nathaniel Ian Miller is the author of the debut novel, "The Memoirs of Stockholm Sven," which was longlisted for the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize and has been translated into five languages. A former journalist for newspapers in New Mexico, Colorado, Wisconsin and Montana, he now lives with his family on a farm in Vermont. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, call (802) 472-5533 or visit galaxybookshop.com for a full schedule of events.

Children's Parade, June 7

EAST HARDWICK – The East Hardwick Children's Parade is scheduled for Saturday, June 7. Line up will begin at 10:30 in the parking area at Hardwick Chiropractic. The parade begins at 11:00.

All are welcome to ride a bike, pull a wagon and bring friends. Come early and decorate a bike with crepe paper that will be provided. Parade organizers are seeking groups like martial arts classes, Girl Scout troops and 4-H clubs to participate. Popcorn, popsicles, rock painting and a rock-paper-scissors championship will follow the parade.



This group of actors presented the "Get Thee to the Funnery" version of a Shakespeare play last summer. *courtesy photo*

"Funnery" Shakespeare Camp Set for July

GREENSBORO – Peter Gould's "Get Thee to the Funnery" Shakespeare camp for young people celebrates its 28th summer under the big tent at the Highland Center for the Arts. More than 20 people have signed up for the deep dive into witchcraft, violence, and revenge with Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, one of history's most treacherous power couples, beginning on Monday, July 28, with two performances on August 8 and August 9.

Information and registration forms can be found at gettheetothefunnery.com or by calling Gould at (802) 451 9706,



This photo shows where a memorial bench in memory of Tom Hurst is planned for an August installation at the Greensboro Historical Society (GHS).
enhanced courtesy photo

Memorial Bench Installation Planned

GREENSBORO – A granite bench in memory of Tom Hurst is being readied for August 2025 installation on the Greensboro Historical Society (GHS) front lawn. The reverse side of the bench will read: "Remembered by friends – 2025."

Hurst grew up in Greensboro, he worked at The Willey's Store and became a fourth generation Willey's storekeeper. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2000. In 2016, he moved to Trumansburg N.Y., to be near family.

Hurst died in November 2024 of complications from a new diagnosis of pancreatic cancer.

GHS plans to raise $4,000 to build and install the bench. Donations are sought to help support the remembrance at PO Box 151, Greensboro VT 05841 or using the donation link on the GHS page, indicating the donation is for "Toms Bench."

Education

Bryant Austin Named to Dean's List

MANCHESTER, N.H. – Bryant Austin of Hardwick, Vt., has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Spring 2025 Dean's List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Marcus Named to President's List

MANCHESTER, N.H. – Chelsea Marcus of Wolcott, Vt., has been named to Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) Spring 2025 President's List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.



Our Communities

Plant Sale, May 24

CRAFTSBURY – A plant sale will be held on Craftsbury Library's side lawn on Saturday, May 24, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Plants will be labeled and priced, and garden experts will be on hand to describe plants and offer advice for the garden.

Plant donations will be accepted on Friday, May 24 and Saturday morning from 8 to 9 a.m. Any donated plants should be potted, watered and free of weeds and pests. The income from this sale goes directly toward covering operating costs of running the library.

For more information, contact the library at (802-586-9683 or director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org.

CVSWMD Office Moves

BERLIN – The Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) office is closed through May 23 as it moves from Montpelier to 300 Granger Road in Berlin. The office will reopen Monday, May 26, and is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (802) 229-9383.

History Exhibit on Display through June 5

ST. JOHNSBURY – "The American Revolution Experience" exhibit is on display May 26 to May 30 and June 2 to June 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the St. Johnsbury History and Heritage Center. The exhibit encourages visitors to consider the choice faced by members of the revolutionary generation as tensions mounted in the 1770s,

The exhibit is hosted by St. John de Crevecoeur of the Daughters of the American Revolution in partnership with the American Battlefield Trust. The History and Heritage Center is located at 421 Summer Street St. For more information, call (802) 424-1090 or email stjohnsburyhhc@gmail.com



Amber Vecchiarelli (left), territory sales representative for Casella, presents an honorable-mention certificate to Lakeview student Solace Cohen (right), May 14, for his drawing in the Casella calendar contest. Four-hundred-nineteen third grade entries from throughout Vermont included 13 winners and 12 honorable mention entries. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*

Black Fly Story Hour, June 6

HARDWICK – Blackfly Story Hour returns to the Hardwick Town House, Friday, June 6, 7:30 p.m. This event's theme is "Busted." This event is free. Storytellers should sign up at the door on arrival and keep telling-time within five minutes. Mic and PA available.

Education



Students Diamond Kassim and Willow Dyer visit with residents of the Greensboro Nursing Home. *courtesy photo*



Students Lucas Hall, Sadie Gann and Iziaha Peck plant spring flowers at the United Church of Hardwick. *courtesy photo*



Student Jameson Lamarre helps the Civic Standard transport items for the Mother's Day high tea. *courtesy photo*



Students Mercedes Keith, Sydney Moore, and Nevaeh Nash host a bake sale at Buffalo Mountain Coop to benefit local non-profits. *courtesy photo*



Students McKenna Durkee and Caidynse Bartlett sort DVDs at the Greensboro Free Library. *courtesy photo*

Obituaries

BETTY ANN KNOWLTON

NEWPORT – Betty Ann Knowlton, 92, of Barnet, passed away in her sleep with loved ones by her side on Friday, May 2, at Bel Aire Center in Newport.

She was born on March 23, 1933, in Hardwick, to Mildred (Bailey) Gates and Elmer Van Ness Gates. She attended Hardwick Elementary School and graduated from South Lancaster Academy, South Lancaster, Mass., in 1951.

She married Howard Larkin Knowlton, after graduation on June 2, 1951, in South Lancaster.

After the wedding, they returned to Hardwick, where their two children were born at Hardwick Hospital. Dr. Warren delivered Betty and both her children in the same room.

They moved to St. Johnsbury in 1965, where, along with raising her family, she worked at the St. Johnsbury House and then Desrocher's Pharmacy before becoming the bookkeeper for Knowlton's Welding.

They moved to Barnet in the early 1970s and loved living there for the next 50 years.

She and Howard (Slim) were married for 71 years before he passed away in 2022. In 2024, she moved from Barnet, where they had lived for 50 years, to the St. Johnsbury House, where she loved living until her passing.

She was a member of the St. Johnsbury Seventh-day Adventist



Betty Ann Knowlton

Church. Mom never met a stranger, so if you knew Betty, you were probably on her long prayer list.

She was the light of our lives. Her wit and wisdom never ceased to amaze us. She loved Border Collies and loved playing games of all sorts.

Along with many family members and friends, she leaves behind her son, Roger (Lois) of Cabot; granddaughters, Kelly (Phil), Chelsea (Kirk); great-granddaughters Ella, Izzy and Lily; daughter, Martha (Scott), Walla Walla, Wash., and grandsons Alan, Aaron and Adam.

Mom will surely be missed, but we look forward to seeing her soon when our Savior returns to take us home.

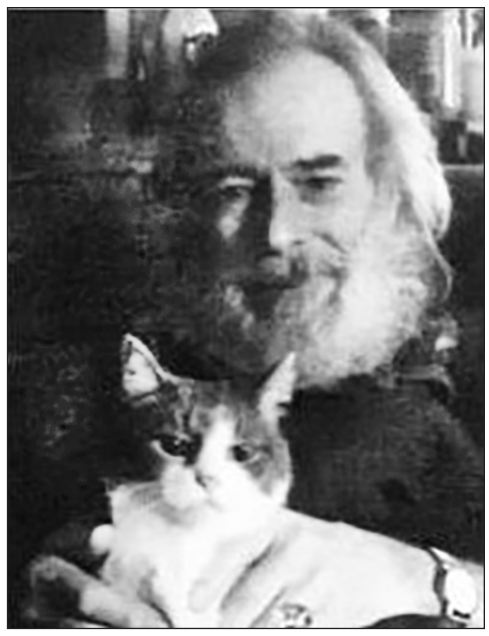
Ricker Funeral Home & Cremation Care of Woodsville is assisting the family with arrangements. To offer the family an online condolence, visit rickerfh.com.

DONALD A. "DONNIE" MOULTON

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. – A memorial service with military honors, for Donald Andrew "Donnie" Moulton, formerly of Calais, who died December 3, 2024, in St. Petersburg, will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, June 7, at Northern Vermont Funeral Home, 60 Elm Street, Hardwick.

A complete obituary and online condolences are available at: northernvermontfuneralservice.com

KENT DAVID CORDUAN



Kent David Corduan

HARDWICK – Kent David Corduan died after a long journey with early onset dementia.

Kent was born March 8, 1950, son of Malcom (Mac) and Lynn Corduan of Groton, Conn. and loving brother to Cap and Nancy Corduan.

Kent loved the outdoors, traveling, cooking and the life he created in Waterville with life partner Carolyn Mecklosky.

Kent loved his daughters Haita Corduan, Maia Corduan and son Lan Currier, daughter-in-law Jillian Ross, and grandbaby Zoe. Kent spent his life traveling the world since he was a young man. At sixteen, he moved to San Miguel Allende, Mexico.

He enjoyed meeting people from all walks of life. He loved sharing his stories from his travels on land and sea.

He was a wonderful cook and carpenter. He designed and built a variety of homes in New England, New Mexico, Belize and beyond. Kent's joy of animals, nature and the outdoors was a gift. Being in the woods with him, sharing that deep silence of observation was a true joy.

He will be sorely missed and remembered with much love. Many thanks to all who have helped care for Kent. Many warm thanks to our wonderful friends. Thank you to the lovely staff at Forest Hills and Brownway Residential, as well as the exceptional folks at Cold Hollow Family Center. A zillion thanks to Central Vermont Council on Aging CVCOA, for constant and endless support. And many thanks as well to the super-amazing Copley team doing hospice. And a big shout out to star ombudsman, Randi Morse. Thank you all so much for your grace, caring and humor. Donations in Kent's honor can be made to the CVCOA, the Alzheimer's Association, and/or to your local animal shelter. Condolences and memories of Kent may be shared with his family at dgfunerals.com.



Work continues on the new octagonal Greensboro Gazebo in the park across from Willey's Store, which now has a floor and supports for the roof, May 19. Mike Lapierre and his son Corban have been doing the work, which is using locally sourced and sawn wood paid for with Greensboro ARPA funding requested several years ago by the Caspian Critters 4H Club.

photo by Paul Fixx

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PRENEED PLANNING

"Mermaid" Featured Large Cast of Children, Adults

REVIEW

by David K. Rodgers

CABOT – Usually plays are turned into films but there is a certain trend of turning movies into plays, as in the case of "The Little Mermaid." Originally a Disney animated musical which came out in 1989, based on Hans Christian Andersen's tale, it has been adapted for the stage and was produced on May 8 through May 11 by the Cabot Community Theater in the Cabot School Performing Arts Center, combining a large cast of adult and child players.

The basic plot is fairly straightforward: a headstrong teenage mermaid (Ariel) rescues a young sailor (Eric) from a storm-wrecked ship and then falls in love with him She wants to lose her fish tail and grow legs, becoming a human being, but she gets no encouragement from her sisters and her father (Triton, King of the Ocean World). She makes a pact with the evil sister of her father (Ursula) to get a pair of legs, but with the trade off of losing her voice. After many difficulties she is finally able to marry the sailor, who turns out to be a prince. Happy ending!

Making a play from a movie illustrates something of each medium. In films, scenes change frequently, but in the theater a drama usually has a few acts with a limited number of scenes within them. In "The Little Mermaid" there were some 32 scenes, of short duration and requiring a constant moving of background props to suggest, for example, being underwater in Triton's Kingdom, on a beach or in a Prince's palace, in this production just a minimal suggestion of coral and seaweed, rocks and grass or tables and chairs. But to describe the numerous twists and turns of the story line would be tedious, so it might be better to focus on the characters and the overarching themes.

The heroine Ariel, a mermaid who is one of the daughters of King Triton, represents defiance to authority and the triumph of love through persistence. She is an independent person, at one point saying that she has no friends and didn't feel she belonged here in the sea. She wants to change and become a human being so she can consummate her love for the sailor Eric, whose life she saved. All children need to separate themselves from their parents psychologically at some stage of their life, usually as teenagers, hopefully without too much pain. Hence the long standing appeal of Ariel as a role model to younger people in Hans Christian Andersen's popular story. In this performance, the role of Ariel was given to three young girls, Nora McCann, Sycada Barnes and Elliett Melen, each of whom showed impressive dramatic talent and had fine voices.

Eric, the sailor-prince, was portrayed by Mary Rogerson and Louise Swift, both of whom were convincing in their acting and sang well. He is the hero of the play but his presence is secondary to that of Ariel. Their mutual attraction is the underlying momentum of the whole plot as she changes symbolically into another person, and his love the source of her deepest happiness.

Of the older authority figures, Seth Vandenburg as King Triton embodied the archetype of a loving father, keeping consistently in character, while Thomas Dunbar and Jesse Clayton, sharing the role of Sebastian, the music director, stood for the empathetic adults that every young person appreciates when their life is changing. Similarly, Erin Barry as Grimsby showed an admirable dignity characteristic of adults who can give wise advise and protection when it is needed, as did Clare Waterman as Scuttle. In a comic interlude in the second half of the play, Thomas Dunbar was quite humorous as Chef Louis, preparing a meal of dubious ingredients.

At the opposite end of the moral spectrum was the villainess Ursula, King Triton's exiled, evil sister, performed with great dramatic flair by Luna Dunbar and Jessica Della Pepa-Clayton. In the fundamental choice in life whether to relate to people by love or by power, she had chosen the latter. The proverbial witch, she used black magic in her lust for power over others, but ultimately she was defeated.



Sea creatures from "The Little Mermaid" are (all from left) front, Elfi Goldenrose, Penelope Otto and Kate McIntyre; back, Luciana Abare-Rossi, Cora McIntyre and Thomas Dunbar, extol the delights of living under the sea during the Cabot Community Theater production, May 8, with 45 performers.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

The cast of younger children acting, singing and dancing in "The Little Mermaid" was extensive, as sailors, sea creatures, seagulls, maids, chefs and princesses. They included Liam Waugh, Alexander Clayton, Alice Hannan, Rue Jacobs, Gwenyth Pare, Mavis Hall, Kate McIntyre, Fern Hammond, Susannah Harman, Lila Christiansen-Pollica, Althaea Itwin, Iris Jacobs, Jojo Taylor, Simone Kulsick, Amara Hansen, Judzia Bubrouski, Hanalee Hill, Luciana Abare-Rossi, Ariabella Clayton, Lily Dunbar, Elfi Goldenrose, Enid Hammond, Ariella Helfand, Cora McIntyre, Penelope Otto, Ruthie Podolin, Nora Rader, Zelda Scrivenner, Addelyn Temple and Moriah Usinowicz. This production was an inspiring example of genuine community theater, giving children an important opportunity to discover their potential acting skills. Live theater is a wonderful world of imagination and pretending to be that is always fun to explore.

The director and producer was Karen Mueller-Harder, the music directors were Jessica Della Pepa-Clayton and Mark Violette, who was also the keyboard accompanist, the assistant director was Jesse Clayton and the choreography was by Sarah Spletzer, Stella Cusack, Althaea Irwin, Louise Swift and Karen Mueller-Harder.

"The Revolutionists" Begins June 5

MONTPELIER – "The Revolutionists" by Lauren Gunderson will be presented Thursdays through Sundays, June 5 to June 15, at Lost Nation Theater (LNT).

The production presents four bold women who try not to lose their heads in comedy set during the French Revolution. Amidst the Reign of Terror, four renegades, an assassin, a writer, a spy and a queen, hang out, plot murder, find friendship and try to beat back extremist insanity.

The play is presented at 7:30 p.m., Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and 2 p.m. on Sundays and 2 p.m. Saturday, June 14.

Masks are encouraged, but not required. LNT's state-of-the-art bio-defense air purification Synexis system is in service 24-7. The flood made LNT - City Hall's elevator inoperable, requiring climbing stairs to attend in person. The play will be available digitally to make the show accessible to those unable to physically join us. Since there is no wheelchair-walker access, call (802) 229-0492) or email info@lostnationtheater.org to discuss options for seeing the show.



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Cast members Seth Vandenburg (left) as King Triton and Thomas Dunbar (right) as Sebastian discuss the concert during "The Little Mermaid" presented by the Cabot Community Theater in five performances, May 8 to 11, in the Cabot School Performing Arts Center. In back are Kate McIntyre (left) and Fern Hammond (right).

photo by Vanessa Fournier



In the final scene, May 8, of "The Little Mermaid" Elliette Melen (Ariel) and Louise Swift (Eric) are together at last. In back (from left) are Kate McIntyre, Enid Hammond, Mavis Hall, Elfi Goldenrose, Ruthie Podolin and Liam Waugh. The cast included 45 performers.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



A large cast of dancers of all ages perform in the adaptation of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Saturday and Sunday, June 7 and June 8, at the Barre Opera House.

courtesy photos

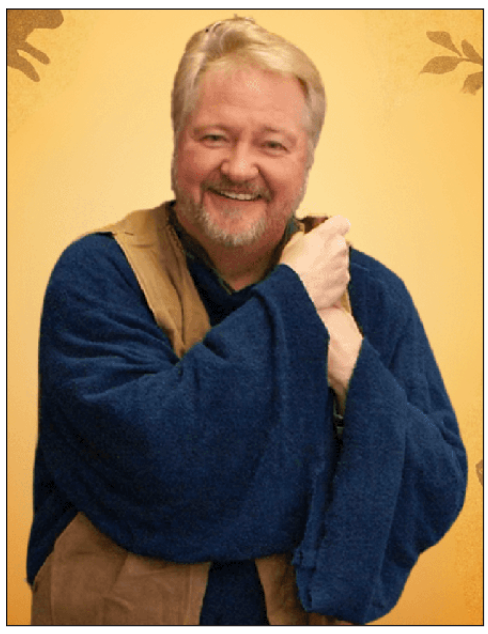
Ballet Adaptation of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" June 7-8

BARRE – An adaptation of Shakespeare's classic. "A Midsummer Night's Dream" will be presented

Saturday, June 7, 7 p.m., and Sunday, June 8, 2 p.m., at the Barre Opera House.

The story takes place in ancient Greece and opens on a love tangle that relies on a magic flower to unite the lovers. The production features choreography by director Christine Harris, Carissa Bellando and Brandy Perez. The show is performed by a cast of 60 dancers of all ages and levels and has original costumes by Emily Wheeler, Anne Labrusciano and Susan LaValley, sets by Joe John and lighting by Craig Mowery. Set to music by composer Felix Mendelsohn and others, this performance features fireflies, fairies, bumblebees and other characters.

For tickets and information go to barreoperahouse.org



J.T. Turner

Storyteller J.T. Turner, June 8 in "A Visit with Aesop"

PLAINFIELD – J.T. Turner presents a one-man show, "A Visit with Aesop," Sunday, June 8, at 4 p.m., at the Plainfield Opera House. Turner brings to life Aesop's classic fables while weaving in the tale of the storyteller himself.

J.T. Turner is an award-winning professional actor, director and playwright whose work spans stage, screen and audio. A member of SAG-AFTRA and Actors Equity, he tours nationally with solo performances featuring literary and historical figures such as Robert Frost, C.S. Lewis, Benjamin Franklin and Aesop. Beyond the stage, Turner is a skilled fight choreographer, circus ringmaster and teacher of acting, public speaking and Qigong.

Admission is by pay-what-you-can donation. Reserve seats online at plainfieldartsvt.org or buy tickets at the door.

Rossi Art Reception, May 22

GREENSBORO – The art of Renee Rossi will be on display at the Greensboro Free Library through the end of May. An artist's talk and reception will be held on Thursday, May 22, starting at 5 p.m., at the library, with light refreshments and the chance to win a Rossi art door prize. A portion of artwork sales will benefit the library.

Contact the greensborofree@gmail.com for more information.



Art by Renee Rossi will be displayed at the Greensboro Free Library beginning May 22.

The Hardwick Gazette

~ Since 1889 ~

News, Opinion, Entertainment, Sports & More!

Events

Wednesday, May 21

TWINFIELD COMMUNITY NIGHT, 5:30 p.m., Twinfield School. Pizza, bike rides, games and live music. At 6:45 p.m. "Twinfield's Got Talent" will be presented, as well as a display of student art work.

Friday, May 23

FARMERS MARKET, Food Trucks, free concert and dance party with Beg, Steal or Borrow, 3 - 10 p.m., Atkins Field, Hardwick.

Saturday, May 24

DOWNTOWN HARDWICK, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Fun Run - register 8 a.m., Parade - 10 a.m., Street Fair - 11:30 - 3 p.m., Tristan Southworth Memorial Day baseball game - 3 p.m. Information: hardwickdowntown.org.

MEDITATION WORKSHOP, 1:30 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, with Barry Wyman. Co-sponsored by the Marshfield Resilience Hub and the Jaquith Public Library. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.org or call (802) 426-3581.

Monday, May 26

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCES, 10 a.m., Memorial Park, Hardwick.

Tuesday, May 27

AUTHOR NATHANIEL IAN MILLER to read from his new novel, "Red Dog Farm," 7 p.m., The Galaxy Bookshop, Main St., Hardwick. Open to the public. Information: (802) 472-5533 or galaxybookshop.com.

Thursday, May 29

AUTHOR KENNETH CADOW leads a discussion of his book "Gather," 6 p.m.,Twinfield School Library. Co-sponsored by the Jaquith Public Library and the Cutler Memorial Library. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com or call (802) 426-3581.

Ongoing Events

MONTPELIER CONTRA DANCE, 8 - 11 p.m., Capital City Grange. Newcomers lesson at 7:40 p.m. First, third and fifth Saturdays. Information: (802) 225-8921 or cdu.tim@gmail.com

FRIENDS OF THE JEUDEVINE LIBRARY, meets the third Tuesday of every month, 5:15 p.m., at the library, N. Main St., Hardwick.

MOVEMENT, MEDITATION, QIGONG, with Ellie Hayes, the first Saturday of each month through May, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., Woodbury Library community room, 69 Valley Lake Road. All are welcome and children can join the story time from 11 to 11:30 a.m. Space is limited. Call (802) 472-5710.

OLD-TIME JAM SESSION, 6 to 8 p.m., J.W. Simpson Library, 1972 East Craftsbury Road, East Craftsbury. All ages and abilities encouraged to attend. Jam sessions held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

COMMUNITY DINNER, noon, United Church of Hardwick, S. Main St., Third and Fourth Thursdays of the month. Call Sharyn Salls at (802) 472-6566 to reserve a meal. Take-Out or Eat-In. Donations appreciated.

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS for Young Adventurers, first and third Mondays, Craftsbury Public Library,

See EVENTS, Next Page

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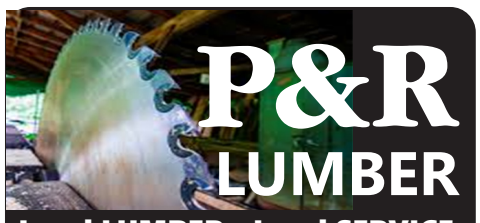
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Events

for children ages 8-13. Reserve a spot to play by contacting director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org.

EARLY LITERACY STORYTIME, Craftsbury Public Library - Tuesdays, 10 a.m. For children ages 0 - 5. Information: childrenslibrarian@craftsburypubliclibrary.org or (802) 586-9683.

TAI CHI CLASSES, Tuesdays, Hardwick Area Health Center, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. Advanced Tai Chi, taught by Norma Spaulding, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Tai Chi for Fall Prevention, taught by Norma Spaulding. Information: Norma Spaulding, (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com.

TAI CHI CLASSES, Church of Christ, Greensboro. Thursdays, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Advanced Tai Chi taught by Norma Spaulding. 10:30 a.m. to 11:30. Tai Chi for Fall Prevention, taught by Norma Spaulding and Paul Fixx. Information: Norma Spaulding, (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com and Paul Fixx (802) 441-4599, pfixx@pfixx.net.

CRAFTING GROUP on Tuesdays, 4:30 to 6 p.m. and the fourth Saturday of each month, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, 122 School St., Marshfield. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, call (802) 426-3581 or visit jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

MAGIC ON TUESDAY. A group of young people get together at The Civic Standard, 42 S. Main St., Hardwick, to play Magic: the Gathering, hosted by Dean Burns. Games gin at 5 p.m. and new players are always welcome.

PARENTING GROUP, on Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., Jaquith Public Library. Caregivers can relax and connect with each others while their babies play. Geared for babies 0-18 months. Siblings invited. 122 School St., Marshfield. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, call (802) 426-3581 or visit jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

COMMUNITY SUPPER, every Wednesday, 5:30 p.m., The Civic Standard, 42 S. Main St., Hardwick.

COMMUNITY DINNER, Sterling College, Craftsbury Common, every Friday, 4:30 to 6 p.m. Free and open to anyone in the greater Craftsbury area and neighboring towns. Hosted by students in the Food Harvest and Conservation class. Students will give brief presentations at 5:30 covering a couple components of the menu they create.

STORYTIME, PLAYGROUP ON FRIDAYS, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, 122 School St., Marshfield. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, call (802) 426-3581 or visit jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

MENDING CIRCLE MEETS, every third Sunday, 3 to 5 p.m., the Civic Standard, 42 S. Main St., Hardwick. Bring clothes in need of fixing. Materials, instruction and snacks will be supplied.

BOOK CLUB meets the second Thursday of each month, 1:30 p.m., the Flower Basket, Main St. Hardwick. Hosted by the Galaxy Bookshop. Call the Galaxy or stop in to reserve a copy of each month's book at 20% off for book club members. Tea and other drinks and small treats for sale.

HARDWICK HAIKU CLUB, every first Thursday, 5:30 - 7 p.m., The Civic Standard, 42 S. Main St., Hardwick. A time to read published haiku, brainstorm some Vermont kigo, or season words, and write your own haiku. No previous writing experience needed. Hosted by Mark Scott.

TRIVIA NIGHT, at the Village Restaurant, S. Main St., Hardwick, Thursdays, 6 - 8 p.m., unless there is a home basketball game. A limited menu of burgers and appetizers. Hosted by Annie Houston. First come, first serve event, with room for roughly 10 teams.

MEDITATION at Craftsbury Community Care Center, the second and fourth Fridays, 3. to 3:45 p.m., 1784 East Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury. Offered by Nancy Milholland. Open to all and sponsored by the Mental Health Resource Group of Craftsbury.

HANG OUT ON THURSDAYS, at the Civic Standard, 42 S. Main St., Hardwick, 2:45 p.m. - 6. Relax, make art, play games, get help with homework, or just spend time with friends. Facilitated by Hazen Union's Community School Coordinator Vaiva Velzis, with support from The Civic's staff. Snacks provided. Information: Vvelzis@ossu.org.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. - 5. Cabot Public Library. Ages 9 - 13. Mysteries and magic, tails and talons, puzzles and prophecies.

OUTDOOR STORY & ACTIVITY TIME, with the Cabot Public Library, Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. - 11:30, Cabot Rec Field Pavilion. Join Amanda Otto for stories, songs, snacks, crafts, open play and special programming.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM, Every Tuesday, 3 p.m. - 5; Thursday, 10:30 a.m. Preschool Storytime; Friday, 10:30 a.m. Homeschool Program. Greensboro Free Library. Information: (802) 533-2531.

Exhibits

LOCAL ARTISTS EXHIBIT, the Third Floor Gallery. Hardwick Inn. A building-wide show on all three floors. Open during regular business hours. Show will be up through May.

ORAH MOORE AND MARIE LAPRE GRABON on Exhibit, River Arts, 74 Pleasant St, Morrisville, through June 17. Galleries are open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Information; (802) 888-1261 or info@riverartsvt.org.

PHILLIP ROBERTSON EXHIBIT, Meditations On The Landscape, T.W. Wood Gallery, Montpelier. Exhibit runs through June 20 with a closing reception 5 - 6 p.m.

GERRY TREVITS: New landscape paintings of Shadow Lake and surroundings, through June 17, Parker Pie Gallery, 161 County Road, Glover.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION EXPERIENCE exhibit on display May 26 to May 30 and June 2 to June 5, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., St. Johnsbury History and Heritage Center, 421 Summer St. Hosted by St. John de Crevecoeur of the Daughters of the American Revolution in partnership with the American Battlefield Trust. Information: (802) 424-1090 or email stjohnsburyhhc@gmail.com

To have your event listed free in our weekly events calendar, please e-mail: news@hardwickgazette.com.

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK POSITION

The Town of Greensboro is seeking an organized and motivated individual to serve as parttime Assistant Town Clerk. This position is for 13-20 hours a week. Please call Kim Greaves, Town Clerk, at (802) 533-2911 or email townclerk@greensborovt.gov for a full job description.

Hardwick

Enjoy furnished third-floor bedroom in spacious in-town home shared with welcoming family. Shared bath, no smoking, hypoallergenic dog considered, no other pets. $600 plus utilities. (802) 863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

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PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY HERBICIDE

Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. (VELCO) has applied for a right-of-way pesticide application permit through the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the purpose of making selective ground base applications of herbicides. These herbicides include: Aquamaster (Glyphosate), Escort XP (Metsulfuron Methyl), Garlon 4 Ultra (Triclopyr), Krenite S (Fosamine Ammonium), Polaris (Isopropylamine salt of Imazapyr) and Round Up Custom (Glyphosate). Applications will be made on VELCOs various 115kV and 230kV transmission line right-of-ways located in the following county and towns:

Caledonian County

Barnet	Groton
Lyndon	Ryegate
Sheffield	St. Johnsbury
Sutton	Waterford

Herbicide application will start on Monday June 16, 2025.

Landowners adjacent to the areas in which will be treated should contact VELCO if private water supplies or other environmentally sensitive areas are located within 200 feet of the right-of-way edge. For further information please contact:

Colby Marshall
VELCO Utility Arborist
366 Pinnacle Ridge Road
Rutland, VT 05701
(802) 779-7163
cmarshall@velco.com

Please contact the state agency with any other questions, comments or concerns:

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
116 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620
(802) 828-5667
www.agriculture.vermont.gov



Home plate umpire Dennis Deatte (left) makes a dead ball call as Lake Region's Julia Gardner (center) makes the catch and Adelina Augsberger of Craftsbury safely steals home, May 12, on Dustan Field. The Rangers beat the Chargers 22-7.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



Craftsbury pitcher Savanah Boyce (right) waits for the ball as Ruby Gardner (No. 2) of Lake Region crosses home plate safely. Lake Region defeated Craftsbury 22-7.
photo by Vanessa Fournier

Ken Brown's Softball Roundup

Lake Region Slugs Past Lady Chargers

CRAFTSBURY – Lake Region breezed past the Craftsbury Academy (CA) softball team for their fourth consecutive win last week.

Julia Gardner smashed a three-run triple and Lauren Legacy went 3-3 with a double to power Lake Region past CA on the road last Monday 22-7. The dynamic duo combined to drive in eight runs on the day for the Lady Rangers. Lindsey Brown struck out seven to earn the win and Maddy McCoy twirled a pair of hitless innings as Lake Region improved to 5-4 and moved into contention in the current Division II standings. Gracie Crown scored three times and collected a pair of hits for the Lady Chargers as they fell to 0-7 on the season.

CA was scheduled to travel to Lamoille on Tuesday, host Fairfax on Wednesday and travel to Paine Mountain on Thursday, before wrapping up a busy week at home against Burlington-Winooski on Saturday.



Charger Ada Allen gets set to hit the ball from a Lake Region pitcher May 12 in Craftsbury.
photo by Vanessa Fournier

Lady Bullets Handle Cal United

DANVILLE – The Caledonia United (Twinfield-Cabot-Danville) softball team ran into one of the top contenders in Division III last week, falling to BFA-Fairfax at home to drop to 0-7 on the season.

Tatum Gaudette struck out three in four innings of work to earn the win, powering the Lady Bullets past Cal United on the road last Tuesday 16-4. Halle Rochleau finished up in the circle for BFA with a pair of strong innings and helped her own cause at the plate with a 4-4 performance that included a double. Anna Villeneuve went 3-3 with an RBI and Summer Boutin and Ella Arel combined for three more hits and a pair of RBI in the win. Amyra Simmons and Olivia Hess each belted a double for Cal United, Phoebe Crocker collected a pair of hits, and Sophi Mancini scored twice. Myah Morgan struck out five in taking the loss in the circle. Fairfax remains atop of the divisional standings with a 7-2 record.

Cal United has a busy week of softball ahead of them after inclement weather postponed matchups against Craftsbury Academy, Paine Mountain, and Richford in the last 10 days.

Strong Keeps Green Knights Rolling

ENOSBURG – Finley Strong, the daughter of former Hazen Union baseball standout Jeff Strong, drove in the only run of the game against division rival Enosburg last week to keep her Rice Memorial softball team near the top of the Division II standings.

Strong's game winner on Friday helped Rice escape with a 1-0 road win, handing Enosburg their first loss in five games. Teammate Alayna Havreluk fired a two-hitter, striking out 12 on the day to earn the complete game shutout win. Earlier in the week, Strong smashed a two-run double to help power the Green Knights past Milton 22-8.

Rice improved to 8-1 on the season and have pivotal matchups against Harwood, Mount Abe, Middlebury and Milton this week.

Clark Inducted into VPA Hall of Fame

by The Hardwick Gazette



Mike Clark, center, receives his Vermont Principals Association Hall of Fame certificate from VPA Director Jay Nichols, left, and Assistant Director Mike McRaith, right, Friday evening, at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier.

courtesy photo

MONTPELIER – Mike Clark, an athlete, teacher, coach, administrator, councilor, referee and umpire, was honored last week for a significant life-pursuit. This past Friday evening, after a professional career spanning over four decades, Clark got his due and was inducted into the Vermont Principals Association Hall of Fame. Clark was one of 14 new members inducted on Friday, during the awards ceremony at the Capital Plaza in Montpelier.

Clark was recognized by the VPA as a standout sports official, but he could have easily been honored for most of the VPA's six categories, including athlete, coach and administrator.

When he chose early in life to participate in athletics, Clark developed into one the top local athletes of his era in several sports. He was a four-year varsity athlete in soccer, basketball and baseball at both Hardwick Academy and Hazen Union. He graduated from Hazen Union in 1972.

Clark attended the University of Vermont and, while doing his student teaching at Hardwick Elementary, he was hired as its physical education instructor. He had to take summer classes at UVM to complete his college degree after being hired by the school that gave him his elementary education.

He would spend five years at Hardwick Elementary before moving on to Cabot High School for the next five years. While there, he coached soccer and baseball. Despite coaching one of the smallest schools in the state, Clark's teams won a few CVL North crowns, including one in baseball in 1981 and one in soccer in 1984.

As the story goes, coaches used to roam the halls at Cabot to find a fifth player to fill out the basketball rosters. Once Clark arrived, sports participation exploded. Clark's influence resulted in upwards of 40 percent of the student body participating in athletics. He was also appointed assistant principal at Cabot.

After his Cabot stint, Clark moved on to Twinfield High School, spending the next 22 years there as a teacher, coach and councilor. He ended his 41-year teaching career at Hazen Union working as a councilor.

Clark won a Teacher of the Year honor at all three schools he taught at.

His first foray into refereeing happened in 1976, where Clark's evaluator was none other than standout official Dick Stewart. Stewart admired Clark's work on the field and assured him he would become a great official. Stewart was correct, and in 2009, Clark won the elite Dick Stewart Official of the Year award.

Clark was named the Vermont Soccer Coaches Association Official of the Year in 1995. He won the Capital Division's Official of the Year in 2023. Just recently, Clark was awarded his 40-year pin from the Vermont Soccer Officials Association.

By 2023, Clark had worked 10 soccer championship finals, 27 semifinal games and four Lions Cup Twin State games. He has been a member of the Vermont Softball Umpires Association for 24 years. During that time, he has worked seven state championship games and 16 state semifinal games.

In his acceptance speech, Clark credited many of his mentors, family and friends who helped him along his journey. He lauded former coach Dan Hudson, also a Hall inductee, for being a model coach, a person to envy and emulate for his high moral standards, as well as a family friend who helped out during some difficult times.

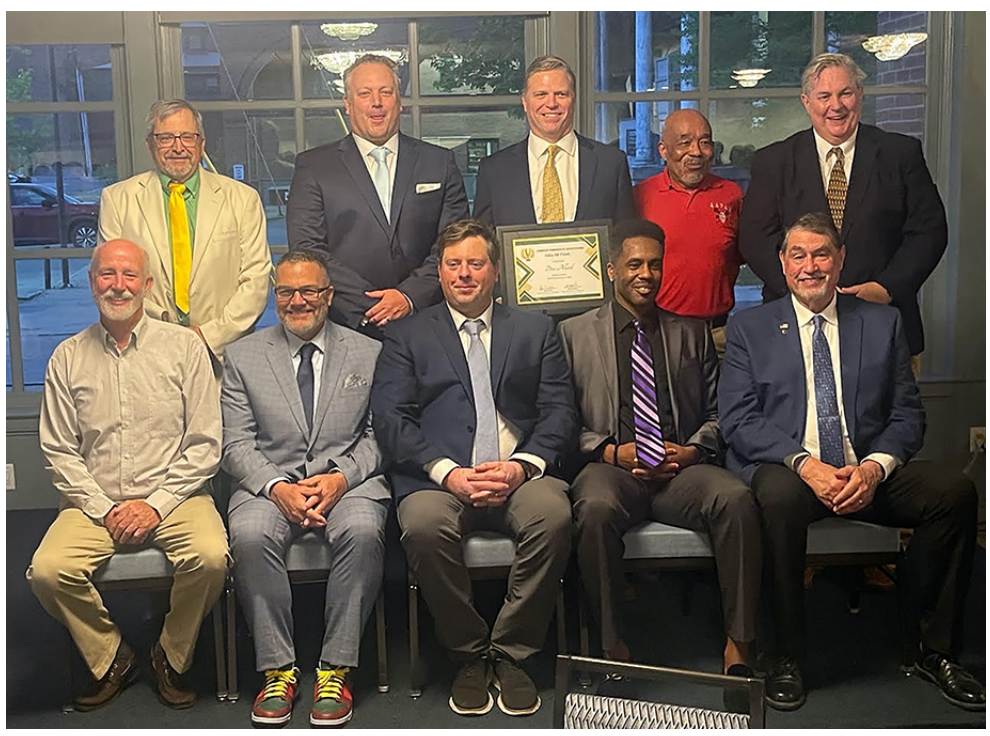
He singled out Hazen Union coach and Athletic Director Aaron Hill as yet another positive role model for Hazen athletes and for Hill's collection of data as a Vermont sports historian. Both Hill and Hudson wrote supporting letters for Clark's induction as did fellow official Frank Martel.

The support for Clark was on full display Friday evening as his supporters filled not one, but three different tables. At the main table supporting Clark was his family with his wife Alicia Benoit-Clark, sons Caleb and Jacob Clark and sister Julie Clark.

At a second table were many of Clark's fellow referees and close associates, including Martel, Marvin Pritchard, inducted last year, Mike Nixon, Miles Etter, Dave Christianson and Greg Barcomb. At the third table were Hudson and Hill as well as many lifetime friends that included Mike and Dan LeCours, Dave Burnham, Bob Blake, Gary Brochu and Pat Hussey. Clark personally thanked each and every one of his supporters.

Clark said he has been humbled and appreciative of all the support he has been given throughout his life. He talked of his love for officiating and how he takes very seriously his responsibility to monitor games fairly and without bias.

Clark said he expects to continue officiating as long as his physical condition and ability to govern games remains strong. So far, so good, Hall-of-Fame-good, in fact.



Members of the Vermont Principals Association Hall of Fame Class of 2025 included (all from left front, Mike Clark, Dalyn Drown, Lou DiMasi, Byron Robertson, and Dave Cobb; back, Richard Berthiaume, Ben Gilbert, Don Allard's son, George Cook and Brent Curtis. Missing are Elizabeth Burnham, Karin Dwyer, Benjamin Shungu and Arlan "Chip" Langmaid.

courtesy photo



Hogan Morrissette, 6, (left) of Bolton, from Vermont Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Giavanna Bona, 6, (right), of Wolcott, from Martial Arts in Hardwick competed a grappling event, May 17, at the Conifer Clash Open Martial Arts Tournament.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



Baillee Gonzalez, 13, from Grand Master Randy Rotta's Black Belt Academy competed in the colored Belt Weapons 11-13 co-ed division using a bo staff during the Conifer Clash Open Martial Arts Tournament Saturday.
photo by Vanessa Fournier

Ken Brown's Sport Nuggets

Fliegelmann Posts Season-Best Finish

ST. JOHNSBURY – The top two boys track and field programs in the state went head-to-head last week and something had to give as the U-32 Raiders clipped host St. Johnsbury Academy (SJA) to claim May bragging rights.

Former Hazen Union standout Manny Fliegelmann posted his best finish as a Hilltopper, securing a runner-up finish to teammate Evan Windrow in the 800m. Former Craftsbury Academy champion Charlie Kehler ran his best time of the season in the mile over the weekend at the William F. Eddy Jr. in Schenectady, N.Y.

The Raiders boys program has dominated Division II for more than a decade, winning their ninth title in eleven years last spring. The Hilltoppers will be going for their fifth consecutive Division I boys state title next month. The Raiders took down SJA on their home track last Tuesday 169-164.

The Hilltoppers were scheduled to travel to U-32 for the rematch on Tuesday.

Stags-Alekson Set for MAAC Tournament

LAWRENCEVILLE, N.J. – Stowe native and former Peoples Academy (PA) great Ben Alekson and his Fairfield University baseball team will enter the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Championship as the No. 2 seed this coming week.

The 6-2, 200-lb right hander dazzled once again in his final regular season start against Rider last week, allowing just one earned run over five innings of work. The game was postponed due to inclement weather and resumed nearly two days later. Rider swept the series-shortened doubleheader over the weekend to leapfrog the Stags for the top seed.

Alekson finished up the regular season with a team leading 8-1 record, 3.14 era, allowing just 70 hits over 83 innings of work, while striking out 70. The former Vermont Gatorade Baseball Player of the Year and 3-time state champion is 14-2 in his young career at Fairfield.

Opening round games of the MAAC Tournament are scheduled for Thursday in Pomona, N.Y. Alekson is scheduled to take the mound in the opener, where the game can be streamed on ESPN +.

Richards Advances to Finals of U.S. Open Qualifying

LINCOLN, R.I. – Former U-32 golf star Bryson Richards, son of Craftsbury Academy legend Pete Richards, was one of five players to fire low rounds of 68 at Kirkbrae Country Club last week to advance to the Final Stage of U.S. Open qualifying.

The two-time Vermont Amateur winner and Vermont Open champion was coming off a runner-up finish at the PGA National Fazio Two-Day at Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., on the Professional Mini Tour. Richards graduated from the University of Rhode Island (URI) last spring with six career collegiate wins, three straight Atlantic-10 First Team honors, and was the first golfer in program history to receive the Albert LaBoeuf Award as URI's top senior athlete of the year. His dream of competing on the PGA Tour nearly came true last fall, advancing to the first round of Q-school.

Final Qualifying tee times and locations will be announced in the coming weeks. Richards will be at one of 10 locations ranging from Walla Walla, Wash., to West Palm Beach on June 2, known as "Golf's Longest Day,". The U.S. Open will be played at Oakmont C.C. in Oakmont, Pa., on June 12 to June 15.

Sport Calendar

Thursday, May 22
4:30 p.m., Hazen Union Baseball at Lyndon

Saturday, May 24
4:30 p.m., Hazen Union Baseball vs. North Country, at Hazen Union

Tuesday, May 27
4:30 p.m., Hazen Union Baseball at Harwood
4:30 p.m., Caledonia United Varsity Softball vs. Blue Mountain, at Danville

Thursday, May 2 9
4:30 p.m., Caledonia United Varsity Softball at Craftsbury
4:30 p.m., Hazen Union Baseball vs. Lake Region, at Hazen Union

Saturday, May 31
Hazen Union Track and Field at Essex Invitational, time to be determined
Craftsbury Track and Field at Essex Invitational, time to be determined
Division 3 Track and Field State Championships, date and time TBA

Ken Brown's Baseball Roundup

Barre City Teams Feast on Wildcats

HARDWICK – The Hazen Union baseball team dropped a pair of lopsided games out of division last week as U-32 and Spaulding pounded Wildcat pitching, dropping them to 2-8 on the season.

Owen Dwyer and Maddox Heise combined for four hits and seven RBI to power U-32 to a program record 26-0 road win over Hazen last Tuesday. Carlo Concessi drove in two runs on a pair of hits and Carson DeForge smacked a three run double as the Raiders plated 12 runs in the third inning to put the game away early. Jaxon Keane earned the win for U-32, striking out two and walking none. The Raiders improved to 6-2 with their sixth straight win. Owen Skorstad had a hit and a stolen base for the Wildcats, and teammates Evan LaMare, Jake Hayden, and Justin Montgomery added a hit apiece in the loss.

Tanner Arsenault went 4-5 with a triple on Thursday to lead Spaulding over the Wildcats 21-5 at home. Zach Parker drove in four runs on a pair of hits for the Crimson Tide and Carson Nuhfer added a pair of hits and stole a pair of bases in the win. Joey Hayes-Garcia earned the win, scattering five hits over four innings of work. Freshman Trent Loftus finished the fifth with a pair of strikeouts in the win. Spaulding has now won four of five after starting the season 1-5.

Hazen looked to snap a five-game losing streak at Randolph on Tuesday, will stay on the road against Lyndon Institute on Thursday, before wrapping up a busy week at home against Lamoille and North Country on Friday and Saturday. All home games can be streamed live on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

Brown's Bullets Stay Hot

FAIRFAX – Hazen Union alum and BFA-Fairfax head coach Mike Brown guided his Bullets varsity baseball team to their sixth win in seven tries with a dominant performance against Richford at home last week.

Ryan Sheehan struck eight, scattered three hits, and didn't walk a batter to lead Fairfax to a 10-0 home win over Richford last Thursday. Rylan Muehl led the Bullet offense with three hits and a pair of RBI in the win. Fairfax improved to 7-4 on the season and look poised to defend their Division III state championship next month. Brown led his Bullet's program to their fifth state title under his stewardship last spring as a sixth seed.

Fairfax will host defending Division IV champion Blue Mountain, Richford and Paine Mountain this week.

Ken Brown's Track & Field Roundup

Hill Leads Chargers with First Career Title

LYNDON CENTER – Sophomore Natalie Hill won her first career varsity track and field event to lead several teammates with personal bests for the Craftsbury Academy (CA) track and field team at Lyndon Institute last week.

Hill crushed the field in the discus event last Wednesday with a personal best throw of 67 feet, 5 inches, besting runner-up Sage Cook of Oxbow by over six feet. She capped off her big day with a solid sixth-place finish in the shot put, with freshman teammate Linsey Allen setting a personal record in the same event. Abigail Dunn of North Country took home first place honors. Allen had a personal record throw in the discus event, good enough for a sixth-place finish.

Junior Soren Stelma-Leonard ran his best time of the season in the 1500m for the Chargers, finishing runner-up to Lyndon Institute's Mateo Gomez-Moguer. Sophomore Theo Alexander posted a personal best and sixth-place finish in the 800m behind Lamoille senior Elliot Rowe, who bested the field by over 14 seconds. Junior Owen McKibben ran personal best times in both the 200m and 400m events, posting a sixth-place finish in the 400. Freshman Nora Van Gulden wrapped up a stellar day for the Chargers with a strong sixth-place finish in the 800m event, won by Lyndon Institute's Elia Garcia Jurado.

"We had solid performances all around, with the team showing consistency and a desire to compete. Our athletes overall did a good job of hovering around their season bests in their events. They're in a good position to be competitive and continue to improve on our last weeks of the season," said head coach Kyle Anderson.

The Chargers are scheduled to travel to South Burlington on Wednesday.



Kristina Waters (left) of Pomfret, from Grand Master Randy Rotta's Black Belt Academy spars with Bill Morin (right) of Fairfax, from Arrowhead Martial Arts during the Conifer Clash Open Martial Arts Tournament, May 17, in the Hardwick Elementary School gymnasium. Master Alexander (center) is the head referee for this division. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*

Local Middle Schoolers Shine in Opening Meets

NEWPORT – Several local middle schoolers shone last week for Craftsbury Academy (CA) and Danville as they kicked off their middle school track and field season at North Country high school.

Seventh-grader Hollis Allen led the Chargers with a first-place finish in the 1500m event, blitzing runner-up eighth grader Jonah Higgins-Matte of Kingdom East by nearly seven seconds. Allen posted a runner-up finish in the 800m event and a fifth-place finish in the 110m hurdles. Sixth grade teammate Joseph Krebs ran to an impressive seventh-place finish in the 200m event, and eighth grader Oakley Crawford finished third in the 800m event for CA. On the girls' side, Charger eighth grader Eliza Bunten clipped Enosburg's Emma Howard by just under a second to best the field in the 800m. Sixth-grade teammate Evelyn Stout finished sixth. Seventh-grader Poppy Glestos capped off an impressive day for CA in the field events with a runner-up finish in the discus and a fifth-place finish in the shot put. Eighth-grader Ora Nobel and sixth-grader Jade Griggs also posted top five finishes in the discus event for the Chargers.

Danville eighth-grader Landon Garrand edged North Country's Cisco Damato to take home the hardware in the 100m event and eighth grade teammate Colin Gray accomplished the same feat in the 110m hurdles. Gray bested the field in the long jump event and eighth-grade teammate Mirek Siebenbrunner did the same in the javelin event. Seventh-grader Hailey Duprey dominated the 400m event for Danville, seventh-grader Althaea Irwin edged Kingdom East's Lillian Rossetti in the long jump and seventh-grade teammate Willa Mantius took home the title in the 1500m.

CA, Danville, and the Hazen Union middle school programs were back on the track this past Monday in St. Albans.