THE
Hardwick Gazette

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Wednesday, May 28, 2025 *hardwickgazette.org* **Volume 136 Number 22**

Town Hall Uses Proposed, Discussed

by Raymonda Parchment

GREENSBORO – The May 14 regular select board meeting garnered its usual attendance, with many community members wondering what's next for the town hall. Several proposed uses came up in discussion throughout the evening. Other agenda items included the potential purchase of a new fire truck, paving bids and other public concerns.

Greensboro Fire Chief David Brochu was present, delivering his regular report. The board then discussed options for replacing the current rescue truck and 2006 pumper truck.

Several proposals were considered, including refurbishing the current pumper, purchasing a used stock unit, a late-model new stock unit or a new custom E-One unit. Chief Brochu's recommendation for this purchase was the E-One unit, as it includes a greater hose capacity and top-mounted pump. This would be beneficial as Greensboro has many long driveways, requiring a longer hose length. Brochu said the service life is estimated at 25 to 30 years.

Some community members present questioned Brochu's recommendation, however. Peter Romans asked if the select board has looked at the Capital Budget to see how this truck purchase will work out financially. In response Vice Chair Tim Brennan said the capital budget currently shows $490k scheduled for this truck, with an annual payment of $70k.

Resident Gary Circosta said just because this spending is scheduled in the capital budget, that doesn't mean it's a feasible cost for

See USE, 4



Select Board Chair MacNeil said at the board's May 14 meeting, the Greensboro Town Hall blue room (seen here on May 25), in the building's northern corner, and now Josh Karp's office, will be turned into a general town meeting space with technology to make hybrid meetings possible.

photo by Paul Fixx

Foster Hopes to Rebuild Herd, Barn

by Raymonda Parchment

HARDWICK – Area organic dairy farmer Forrest Foster has been around agriculture for 76 years. Like many other farmers, Foster's insurance policy was canceled last fall. The policy included liability insurance, required to ship milk.

Foster has since sold most of his cows, keeping a few with the hopes of rebuilding his herd. "We have to have liability. I send 500,000 pounds of milk in a year, so I had to have 2 million dollars a year of liability insurance," he explained.

Foster says it all has to do with modern farming regulations. "If you don't know that I treated a cow, and didn't mark it and the milk goes in there with medicine in it, gets in the truck so you got 30,000 to 50,000 gallons of milk. You have to have insurance enough for all the milk, not just the milk I make. We never had to have it until a while ago."

Foster says they've done this to seven farms he knows of in recent months. He believes over-regulation and inconsistency in policy has made it more difficult for small farmers like himself to keep up. "Every time you get something that makes it in standard, insurance is the same, getting certified for organic, they keep adding new restrictions. They take away some medicine you can't use." Citing one example, Foster explained he is trained and more

See FOSTER, 5



A Hardwick American Legion Post 7 Honor Guard and veterans marched from Hardwick Elementary School to the Memorial Park, stopping for Lynn Bessette to place a wreath in the Lamoille River from the North Main Street bridge with Bradley Slayton to the right and the Honor Guard to the left made up of Todd Manchester, Matt Greaves, Ivan Menard, Mark Cloutier, Slade Farnham, Barry Cadorette, Gary Smith and Steve Fortmann.

photo by Paul Fixx



Organic dairy farmer Forrest Foster discusses his return to dairy farming, outside his soon-to-be dismantled and replaced barn.

photo by Raymonda Parchment



The first Hardwick Farmers Market of the season opened on a drizzly May 23 at Atkins Field. The market will run every Friday from 3 a.m. - 6 p.m. until October 10. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*

Farmers Market Season Begins

by Paul Fixx

AREA TOWNS – Hardwick's first farmers market of the season featured Food Truck Friday, May 23, to open the town's Springfest activities at Atkins Field. The rain-or-shine Farmers Market proceeded as planned despite an intermittent drizzle.

Craftsbury's market opened May 17 and continues every Saturday through September 17, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The market in Plainfield opens Friday, June 6, with Greensboro's a month later, on Wednesday, July 2.

Vermont leads the nation in farmers markets and CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) by a wide margin with 20.1 per 100k residents, more than double every state except Wyoming, which counted just 12.2 per 100k according to "America's Farmers Market Capitals," a Trace One, April 2025 report.

The Craftsbury Market offers music and

See MARKET, 4

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May 28 - June 3

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Briannas Salad Dressing $2.99 12 oz.	Kraft Miracle Whip $4.99 30 oz.	Heinz Grill Pack $5.99 54 oz.
Vlassic Pickles 2/$5 16-32 oz.	Skippy Peanut Butter 2/$5 14.3-16.3 oz.	Nabisco Snack Crackers 2/$6 6.5-13.7 oz.
Wasa Crisp Bread $2.99 4.9-9.7 oz.	Simply Done 12 Roll Bathroom Tissue $9.99 314.5 s.f.	Cabot Cheese Slices 2/$5 7-8 oz.
Food Club Butter $3.49 16 oz.	Breyers Ice Cream $4.49 48 oz.	Talenti Gelato $3.99 16 oz.
Cantaloupe 2/$5 ea.	Honey Dew Melon $3.99 ea.	Washington State Dark Cherries $3.99 lb.

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"If we don't have it, then you probably don't need it."

Weather Watch



Food trucks and vendors filled the Jeudevine Mansion parking lot during Springfest activities Saturday. photo by Vanessa

Rain, Rain, Here to Stay…

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – After another round of dreary and soggy conditions, Memorial Day weekend closed out Monday with the first 24-hour break in rainfall seen in over 10 days. Precipitation this forecast period was lighter than the previous due to its showery nature. It amounted to a widespread eight-tenths of an inch to an inch of rain. No observing stations reported snow accumulations, although an anecdotal report of a few flakes came from the higher elevations of Walden during the coldest conditions Friday morning.

A total of seven rain-free days were recorded at the weather station in May. Although there is hope we can squeeze another zero out of today, refrain from banging your head against a wall as we discuss the forecast trends through the weekend, and consider getting your outdoor chores done before we revert to our now relatively predictable wet pattern.

High pressure overhead Wednesday gives way to an approaching low-pressure system in the Ohio Valley, which will lift a warm front through New England into Thursday with steady rain that exits by day's end. A lull occurs for part of Friday, where we may see some breaks of sun early and some warming. Another low-pressure system spins up off the coast and moves north with a steady rain arriving by daybreak Saturday. This persists through Sunday morning before exiting by afternoon, where we have the opportunity to start the break in activity all over again. This time around, temperatures should be warm enough for rain everywhere. It's preposterous to think we're days away from June. Here are the forecast details:

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with increasing clouds late. High: 74. Low: 50. Light and variable wind.

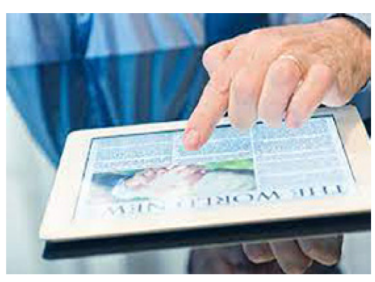
Thursday: Mostly cloudy. Rain. High: 65. Low: 48. South wind 5-10 mph.

Friday: Mostly cloudy, with occasional breaks of sun. Scattered showers. High: 66. Low: 46. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

Saturday: Mostly cloudy. Rain. High: 63. Low: 43. West wind 5-10 mph.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy early with scattered showers; becoming partly sunny by afternoon. High: 66. Low: 45. West wind 5-10 mph.

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Police Report

Hardwick Police

Media Log

May 18: Accident – Injury to Person(s), E. Church St. (East Hardwick); 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.

May 19: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Suspicious Event, Vt. Rte. 15; Phone Problem, Vt. Rte. 15 W; Accident – TCNR, Vt. Rte. 14/ Vt. Rte. 15; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Drive; Theft, Hopkins Hill Road; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 14; Fingerprints, High St.; Juvenile Problem, Houston Hill Road; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St. - Granite St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Elm St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Pleasant St.; Citizen Dispute, Mountainview Road; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St./Granite St.

May 20: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; School Event, Hazen Union Drive; Traffic Stop, Mill St.; Information, Craftsbury Road; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Drive; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St. - Granite St.; Wolcott St.-Gravel St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15; Animal Problem, Molleur Drive; Information: Vt. Rte. 15 E.

May 21: Medical, Maple St.; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Suspicious Event, Vt. Rte. 14 S; Accident – Property Damage Only, Vt. Rte. 15 W - Kate Brook Road; Mental Health Incident, Vt. Rte. 15 E; Alarm, Mill St.

May 22: Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Rte. 16; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Bridgeman Hill Road; Alarm, Town Farm Road; Assist – Other, Wolcott St.; Accident – Property Damage Only, Center Road; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Rte. 16; Suspicious Event, Granite St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Rte. 15.

May 23: Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Rte. 16; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Welfare Check, Spruce Drive; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Drive; Assist – Public, Maple St.; Assist – Motorist, S. Main St.; Juvenile Problem, Hazen Union Drive; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St./Elm St.;Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Alarm, Vt. Rte. 15 W.

May 24: Unsecure Premise, Vt. Rte. 14 S; Suspicious Event, Vt. Rte. 14 S; Fingerprints, High St.; Directed Patrol, Main St.; 911 Hangup, Vt. Rte. 16 - Pumpkin Lane; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St. - Elm St.; Citizen Dispute, Evergreen Manor Drive; Medical, Maple St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 14; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St. - Elm St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15 - Bunker Hill Road; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; DUI Vt. Rte. 15; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15.

May 25: Mental Health Incident, Maple St.; Welfare Check, W. Church St.; Alarm, Depot St.; Mental Health Incident, Maple St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St. - Elm St.; Traffic Stop, Mill St.; Suspicious Event, Vt. Rte. 14 S.

Hardwick Police

DUI-Drugs, Vehicle Crashes

On May 12, at 9:34 p.m., Hardwick Police responded to the Jiffy Mart in Hardwick for a report of an unresponsive male in a vehicle. Upon investigation Hardwick Police learned that the driver, Shawn Hickok, of Morrisville, had two warrants, a Vermont warrant and an extradited New Hampshire warrant. Shawn was also processed for DUI-Drugs and Driving with a Criminally Suspended License.

On May 15, at 2:18 p.m., the Hardwick Police Department was dispatched to the Hardwick Health Center for the report of a motor vehicle crash involving a pickup truck and a parked vehicle. The crash was reported by the owner of the parked vehicle, Megan McAllister of Greensboro Bend. The owner of the offending vehicle, Elizabeth Hodgson of Greensboro returned to the health center after noticing the damage. The crash resulted in minor damage to both vehicles and no injuries.

On May 18, at approximately 8:15 a.m., Hardwick Police were advised of a crash on Rte. 15 E near Quick Lane. The vehicle was traveling east when it went off the right side of the road. The operator, Melody Angolano of Walden, advised she fell asleep and her 2021 Nissan Sentra left the roadway and went into the field. The field had standing water and she could not get out. There was damage to the front and rear bumpers and possible damage to the undercarriage. The investigation is ongoing. Anyone with information should call Hardwick Police Department.

On May 18, at approximately 8 a.m., Hardwick Police were notified of a one-vehicle crash into a tree on East Church Street [in East Hardwick]. Jayson Foster of Walden, lost control of his 2005 Toyota 4Runner and went off the opposite side of the road and hit a tree. The Toyota suffered major front damage and Foster was injured and transported to Copley by Hardwick Rescue. The crash is still under investigation. Anyone with information should contact the Hardwick Police Department.

On May 22 a 4:23 p.m., Hardwick Police responded to Center Road in Hardwick for a single vehicle crash involving a deer. Upon arrival police spoke with Elizabeth Brown, of Craftsbury, who was operating a 2024 Kia Sportage who advised she was traveling north when a deer ran out in front of her. The deer contacted the front driver's side headlight and proceeded down the side of the vehicle.

On May 24, at 6:38 p.m., the Hardwick Police Department conducted a motor vehicle stop on Vt. Rte. 15 near All Metals Recycling for a moving violation. Investigation revealed the operator of the vehicle, Gavin Ty DennisHuntley of Winooski, was operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol. DennisHuntley was processed for DUI and issued a citation to appear in the Superior Court of Vermont, Caledonia Division, to be arraigned for this offense.

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.



Vermont State Police

Theft, Lewd and Lascivious

NEWPORT CENTER – On May 23 at 7:56 p.m., the Vermont State Police received a call from Michael Breault, of Newport Center, advising two males stole multiple brake pad rotors from his residence. The two males then left in a black truck with a black dump trailer attached to it. Also inside the truck was a woman and a child. The vehicle was last seen traveling south on Vt. Rte. 14.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact the Vermont State Police barracks in Derby at (802) 334-8881 or leave an anonymous tip online at vsp.vermont.gov/tipsubmit.

CRAFTSBURY – On May 15, the Vermont State Police began an investigation into Andrew Calderwood of Craftsbury after receiving a report concerning lewd and lascivious behavior involving multiple juveniles. Investigation revealed that on May 10, Calderwood committed the offenses of two counts of Lewd and Lascivious with a Child. On May 19, Calderwood was taken into custody without incident and processed at the VSP State Police Derby Barracks. At the conclusion of processing Calderwood was transported to Northeast Correctional Complex and lodged for lack of $10,000 bail.

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.

Market

Continued From Page One

special events on the Common at 1422 N. Craftsbury Road in Craftsbury, with a pollinator festival coming up, June 7, a Kids Market, June 28, and the annual Antiques and Uniques Festival with expanded 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. hours, July 12.

A diverse group of 21 regular vendors offer fresh produce, bakery treats, handmade goods, unique artisan and body care products, and ready-to-eat foods. Questions about the Craftsbury Farmers Market can be sent to craftsburyfarmersmkt@gmail.com or call 802-586-8022.

Plainfield's Farmers Market is set to open Friday, June 6, from 4 to 7 p.m., then continues every Friday through September in Plainfield Village, at the Mill Street Park by the Grace United Methodist Church stone wall.

Ben Youngbaer, who coordinates Plainfield's market activities said, "Updates about vendors can be found on facebook (plainfieldfarmersmarket) and instagram (plainfieldvtfarmersmarket). We are hoping to have live music every market as well. and no flooding!"

Greensboro's Farmers Market season begins Wednesday, July 2, at a new Highland Center for the Arts (HCA) location from 3 to 6 p.m., then continues every Wednesday at the same time through July and August. A bonus market is scheduled on the town hall green at Greensboro's Funky Fourth celebration, July 5. "Our new location at the HCA provides indoor space



Ben Gomo (left) and Harmoney Peets (right), both of Hardwick, purchase food from the Chez Poutine Food Truck owned and operated by Chad Bechard of St. Johnsbury. There were 18 vendors and three food trucks at opening day of the Hardwick Farmers Market on a rainy afternoon, Friday.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

for when it rains, restrooms and wifi," said Carol Fairbanks, who organizes Greensboro's market.

Along with food trucks and the many usual vendors at Friday's Hardwick Market, a Youth Booth staffed by young community entrepreneurs offered face painting by donation.

A steady stream of vehicles and visitors stopped at the vendor tents to sample and purchase items from both regular and part-time vendors offering bakery items, fresh eggs, jam, jelly and pickles, beef, maple and honey products, early season vegetables, artisan goods, a wide array of ready-to-eat meals and several vendors offering distilled spirits.

The Atkins field property, owned by Hardwick's Center for an Agricultural Economy, offers features to explore during the market, and at other times, with gardens and green spaces, a community orchard, walking trails and a bicycle pump track. The Hardwick Farmers Market is open every Friday from 3 to 6 p.m., through Indigenous People's Day, October 10. The market has a new website at hardwickfarmersmarket.org/

This year's Greensboro market will "have weekly live entertainment, delicious food and a beautiful setting," said Fairbanks. Visitors to that market will be able to play the HCA's mini-golf course.

The Greensboro market accepts SNAP and Crop Cash, which enables SNAP customers to extend their food dollars, said Fairbanks. "We are currently accepting vendors of fresh and value-added produce, meats, dairy, eggs, honey, prepared foods, baked goods, handcrafted art and other artisan products."

"The market received a Greensboro Association grant to give away more free food," Fairbanks added. "I'm encouraging more cottage vendors to try out the market. It's a good way to make some extra cash in an uncertain economy."

More is on Facebook at Greensboro Farmers Market (Vermont). Non-profits and other entities interested in tabling, or musicians who would like to be considered for a market date, can contact carol@broadfork.org or call (802) 533-2334.

Use

Continued From Page One

taxpayers. He later suggested a capital committee be formed to work on long-term financial planning for the town, as there will be many upcoming expenses in relation to the new truck. A number of others present agreed. After some discussion, the board agreed to table the decision on the fire truck purchase until next month's meeting.

Road Foreman Tom Camarra was present, providing several updates. He reported one paving bid has been received from Pike Industries. The bid included two sections, each under a mile, with each section costing $134,850. Camarra said the town is behind on paving and he had asked Pike to separate their bid into two sections in the event some FEMA money became available for additional paving. Board members present agreed the town has been behind on paving for years, accepting Pike's bid to pave both sections for $269,700.

Beth Meacham was present to remind the board that the library parking lot also needed to be repaved. She said it's a safety issue in its current state. Camarra said the road crew will coordinate with Pike to repair the site.

Several proposed uses of town hall space came up in discussion. Board Chair MacNeil said the town is planning to turn the large blue room, now occupied by Josh Karp, into a general town meeting space. Technology would be purchased to make hybrid meetings possible, while Karp would move into the Collier room, as would Brett Stanciu upon her return.

Naomi Ranz-Schleifer, president of the Greensboro Association (GA), said the GA is interested in renting the blue room.

Meaghan Meacham said, since the Rural Edge project is not happening, the town needs to consider the future of the building. She suggested community conversations be held this summer to get public input about the building's future.

Ranz-Schleifer wondered what the town's process is for making decisions about town hall spaces. She added that rental income from the GA could help support the town.

Vice Chair Brennan agreed there should be an upfront process that the town goes through to decide who can use the space. While the GA has requested use of the space, he said it feels premature to decide now and suggested the conversation continue.

Board member Ellen Celnik asked Ranz-Schleifer if the GA had looked for space at the Highland Center. She responded saying the GA wants to collaborate with the town and is seeking a town space. Chair MacNeil said, after the blue room is set up and the town gets a sense of how it is being used, the town might be able to work something out with the GA, but the GA wouldn't be getting its own dedicated room. Ranz-Schleifer agreed, saying the GA's use of the blue room need not be exclusive. Stu Arnold said this new meeting room may sit idle most of the time if only official town use is permitted, adding that volunteers could help facilitate the use of the space by the larger community. Celnik, a member of the GA, agreed to continue the conversation in the future.

In other business, Ranz-Schleifer announced there will be a free weekly community meal at the Lakeview School, Tuesday's at 5 p.m., beginning May 27. Seed funding from the Greensboro Association helped to get this off the ground and volunteers are needed, she said.

Josh Karp informed the board that all federal funds have been received for the 2023 flood. A full report can be found on the town's website. Approximately $180,000 in additional funds are expected by the end of 2025.

Town Clerk Kim Greaves reported Rod Kerr will be installing dehumidifiers in the town offices by June 1. Greaves was also appointed interim treasurer at the meeting, with the board agreeing to provide additional compensation for her dual workload.

Kingdom Games requested permission to hold the 14th annual Caspian Swim on Sunday, August 10. The board agreed.

A granite bench in memory of Tom Hurst was proposed, with the board unanimously approving its installation.

The board entered executive session to discuss a personnel issue to end the meeting.



State Approves Community Radio Funding

PLAINFIELD – In a recent blog post, WGDR-WGDH Station Manager Llu Mulvaney-Stanak announced, "The Vermont legislature just approved $150,000 in one-time funding for the ten community radio stations in Vermont. This is a direct result of your advocacy on behalf of the difference WGDR & WGDH makes in your everyday lives. Especially given federal funding trends and the impact on state funding, this is a really, really big deal."

"This funding will help each station upfit with new, critical broadcast gear like new transmitters or antennas, to ensure we stay on the air, especially during emergent situations in our communities," she said. "For many of these stations, they operate on budgets of less than $25k, with no staff. This is a game changer for them."

"For WGDR and WGDH, this means we can move ahead with our plan to move the WGDR antenna to a better tower location in Plainfield, to dramatically improve our broadcast reach and quality. This too, will be a game changer for us."

For 50 years WGDR-WGDH has broadcast to central and northern Vermonters. In the spring of 2021, Goddard College gifted the station to the community by way of Central Vermont Community Radio (CVCR) to manage. Under community ownership, the station's mission shifted to put community first, by serving the people of north central Vermont and beyond; to provide a forum for cultivating social change that re-harmonizes human communities with the natural world, supports the independent arts and celebrates diversity, creativity and freedom. The station exists to inform, entertain and educate listeners through the presentation of alternative news, artistic expression and public affairs programming.

The station can be found over the air at WGDR, Plainfield, 91.1 FM and WGDH, Hardwick, 91.7 FM and online at wgdr.org



Plans by WGDR to move its Plainfield antenna to a higher point in Plainfield to increase its broadcast reach into Montpelier, Barre and other areas where coverage has been spotty for over 50 years will be able to proceed with grant program approved by the Vermont legislature in the FY2026 budget.

social media photo



Members of the Blazing Bridles 4-H Club in Danville demonstrate how to craft memory shoes from horseshoes and other supplies for a visitor at 4-H State Day, held May 17 at the Barre Auditorium. They were (from left) Adrianna Holbrook, Hardwick; Catherine Mangan, Cabot; Natalie Taylor, Danville; LeighAnn Judd, Wolcott; and Jenesy Zwart, Barnet.

photo by Holly Ferris, UVM Extension 4-H)



Blazing Bridles 4-H Club members show the ribbons they earned for their action exhibits and other entries at 4-H State Day, May 17, in Barre. They were, front, (all from left) Jenesy Zwart, Barnet; Adrianna Holbrook, Hardwick; LeighAnn Judd, Wolcott; Catherine Mangan, Cabot; and Natalie Taylor, Danville; back, Devin Davidson, Barnet; Jaida Jenkin, Wheelock; Kaylee Demars and Thea Ross, both from St. Johnsbury.

photo by Holly Ferris, UVM Extension 4-H)

State Day Highlights 4-H Achievements

BARRE – 4-H State Day, the capstone event for 4-H, took place May 17 at the Barre Auditorium in Barre. Talented 4-H club members from throughout the state participated in the 2025 event, demonstrating what they have learned in 4-H through stage performances, action exhibits, fashion revue, illustrated talks and other activities.

All entries were evaluated with several chosen to advance to Eastern States Exposition, West Springfield, Mass., in September.

Local entries representing Vermont at Eastern States include Photography, LeighAnn Judd and Action Exhibit, Blazing Bridles 4-H Club, Danville, "Memory Shoes," with Adriana Holbrook, Hardwick; LeighAnn Judd, Wolcott; Catherine Mangan, Cabot; and Natalie Taylor, Danville; Jenesy Zwart, Barnet., Wolcott.

Foster

Continued From Page One

than capable of dehorning his animals, but certain regulations could force him to hire a veterinarian for the procedure, adding an additional cost. "They're not looking at the farmer much at all," he said.

Foster is currently waiting for a state inspection so he can dispose of his barn materials according to state regulations. Some of the wood will be repurposed for the construction of the new barn, headed to an Amish community in upstate New York. In exchange, they will provide some labor during construction. The new structure will be fitted with new electric, and a milking parlor.

He expressed his frustration with the potential delays. "If he doesn't show up in the next seven or eight days, June he's taking off, so I might set on my a** [rear] for the month of June when it might be the best time to do the tearing down and building."

Foster quit school just before he turned 13, spending the bulk of his lifetime in agriculture. In his twenties, Foster relocated his sawmill business in order to be closer to the family farm.

"My dad was pissed off, he didn't want me to keep cows, I had 31 cows over there before I left, and was shipping milk. I told him I'm gonna keep my cows, and you do the sawmill business yourself."

Foster said he took a chance, buying 135 acres and a barn. He continued, "A lot of people have written about this, but farming is a life. Karen was with me for 45 years. She came out of the middle of New York City. You never seen a girl so happy in the dirt, gardening, learning how to cook and cooking."

Foster is touched by the community support he has received in recent months, thanking several individuals. He cited Maria Amador,



Foster's barn will soon be demolished to make way for a new one. *photo by Raymonda Parchment*

of the Barton Chronicle and The Civic Standard, as a great help. "She comes in and helps milk, she isn't afraid to ask questions. Maria fits right in."

He also named Erica Heilman of the RumbleStrip podcast, and Steve Gorelick, grateful for their continued assistance. "I didn't even know what a Go-Fund-Me was. He (Steve) and Erica started, they met in the barn.

"There were some nights when I was milking, there would be from six to 16 people. Everybody's doing something, they'd be all visiting, they didn't know each other but they got to coming, and it worked really good. That's one of the reasons for helping me get back at it, because they want to be there. It's a neat place."

To support Foster's return to dairy farming, visit gofundme.com/f/support-forrest-fosters-return-to-dairy-farming

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Hardwick Springfest
Friday and Saturday, May 23 – 24



The Hardwick American Legion Post #7 Honor Guard (from left) Steve Fortmann, Ivan Menard (in back), Matt Greaves, Todd Manchester, Mark Cloutier and Barry Cadorette lead the Spring Festival parade Saturday in Hardwick.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



The Jeudevine Memorial Library float won first place in the Springfest parade held in Hardwick May 24. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Jeremy Michaud (front) drives a Farmall 200 from his parents Denis and Claire Michaud antique tractor and lawn mower collection. Seven tractors, the oldest from 1941, and two lawn mowers joined the Springfest parade, Saturday. They were all operated by Michaud family members.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



The St. Norbert Community Handbell Choir include (from left, front) Melissa Rose, Laurie Thorpe, Diana Frederick, (back) Diana Klingler, Amy Papineau, Debbie Wells and Jean Hackett, ride in Saturday's Hardwick Springfest parade.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



The Hazen Union band marches in the Spring Festival parade under the leadership of band director Leah Gagnon (front left), Saturday.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



The Northeast Kingdom Mt. Sinai Fire Brigade is always an entertaining addition to Hardwick's parade, that was held this year on May 24.
photo by Vanessa Fournier

Hardwick Springfest
Friday and Saturday, May 23 – 24



Karate kid Igneous Paquin, 6, walks in the parade with other students from Martial Arts in Hardwick.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



One of a dozen pets participating in the pet show during Springfest was Greta, a dachshund dressed in a hot dog costume, with her owner Lilith Spencer of Hardwick. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*



A balloon arch in front of the North Main Street bridge welcomes visitors to the many Springfest activities, games, contests, races, music and organizations, where the road was closed to traffic Saturday. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*



The Always Shiftin' team (from left) of Michael Lew-Smith, Charlotte Thornley, Eric Remick, Solomon Lew and Emmett Avery won first place with a time of 13.45 seconds in the Human Truck pull contest held on Church St. during Hardwick's Springfest. Four teams in all pulled Danny Hale's semi-truck across the finish line. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*



The Messier family float of Mountainside Orchards in Walden won third place in the Hardwick Springfest parade Saturday.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Orleans County Unemployment Well Above State Average

by Paul Fixx

VERMONT – State Department of Labor (DoL) data on the Vermont economy for April released May 21, showed the seasonally-adjusted statewide unemployment rate for April was 2.7%, according to household data. This reflects an increase of one-tenth of one percentage point from the prior month's revised estimate. The civilian labor force participation rate was 65.1 percent in April, a decrease of two-tenths of one percentage point from the prior month's revised estimate.

The April unemployment rates for Vermont's 14 counties ranged from 2.1 percent in Chittenden County to 5.1 percent in Orleans County (note: county unemployment rates are not seasonally-adjusted). For comparison, the April unadjusted unemployment rate for Vermont was 2.7 percent, a decrease of one-tenth of one percentage point from the revised unadjusted March level and an increase of four-tenths of one percentage point from a year ago.

In Caledonia County, the unemployment rate was 2.9% for its labor force of 16,157 people.

Orleans County's unemployment rate at 5.1% reflected 708 people out of work in the labor force of 13,874 people there.

Lamoille County was less than one point above the state unemployment rate, at 3.6% for the labor force of 15,086 there.

Washington County unemployment, at 2.7%, was at the state average for the 32,889 people in its labor force.

Data available for area towns with a population of over 1,000 showed unemployment rates as follows: Cabot 3.0%, Calais 2.5%, Craftsbury 2.4%, Hardwick 2.6%, Marshfield 5.0%, Plainfield 2.5% and Wolcott 6.0%.

The start of 2025 has shown downward pressure on Vermont's labor force, according to DoL data. The report noted, "This is likely driven by the number of mature workers who are retiring, leaving great career opportunities for job seekers and young Vermonters entering the workforce."

The Vermont seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate increased to 2.7 percent in April. The comparable United States rate in April was 4.2 percent, no change from the revised March estimate. The seasonally-adjusted Vermont data for April show the Vermont civilian labor force decreased by 796 from the prior month's revised estimate. The number of employed persons decreased by 868 and the number of unemployed persons increased by 72. No changes were statistically significant in the seasonally-adjusted series.

The full report is available at vtlmi.info/



The team of people working on the pollinator garden at the LVRT trailhead in Greensboro Bend, May 24, included (from left) Jim Fredericks, Liza Kiesler, JoAnn Hanowski, Chris Steel, Linda Shatney, Jane Hoffman, Fan Watkinson, Will Marlier, Dede Stabler and Peter Watkinson. photo by Jim Fredericks



Work on the pollinator garden at the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail's Greensboro Bend trailhead last Sunday involves (from left) Jim Fredericks raking, Liza Kiesler with her hands in the dirt, Fan Watkinson and Linda Shatney standing in the trail, and Dede Stabler and Peter Watkinson with wheelbarrows heading for more loads of mulch. photo by Chris Steel

Pollinator Garden Prepared, Planted

by Chris Steel

GREENSBORO BEND – The Greensboro Conservation Commission (GCC) has been working with the Bend Revitalization Initiative and the Pollinator Friendly Greensboro group to establish pollinator beds at the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail's Greensboro Bend trailhead.

Last weekend, Liza Kiesler of the GCC led a volunteer work party spreading mulch, compost and sowing seed. More plugs will be planted this coming weekend.

Black Dirt Farm donated and delivered some of the compost and Stuart LaPoint provided tractor work earlier in the week to prepare the site.

The GCC is looking for volunteers to provide support at the site throughout the Summer and searching for a person to join the commission. Learn more at greensborovt.gov/conservation-commission.



Students from The Jeudevine Memorial Library Jeudevine Players (from left) Ysabel DiMarco and Amelia Crank perform as dragons pulling King Oly Parker during "The Evil Bunny's Awakening." The original play, performed on the third floor of the Memorial Building, May 24 as part of Springfest, was written by six students and youth librarian Rachel Funk.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

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Five year old Carolyn Aiossa (left) and Cheryl LaViolett stand in front of a windmill and behind a bed of soon to bloom tulips, during the Hardwick Spring Tulip Festival in 1952. This year's Grand Marshall Elizabeth Dow chose Aiossa to ride with her during this year's parade with the theme of "Traditions of Tulips," because of this photo. *courtesy photo*



Kiwanis Club President Sherry Lussier introduces the Hardwick Springfest Grand Marshall Elizabeth "Wiz" Dow, president of the Hardwick Historical Society. *photo by Paul Fixx*

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U.S. Rte. 2 Resurfacing Project Continues

by Vermont Department of Transportation

MARSHFIELD, CABOT, DANVILLE – Work continues this summer on the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) U.S. Rte. 2 resurfacing project from the Plainfield-Marshfield town line, through Cabot to Danville.

On Tuesday, May 27, crews were expected to be paving U.S. Rte. 2 from West Shore Road to the intersection with Vt. Rte. 15 in West Danville and to pour concrete for the raised island near the park and ride in West Danville. From Wednesday, May 28, to Saturday, May 31, crews will be paving U.S. Rte. 2 near the Marshfield Dam in Marshfield.

In those areas, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., motorists are being advised by VTrans to anticipate minor delays and alternating one-way traffic. Flaggers and uniformed traffic officers will be present to assist motorists through the work zone.

The entire project begins near the Plainfield-Marshfield town line, on U.S. Rte. 2, near its intersection with Hillside Drive, and extends easterly along to a point just west of the Vt. Rte. 15 intersection in West Danville.

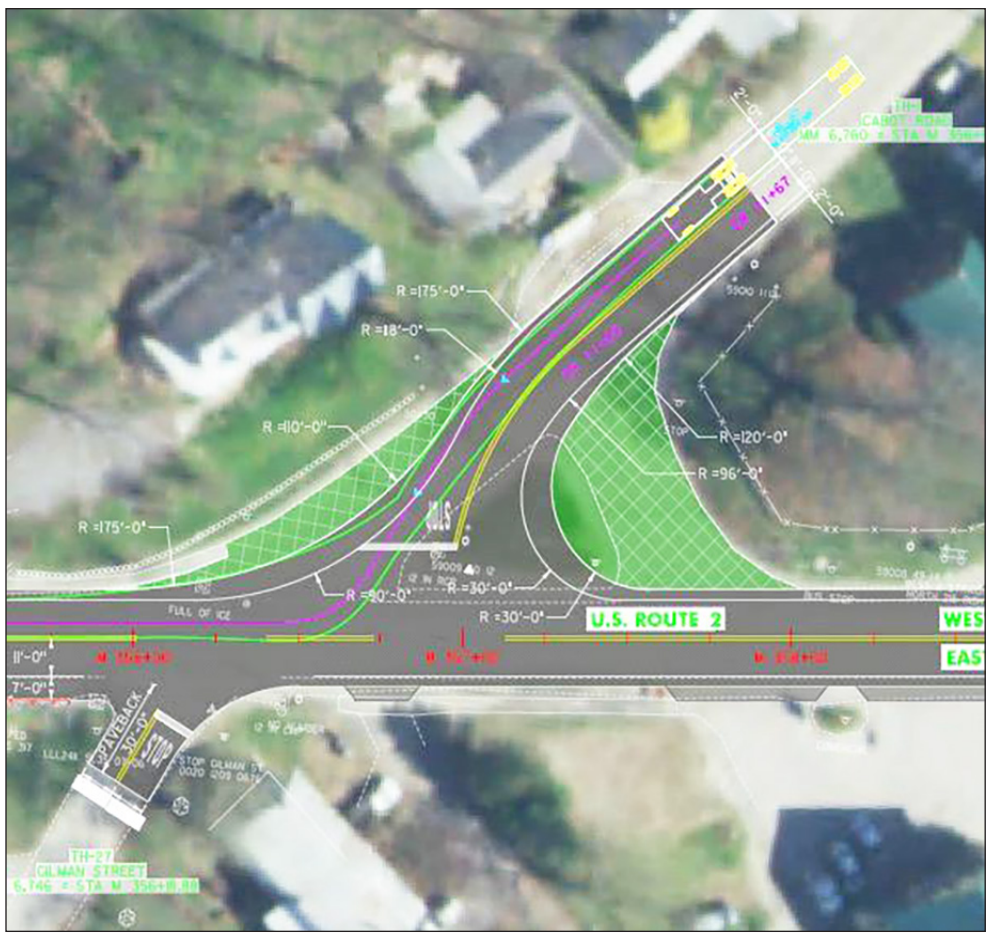
The work is expected to be complete this summer at an estimated cost of $29,165,867.19.

The project consists of three different pavement treatments with pavement reclamation, resurfacing and marking, some of which has already been completed during 2023 and 2024 construction seasons.

In addition to resurfacing through much of the project area, except between Last Road and Danville Hill Road in Cabot, which is scheduled to receive only pavement markings, work will include the replacement and maintenance of existing guardrail runs, some culvert replacements and ditching.

Signs along the corridor will be replaced and upgraded to meet current standards. The geometry of the intersection of US Rte. 2 and Cabot Road in Marshfield will be improved with the removal of the island. The park and ride in West Danville will receive additional parking and some minor improvements to enhance user mobility, according to VTrans.

The corridor will be evaluated for the installation of centerline rumble strips (CLRS). CLRS will be installed where the speed limit is 45 mph or greater, the pavement width is 14 feet in both directions and the traffic volume exceeds 1,500 vehicles per day. The CLRS will be stopped at town highway intersections, and anywhere that a residence falls within 100 feet of the centerline. In these cases, the CLRS will be stopped and resumed 100 feet from either corner of the residence.



This Cabot Road Concept rendering shows geometric improvements to the intersection of U.S. Rte. 2 and Cabot Road in Marshfield, near the Marshfield Village Store, where the island will be eliminated during the VTrans U.S. Rte. 2 resurfacing project, planned for completion this summer.

courtesy drawing

Peace Corps Panel at Greensboro Free Library



Arminda King (left) and returned Peace Corps volunteer Corrine Pelletier hosted a Peace Corps panel presentation at the Greensboro Free Library.

courtesy photo

by Greensboro Free Library

GREENSBORO – The Greensboro Free Library hosted a Peace Corps panel presentation, Friday, May 16, where three area returned-volunteers joined UVM's Peace Corps Strategic Campus Recruiter, Arminda King, to share stories from their time abroad.

King is a two-time volunteer, serving in both Madagascar and Zambia. Her first stint of service was abruptly brought to an end when Covid-19 disrupted operations around the globe. Volunteers uprooted from their service countries were forced to return home and quarantine for two weeks. She was later able to fulfill her full 27 months of service in Zambia.

The Peace Corps is a volunteer program funded by the U.S. government that sends American citizens overseas to work in international development efforts for 27 months. The program was created by President Kennedy in 1961 and is open to all citizens over 18 who possess the skills necessary to qualify for service and are able to pass thorough medical and dental exams. Peace Corps promotes world peace and friendship through investments in education, health and cross cultural exchange.

Corinne Pelletier served 58 years ago in Senegal, which was a French colony until it gained independence in 1960. She was an English major in college at a time when women were discouraged from leadership roles; she joked that most of her girlfriends were determined to earn their Mrs. She felt aimless and knew she wanted more than to rush into marriage. She wanted to do something significant, and serving in the Peace Corps allowed her that opportunity.

Travis Reynolds, son of library trustee Carol Reynolds, served in Senegal more recently. French is the official language of Senegal. He credits French Canadian Sesame Street, one of the two channels of television he could access at home, with his initial interest in other languages. Reynolds grew up in Stannard learning how to sugar. He mentions applying skills learned at home on the farm to his service. "I went from making maple syrup to grafting lemons," emphasizing how important it was to plant trees to fight drought in Senegal. The local youth were empowered by working together to accomplish the job. Reynolds described the Peace Corps as being one of three faces America shows the world (the others being our military and economic powers) and described the many ways that his service shaped the trajectory of his life.

Ruth Brown grew up in the 1960's in Manchester, N.H. She said unapologetically: "I was never going to be exceptionally pretty or smart, and girls were discouraged from participating in sports at the time." Similarly to Pelletier, she felt she didn't quite fit in, but she had a curious mind, and knew there was value in that. When she heard President Kennedy talking about the Peace Corps, she was inspired to apply. Brown served in northern Namibia where she taught English to children. She mentioned her enduring pride at having served and said the connections she made during her time stayed with her. Brown's service took place in a very remote part of the country, and she spoke to the importance of planning ahead for groceries and sundries.

Other Greensboro community members, including Hal Gray, Nancy Hill and Chris Cogswell shared stories of their Peace Corps service, which speaks to the nature of the Greensboro community.



Paddleboats float on Echo Lake at Camp Plymouth State Park in Plymouth.

photo by Glenn Russell, VTDigger

Vermont's Parks Offer Free Entry for Some Residents

by Izzy Wagner, VTDigger

VERMONT – More than 100,000 income-eligible residents are going to have free access to Vermont's state parks this year, thanks to a first-in-the-nation pilot program.

The Park Access Fund Pilot Program will give people who receive benefits through the state's Economic Services Division or the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program free entrance to any of Vermont's 55 state parks during the May through October season.

To participate in the program, residents can show their EBT or WIC cards at the park entrance. Those who are eligible but do not have an EBT card can visit their local Economic Services Division District Office to request a card that can be used for state park entrance in 2025, according to the Park Access Fund website.

Once inside, all guests have the option to participate in free park-led activities, such as bird walks, concerts and evening campfires. The state parks events and programs page contains information on upcoming programming.

The initiative originated from an idea to bring park accessibility to Vermonters experiencing food insecurity, according to Sarah Alberghini Winters, the executive director of Vermont Parks Forever, which runs the program.

This new program is an extension of the Parks Access Fund, which grants free park passes to 55 nonprofit community partners to help their clients get outside, according to Winters.

Winters said she hopes this year's expansion of the program is well-utilized. Depending on its success and donors' willingness to support future efforts, the pilot program could continue in 2026 and beyond, she said.

"It really takes a village," Winters said. "We're so thankful to have support from local and national foundations."

Vermonters not eligible for this pilot program can receive assistance accessing state parks through library passes and the Green Mountain Passport.

Financial barriers are not the only thing preventing some Vermonters from getting outside, Winters said, but this program is a starting point. She said her hope is that Vermont will set an example for other states to consider expanding programs for outdoor accessibility.

"We'll continue to learn about how we can help with other barriers that exist," she said.

"How is this not Price-gouging?" Hospital Drug Markups Spark Anger

by Peter D'Auria, VTDigger

VERMONT – Last year, Andy Kehler, a co-owner of Jasper Hill Farm, was looking to renew his employees' health insurance plans.

The first quote the Greensboro-based cheesemaker received, for an "apples to apples" renewal of the plans, Kehler said in an interview, would have cost 74% more than the 2024 plans. For a company with flat sales, now facing the threat of tariffs on its sales to Canada, the increase was nigh unaffordable, he said.

"We ended up scrambling to get an only 44% increase," Kehler said. "That's just ridiculous. It's completely unsustainable."

One big factor driving that price tag up: drugs. Jasper Hill is paying tens of thousands of dollars, a significant chunk of its roughly $300,000 annual health care costs, for pharmaceuticals to treat an employee's autoimmune condition, Kehler said.

The company is grappling with one of the state's dubious distinctions. According to data from 2020 through 2022 compiled by RAND, a national policy think tank, Vermont has the nation's highest prices for outpatient pharmaceuticals, by a wide margin.

In Vermont, the average prices of outpatient pharmaceutical drugs, meaning, drugs administered to patients without admitting them to hospitals, are more than five times the manufacturers' average sale prices, according to RAND. That's the highest average markup out of all 50 states.

Over the past several weeks, as lawmakers seek to rein in skyrocketing health care costs, that statistic has sparked criticism and a legislative effort to cap those prices.

"I can't move beyond the immorality of this," Rep. Alyssa Black, D-Essex, the chair of the Vermont House Committee on Health Care, told a hospital lobbyist Tuesday.

"How is this not price-gouging?" she added.

Outpatient pharmaceutical drugs are generally administered via injection or infusion in hospitals or clinics, rather than dispensed by a pharmacy. These are generally specialty drugs used to treat cancer, Crohn's disease, autoimmune disorders or other conditions.

"These tend to be drugs where you have a doctor and a nurse watching you while you're taking the drug to make sure it's working," Sara Teachout, a lobbyist for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont, said in an interview.

Some hospitals are able to buy some of the drugs in question at a discount under a federal program called 340B. And yet, according to data Teachout presented to lawmakers last week, the markups for some of those drugs are steep.



Andy and Mateo Kehler, co-owners of Jasper Hill Farm. The cheesemaker has faced steep hikes in its insurance costs, driven in large part by outpatient drug prices. *photo courtesy of Andy Kehler*

At the University of Vermont Medical Center, for example, one cancer treatment drug, Neulasta, costs private insurance nearly 70 times the manufacturer's average sales price.

Rep. Daisy Berbeco, D-Winooski, said on the House floor Friday that that markup means Vermonters who need that drug may pay $95,000 a year for Neulasta compared with an average sales price of $1,357 a year.

It's not clear, even to the state's hospital association, why Vermont's drug markups are so large.

"I don't know exactly why we're so high," Devon Green, a lobbyist for the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, said in an interview. She said that she was not sure hospitals were even aware of the state's disproportionate costs.

But Green said she believes the reason has to do with low payments from the federal government's Medicare and Medicaid programs.

According to data compiled by a hospital consultant for Southwestern Vermont Medical Center, Vermont receives smaller Medicare payments than all other states for a variety of hospital procedures.

"The hospitals in Vermont are the least paid (by Medicare) of any hospitals in any state in the union," James Trimarchi, Southwestern Vermont's planning director, said in an interview Thursday.

The reason for that? "We don't know," Trimarchi said. Medicare calculates reimbursement rates based on numerous factors, including the procedure, type of facility and geographic region. "I hesitate to speculate," he said.

But, he noted, when Medicare reimbursements do not cover the cost of the procedures they help pay for, hospitals must make up the losses elsewhere such as prices charged to private insurance for commercial drugs.

'I do find it cruel'

Some health care players, however, expressed doubt about that logic.

"There are many reasons that Medicare reimbursements may be low, and I'm not sure that I necessarily agree with the premise," Owen Foster, the chair of the Green Mountain Care Board, told lawmakers in the House health care committee Wednesday.

He wondered whether Vermont's hospital leaders are doing all they can to maximize their Medicare reimbursements — and why they weren't dipping into cash reserves rather than hiking prices for drugs.

"I do have to say that I do find it cruel to charge enormous markups on life-saving treatments to patients who are incredibly sick," he said.

On Thursday, Vermont's House health care committee voted unanimously to advance an amendment that would cap those drug costs at 130% of their average sales price starting July 1, and 120% of their average sales price starting January 2026.

The amendment, part of a larger bill relating to drug pricing, passed out of the House Friday and now heads to the Senate.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont has said that the proposal could reduce their requested premiums which are expected to rise by double digit percentages by four percentage points for individual and small group insurance plans on the health care marketplace, and three percentage points for school health insurance plans.

The Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, however, said the proposed legislation would cause millions of dollars in losses, and would require multiple Vermont hospitals to cut staff or services.

Asked in an interview later that day about the morality of charging large markups on critical pharmaceuticals, Green, the hospital lobbyist, paused for a long time.

"I do not think that it is right," she said finally. "And I think it is an unfortunate byproduct of a very flawed way of paying for health care."



The first Hardwick Farmers Market of the season opened on a drizzly May 23 at Atkins Field. The market will run every Friday from 3 a.m. - 6 p.m. until October 10. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*



People partake of the free salad bar from the Center for an Agricultural Economy, in the Idle Hour Park on Main St. in Hardwick, during Saturday's Springfest activities organized by the Hardwick Downtown Partnership.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

EDITORIAL

Springfest a Success Despite Drizzly Days

The 46th annual Hardwick Springfest celebration this year, marked a new collaboration between the Hardwick Kiwanis Club, the Farmers Market, the Hardwick Downtown Partnership, The Civic Standard and American Legion Post #7. The Memorial Day weekend activities were a striking success, with many participating despite a light rain that fell throughout much of both Saturday and Sunday. Monday morning's Memorial Day observances by the Legion happened under clear skies, warm enough to leave a coat at home, providing a welcome taste of what a spring day in Hardwick can be like.

For many years, organization of the annual Memorial Day weekend event had fallen to the Kiwanis Club, but the many different activities needing to be coordinated had become more than a single organization could be expected to handle. In recent years other organizations had stepped in to assist, but the celebration had seemed to lose a bit of its direction.

This year's Springfest began with the Hardwick Farmers Market's Food Truck Friday, where the first section of Atkins Field Parking filled up early and vehicles began to fill the next section. The steady stream of visitors left Market Manager Hayley Wiliams, "impressed with the turnout." Remarkably, the rain seemed not to discourage market visitors and the food trucks seemed to draw a new crowd with what seemed like "a lot of news faces," according to Williams. Regular prepared food vendors did roughly the same business as last year, so the food trucks brought new business, said Williams, who added, "A rising tide lifts all boats." Market visitors dressed for the weather and seemed cheerful, she said.

The Civic Standard's Dance Party that evening, moved from the Atkins Field Pavilion to the Hardwick Town House because of the rainy weather expected on Friday, drew a crowd that filled the building. Dancers took to the flat section of floor from which the seating had been removed and the party continued with the band, Beg, Steal or Borrow until 10 p.m.

Saturday morning greeted parade marchers, floats and vehicles with gray skies, but no rain early as they gathered while vendors, community organizations, musicians and those setting up games prepared for the Downtown Partnership's block party.

By the 10 a.m.-start of the parade, an on and off light drizzle, with a temperature in the mid-40s, seemed not to dampen anyone's spirits.

Activities, vendors, a band and food trucks near the North Main Street bridge over the Lamoille River drew quite a crowd from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., when the rain picked up.

The Gazette set up in the new Jeudevine Library addition's parking lot, along with HCTV and AWARE, where we all had a fine time visiting with those who strolled by and each other. I didn't have a chance to visit the food trucks in the Jeudevine Mansion parking lot, play volleyball, or join in any of the many other activities, though I was able to watch the Human Truck Pull from afar.

I had been looking forward to touring the library's new addition, but that was not to be due to final work needed before an occupancy permit could be issued, according to Librarian Diane Grenkow. She said nothing that needs to be done is a big issue and the addition should be able to open for patrons in the near future.

By 2 p.m. Saturday I was ready to pack up and warm myself, which took several hours.

I was fully thawed by Monday morning to join an American Legion Honor Guard and marchers, who started in front of the elementary school, marched down South Main Street, then up North Main Street to the bridge. There a prayer honoring fallen service members was said and a red, white and blue wreath was dropped to fall into the river.

The honor guard continued to the Memorial Park, where poppies were placed near the veterans memorial in remembrance and a ceremony honored the service of those lost in U.S. military service.

Overall, I'd mark the weekend a success, especially considering the weather. I suspect a few years to get the word out to a larger audience, and a picture-perfect weekend, might bring out even more people to join in the festivities.

by Paul Fixx, editor

LETTERS FROM READERS

Bill to Increase Debt, Benefit Wealthy

To the editor:

The big beautiful bill has passed the U.S. House by a one-vote margin. As we await the vote of the U.S. Senate, let's look at some of the effects of this proposal. Robert Reich, former U.S. Secretary of Labor, has written the following information, and he encourages us to share it widely.

Does the House's "one big beautiful bill" cut Medicare? Yes, by an estimated $500 billion.

Because the bill cuts Medicaid, how many Americans are expected to lose Medicaid coverage? At least 8.6 million.

Will the tax cut in the bill benefit the rich, the poor or everyone? Overwhelmingly, the rich.

How much will the top 0.1 percent of earners stand to gain from it? Nearly $390,000 per year.

If you figure in the benefit cuts and the tax cuts, will Americans making between about $17,000 and $51,000 gain or lose? They'll lose about $700 a year.

How about Americans with incomes less than $17,000? They'll lose more than $1,000 per year on average.

How much will the bill add to the federal debt? $3.8 trillion over 10 years.

Who will pay the interest on this extra debt? All of us, in both our tax payments and higher interest rates for mortgages, car loans, and all other longer-term borrowing.

Who collects this interest? People who lend to the U.S. government, 70 percent of whom are American and most of whom are wealthy.

Bonus question: Is the $400 million airplane from Qatar a gift to the United States for every future president to use, or a gift to Trump for his own personal use? It's a personal gift, he'll use it after he leaves the presidency.

Will U.S. senators actually vote for this bill which increases the national debt, benefits the wealthy but hurts working people, children and the elderly?

Ruth Gaillard
Hardwick

THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

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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.

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Another Opinion

Education Reform: Trust Vermont Values

by David F. Kelley

GREENSBORO – The road to education reform in Vermont has been long and winding, and we are at another crossroads. Driven by increasingly unaffordable property tax bills, House bill H. 454 attempts to use district consolidation as a cost-saving measure along with a funding formula change meant to contain spending. With no proof that this tactic will actually save money, and plenty that suggests it will not, this legislation heads us dangerously in the wrong direction. We need to look both ways before we go any further down this road.

H. 454 proposes a massive transfer of power. If it is enacted, taxpayers will no longer get to vote on their school budgets. Rather than the checks and balances between local and state power, school spending will be determined by the governor and the Agency of Education. Additionally, this legislation will not only take away voters' power to control local spending, but also the power over whether their school remains open. It severs ties between voters, communities, spending and governance decisions.

It's understandable that many superintendents want greater consolidation: bigger districts, fewer school boards, fewer meetings, and more control will make their jobs easier. But advantages for central office come with costs. Those school boards and meetings instill leaders with an understanding of the communities they serve. The movement toward greater consolidation is movement away from local input, community engagement, and informed democracy.

The legislature and administration spent the winter largely stymied on education reform, attempting to choose from among vastly unwieldy, universally unpopular proposals that do not address the real issues. Policymakers have become obsessed with creating a system with a larger scale. But Vermonters understand that size and scale have little effect on either fiscal responsibility or academic quality. Quality and cost should be the indicators receiving the most scrutiny. High-quality, cost-effective schools and districts come in all shapes and sizes.

As we have already seen in Roxbury and Westford, the gravitational pull of the big towns on consolidated boards causes the closure of rural schools. Quite frankly there is no data to suggest that dynamic solves either our fiscal or academic problems. In fact, it may exacerbate them.

But answers have emerged from a source that should not surprise us: Our communities. Common-sense, bottom-up solutions are being offered by the 97 towns that make up the Rural School Community Alliance. RSCA has offered testimony that is well documented, fact based, and articulately presented.

The Alliance reminds us that elementary-aged children should be educated close to home, and that elementary schools are fundamental to a thriving community. They warn that closing rural schools will not fix Vermont's problems and could create damaging new ones. They stress the need for an education funding system that provides immediate tax relief to low- and middle-income Vermonters and distributes education funds equitably, while strengthening high quality education.

Before we pass a bill, we need to carefully consider Vermont data. We need fiscal analysis of each district to know what produces good outcomes at sustainable costs and what doesn't; implement a public school approval and certification process using professional panels made up of Vermont experts who visit schools to make recommendations about budgets as well as programs; and model the real financial impacts of any changes including accounting for transition costs. Guessing about future tax impacts is not good enough. It's dangerous to assume scale will deliver on cost effectiveness and quality.

Local school boards have long delivered and managed the tough decisions Gov. Scott has called for; unfortunately, the real cost drivers are out of school boards' control. Clearly, there is real work to be done at the state level. Legislators should focus on getting health care costs under control and tackling the education fund by moving non-education needs into the general fund where they belong. They can address immediate tax relief for moderate income households by updating the outdated income sensitivity thresholds, so-called "tax cliffs", without waiting to re-write the entire funding formula.

Vermont values grew out of a rural economy and a deep, abiding commitment to community. Community is the singular, non-monetizable asset that has long helped Vermont's policies work at a human scale. Vermont's schools reflect this history. Our system has evolved over generations springing from community, history and geography, and we need to respect the organic connections between people and place. Rather than attempting to control these from the top down, we need to listen to their messages and utilize their strengths.

Above all, if we want to build a healthier education system then we need to help Vermont get back to her most fundamental values. We need to reinvest in grassroots democracy with a renewed vitality in local decision making.

David Kelley is a Vermont attorney. He lives in Greensboro and is a former chair of the Hazen Union School Board. He was part of the legal team that represented more than two dozen rural elementary school districts that appealed forced mergers under Act 46.

For the record

Last week's story, "Fire Ignited by Crashed Car Destroys Iconic Red Barn," should have referred to Bruce Fortmann as the driver who stopped to help and not Brian Fortmann. In addition, one of the captions misidentified the crashed vehicle as a truck. It was a car.

Manny Fliegelman's last name was misspelled in the headline and text of last week's story, "Manny Fliegelmann Posts Season-Best Finish." It was similarly misspelled in the April 30 story, "Personal Bests for Chargers at Essex."

Letters From Readers

Gentle Words

To the editor:

I would like to express my appreciation to Elsa Schultz for her recent, extremely eloquent letter to Greensboro residents as published in last week's Gazette.

Elsa expressed so beautifully how many of the silent majority have felt about the Town Hall struggle.

There are no bad guys in the situation; just people who disagreed with each other and worked it all out in a civilized manner.

Elsa's gentle words are healing and inspiring.

Betsy Donlon
Greensboro

Memorializing Holch

To the editor:

Friends of The Bread & Puppet Theater may join us in memorializing Meredith Holch at 4 p.m., Sunday, July 6, at The Bread & Puppet Theater. We will gather in front of the house at 753 Heights Road in Glover and process across the pageant field to the Pine Forest. Bring a brass instrument if you'd like to join the procession band. The Pine Forest memorial will end in a procession back to the house where dinner will be served. We hope to see you there as we honor Meredith's life, her commitment to the theater, her art, her friends and her community.

Gabe Harrell
Bread & Puppet Theater



The Sara Whitehair Band of Waterbury entertained on North Main St. during Springfest in Hardwick Saturday.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Monthly Musings

Trish Passmore Alley

May Mayhem

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." It's hard to hear our hearts when we are yelling, insulting, firing, defunding, deporting, defying court orders, defiling democracy, and denigrating our neighbors. Sylvia Boorstein, a Jewish Buddhist teacher, repeatedly says to herself and to others, "Sweetheart, you are in pain. Relax. Take a breath. Let's pay attention to what is happening. Then we'll figure out what to do." It's good advice for all of us, regardless of our political views. We have at least one thing in common. We are in pain.

I stepped outside for a break from my mental mayhem and marveled at the greenness of the grass, the spring-green trees, the squirrels, chipmunks, rabbits, fox, dandelions, daffodils, violets, trout lilies, spring beauties, mating birds, bees, butterflies, marsh marigolds, mice, and yes, the mosquitoes, black flies, ants, and spiders. The coltsfoot is going to seed. Mother Nature is delighted in her May mayhem.

We can learn a lot from Mother Nature. She flourishes in interdependent biodiversity.

Friends tell me about the respectful, peaceful protests they are attending. Apparently, protest puppies are popular. One purposeful pooch sported a jacket that said, "DOGS NOT DOGE!" It's important to listen, laugh, and linger together.

I am grateful for friends who visit, drop a line, call, or connect on Zoom. This can be a challenging time of year for me. I lost my dear doggy, Spencer, 20 years ago on April 26. April 30 was the 35th Anniversary of the loss of my child. Grace Gaia feels very present, as she nudges me into Graceful Mischief for The Common Good. Mother's Day reminds me to celebrate all "my" children. One of my adopted daughters recently reached out to tell me she thinks of me as her Fairy Godmother. Amira works for The New Humanitarian.

I talk on the phone with my husband, Bill, every day. I called him early on his 89th birthday, which fell on Easter this year. He was on antibiotics in preparation for a root canal. I asked him what he thinks about resurrection. He told me he thinks it's a good idea. We met 40 years ago when we were both Vermont delegates to the White House Conference on Small Business. It may be true that opposites attract. Our backgrounds and interests are different, but our values are mostly the same. After 37 years of marriage, we both value the other's kindness. We talk often about how we have helped each other as well as others.

I think of Bill every time I see someone wearing a "Make America Kind Again" button.

Trish Passmore Alley holds an MBA in Organizational Development and Behavior. A published author and poet, her career has included teaching at the collegiate level, owning several small businesses in manufacturing, engineering, and retail, and founding and operating three social profits in Greensboro, A published author and poet, she posts brief, monthly blogs at gracefulmischief.com/. When her column refers to Grace, it is a presence in her life, and it is capitalized. She now lives in Shelburne.

In the Garden

Moving Starter Plants to The Garden

by Deborah J. Benoit

Planting time is almost here. While some crops will be directly sown, many others will begin as starter plants that have been grown from seed at home or purchased locally. The trick is to successfully move those plants outdoors from the controlled environment where they've been nurtured.

The first thing to decide is when to begin moving those starter plants into the garden. There's more to consider than waiting for a warm, sunny day. Mother Nature can be fickle: temperatures in the 70's one day, dropping below freezing at night the next, maybe snow a few days later. Springtime in New England can be tricky.

To help decide when to put start plants in the garden, people should first determine their location's average last frost date. While anything is possible weather-wise, the average last frost date will tell when the chances of freezing temperatures have diminished sufficiently enough to put in starter plants without worrying that a killer frost will wipe out the plants.

To find the average last and first frost dates for, individuals can enter their location at garden.org/apps/frost-dates/ Enter a zip code to find the chance of freezing temperatures from April to June.

For example, in Bennington there is a 50 percent chance of temperatures falling to 36 degrees on May 22, but by June 1, the chance of a frost falls to just 20 percent. A week later, it's just 10 percent.

Those in St. Johnsbury will need to be a bit more patient with an average 50 percent chance of frost on June 2 and a 10 percent chance not until June 17. Using the location's average last frost information, individuals can select a date to begin planting their gardens.

Two weeks prior to that date, begin "hardening off" plants to prepare them for the transition. During that time, introduce them to conditions outdoors: sunlight, changing temperatures, wind and perhaps rain.

When daytime temperatures are above 50 degrees Fahrenheit, temporarily move plants to a protected location outdoors, such as a covered porch or an area of dappled shade. Begin with an hour or two the first day, gradually increasing the amount of time they're outdoors over the next two weeks.

At this point, don't worry that the plants won't get enough light. Direct sunlight is far stronger than a grow light or natural light through a window and can burn tender leaves accustomed to less intense light. By the end of two weeks, the plants can be placed in the area where they'll be planted.



Starter plants need to be "hardened off" to prepare them for transitioning to the garden, beginning two weeks before the average last frost date for the area. courtesy photo

Be aware that wind can break tender stems. Wind and sun can also dry out pots faster than if they were inside, so adjust watering as necessary.

After a week or two (depending on the weather), the plants will be acclimated to their new environment and ready to take their place in your garden.

Moving plants in and out each day for two weeks may seem like a lot of bother, but by slowly introducing plants to life outdoors, people can lessen their stress adapting to stronger light, wind and varying temperatures that they didn't experience indoors.

When it's time to put in starter plants garden, overnight temperatures should be above 50 degrees Fahrenheit, but watch the weather forecasts. A late-season frost is always possible.

Have a plan in mind to protect plants if needed. An old sheet, blanket or tablecloth work well. Avoid using plastic because it can cause damage to foliage it touches.

It won't be long before those tiny starter plants will be flowering and bearing veggies for the table.

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

Voices of Spirit

Finding the Treasure vs. the Coin

by Eleanor Guare

GREENSBORO – Arriving at the back door of Chaplain Alexandra (Alex) Jump's home, I noticed several carts of freshly sheared wool. I was there to get to know her and gain insight into her work as a chaplain. Unknowingly, I was also about to learn what chaplains and shepherds have in common.

Inside the house, I observed tools for sorting, combing and spinning wool. Chaplain Alex demonstrated the combing process using a nifty device on her kitchen counter. Once a shepherd, she now cares for a different kind of flock: people who are sick, suffering and at the end of their life journey.

We sat amidst books, papers, computers and to-be-finished exams, all part of a chaplain's unending academic journey. Being a chaplain means not only tending to a flock but teaching and evaluating chaplains-in-training. These could be hospice chaplains, healthcare chaplains, military chaplains, first-responder chaplains: those you are likely to find at life's critical incidents. While Chaplain Alex has performed several of these roles, her chosen path was medical chaplaincy and hospice care.

I asked her what is meant by a critical incident and how it differs from what people may be calling a state of crisis in our country. She remarked jokingly (and she often uses humor to lighten a dark moment) that a crisis is when she doesn't have her cup of tea in the morning. A crisis is a personal experience, often passing with time. A critical incident happens when life changes 100% for those involved, she said. It's when a town burns down, an accident causes imprisonment, a life-threatening illness brings death. In these and other hard times, a chaplain steps in to support those involved and aid the transition to whatever is next. Chaplains are also called upon to "marry, bury and bless" stated Chaplain Alex.

Given the range of life situations that a chaplain attends, I wanted to learn what it takes to become a chaplain in the first place. Listening to Chaplain Alex tell her stories, I concluded that the path to chaplaincy is rugged. It's not tied to any specific religious group, although chaplains must be knowledgeable in a variety of faith practices to comfort people on their spiritual journey. Regardless of their chosen area of practice, chaplains must also be experts in health care, psychology and ethics. They must pass excruciating tests of evidence-based competencies that cover everything from the first encounter to the moment of death. This comprehensive training is necessary because critical incidents happen everywhere, to all types of people.

Although raised in an academic family and exposed to the medical field early in her childhood, Chaplain Alex's career path was not preordained. After obtaining her degree in education, she became a teacher, a mental health practitioner, a shepherd and a fiber artist. She married and had children. She survived cancer. She eventually received her Master of Divinity and completed her Clinical Pastoral Education requirements of field study and hospital residency, often in urban settings.

She decided, after years of studies and work assignments in the city, to move to Greensboro where her family had summered for four generations. Here, she knew her children would be able to "run through fields and catch fireflies."

Describing her choice to move from city to country life, she used the expression, "the treasure vs. the coin," implying that opportunities for achievement and wealth (coin) may be more plentiful in the city, but she was seeking opportunities for working closely with people in ways that were meaningful to her (treasure). I interpreted that as a way of approaching life with gratitude and recognition that money cannot buy happiness. It values what is essential and considers it an honor to guide others through the most critical times in their lives.

Given the private and sacred nature of her work, Chaplain Alex's stories are not rightfully told outside of her community of spiritual care providers. You may have had or will have your own critical life experiences when nothing is the same going forward. You may feel that now, as I do, when the loss of democracy seems possible and our country doesn't feel the same as it has in the past. It is a type of grieving that Chaplain Alex calls "ambiguous grief, when you are not sure what will happen next.

When I asked her if our current events constitute a critical incident or at least a crisis, her answer surprised me. I expected her to say that death is much bigger or more significant than the woes we are carrying during these social and political times. Instead, she said "There is nothing new in humanity, ever. Empires rise and fall. Wars carry on. Elite groups misuse their power. Cultures die out. New ones come in to replace them. What is different about today is the speed at which it is happening, especially given giant leaps in technology. We are also on the receiving end of what other countries have suffered for years. We have elevated non-essentials such as football players' salaries and devalued how we pay our teachers and farmers. We have based our economy on what we are consuming, not what we are making. We continue to view money as the treasure rather than the treasures of community, family, and respect for our shared humanity."

Chaplain Alex explained that in her experience, how people are affected by social and political upheavals depends on their resiliency and personal history of surviving other issues. For example, those who have experienced war or economic depression may have some extra resiliency.

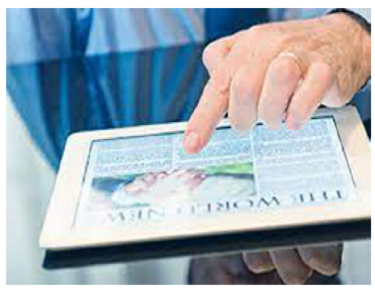
To meet these troubling times, Chaplain Alex suggests finding how to use your gifts to make change and help others. You might run for office, speak up for the sick and disenfranchised, become something you've always dreamed of or help other people fulfill their dreams.

As we left through the back door, we passed by the drying wool. She touched it gently and remarked at the beauty of the wool as it dries and brings out new colors; a treasure that emerges with the passage of time.

Eleanor Guare resides in Greensboro and curates the Voices of Spirit column. Chaplain Alexandra Jump holds a Master of Divinity from Andover Newton Theological School, is an Advanced Practice Board Certified Chaplain, and is First Responder Board Certified. She is the Associate Director for Credentialing and Certification for the Spiritual Care Association and is the Hospice Chaplain for Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice. She resides in Greensboro.

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Card of Thanks

Many, many warm thanks to Copley Hospital and des Groseilliers Funeral Home.

There is no way I can thank both of you enough for your grace, caring and good humor during Kent's last week.

Your exceptional caring and attention eased our way.

Thank you Copley Hospital nursing staff and support staff and the great midnight staff for your kindness and palliative care. Thank you so much Dr. Steven Levine for letting us stay and do hospice at Copley. This was a true gift. You all gave us privacy and space to support Kent in his last days.

Many warm thanks to Nicole and Doug at des Groseilliers Funeral Home. You had such amazing grace, tact and compassion during this very difficult time. Thank you so much for supporting us with our home burial.

My wish is also that Lamoille County could have a hospice space. Being able to stay local, with 24-hour professional support made the world of difference.

My heartfelt thank you to all who helped us through this long, difficult journey.

Carolyn Mecklosky

Yankee Notebook

We Just Visited Them in their Stalls

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – My tour group's transfer from Salzburg to Vienna was nothing if not leisurely. Our bus first took us to the gigantic abbey at Melk, a typically imperialistic pile of stone decorated with heroic figures. Thence we boarded the "Austria," a cruise boat that took us several miles downriver to a landing where we reunited with our bus. Both riverbanks were lined with vineyards, which got me remembering one of my favorite concierge's disdain for German wines.

Norman Lazar was a thoroughgoing Quebecker who oversaw the guest operations at the Manoir Hovey, just north of the border. After my wife and I had been there a couple of times, he'd learned to his horror of my affection for German wines. He also remembered our dog's name and welcomed us all with exquisite panache. On one memorable occasion he exclaimed, "Oh, Monsieur and Madame Lange, and the little Tucker, too! I've been looking forward to seeing you! Monsieur, I have a bottle of Liebfraumilch I'd been planning to use to start the fires, but I heard you were coming, so I saved it for you." So I had fish for dinner that night.

The "Austria" dropped us off at a landing near the village of Dürnstein. We hiked to our bus and about an hour and a half later swept into the old imperial capital of Vienna. Because of regulations regarding narrow streets and large buses, we were dropped off a few blocks from our hotel. More hiking, while the staff, incredibly, ferried our luggage on brass hotel carts through traffic to the lobby. We got our keys, and as soon as we all managed to figure out that pressing "1" on the elevator took us to the third floor (don't ask; I'm still not sure), we got into our rooms at last.

The next couple of days we spent gazing slightly awe-struck at the magnificent architecture of the old capital. It's pretty clear that resources flowed substantially into Vienna from the hinterlands. The idea seemed to be to build the grandest palaces possible, with terraces here and there surrounded by stone railings with thousands upon thousands of turned stone balusters. More railings around the roofs, interrupted by heroic statues of war horses carrying human heroes armed with spear and sword and capped with winged helmets. No embellishment was spared. The gulf between the wealthy and the rest of humanity then was at least as great as is ours today. The prince who commissioned the palaces (one of his daughters, Marie Antoinette, married the ill-fated Louis XVI) I'm sure that if I'd been a laborer, a mason, carpenter, gardener, in the days of the empire, I'd've been hanged, or worse, for insurrection. On the other hand, imagine the number of common people employed (presumably gainfully) in the construction and maintenance of all this elegance.

We visited the Spanish Riding Academy, where the Lipizzaner stallions are bred and trained, and perform in the galleried (more elegance) arena. The horses were having a day off, so we just visited them in their stalls while they looked out at us.

The high point of the tour for me (besides the lovely birthday party the group threw me the last evening in the village of Gumpoldskirchen) was an evening of chamber music by the "Mozart Ensemble," a string quartet performing in a vaulted room that reportedly once saw Mozart himself perform while he lived a few months during 1781 in the house surrounding the hall.

The plaster walls were decorated in Baroque imagery; just behind the quartet loomed a very lush Dionysus making merry. The quartet made merry, as well, musically. It was clear they liked and knew each other and the music very well. The violist and the cellist, apparently, were married. And the cellist did often what cellists do so infrequently; he smiled. At mid-concert we adjourned to the cobbled courtyard for flutes of sparkling wine, then returned for "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" and the "Emperor" Waltz." I've never known an hour and a half to pass so rapidly, and rarely so pleasantly. I'm pretty sure that, listening to music electronically, as we usually do, we forget the up-close and personal touch of sitting only an arm's length from the musicians.

The last morning, as is usual with European tours, we rallied in the hotel lobby a little past five in the morning, collected bag lunches for the road, made sure our luggage was loaded for transfer to the bus, and started our sleep-walking trek back to the entrance to the tube that would, about twelve hours later deposit us into the loving arms of Boston traffic. The recovery from jet lag would begin. But, as I reflect, we had a lovely trip through magnificent scenery, heroic architecture, fine art, lively people and probably the world's most unselfconsciously fantastic beer.

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



Meeting Memo

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.

Thursday, June 5

Hardwick Select Board, first Thursday of month, 6 p.m.

Town Clerks

Cabot: cabotvt.us
Calais: calaisvermont.gov
Craftsbury: townofcraftsbury.com
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

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In the Garden

Plant Flowering Annuals for Beneficial Insects

by Bonnie Kirn Donahue

NORTHFIELD – If looking to boost the health of a vegetable garden, consider adding annual flowering plants that will attract beneficial insects to help support and protect plants from pests.

Insects that are beneficial behave either as predators or parasites. They will prey on other insects like aphids or lay their eggs on a host species.

There are many beneficial insects that can be attracted to a garden, including different kinds of wasps, ground beetles, lady beetles, flies and some bees. Annual flowering plants that attract beneficial insects might have a particular flower shape, size, structure, color or scent.

Dill (Anethum graveolens) is one of the most fascinating plants to observe when in bloom as insects flock to the delicate, parasol-shaped flower clusters (umbels). Dill grows 18 to 48 inches tall and eight to 10 inches wide with wispy leaves that resemble tiny ferns. Preferring full sun, dill can be planted as soon as the soil has thawed and can take more than 45 days to develop flowers.

French marigolds (Tagetes patula) are lovely flower balls of red, orange and yellow that add a lot of interest to a vegetable garden. Growing eight to 12 inches tall and 12 to 18 inches wide, French marigolds prefer full sun and take about 50 days to bloom from seed. Seedlings can be planted after the threat of frost is gone.

Sweet alyssum (Lobularia maritima) is a delicate plant with copious terminal heads of white flowers. These grow eight to 16 inches tall and 10 to 12 inches wide and prefer full sun to part shade. They take up to 50 days to produce flowers when planted by seed. Seeds can be planted once the ground has thawed.

Ideally, plant clumps of three or more of each flower species throughout the garden to maximize their impact by providing a critical mass of pollen, nectar or habitat. Do not to plant the species too close together as marigolds planted closed to sweet alyssum grow over the top of the alyssum, causing them to die too early in the season.



Sweet alyssum and French marigolds are two annuals that add interest to the garden as well as serve as a food source for bees, lady beetles and other beneficial insects that protect other plants from pests.

photo by Bonnie Kirn Donahue

It's important to remember that most insects found in the garden are not problems. They might be helping with pollination or having a neutral impact on your garden. It is best to assume that the insects you see are beneficial, unless proven otherwise.

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

The Outside Story

Mosquitoes in the Rain

by Rachel Sargent Mirus

WATERBURY – If you're a mosquito and it's a warm spring afternoon, you're out cruising the air currents on your tiny wings. But as you buzz around, the sun warming your exoskeleton, the clouds roll in, heralding a spring shower. Balls of water up to 50 times heavier than your body begin plummeting out of the sky. You're too slow to evade the giant drops; it's only a matter of time before one will hit you.

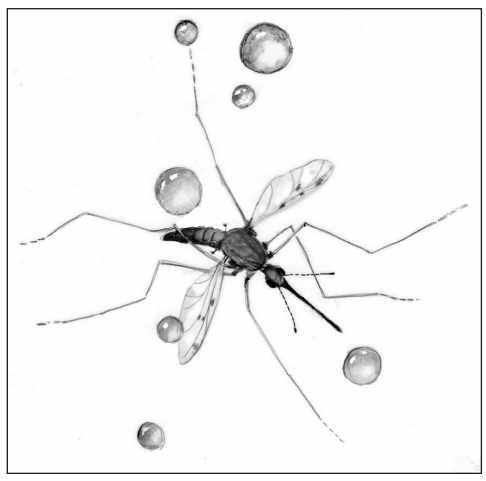
For tiny flying insects, such as mosquitoes and their relatives, rainfall is a completely different experience than it is for other animals. Their relative size to the raindrops makes it a potentially life-threatening situation. When drops hit a larger creature, they break apart in a splash, and the only result is a wet animal. But what happens to insects, when being hit by a raindrop is a full-body mid-air collision?

Andrew Dickerson, a researcher at the University of Tennessee, who investigates how liquids flow under different conditions, asked this question. He put mosquitoes in enclosures and dropped water on them at about half the speed of falling rain. He described this experiment as "the human equivalent of raindrops the size of Volkswagen Beetles falling from the sky."

Flying insects do have an advantage over humans when dealing with water: they are extremely water-repellent. They have wax-coated hairs on their bodies that make them more hydrophobic than their aquatic or terrestrial cousins. This means that when they are hit by water, it is more likely to slide or bounce off than it is to remain stuck to them. "It would be like us walking around with a coating of Teflon," Dickerson said.

Natural raindrops vary in weight and size, but usually come in around 4 to 100 mg, with a radius of 1 to 4 mm. Insects that weigh in at under three mg, including mosquitoes, blackflies, and fruit flies, are smaller than a raindrop. When one hits their body, it remains mostly spherical and doesn't break apart into a classic crown-shaped splash. Instead, it gives the insect a solid push downwards. When this happens, they experience accelerations that are 100 to 400 times stronger than gravity. By comparison, the greatest acceleration humans can survive is 50 times gravity.

Small insects can shrug off these extreme accelerations because they have so little mass that the actual forces generated are also small. Additionally, smaller animals are proportionately stronger than their larger counterparts. If we imagine doubling the mass of a mosquito, that super-mosquito would be stronger, but it wouldn't double in strength relative to a normal-sized mosquito. While getting hit with balls of water 50 times our body weight sounds terrifying for a human, flying insects are actually better prepared to survive such an experience than we are.



Mosquito

Perhaps this is why Dickerson's mosquitoes didn't appear alarmed about water collisions. In his lab experiments, he never saw mosquitoes attempt evasive maneuvers before being struck by water drops. A mosquito's maximum flight speed is so much slower than the speed of a falling raindrop that Dickerson calculated they would rarely, if ever, succeed at avoiding such a collision even if they did try. Although, if they reacted quickly enough, they might turn a full body strike into a glancing blow.

He also never saw mosquitoes attempt to actively shed water after being hit, like how mammals shake to dry off more quickly. They didn't show any behavioral tricks to free themselves from the water. Instead, they relied on their natural water repellency to passively separate from a ball of rainwater.

Still, the intensity of the everyday experience of rain for insects is hard to imagine. A mosquito braving a raindrop collision is "like a Teflon-coated Hulk being hit by a car," said Dickerson. So next time you feel mildly inconvenienced by the rain, imagine instead that you're cruising the air as an insect. Each drop is a giant ball of water which can send you plummeting towards the earth. When one hits you, you tumble downwards at terrifying speeds before recovering and continuing your flight. Just another day in the rain.

Rachel Sargent Mirus is a teaching artist and writer who lives in Waterbury. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.

The Outside Story

How Growth Rings Chronicle the Seasons

by Alyssa van Doorn

SOUTH BURLINGTON – The longer, warmer days of spring spark phenological changes in trees, from root to tip. As the limbs of trees stretch and twist toward the sky in search of sun, their trunks grow wider to support the new weight. New wood is added year after year to the cambium, the area of a tree just beneath the bark, where cell division happens. This expansion creates growth rings, also called tree rings. Though growth rings are often hidden from view, the emblematic bullseye pattern can be seen on stumps left behind after felling a tree, or on cut logs strewn across a hiking trail.

Each ring corresponds to growth in one year. Under magnification, or with the keenest of eyes, they have a visible ombre effect, shifting from light to dark gradually then abruptly back to light again, reflecting how trees respond to the seasonality of temperate climates.

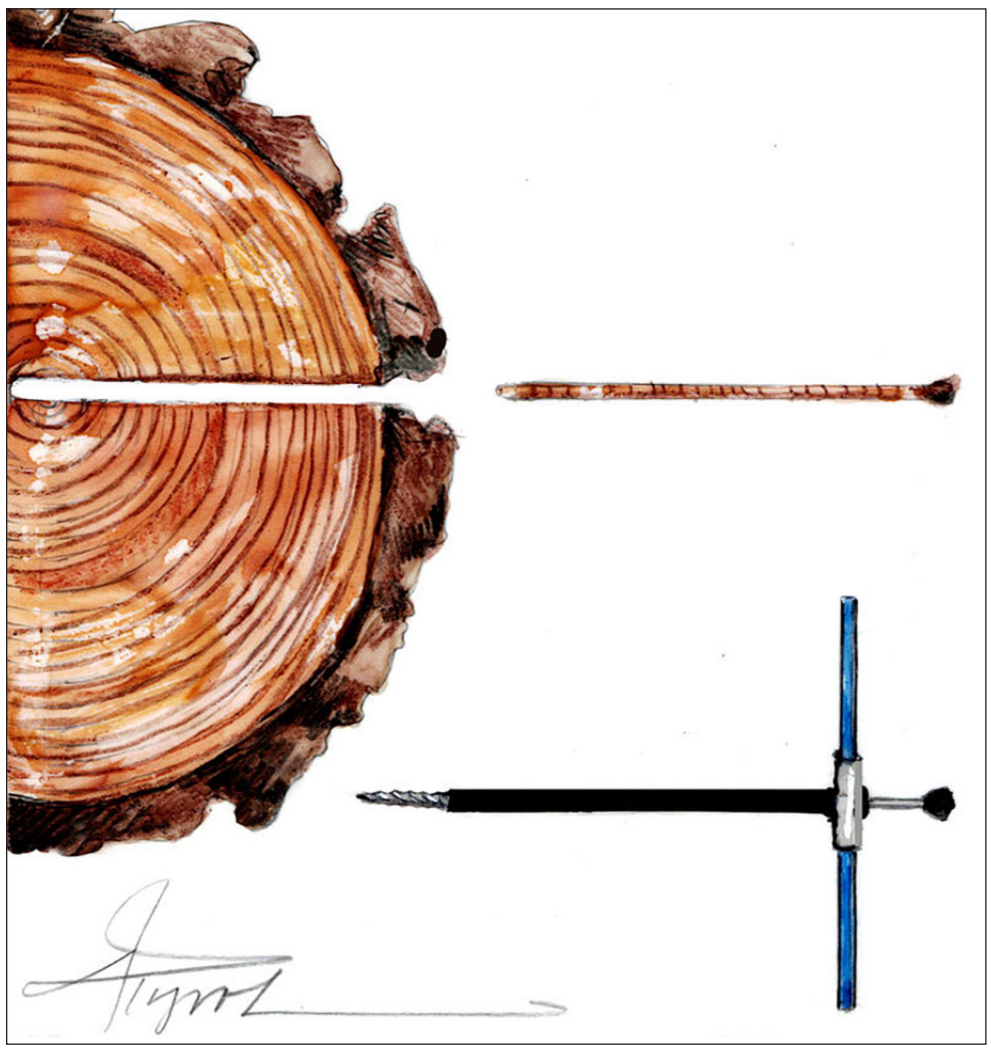
The wood that cambium produces in spring and early summer is called earlywood. Earlywood is light in color because the cells are large and open to efficiently transport water upward, much like a drinking straw. As the growing season progresses towards autumn, trees prepare for dormancy in winter. They need less water, so their cells get smaller. The constriction of cells results in denser and darker wood, and eventually, once winter comes, new cells stop being created all together. The ombre coloration pattern shows a tree's slow winding down of biological processes heading into winter, then hitting the ground running when spring rolls back around.

In places with distinct seasonal changes, like the Upper Valley, one ring typically represents one year of life. But in tropical regions, where climate remains more constant, trees may grow continuously without forming visible rings at all.

To examine growth rings without cutting down or permanently damaging a tree, researchers drill perpendicular to the trunk and extract narrow, pencil-sized cores. Obtaining a core does no more harm than tapping a maple for sap. Tree cores are a powerful tool, allowing scientists to ask and answer questions about growth and climate over extended time spans. Forest ecologists at the Harvard Tree Ring Lab are examining the Northeast's oldest trees to reconstruct climate fluctuations back to the 1500s.

Recently, through a microscope lens, I counted the rings of a red spruce I first encountered this past summer in Vermont. The rings were so tight together I couldn't accurately count them in the field with just a hand lens. I tallied the rings in sets of ten, and by the time I finished I had counted 29 sets and 7 rings; the spruce was at least 297 years old, and possibly even older. I returned the tree core back to a desk drawer where it sits next to 107 others, all ready to give insight into Vermont's past.

Another term for examining a tree core is "reading" it, because there is more to the story than just age: tree rings are clues to the life and trials of a tree and the forest in which it grows. My own research studying Vermont's old growth forests relies on tree rings to understand how forests change structurally with age. When I read a tree core, I count it to estimate age, but I also take note of the tree ring widths. Wide rings represent times when a tree's light, water and nutrient needs were all well met, allowing for substantial growth. Narrow rings can indicate a time of suppressed growth due to stressful conditions, such as a drought or competition for sunlight. The tight rings of the 297-year-old red spruce meant its growth was suppressed, competing for sunlight in a dense forest. Other life events marked in cores are fire and insect infestations which create signature scars.



Tree Core

Growth rings are nature's diary, chronicling the climate across centuries. While rings record growth internally, bark bears the marks of expansion externally. The new wood added year after year generates width that bark must expand to accommodate. Dr. Alexandra Kosiba, UVM extension assistant professor, explained that the bark gets ripped apart, then generates new cells to repair where cracks occur. This ripping and repairing creates the craggy, deeply furrowed appearance of old trees. They're like stretch marks: an external echo of the story within.

The history we can learn in growth rings is only possible thanks to our cold winters and warm summers. As we march towards summer, trees continue their seasonal cycle, writing their story in wood.

Alyssa van Doorn is a naturalist and forest scientist based out of South Burlington. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.



A snapping turtle on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail proves it really is a multi-use trail, Saturday, April 28. *photo by Ross Connelly*



Business Briefs

Rowell Ready to Move on From Cork and Fork

by Raymonda Parchment

HARDWICK – Opening in 2023, the Cork and Fork has served as a place to dine, drink and convene for many members of the local community. In April, many leamed this local establishment will be changing hands. A restaurateur with local origins, Marc Rowell says he's ready to move on, sharing what's next for himself and the Cork and Fork.

"We are still looking for people, quite a few bites. It is a bit nerve wracking. It's important to me that they don't change it right away. Slow gradual change is great. My team and I developed a good product that locals enjoy, and is affordable, and it's just important to me to find the right person for the space, and the town, and community."

Rowell said he'd prefer to sell to an in-state buyer, someone familiar with the community or willing to familiarize themselves really well.

"I just want someone to know their demographic before they jump into something. I've seen a lot of places here fail, go downhill and I want it to succeed."

The next steps for Rowell, once the restaurant is under contract, is moving forward to sell their house. "We're going to sell our home and let the wind take us wherever, just kind of enjoy life for a moment," he said with a laugh.

Rowell says they are considering Costa Rica, but nothing is certain. As the search for a prospective buyer has just begun, there are no timelines just yet. Rowell is fielding around five offers, with some internal prospects as well. "We'd love that, because they'd know the quality of the product we'd put out," said Rowell.

Rowell began his career in the restaurant industry when he was 12. He began washing dishes at the Village Restaurant, still under the ownership of Mary Mercier. In high school he worked his way up to line cook. "I was like 16 and bought my first car, started managing the House of Pizza for Mark Trudeau."

From there he moved away and got into the food industry elsewhere, he says. He briefly went into property management and maintenance, before returning to the area in 2012. Rowell worked for Claire's, the first restaurant in Cork and Fork's current space. He did odd jobs after their closure, prior to helping Sven Olsen open the Scale House, in the same space.

Rowell also helped his friend Lee Kinsey get the Blackbird Bistro, in East Craftsbury, off the ground.

"I went through some health issues, had some cancer, got that treated, got back on my feet. The Scale House had closed within that time frame, so I kind of looked into it. It was viable, and I could do it, so I did it," said Rowell.

After acquiring the space and doing some rehab on the interior, the Cork and Fork opened its doors to the public June 14, 2023. "It's been gangbusters ever since. It's definitely a lot of work, which I love and enjoy. It's time to take a breather."

Rowell said they want to take some time for themselves, and they haven't had the opportunity in some time. "It's just kind of moving forward, moving on, trying something new in life. I've never been afraid to dip my toes in some different waters, just explore, have fun. Let the world take me where it's going to take me."



Marc Rowell of the Cork and Fork

Reflecting on the past two years, Rowell said the community is what he's enjoyed the most.

"I love this community so much, I really do. That's why I'm so picky with who takes us over, because it's not just a restaurant. It's a local hangout, it's a community haunt. It's big for me to make sure the community has a great viable space to come to."

He works every day of the week, running food, talking to customers and more. "It's important to me to do that instead of sitting on my hands and watching somebody else do anything. I like to jump in the mix with all the staff and my team, and have fun with them and I think the community likes that as well."

Our Communities

Children's Parade, Plant Swap, Saturday, June 7

EAST HARDWICK – A plant swap will take place Saturday, June 7, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Caledonia Grange #9, 88 E. Church St., East Hardwick. This year the swap coincides with the East Hardwick Children's Parade. Everyone is welcome to take some plants home. For those bringing extra plants, ensure they are labeled and disease free. All types of plants are welcome; from annual vegetable and flower starts to perennial flowers, fruits and tubers. Do not bring extremely invasive plants to share. In an effort to discourage the spread of jumping worms, participants are asked to bring seedlings in potting soil or bare rooted plants dug from garden soil (with soil washed away).

For more information contact swapsisters@gmail.com



A new Ocean State Job Lot store has opened in Morrisville at the former site of Big Lots, 66 Morrisville Plaza, Suite 5. *photo by Paul Fixx*

Our Communities

WGDR/WGDH Holds Birthday Party, June 7

PLAINFIELD – Central Vermont Community Radio is celebrating 52 years of WGDR and 15 of WGDH at a birthday party, Saturday, June 7, noon to 3 p.m., with food, drinks, DJs and music.

There will be a short program toward the start of the party. Food, tours of the station will be available.

The station is located on the far side of campus in the basement of the Pratt library building. Follow signs for directions and parking. Rain location is inside the station. Donations for the station will be accepted toward a $2,000 goal that will be dollar-for-dollar matched by the weekend's sponsors.

CA Friends Luncheon, June 18

CRAFTSBURY – Craftsbury Academy Friends Luncheon will be held June 18, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Charlmont Restaurant in Morrisvile. Contact Stella Slicer at (301) 222-6924 for more information and to sign up.

Church Hosts Lecture Series on Holocaust

GREENSBORO – Jeff Pierpont, interim minister of the Greensboro United Church of Christ, will offer a two-part public lecture series this summer exploring the historical and moral legacy of the Holocaust.

"The Landscape of Memory: Walking Through the Holocaust in Poland" will be presented Tuesday, June 24, 6:30 p.m., and "The Holocaust and the Power of One" lecture will be Tuesday, July 15, 6:30 p.m. The lectures will blend historical insight with personal reflection. Both lectures will be held at the Highland Center for the Arts.

The series is based on Pierpont's 2024 participation in an intensive seminar on Holocaust education, sponsored by the Simon Wiesenthal Center and New Brunswick Theological Seminary. His journey included research at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, as well as visits to Treblinka, Chelmno, Plaszow, the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camps and other key Holocaust memorial sites. The lectures are free and open to the public. For more information, email greensborochurch@gmail.com

Business Briefs

VEC Holds Annual Meeting at Jay Peak

JOHNSON – On Saturday May 10, Vermont Electric Co-op's (VEC) annual meeting was held at Jay Peak Resort.

VEC's electricity procurement strategy was a key topic at the meeting. The main presentation, titled "Navigating a Clean Power Supply," examined how and why VEC chooses certain types of power, like wind, solar, natural gas, biomass, and others from the regional wholesale electricity market keeping both climate-related goals and affordability top-of-mind.

VEC also announced at the meeting that Tom Bailey, William Gilbert, Bonnie Pratt, and Jeff Wilson were all elected to the co-op's board of directors, representing various board districts.

Members also saw demonstrations of how VEC uses drones for system maintenance and power restoration, and spoke with VEC staff employees about the co-op's use of electric fleet pickup trucks.

Members enjoyed a complimentary breakfast and giveaways and several lucky members won raffle prizes including an electric food smoker courtesy of Downs Rachlin Martin, a battery-powered "weed whacker" donated by Efficiency Vermont, as well as gift cards and certificates to local and national chain stores, and more.

Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC), established in 1938, is a non-profit, member-owned electric distribution utility that provides electric service to approximately 33,000 members in 75 communities in northern Vermont. VEC is the largest locally-owned electric distribution utility in Vermont.

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Education



Five Hazen Union School students (from left) Cappy Santamore (grade 11), Ursa Goldenrose (grade 9), Juniper Book (grade 10), Ava Renaud (grade 11), Mackenzie Zornow-Figueroa (grade 10) display Teen Mental Health First Aid certificates earned May 14, after completing three two-hour training sessions. They stand with Hazen community schools coordinator Vaiva Velzis (far right). Students not pictured who earned certificates are Haley Blair (grade 9) and Layla Russell (grade 10). One additional student participated.

photo by Lisa Stinson

Hazen Students Complete Teen Mental Health First Aid Training

by Lisa Stinson

HARDWICK – Seven Hazen Union students successfully completed a three-part, in-person training series in Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA),May 14. Open to students in grades 9 to 12, the training is a key initiative of Hazen's new Student Wellness Center.

Through the program, student leaders gained valuable skills for recognizing and responding to mental health challenges among their peers. They learned how to provide initial support to a friend in need and how to involve trusted adults when necessary. Additionally, participants explored mental health resources and received training to provide them with a deeper understanding of personal well-being. All express a strong commitment to applying their new skills to support their peers and strengthen their community.

Teen mental health training and the Student Wellness Center are part of Hazen's broader community school strategy. This approach brings together students, staff and the wider community to foster a school culture that prioritizes inclusivity, responsiveness and connection. By supporting students in their personal growth and well-being, Hazen aims to empower them to thrive academically and beyond. Learn more about these initiatives at hazen.ossu.org.

Duff Named to Dean's List

CULLOWHEE, N.C. – Henry Duff, of Wolcott, Vt., has been named to the Western Carolina University Spring 2025 Dean's List. Duff was among more than 1,600 students to achieve this honor. To qualify for this honor, students must earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

THANKS
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Obituaries

MARTHA NIEMI

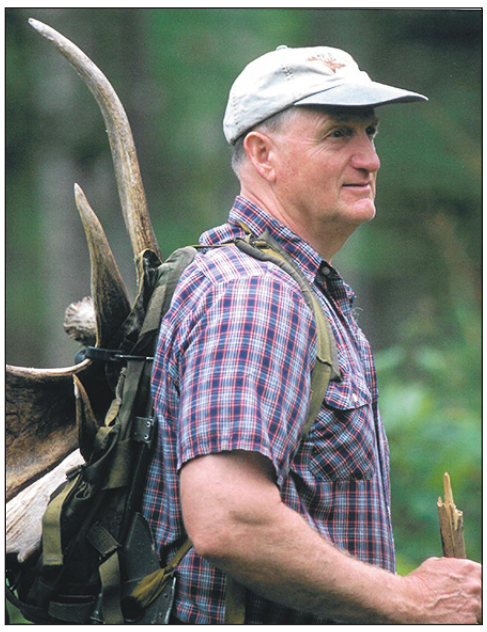
GREENSBORO – It is with deep sorrow and much love that we announce the passing of our beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and friend, Martha Niemi, who left this world peacefully on Saturday, May 24, at the age of 81. A complete obituary and information for her services will be available in a later edition. The des Groseilliers Funeral Home is in care of arrangements.

JENNIE N. SALLS ALLEN

ROCK HILL, S.C., GREENSBORO – Memorial Services for Jennie Nellie Salls Allen who died November 30, 2024, in Rock Hill, S.C., will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, June 14, at the Greensboro United Church of Christ, with Pastor Kimberly Larose officiating. A time of fellowship and light lunch will follow in the church dining hall. A complete obituary along with online condolences are available at northernvermontfuneralservice.com

WALTER JOHN CELLEY

CABOT – On May 8, at the age of 85 and in his home of 53 years, Walter John Celley passed away doing what he spent his life perfecting; carving something special for a loved one. He was a lifelong artist, spending decades as a master granite sculptor, and then using his retired years to create everything from birch bark moose calls, to wooden trunks, to wedding ring holders for his family. He was proud to have carved the granite eagles on the WWII memorial in Washington D.C., especially after having served as an army military police officer with men who also served in WWII.



Walter John Celley

Walter was a lover of the deep woods. One of his favorite pastimes was using his handmade birch bark moose calls to get moose close enough to be photographed. On his long treks through the woods he would collect the heavy antlers that were naturally shed every year, hauling them out of the thicket on his back.

He was also a collector and restorer of antique engines and snowmobiles, and some of his best memories were attending engine shows with his sons and grandson. Last summer he and his family created an antique snowmobile float, and walked in the Fourth of July parade with his grandchildren and great-grandsons.

He may now be physically gone, but his love and respect for the wilderness, and his way of creating beauty out of nothing will continue on in his family for decades to come.

Walter is survived by his wife of 62 years, Cyrena (Hatch) Celley; five sons and their spouses, Timothy (Margaret Santa Maria) Celley, Michel (Lisa Whipple) Celley, Paul (Susan Dessureau) Celley, Thane Celley, Aaron (Miranda Hunt) Celley; seven grandchildren and their spouses, Caitlin (Ian) Ackermann, Camden (Acadia) Celley, Darren (Rachel) Celley, Kyle (Alexis) Celley, Alisha (Jordan) Hale, Cadence Celley, and Nora Celley, and three great grandsons, Blake, Bryce, and Corbin. He also leaves behind his sister Mary Lou Cole, and brother Glenn (Tommy) Dailey. He is predeceased by his mother Katherine Symonds, sister Rose Schmidt, and two brothers, Lloyd Dailey and Charles (Sonny) Lamphere.

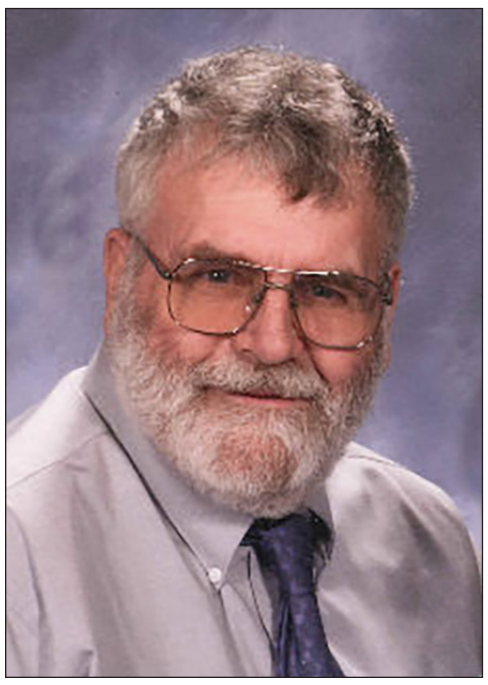
His ashes will be scattered in the places he loved, and his memorial stone will be in the Durant Cemetery in Cabot.

There will be an informal gathering in his memory at his home on Saturday, June 21, at 2 p.m., for those who wish to come.

Condolences and memories of Walter may be shared with his family at dgfunerals.com. In lieu of flowers, the family asks to please send donations to the Cabot Ambulance.

GLENN CARROLL AILES JR.

ST. JOHNSBURY – Glenn Carroll Ailes Jr., 92, of St. Johnsbury, passed peacefully on May 17, at the St. Johnsbury Health and Rehab Center following a brief illness.



Glenn Carroll Ailes Jr.

He was born in St. Johnsbury, January 29, 1933, to Glenn C. and Martha (Paquin) Ailes.

Glenn was predeceased by the love of his life Barbara Elizabeth (Stone) Ailes in 2019 after almost 60 years of marriage. Glenn and Barbara were married on September 6, 1959, and made homes and connections in Cabot, West Danville, and St. Johnsbury.

In Glenn's youth he attended schools in Waterford and Danville, then graduated from the St. Johnsbury Trade School in 1953. He enjoyed being a 4-H member, winning a trip in 1949 for the "most outstanding boy in helpfulness", and was a leader of the Danville Green Pioneers in 1950.

That community spirit was further realized in serving on the executive committee of the Danville Grange No. 520 in the 1950s and in his devotion to lending a helping hand at the churches he attended. He was an active and long-time member of the Danville Congregational Church for many years, and later a member of the West Danville Methodist Church.

Glenn served two years in the U.S. Army and later in the Lyndonville unit of the Vermont National Guard.

He was always a jack-of-all trades. His career spanned a lifetime of dedication and hard work. In the early years he worked in farming and in the logging trade with his father, whom he recently stated was the "best boss he ever had." For some years he delighted in being the friendly custodian at the Cabot School; being the groundskeeper for Cabot cemeteries; and on a big venture for both Glenn and Barbara, they owned and operated the Spooner's Campground in Marshfield for a time, but most of Glenn's career was spent in the trucking business. Many of those years were trucking for Cabot Creamery. He traveled endless miles and drove for endless hours at a time, always getting his load where it needed to go. For a number of years, he was sought after to change the starters for other truckers who were stuck on the road. A job that had him lying under a truck on the side of the road in all weather conditions.

When Glenn wasn't on the job, he loved nothing more than spending time in his wood shop. As a gifted craftsman, he made many gifts to give and to sell.

Glenn, or Bud as he was known to much of his family, will be remembered as a tease and a character, with a generous and most loving heart. He will be greatly missed.

Glenn is survived by his cherished niece and nephew-in-law, Becky (Stone) and Richard Degreenia of Walden; great-nieces Jasmine and Jessica Hubbard, and Edythe and Miranda Degreenia; sister-in-law Ida Stone; two nephews, Howard Stone and wife Heather, of Sheffield and Jay Stone and wife Kim, of Newark; three great-great nieces and nephews, Brandy and Bailey Clark and Howard Stone; along with a close cousin Deborah Marrier, and numerous loved cousins.

Besides his parents and wife Barbara, Glenn was predeceased by many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Visitation with Glenn's family will be held Saturday, May 31, from 1 to 2 p.m., at Sayles Funeral Home, 525 Summer St., St Johnsbury. A graveside funeral service with Military Honors will follow at 2:30 p.m. at the Cabot Plains Cemetery, 1719 Cabot Plains Rd., Cabot.

In lieu of flowers the family is asking that donations be made to your local 4-H Group or county office.

Memories and condolences may be shared with the family at CaledoniaLifeServices.com



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.

Click here to **DONATE** now so we continue to be here with fair and accurate community news and information when you need it.

Original Drama Based on Familiar Story



Lakeview students (from left) Fox Modry, Silene Lapoint, Rylie McDonnell and Reia Lemery perform a scene from The Pigs' Tale adapted and directed by Rosann Hickey. The play was held on May 19 at the Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*

REVIEW

by David K. Rodgers

GREENSBORO – Almost all of the children in the Greensboro primary school participated in this spring's theatrical event at the Highland Center for the Arts on Monday, May 19, at 5 p.m. Some 16 students performing as the Lakeview Elementary School Players. The drama was "The Pigs' Tale," adapted by director Rosann Hickey from the old familiar story of "The Three Little Pigs."

The play started with all the cast coming on stage singing and then sitting down in a row of folding chairs, each of which had a painting of a house they had done on the back, thus forming a kind of Greek chorus.

The old mother pig, Reece, talked to her three young pigs, Fox, Silene and Rylie, about their needing to have houses of their own now, but she warned them to look out for the big bad wolf.

The wolf, acted with convincing character by Solace came in following his nose to find pigs to eat. People from the chorus tried to distract him by humorously offering different foods, Bryan with a whole chicken on a platter, Dorthy with flowers, Rowan with a bunch of garlic, Paisley with a basket of rolls and Xavier with a large dill pickle, all of which he contemptuously rejected. In frustration he asked, "Where are the pigs?," to which Jasper and the chorus yelled, "Maybe you should try the other side of town."

The three young pigs found various materials to construct their houses.

Russell, a straw seller, made a sale to the youngest pig based on how cheap it was. Finnley, who sold twigs, got the second pig to buy his product based on how quickly it could be put together. The third pig was very skeptical of those choices and went for bricks, which he purchased from Jasper after some amusing bartering. He reasoned that bricks were more expensive initially than either straw or sticks and would take more time to build with, but the house would last longer.

Soon the big bad wolf returned and knocked on the door of the straw house, demanding, "Let me in." The pig replied, "Not by the hair on my chinny-chin-chin." So the wolf threatened, "I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in," which he succeeded in doing. The pig escaped to the stick house and the wolf asked the chorus where it went, and they responded "The pig went thataway," pointing in the opposite direction.

The same scenario was repeated at the stick house, with similar destruction, so the two pigs ran off to the brick house. Again, in exasperation, he asked what happened to the pigs and the chorus unhelpfully repeated, "thataway."

Meanwhile the three pigs inside the brick house made a plan of what to do when the wolf came. When he appeared, he went through his routine of "Let me in," but when the pigs refused, he failed to knock down the brick house with all his huffing and puffing. Undeterred, he got a ladder and attempted to enter through the chimney. Much to his surprise, he landed in a cauldron of very hot water the pigs had prepared for him, and he ran away. He gave up his appetite for pigs and became a vegetarian, reappearing with a sign on his chest saying, "I love broccoli."

The whole cast came to the front of the stage for the happy ending and to bow to the applause from the audience of their parents and friends.

Additional members of the chorus than those mentioned above were Leona and Bentley. The producer was Lorelei Wheeler, the keyboard accompanist was Karen Miller, the choreographer was Rose Leach, the set construction was by Ted Fullard, the scene painters were Jayne Donahue and Ed Lemery, the costumes were by Penny Bretschneider, Ana LaPoint and Nancy Hill, lighting was by Cavan Meese, and the stage hands were Ted Fullard and Jasper.

While it might seem a little silly to draw any great lessons from "The Pigs' Tale," we could state he obvious, that anything built well is going to outlast something cheaply or carelessly constructed, which applies to everything we do, raising the wider issue of the perpetual conflict between short-term and long-term thinking. And we could even mention the current dilemma of affordable housing and the increasing dangers of violent weather due to climate change.

We should be grateful to all those who made this production possible, especially Rosann Hickey, who initiated the performance and guided it through many rehearsals, as well as the generous support of the staff of the Highland Center for the Arts. Introducing children to live theater is a great way to encourage their creative imaginations and to discover their talent and delight in acting, which otherwise might remain unexplored.

Full disclosure: The author of this review was a mason for all of his working life and therefore has a certain preference in favor of the pig with the brick house.



The Chez Poutine Food Truck serves up its namesake dish outside the Hardwick Town House, at a free dance party, the Friday evening of Springfest, May 23. *photo by Paul Fixx*



The band Beg, Steal or Borrow, performs inside the Hardwick Town House for a crowd that had reached over 140 people not long after the band began to play, according to The Civic Standard organizers, Friday evening, May 23, for Hardwick Springfest. *photo by Paul Fixx*

Gitano Music Offers Imaginative Solo Improvisations

REVIEW

by David K. Rodgers

ADAMANT – The Kraatz Carromato, a Burlington quartet of four excellent musicians, came to the Adamant Community Club on Sunday evening, May 18, and gave a unique concert of Gitano-inspired music.

Gitano is one of many labels for the Roma (gypsies), both words derived from Egypt, to which people originally from Northern India migrated, as well as into the Balkans and Central Europe by the 1400s, and subsequently over all of Europe. Their language, Romani, is Indo-European, but most of their own history has been passed down orally, not in a written form.

The Roma, are the epitome of remarkable cultural survival over centuries despite horrendous persecution. They are fiercely independent and proud of their heritage, preferring the freedom of their nomadic life rather than a settled existence. They are constantly traveling in caravans (carromato means caravan in Spanish), finding temporary jobs as metal workers, picking seasonal crops, in construction, basket making, horse dealing, playing music and fortune telling. Roma music, which became popular in cafes in the Nineteenth Century, had a significant influence on expanding the rhythmic possibilities of classical music, especially for Liszt, Brahms and Dvorak. The Spanish tradition of flamenco is derived from the Roma and Django Rheinhardt, a French Roma, was one of the greatest jazz guitarists of all times.

The musicians of the Kraatz Carromato were Elijah Kraatz on guitar, flute and recorder, as well as a curious guitar with two necks but no frets, of his own invention, Harry Grabenstein on guitar, Keith Levinson on drums and Kevin Fink on violin. Together they had a highly coordinated ensemble effect and were also able to do imaginative solo improvisations.

They began with a piece that featured Kraatz playing a small wooden piccolo, which had a haunting aspect, then joined by Fink on violin and Levinson clapping the beat. The "Rose at Home" was the next selection, commencing with the guitars and then expanded to the drums and violin, all with a relaxing ambiance. The following work had a lot of feeling to it and a nice lilt to the rhythms. An old Italian anti-fascist song got the audience involved in the refrain, "Bella Chow," with Kraatz leading the vocals.

"Funeral For My Father" was composed by Kraatz, a well developed melody suggestive of his father's Sicilian background. Gitano elements from the Camarque region of Mediterranean France formed the basis of a pleasant tune with a nice finish on the violin. Kraatz sang in Hungarian a song about the classic search for love, with a driving beat from the percussionist Levinson.

After intermission, Kraatz played on his double neck guitar, which had a mysterious deep resonance, quite powerful, almost earthy, close to the sound of the Middle Eastern oud. He then switched to a long vertical wooden recorder which continued that mystical mood, evoking Sufi music. "Spaghetti Wedding" had singing in syllables like jazz skat, with pizzicato textures on the violin by Fink and Levinson slapping he drum heads. Another original piece by Kraatz was entitled Nameless, dedicated to the young homeless people he knew in San Francisco and Berkeley when he lived there, which had a fine melody. Again taking up his double necked guitar, Kraatz performed a work about the unnerving wind from North Africa to Spain called the sirocco, having intriguing slides that are possible on this instrument because of the lack of frets.

"After the Revolution" seemed set in Central or South America and was quite beautiful, featuring Kraatz vocalizing and Fink exploring extended improvisations on his violin. "I Was Born in Alamo" had Kraatz singing in Spanish with an expressive quiver in his voice about a longing for one's homeland. "Gelem, Gelem" was a Roma anthem, written by a survivor of Auschwitz; an estimated 250 to 300 thousand Roma were murdered by the Nazis during World War II. The group's last number was "While My Guitar Gently Weeps," with creative permutations on both violin and guitar.

The world of music is endlessly rich and communicates the deepest levels of our human soul, transcending all differences of time and place and culture. It brings daily happiness and the hope that we can share beauty and live together in harmony and peace.

Bardolatry Lives at the Green Mountain Shakespeare Festival

by Raymonda Parchment

PLAINFIELD — The former campus of Goddard College will host the Green Mountain Shakespeare Festival with productions, in June and August and a camp for students in between. For interested students, aged 10 to 14, the day camp runs weekdays from July 21 through August, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., culminating in the performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

"Romeo and Juliet" will open June 19 under the direction of Tom Blachly. "The Taming of the Shrew" is set for August 21, under the direction of Virginia Monte. Both shows will be performed in the Haybarn Theatre, with the summer camp performing outside, depending on the weather.

Director Tom Blachly says, while they are fully cast for "Romeo and Juliet," the director of the "Taming of the Shrew" may still have some additional openings in her lineup.

He's most excited to start doing theater in the Haybarn again. "I've always admired the theatre, it's a beautiful old place and it's been improved over the years so it's pretty state of the art," said Blachly.

"As a member of the community I'm really excited about all the potential for the campus. The guy who bought it has lots of great ideas about what to do with the campus, including having affordable housing which is a crying need of course, and also having an event center."

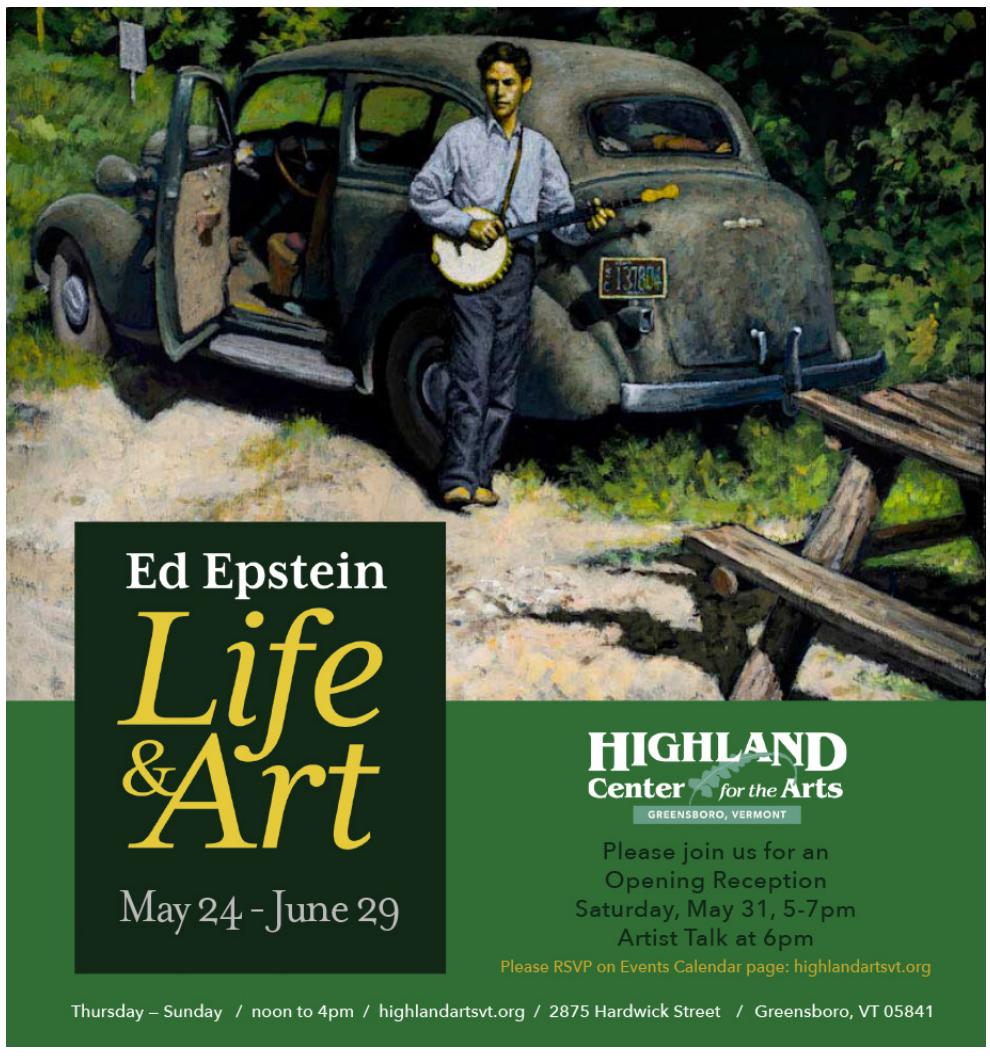
Blachly says there's a full working dining room cafeteria space in the main building, which will be opened to the public for a restaurant.

"What they're hoping to do is to have a package deal and then go see a show, so that's exciting. Continuing, Blachly said there's a lot of good ideas floating around, and it's an exciting time to be on campus right now. "We're all putting our heads together and coming up with creative ideas of how to use this beautiful campus," he concluded.

Blachly grew up in East Calais, in a theatrical family. His father ran the Unadilla Theatre located in Calais. Blachly did theatre as a child, continuing in high school and college. Since then he has both acted and directed in various community production shows around the area.

"Well Covid-19 kind of threw everything out of whack, and I haven't actually directed anything at the Haybarn since before Covid. Before that, I was doing at least one, sometimes two shows a year, directing at the Haybarn and the Plainfield Town Opera House, and sometimes at my dad's theatre. So I've been around the block."

Blachly expressed his happiness that people continue to appreciate the works of Shakespeare. "People keep coming out of the woodwork and I am so thrilled by that, there's a lot of people who feel strongly about it and it's so wonderful to connect with all the other bard-philes around."



Events

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.

Thursday, June 5

"THE REVOLUTIONISTS" by Lauren Gunderson, presented Thursdays through Sundays, June 5 to June 15, Lost Nation Theater, Montpelier, 7:30 p.m., Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays and 2 p.m. Saturday, June 14. Information: (802) 229-0492 or info@lostnationtheater.org.

Saturday, June 7

ALBANY LIBRARY WRITING GROUP, 2 - 4 p.m., Albany Public Library. Teens and adults welcome. Writing prompts provided. 830 Main St., Albany. Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

CENTRAL VERMONT COMMUNITY RADIO birthday party for WGDR and WGDH, noon to 3 p.m., Pratt library building, at former Goddard College, Plainfield. Food and tours.

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, QI-GONG, 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, 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, Atkins Field, Granite St., Hardwick, 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

See EVENTS, Next Page

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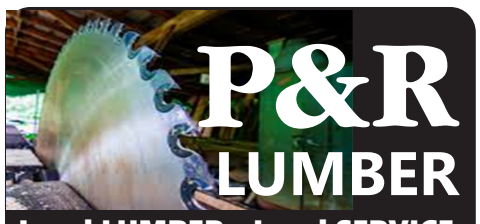
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Events

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 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.



Maggie Foster (left), of Hardwick, and Kristy Jennings (right) of Stowe head for the finish line down Spring St. during Springfest cubmobile race action, May 24. *photo by Vanessa Fournier*

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Ken Brown's Softball Roundup

Paine Mountain Denies Craftsbury First Win

LAMOILLE – After disappointing losses to Lamoille and BFA-Fairfax to start the week, the Craftsbury Academy (CA) softball team rallied to hold their first lead of the season in the final innings before falling late to Paine Mountain (Northfield-Williamstown).

Quinn Sheldon struck out 11 to earn the win and helped her own cause with a double and four runs to lead Lamoille to a 19-5 home win over the Lady Chargers last Tuesday. Hayley Bezio powered the Lady Lancer offense with four hits and six RBIs as they steamrolled to their first win of the season. CA strung together seven hits in the loss.

After a 12-0 loss to Division III powerhouse BFA-Fairfax (8-2) on Wednesday, the Lady Chargers held a lead in the bottom of the seventh at Paine Mountain on Thursday before Abby Truman walked it off in the bottom of the seventh to help her team escape with a 10-9 win. Adelina Augsberger led the way with three runs on the day for CA, as they scored five in the top of the fifth to take a 9-7 lead. Lizzie Hallock earned the win in relief and belted four hits on the day for Paine Mountain. Savannah Boyce took the complete game loss for CA as they fell to 0-10.

The Lady Chargers wrap up the regular season with a home and home against Caledonia United on Thursday and Friday before hosting Blue Mountain on Saturday.

Cal United Drops Pair on the Week

BURLINGTON – The Caledonia United (Twinfield-Cabot-Danville) softball team suffered a lopsided loss to Burlington-Winooski before taking defending Division IV champion Richford to the wire last week, falling to 0-10 on the season.

Taylor Reed scattered four hits and struck out 10 to earn the win in the circle to lead Burlington-Winooski to a 22-4 home win over Cal United last Tuesday. Quinn Vachereau led the offense with three hits and Elza Salejmani belted a double in the win. Alaina Robbins had a pair of hits, including a double for Cal United.

Adi Chagnon belted a double and a triple to lead Richford to a come from behind 20-15 road win over Cal United last Wednesday. Austin Roose had a pair of hits, including a double to give the home team a 15-14 lead in the top of the fourth before the Lady Rockets rallied with six runs in the bottom half to pull away. Aaliyah Keyes had a pair of hits and scored three runs, and Olivia Hess added a double for Cal United in the loss.

Cal United was scheduled to host Blue Mountain on Tuesday before wrapping up the regular season with a home and home against Craftsbury on Thursday and Friday.

Strong Powers Rice to a Pair of Wins

S. BURLINGTON – Finley Strong, granddaughter of Hazen Union coaching great Jack Strong, powered her Rice Memorial softball team to a pair of wins over Harwood and Mount Anthony last week before falling to Middlebury in extra innings.

The senior slugger blasted a home run, a pair of doubles, and drove in eight runs to lead the Green Knights to a 32-9 home win over Harwood last Monday. Bella Messineo earned the win in the circle.

Strong belted another homer on Tuesday and teammate Alayna Havreluk went 5-5 with a home run as Rice dominated Mount Anthony 19-9. Teammates March Lumbra and Molly McGibney added a long ball apiece in the win.

Strong blasted her third homer of the week and added a triple and three RBIs as Rice fell to Middlebury 16-15 in an extra inning slugfest on Thursday. Meredith Cameron blasted three home runs for the Lady Tigers and McKenna Whitney provided the game-winning sacrifice fly, while earning the win in relief. Despite the loss, Rice remained the No. 2 seed in the current Division II standings with a week to go.

Strong and the Green Knights wrap up the regular season with home match-ups against Milton and Enosburg on Wednesday and Friday.

Ken Brown's Baseball Roundup

Offense Sputters as Wildcats Lose Eighth Straight

RANDOLPH – The Hazen Union baseball team continued to look for answers at the plate last week with a trio of lopsided losses to Randolph, Lyndon Institute and North Country.

Randolph continued to play its best baseball of the season in the rugged Capital League last week, blowing past the Wildcats at home 12-2. The Galloping Ghosts added wins against Lake Region and Lamoille to their resume in their last five games to win their fourth game of the season after a 1-7 start.

Wyatt Mason continued his dominance over the entire Northeast Kingdom on Thursday, firing a five-inning no-hitter against the Wildcats in a 10-0 home win for the Vikings. The big right-hander struck out 12 and issued just one free pass as Lyndon remained perfect on the season at 10-0. Mason was coming off a one hit 16 strikeout gem against Randolph two weeks ago, surpassing 200 strikeouts in his outstanding career. Griffin Lawson powered the Viking offense with three hits and a pair of RBI, Logan Wheeler added an RBI double and Mason helped his own cause with a two-run double.

The offensive drought continued over the weekend for Hazen as Preston Humphrey and Jamison Eckhardt combined to no-hit the Wildcats as North Country rolled to a 10-0 road win. Kaden Jones and Ben West combined for six hits, a triple, and three RBIs for the Falcons and Bryson Poginy added a two run double in the win. North Country improved to 11-1 with their eighth straight win. Hazen fell to 2-11 and has now been no-hit three times this season.

The Wildcats are scheduled to travel to Harwood on Tuesday before wrapping up the season at home, Wednesday and Thursday against Lamoille and Lake Region. All home games can be streamed live on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

Bullets Win Third Straight to Keep Pace

FAIRFAX – Hazen Union alum and BFA-Fairfax baseball head coach Mike Brown led the Bullets to their third straight win last week to keep pace atop of the Division III standings at 8-4.

The defending Division III champs escaped with a 3-1 home win over Richford on Wednesday to sweep the season series 3-0. Ryan Sheehan celebrated Senior Night with a two-hit, seven-strikeout, complete game win on the mound. The crafty lefty helped his own cause with a pair of hits and an RBI. Fellow seniors Reagan Baumeister, Xavier Gillilan, and Bryant Matton-Wright were also recognized for helping put Bullet baseball back on the map last season with the program's fifth state championship in Brown's 28 years at the helm. Fairfax is ranked No. 3 in the current division III standings with a week to go.

Brown and the Bullets wrap up the regular season this week with a trio of match-ups against Paine Mountain, Peoples Academy and defending Division IV state champs Blue Mountain.

Sport Calendar

Thursday, May 29

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 Sport Nuggets

Alekson Leads Stags to MAAC Championship

PONOMA, N.Y. – Former Peoples Academy (PA) star Ben Alekson used his big right arm to help his Fairfield University baseball team punch their ticket to the NCAA Division I tournament with a Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Tournament Championship over the weekend.

The sophomore righty scattered nine hits and struck out eight to earn the win in Fairfield's 13-3 opening round victory over Sacred Heart on Friday. The Stowe native improved his league best record to 9-1 on the season with an earned run average of 3.24. Alekson is 15-2 in his two years with Stags and has emerged as their ace, recording 78 strikeouts in 89 innings of work this spring. Fairfield avenged a pair of regular season losses to Rider two weeks ago that dropped them out of the top seed, with a weekend sweep of Broncs, including a dramatic 7-6 on Sunday in extra innings. Nolan Colby's tenth inning blast gave the Stags the lead for good, laying claim to their first MAAC Championship in nearly a decade. Fairfield is coached by former University of Vermont skipper Bill Currier, who won nearly 500 games with the Catamounts prior to the baseball program's end in 2009. Currier took over the Stags in 2012 and has now led them to the Big Dance twice in the last five years. He undoubtedly will be giving the ball to his ace in Fairfield's regional opener. Alekson is no stranger to big games, having led PA to three consecutive state titles (2022 vs Hazen Union), earning him Veermont Gatorade Baseball Player of the Year honors in 2023.

Alekson and the Stags will open up the tournament in Conway, SC against #13 ranked Coastal Carolina on Friday night. The game will be streamed live on ESPN + at 6 p.m.

McKibben Excels for Ithaca

ITHACA, N.Y. – Former Craftsbury Academy (CA) state champion Noah McKibben finished up a stellar junior campaign with his Ithaca College men's track and field team earlier this month.

McKibben graduated from CA in 2022, won his first individual state title in the 300m hurdles that spring, and helped the Chargers bring home the program's first ever Division IV boys team state title. McKibben and his Bomber men's track and field team finished fifth overall at the Liberty League Outdoor Championship in Rochester, N.Y., two weeks ago. He finished 10th overall in the decathlon, besting the field in the javelin, while posting top five finishes in both the 110m hurdles and 1500m. McKibben put a bow on his stellar season last week with a top-five overall finish in the decathlon at the AARTFC Outdoor Championships, winning the javelin event once again, while finishing in the top five in both the long jump and 1500m.

Ken Brown's Track & Field Roundup

Chargers Rounding into Form for States

S. BURLINGTON – The Craftsbury Academy (CA) track and field team strung together another grouping of personal bests last week as they look to peak at the right time heading into the Division III state championships next week.

Natalie Hill continued to impress in the field events last Wednesday, posting a fourth-place finish and personal best in the discus. The sophomore was coming off her first career title in that event last week and was tops once again in her division for the Chargers. Freshman teammate Kilie Burnor posted a personal record in the same event.

Tess Adams of Essex took home first place honors. Kosmos Glestos excelled for the Chargers in the field events, finishing just outside the top 10 in both the discus and javelin. The sophomore posted a personal best in the discus (13th overall) and finished 11th in the javelin. He also had his best effort of the season in the long jump, with Raf Campanile of MMU taking home the hardware in both the long jump and discus. Junior Owen McKibben finished 11th in the 400m with his best time of the season for CA and sophomore teammate Theo Alexander recorded a personal best. Lamoille senior Elliot Rowe bested the field. McKibben posted a personal record time in the 200m, finishing behind event winner Brody Wells of Enosburg. Freshman Nora Van Gulden wrapped up another solid meet for CA, finishing just outside the top 10 in the 800m. Chelsea Larsen of Essex bested the field.

The Chargers will head to states next Thursday, hosted by Burlington High School.

Craftsbury Middle Schoolers Shine in Georgia Meet

ST. ALBANS – Seventh grader Poppy Glestos led her CA middle school track and field team with her first event win of the season at the Georgia Middle School Meet in St. Albans.

Glestos blitzed the field in the shot put with her best throw of the season, distancing herself from Georgia eighth grader Kallie Grattelo by more than a meter. Sixth grade teammate Mia Stout also recorded a personal best in the long jump for CA. Seventh grader Hollis Allen posted an impressive runner-up finish in the 800m with his best time of the season, finishing behind Jack Henry of Fredrick H. Tuttle (FHT). Allen had a personal best in the 75m hurdles and a seventh-place finish, with Mason Soter of FHT taking home first place honors. Charger sixth grader Adrienne Robillard bested more than two thirds of the field in the 100m with his best time of the season, with Joslin Allard of St. Albans finishing first. Eighth grader Aemilia Terrone capped off a sensational day for the Chargers with a runner-up finish in the 75m hurdles and a third-place finish in the 800m, both personal records. Teammates Stella Cusack (75m hurdles) and Eliza Bunten (800m) posted personal bests in their events.

Niemi Leads Local Finishers at Vermont City

by Ken Brown

BURLINGTON – Records were nearly broken in perfect conditions for the 2025 M&T Bank Vermont City Marathon (VCM) over the weekend.

Boston's Ryan Eiler (39 yrs old) crossed the finish line first on Sunday, missing out on the all-time record by a single second with a time of 2:17:04. Chris Gish (26) of Jeffersonville topped all Vermont runners with an impressive runner-up finish, nearly four minutes behind Eiler. Pennsylvania's Margaret Vido (34) was the top female finisher, dusting the field by over seven-and-a-half minutes with a time of 2:41:12. Twenty-six-year-old Hayley Collins of Connecticut took home runner-up honors. South Burlington high school alum (2013) Sarah Shiman was the top Vermont female runner to cross the line. Sam Montclair, Nathan Stine (Burlington), and Boston's Jack Leitch rounded out the top five overall finishers.

Greensboro's Colton Niemi (23) was the top local runner to finish on Sunday, posting a top 25 finish in his male 24-and-under age division (151 competitors) with a time of 3:03:17. Niemi was a standout on the pitch for the Hazen Union soccer team, winning 12 games and making a deep playoff run his senior season. Craftsbury Common's Catee Castle (24), Adrienne Epstein (35), and Wolcott's Jessia Boutin (38) also laid claim to one of the more than 1,500 finishers on Sunday. Twenty-year-old Margaret Fischer of St. Johnsbury posted an impressive ninth place finish among all female competitors with a time of 3:07:10.

The VCM is an annual marathon that winds through the city of Burlington, produced by RunVermont, a nonprofit organization committed to promote running in Vermont. Michael Khobotov still holds the all-time VCM record with a time of 2:17:03, set in 2001.



E. Kingston, N.H.'s Bryan Wall Jr. became the latest upset winner in the 62nd edition of the Mekkelsen RV Memorial Day Classic on Sunday at Thunder Road, besting multi-time track champions Jason Corliss and Scott Dragon.

photo by Alan Ward



After a hard-fought battle with Matt Swanson in the second half of the Granite City 100, Austin Beers claimed his first Thunder Road victory to the tune of $10,000.

photo by Alan Ward

Memorial Day Classic Upset Win Goes to Wall

BARRE – While a heavy fog and mist started off the day, Mother Nature finally changed her ways for Northern New England race fans on Sunday afternoon at Thunder Road. Thirty-three Late Models filed into the Thunder Road pit area with officials opting to start all cars for the Memorial Day Classic.

All with plus-three handicaps earned in qualifying competition, defending Milk Bowl champion Marcel Gravel, former Flying Tiger champ Joel Hodgdon and former Kings of the Road Jason Corliss and Chris Pelkey brought the field to green for their 125-lap showdown on the highbanks. Gravel showed the way early, looking to etch his name on another of Thunder Road's granite monuments but lost the lead to Corliss on the lap-eight restart after Taylor Hoar met an early end with a hard lick to the Widowmaker fronts stretch wall.

Corliss showed the way, looking for win number-four in the Memorial Day Classic but late-race restarts made for a strong-armed battle with Bryan Wall Jr. The former White Mountain and Milton CAT American-Canadian Tour standout is calling Thunder Road his home this summer season and made sure all knew it. Wall would lead lap 68 and even through several close calls in restart launches, never faltered becoming just the latest upset winning driver in Memorial Day Classic history. Wall took down his first Late Model win at Thunder Road in grand style with Corliss holding on for second and Scott Dragon driving up from a 23rd-place starting spot to claim third.

Ronnie Williams took off with the lead in the Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series but fell to defending winner Stephen Kopcik. After stretching the single file line, a lap 45 scuffle between Ronnie Williams and Jon McKennedy collected Jeffery Battle and Woody Pitkat in turn one to call the first caution. Just 11 laps later, a tight battle for the lead with Stephen Kopcik and Teddy Hodgdon saw Teddy's No. 55 ricochet off the backstretch wall to end his day with the first double hook of the year and Kopcik sent to the rear.

Now under the command of Matt Swanson, his mirrors suddenly became full of Austin Beers as the two young-guns battled hard at the head of the pack. Easily the finish of the day, these two Modified stars beat and banged off each other for the point with Beers sliding under with two to go to claim the Granite City 100 and the $10,000 prize.

Travis Patnoe and Ty Delphia brought the Flying Tigers to green but it was Sam Caron that slid through to steal the spotlight. The big one of Sunday's action saw Chris Laforest, Rich Lowrey, Matt Ballard and more collide and collect on the backstretch to call the lap-10 caution. After the scuffle, it was all Sam Caron to victory lane with Kevin Streeter and Logan Farrell joining the podium.

After a spirited battle to drive up the outside groove from sixth on the grid, Josh Lovely started his season on high with a new car in the green-to-checkered Street Stock feature event that was eventually stripped in post-race inspection. Jamie Davis came from an eight-place start to take the win with Fred Fleury second and Dean Switser rounding out the podium. By advancing 12 positions, Nate Brien took home the first $50 hard-charger award of 2025.

Mason Frazier held his own to start the wild Road Warrior feature to round out Sunday's program. Fighting hard with Caleb Cramer, Cramer nabbed the early lead over Frazier as the mini No. 70 back-slid through the inside line. Three cautions on laps 10, 11 and 12 saw several leaders spin and several more head to the rear as penalty cars. Through it all, Cayden Green took his first win of the season followed by Derrick Mann and Ryan Sayers rounding out the podium.

Thunder Road is back Sunday, June 1, for the rain-postponed Community Bank 150 with the Milton CAT American-Canadian Tour. The Late Models are set to fight hard against the Milton CAT American-Canadian Tour travel teams alongside the Flying Tigers, Street Stocks and Road Warriors with a 2 p.m. post time.

For more information, contact the Thunder Road offices at (802) 244-6963, media@thunderroadvt.com, or visit www.thunderroadvt.com. You can also follow them on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @ThunderRoadVT.

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

Late Models

5. 86VT, Marcel J. Gravel, Wolcott
10. 01VT, Stephen Martin, Craftsbury Common
18. 36VT Joel Hodgdon, Craftsbury Common

Flying Tigers – 40 Laps

5. 15NH, Brendan Moodie, Wolcott
6. 01VT, Michael Martin, Craftsbury, Common
18. 5VT, Tyler Austin, East Calais
20. 22VT, Travis Patnoe, Wolcott

Street Stocks – 25 Laps

4. 34, Patrick Tibbetts, Plainfield
20. 18x, Walker Fitch, Marshfield
23. 32, Kylee Potter, Marshfield

Road Warriors – 20 Laps

1. 18, Cayden Green, Marshfield

Spring Board 100 Postponed with Rain

N. WOODSTOCK, N.H. – After two rounds of practice for the five divisions present at White Mountain Motorsports Park on Saturday afternoon, the on-again, off-again rain finally settled in the valley and washed out the remainder of the planned Spring Board 100 program.

With the cancellation due to rain all fans in the stands were issued refunds on Saturday afternoon, pit passes will be valid for next weekend's Late Model doubleheader and NELCAR invasion and the Kid's Division have also been added to next Saturday's event.

White Mountain Motorsports Park is back in action Saturday, May 31, with a Late Model doubleheader alongside the NELCAR Legends and Bandoleros. The track sees Flying Tigers, Strictly Minis and Kid's Division with a 5:30 p.m. post time.

For more information, contact the White Mountain Motorsports Park offices at (802) 244-6963, media@acttour.com, or visit www.whitemountainmotorsports.com