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Circus Smirkus to Perform at Home Following Accident

by Paul Fixx

GREENSBORO – The Circus Smirkus Big Top Tour returns to its Greensboro headquarters for the season's two final performances, August 17, following a rigging accident, July 22, in Wrentham, Mass., that resulted in the cancellation of the next day's shows, alterations to following performances and the cancellation of others.

A message to the Circus Smirkus community, August 5, offered the first information from the organization following the accident involving an 18-year-old aerial silk artist who fell during the evening performance. Performances the following day were canceled.

The injured performer, whose name is being withheld by Circus Smirkus, is expected to recover, and

has attended a recent performance, according to the organization.

The message read, "Dear Smirkus Community, It is with profound sadness that we share the news of a rigging incident that occurred during a recent Big Top Tour performance. The trouper involved is a beloved member of the Smirkus family. Their spirit, generosity, and dedication in and out of the ring shines. We are holding their family in our hearts as we root them on towards recovery."

It went on to share, "Performances following the incident were canceled and we have also canceled upcoming performances in Hanover, NH and Milton, VT. We will close our tour with the finale shows performed, as previously scheduled at our headquarters in Greensboro . . .

See CIRCUS, 3



Circus Smirkus Troupers (from left) Natalie Morgenbesser of Maine, Sam Bernstein of New York and Eli Ezban of Mexico perform during the Circus Smirkus Road Show held at the Hardwick Farmers Youth Market, August 2, 2024.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Real Memories of Tom Hurst Shared by Family, Friends

by Paul Fixx

GREENSBORO – A gathering to honor former Willey's storekeeper, father, pastor, walker and chocolate chip cookie-maker Tom Hurst was an opportunity for well over 50 family members, friends and community members to share tender memories, humorous moments and often both.

Greensboro's United Church of Christ hosted the affair that began with lunch at noon, Monday, Aug. 11. As a projected slide show cycled through photographic evidence of Hurst's life, Rev. Anthony Acheson offered a blessing for the food and those gathered to remember Hurst.

The memories shared clearly indicated Tom was well-loved in the community and well-supported by it as his Parkinson's disease, which he never made any effort to disguise, progressed.

Recalled as a man of great love and caring for others, with an indomitable spirit, who was unlikely to utter a complaint, he was remembered as a regular walker around Caspian Lake whenever he could go, regardless of the weather, rain, or shine or snow, hot or cold. One year-round summer resident later recalled encountering Hurst on a winter day, near Campbell's corner, the most remote area of roads around Caspian Lake, with his face covered in icicles, despite an obviously warm hat. Hurst declined a warm ride, so the resident got Hurst moving again, with the often required kick in the leg.

See HURST, 4



People attending the dedication of the Greensboro Historical Society's new bench in memory of Tom Hurst, raise hands in response to Rob Hurst's question as to whomever kicked him, to get him going.

photo by Raymonda Parchment

Rural Edge to Manage Hardwick Properties

by Raymonda Parchment

HARDWICK – Area residents and business owners have been wondering about the future of 9 South Main Street, home of the Clip Joint and Co. and upstairs apartment dwellers, following an oil spill and subsequent mitigation work in recent months. Fortunately, Rural Edge (RE) Executive Director Patrick Shattuck was present at the August 7 select board

meeting to review the various properties and projects now under RE's management, including 9 South Main, pending a transfer of ownership from the Lamoille Housing Partnership.

According to Shattuck, in 2024, the Lamoille Housing Partnership and Downstreet Housing began discussions with Rural Edge to begin the process of transferring Hardwick properties to Rural Edge. Rural Edge was set to

See PROPERTIES, 3



Construction continues on a new Orton Road bridge in Greensboro, August 11, as the road joins the Stannard Mountain Road, just east of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail on the upper right.

photo by Hal Gray

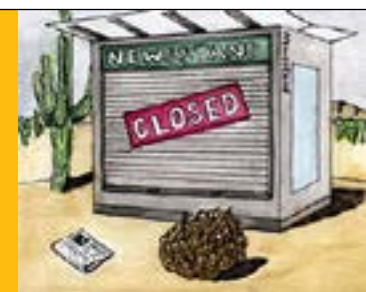
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POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Police Department DUIs, Vandalism

HARDWICK – On July 28, at 9:30 p.m., the Hardwick Police Department responded to a two-car motor vehicle crash in the area of 2659 Vt. route 15 E. Ann Gilcris of Hardwick, collided with Craig Devenger of West Danville. Both vehicles sustained damage, and neither party reported any injuries.

On August 2, at 9:19 p.m., the Hardwick Police Department responded to a report of vandalism to a field. The owner of the field, Kristopher Price, had witnessed a side-by-side tearing up the field by spinning around in circles. The side-by-side then fled down Hopkins Hill Road toward Hardwick village. Anyone with information about this incident is encouraged to call Officer Donna at the Hardwick Police Department at (802) 472 - 5475.

On August 8, at 9:25 p.m., the Hardwick Police Department conducted a traffic stop on a

vehicle for running a stop sign. The operator Michael Deering, of Hardwick, was showing indicators of intoxication and admitted he had consumed alcohol. After a series of Standardized Field Sobriety Exercises, he was taken into custody without incident and processed for a DUI. He was issued a citation to appear in Vermont Superior Court, Caledonia Division on August 18.

On August 8, at 11:49 p.m., Hardwick Police were dispatched to respond to a report of an operator of a motor vehicle passed out behind the wheel, while the vehicle was running. Hardwick Police responded quickly and determined the operator to be Fabian J Bar of Hyde Park. Barup was subsequently arrested for suspicion of DUI, driving while suspended, and driving without a required interlock device. Barup was cited to appear in Caledonia Superior Court, Criminal Division, on August 25, at 8:30 a.m.

Vermont State Police

Unidentified Intruder, Tips Sought

MARSHFIELD – On August 8, at 5:41 a.m., the Vermont State Police was contacted by Alex Caron of Marshfield. Caron advised someone was attempting to break into her residence while she slept. The individual fled the scene shortly before troopers arrived. Troopers checked the area and located the female matching the description given by Caron. The female was subsequently taken into custody for burglary into an occupied dwelling. The female was transported to the Berlin Barracks for processing and later brought to the Washington County Superior Court. The female was subsequently held on \$5,000 bail.

The female refused to identify herself to law enforcement or the Washington County Court. The Vermont State Police asks for assistance from the public in identifying the female. If anyone recognizes “Jane Doe” we ask you to contact the Vermont State Police in Berlin 802-229-9191 or the tip line, <https://vsp.vermont.gov/prevention/tipsubmit>

CABOT – On August 9, at approximately 8:36 p.m., troopers received a report of an assault that occurred in Cabot. An investigation led to the arrest of Tyler Rogriguez for domestic assault and Violation of Relief from Abuse Order. Rodriguez was flash cited to appear in the Washington County



The Vermont State Police are seeking identification of this burglary suspect.

Superior Court Criminal Division for August 11, at 12:30 p.m.

CRAFTSBURY – On August 2, at 10:39 p.m., the state police were notified of a family dispute at a residence on S. Craftsbury Road. While enroute, troopers learned the alleged suspect fled in a vehicle. Nearing the area, troopers located the truck and conducted a traffic stop. Troopers made contact with the operator who was identified as John Medlock, of Craftsbury. Medlock was detained and after investigation, was placed under arrest for First Degree Aggravated Domestic Assault in the presence of a child, Criminal DLS and DUI No. 2. Medlock was transported to the Derby Barracks for processing and was later lodged, held without bail at Northern State Correctional Facility.

Hardwick Police Department Media Log

August 3: Medical, Terrace Hill Road; 911 Hangup, Vt. Route 15 East; Medical, Maple St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.

August 4: VIN Verification, High St.; VIN Verification, High St.; Assist – Agency, High St.; Traffic Stop, Granite St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.

August 5: Fingerprints, High St.; Citizens Dispute, Vt. Route 14 S.; Citizen Dispute, S. Main St.; Intoxication, Brush St.;

August 6: Traffic Stop, Route 14; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14 S.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.; Assist – Public, N. Main St.; VIN Verification, Houston Hill Road; Bike Patrol, Rail Trail; VIN Verification, Winter St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Medical, Maple St., Motor Vehicle Complaint, Maple St.; Medical, Maple St.

August 7: Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14; Citizen Dispute, Dutton Road; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 15; Motor Vehicle Complaint, S. Main St.- Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Cottage St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Medical, Maple St.; Traffic Stop,

Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Glenside Ave.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Suspicious Events, Hays Drive.

August 8: Accident - Injury to Person(s), Vt. Route 14 S.; Transport, High St.; Suspicious Event, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Parking Problem, S. Main.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Mill St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; DUI, S. Main St.; DUI, Vt. Route 15 W.

August 9: Suspicious Event, Vt. Route 14 S.; Medical, Wolcott St.; Accident - TCNR, Wolcott St.; Found Property, Dewey St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Medical, Maple St.; Traffic Stop, N. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Ward Hill Road; Dead Body, Vt. Route 16.

August 10: Alarm, Vt. Route 15 W.; Medical, Bunker Hill Road; Medical, Maple St.; Assist - Agency, Winding Lane; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, Granite St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14.

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Properties

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assure management and eventual ownership of 100 units from Downstreet, and 160 units from Lamoille Housing Partnership.

Shortly after the deciding vote, the third party property management association, Alliance Property Managers, announced they would cease operations by the end of the year. Come November, Shattuck says they were informed Alliance no longer had any employees whatsoever. Rural Edge subsequently agreed to assume management in December.

“What we’d seen at the beginning of the year, to what we took over, was quite different,” Shattuck began. “There were over 20 vacancies, units that hadn’t been vacated, hadn’t been turned over or readied for the next household. There were supposedly very few open work orders or repairs needed, but when we spoke to tenants, there were hundreds of items that had not been addressed,” he explained.

In addition to these unpleasant surprises, Shattuck informed the board several evictions had been started, but no further action had taken place. In November, the oil spill at 9 South Main Street forced the property to be vacated, which Shattuck said became a serious challenge. Because the oil spill was considered an environmental issue, insurance coverage was capped at \$25,000.

“We got the funding to both remediate and rehabilitate the building, due to the design of the building. The oil tanks are on the first floor, but pump up to the boilers on the second floor. And so, when that oil spill happened, the failure occurred on the second floor, which really caused a dispersal of oil all over the structure,” Shattuck explained. The repairs to the Clip Joint and upstairs residencies have been completed, with a certificate of occupancy granted by the state two weeks ago. The heating system at 9 South Main has been refitted for propane, for both efficiency and sustainability purposes.

Police Chief Mike Henry was present to tell the board that radar signs have been placed on Church Street, West Hill Road and on Center Road. The East Hardwick Neighborhood organization is looking to get more signs in that area of town, having applied for a grant and received \$2,500 towards one. Officer Joe Donna has recently completed his requisite 300 hours of field training, moving him up to Level 2. Recently hired Officer Robin French has left the department, having taken a position with Morrisville Police Department. Chief Henry and the board discussed amending Hardwick Police Department (HPD) trainee contracts to include a two-year employment commitment.

In other business, the board elected to join the Vermont-Alert system, used by the state and local responders to notify the public of emergency situations.

The board discussed throwing up Town Highway 316 off of N. Main Street next to 283 N. Main Street. After reviewing the maps,

the board agreed unanimously to begin the process.

The board approved the submission by Community Development Coordinator Tracy Martin, for an application to Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) to support the hiring of Heather Carrington to work on two Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) projects.

Road Foreman Tom Fadden delivered his regular report, saying the crew is almost finished with sidewalk work on S. Main St. They will begin grant work on Tucker Brook Road, as well as mitigation work. The crew has been spot grading, as the weather remains too dry for calcium chloride to be effective.

The board approved some appointments. Kate Brooke was reappointed to the development review board for a three-year term. To the Hardwick Conservation Commission, Peter Moskovitz was appointed for a three-year term, and Joe Nudell for a two-year term.

Circus

Continued From Page One

“Thank you for being part of the Smirkus community. We’re grateful for your support, patience, and understanding.”

A Newport Daily Express report July 28, indicated Wrentham, Mass, Police Chief William McGrath, said “first responders were dispatched to a call at 7:49 p.m., regarding a performer who had fallen 10 to 20 feet while using aerial silks, and was suspected of having a spinal injury.”

A nurse attending the show immediately aided the fallen performer, “providing traction to keep his neck and spine straight,” they reported

“When officers arrived on the scene, the victim was alert, conscious and able to speak,” McGrath said, according to the report. “Fortunately, the performer is expected to recover from the injuries sustained in the fall,” said the Executive and Artistic Director Rachel Schiffer.

A spokesperson for the organization said, “Safety is paramount and a serious component in all of the training and performances.”

As the tour continued through

Massachusetts and Maine, performances were limited to ground acts, said Schiffer. An announcement at the top of each show reassured the audience, saying “heart, joy and skill that defines every Circus Smirkus performance are still center stage.”

Circus Smirkus, founded by Rob Mermin in 1987, is a traveling youth circus based in Greensboro, Vermont. It aims to promote circus arts, culture, and traditions, inspiring young people in circus skills. Mermin, inspired by his own experiences in European circuses, established Smirkus to provide a space for young people to pursue their circus dreams.

Every summer, a freshly auditioned company of Smirkus Troupers, ages 10 to 18, take to the road in traditional mud show fashion for a two-month performance tour of New England.

A mud show, according to historical newspaper accounts, was a traveling show that moved from town to town, setting up in the morning and performing before moving on at night. They were known for their rough-and-tumble travel conditions,

often traversing muddy roads in horse-drawn wagons. The modern circus is said to have evolved from these types of shows.

Circus Smirkus connects to those roots, with a modern approach, backed by professional coaches, cooks, musicians and crew. The performers, called Smirkos, perform to sell-out crowds in a 700-seat European-style one-ring big top tent.

Each year brings a new story line and original full-length show combining the best in traditional and contemporary circus styles giving Troupers the full experience of touring in a classic traveling tent show.

Smirkos are completely immersed in circus life, with rigorous training, daily chores and the loading in and loading out of the Big Top,

This year’s theme, “Game On,” brings board games to life with rolling dice, a whirling spinner, a checkerboard that bursts with acrobats leaping and tumbling while aerial chess queens plot their next moves high above.

The troupers and their support team are now back in Greensboro preparing for two shows on Sunday, Aug 17, at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Tickets are available on the smirkus.org website.

AWARE Report

HARDWICK – Fourteen people used AWARE services between August 3 and August 10. The AWARE 24-hour hotline is 802-472-6463.

A non-profit established in 1984, AWARE serves Hardwick and the greater Hardwick area in preventing and healing the trauma of domestic and sexual violence.

AWARE provides help during immediate crises, as well as advocating for on-going emotional and legal support for people of all ages and gender.

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



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Hurst

Continued From Page One

Tom's wife Merrill Hurst began the reminiscences thanking the many people who facilitated the day's gathering, then recalling Greensboro as "Tom's favorite place on earth," and having a hard time getting him to leave for Trumansburg, N.Y., in 2016 to live near their daughter Whitney's family and where he was fitted with a device that gave him medicine every 36 seconds, greatly adding to his mobility for many years.

In Trumansburg, Tom did the kind of things he'd done in Greensboro, joining and organizing various groups, from Rock Steady Boxing to becoming chaplain of the fire department, joining the historical society, a men's walking group and attending church, his favorite being the UCC in Ithaca.

Continuing a theme, Tom often brought chocolate chip cookies to gatherings, or had them to hand out during chance encounters in the community.

During that time Tom and Merrill were able to visit regularly with Whitney's family and more regularly with Emily's after they moved to Chicago.

Tom received a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer in September 2024 and died November 19 of that same year.

Hal Gray recalled a visit by Tom during one of his walks around the lake, in which Tom asked Gray to dispose of trash he'd collected so he had room for more during the remainder of his walk.

Nancy Reige shared her experiences owning and living in the Greensboro house once occupied by Tom and Merrill, which now has a labyrinth on top of the septic system mound that Merrill had to remind her is correctly called Mount Merrill.

Nancy Hill recalled a misunderstanding when she misinterpreted Tom's request to "kick me" as "kiss me," to the delight of all, and a further comment that at least one either person had a similar experience. Under their breath, some suggested Tom seemed to have a convenient lisp.

Stew Arnold recalled experiences from 55 summers earlier when he'd found a way to spend a college summer in Greensboro to make sure his future wife, Becky, wouldn't have a summer romance with anyone else. Stew and Becky spent time that summer with Tom and Margo Gray, as Becky already knew Tom. They enjoyed trips to Coles Pond that summer. Becky recalled a youth group, shared meals and Tom liking ice cream smoothies.

Stew suggested he and Becky,

who were married in Greensboro by Tom in 1977, might have been his only local marriage, though at the time Tom was a seminary student and Dave Travers signed their marriage license in "the center of the universe."

Margo recalled Tom as her first boyfriend, with his thoughtful and gentle character establishing a high bar for her future relationships. She also recalled her first kiss being in the same church where the day's gathering was happening, which memory resulted in a playful fist from Merrill, who then recalled her first date with Tom. She had asked him to a Sadie Hawkins Day dance and, noticing the photo of a pretty woman on his desk, thought, "this isn't going anywhere."

Jeff Pierpont recalled first meeting Tom when he stopped for milk at Willey's just as Tom was sliding the outside door closed for the day. Tom opened the door, telling Jeff where in the store to find milk, then refusing payment as he said, "the registers are closed," and told Jeff to come back later to pay. Pierpont fondly recalled conversations while driving Tom to and from appointments.

Judy Carpenter recalled her daughter, Leona, returning from visits with Emily, saying "Emily's dad is so funny." She had been glad to see Tom navigate 45 stairs to and from the water and play badminton during a visit in Trumansburg. Karl Stein said he remembered Tom as very supportive and also recalled helping to kick-start him and take a hand-off of trash, though Stein suggested the motive might have sometimes been the possibility that Tom had a supply of chocolate chip cookies to offer, as all agreed, he often did.

Arne Averill remembered a time when they were young and Tom seemed lonely so she invited him to an event. Years later Tom told her that was the beginning of his social life.

Tom's daughter Emily remembered her father for giving her his work ethic, his rootedness in Greensboro and service to his community; all things she's sharing with her children. She also recalled her father calling as he closed the store, to ask Merrill, "Need anything?"

B.J. Gray recalled having to get used to a man lying on the floor of the church sanctuary, which was Tom in one of the poses his Parkinson's often left him in before his next restart.

Carpenter shared another incident in which she'd had to pick up a pair of young turkeys after shuttling Tom to an appointment, which he gently held during the



Preparing for a memorial walk around Caspian Lake in Greensboro to remember Tom Hurst's regular ramblings are (from left) Aaron Hurst, with daughter Leah; Christina Hernandez, Stew Arnold, Becky Arnold, Tony Acheson, Lucy Mitchell, Margo Gray and Nancy Reige. They were served free coffee and crullers at Willey's Store while waiting for others to arrive, Tuesday morning..
photo by Paul Fixx

trip home, then finding him covered with turkey poop, which Tom never complained about.

Reverend Ed Sunday-Winters, said he never knew Tom, except through others reminding him they share the experience of regularly walking around Caspian Lake. He said, "Tom's memory will be a blessing for many years to come."

Karen Collier was appreciative of the way Tom encouraged her husband, Steve, to take off so he could be with their kids, once saying, "From now on, family first."

Monica Morrissey recalled Tom's mother Phyllis playing piano for her class and staying with that class the next year when Emily's

project was Greensboro shops, for which he was very particular about the details.

In closing the gathering, Acheson shared his experience that the memories felt very real, giving a sense of Tom's resilience and courage.

Dedication of a memorial bench for Tom was scheduled at the Greensboro Historical Society immediately after the church gathering, with, of course, chocolate chip cookies served, followed by the interment of his ashes at the Lincoln-Noyes Cemetery soon after.

Tom Hurst's obituary can be found at ness-sibley.com/obituaries/thomas-hurst.

Tax Bills Sent, Orton Road Bridge Replacement Underway

by Paul Fixx

WALDEN – The select board breezed through its July 28 agenda in just 20 minutes, with all members and the Town Clerk Debbie Messier present, July 28.

Ditching and berm removal on a segment of Noyestar Road had been occupying the road crew, who reported no repair expenses in the last two weeks. The project to replace the Orton Road bridge has begun.

Messier said the tax bills have been calculated and sent out at the rate approved at the July

14 meeting: A homestead rate of 2.2302 and non-homestead rate of 2.1686. That's an increase of \$26 per \$100,000.00 of assessed value.

She reported 90 percent of the Orton Road bridge funding has been received. Remaining funds will be paid after the project is completed. The town will cover \$95,000 (25%) of the \$380,000 bridge replacement cost.

The rail trail has a new kiosk where it passes by the town clerk's office, where a map of the rail trail will be on one side and information about Walden on the other.

WEATHER WATCH

Small Amounts of Rain and Cooler Conditions

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – A stretch of fair weather with moderating temperatures was the primary theme for the previous forecast period. Little in the way of rainfall accumulated across a large portion of our forecast area in the Lamoille and Winooski River headwaters. Less than a tenth of an inch of rain has fallen since July 28, except for parts of West Woodbury, where a stalled thunderstorm was likely the culprit of two rainfall reports of over half an inch for August 7.

The prolonged period with little in the way of rain has caused us to be classified as “abnormally dry” on the U.S. Drought Monitor. Climatologically, we’re at least an inch and a half below normal for rainfall in the month of August; and our July numbers also came in a little on the low side.

As of Tuesday, Vermont remains on the back side of a high-pressure system, funneling warm and moist

air into our region on a southerly flow. This is making temperatures a little uncomfortable with highs near 90 with high humidity making it feel warmer.

That high departs on Wednesday, with an approaching cold front setting the stage for afternoon showers and thunderstorms. By Thursday, that front will clear and another high-pressure system sets up north and west of us with a cooler and drier airmass expected for several days. As that high slides eastward, warming resumes and a weaker cold front looks to approach for Sunday with a returned chance of some scattered thunderstorms. Will either of these opportunities replenish our rainfall deficit? A couple of thunderstorms may produce a heavy downpour, amounting to around an inch of rain, but it will not be widespread. There will still be some ground to make up even if that high-end scenario unfolds. Here are the forecast details:

Wednesday: Partly sunny.



Craftsbury’s Old Home Day and Farmers Market tents line the North and East sides of the Common Saturday on a perfect Vermont Summer day with temperatures in the 80s. Paraders circled the green twice, some distributing candy, small fruit pies and mini hamburgers. photo by Paul Fixx

Scattered showers and thunderstorms by afternoon. High: 87. Low: 63. South wind 5-10 mph.

Thursday: Mostly sunny. High: 76. Low: 53. Northwest wind 10-15 mph.

Friday: Sunny. High: 77. Low: 51. Light and variable wind.

Saturday: Mostly sunny. High: 82. Low: 59. Southwest wind 5-10 mph.

Sunday: Partly sunny. Scattered afternoon showers and thunderstorms. High: 82. Low: 50. Southwest wind 5-10 mph, becoming northwest by evening.

by Erin Petenko

VERMONT – Wildfires are supposed to be less common in the summer, when the state is usually lush and green, but they appear to be popping up more frequently, the state forest fire supervisor said.

Most of the state was under a “very high” fire risk warning as of Monday due to dry conditions, according to Vermont Emergency Management.

Only the central portion of the southern end of the state, including eastern Rutland and Bennington counties, and western Windsor and Windham counties, were under a lower-level “high” risk, the department wrote in a Facebook post. It warned Vermonters to avoid open burning, exercise caution with outdoor grills, campfires and machinery, and properly extinguish cigarettes.

Megan Davin, a spokesperson for the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, said three “very high” fire warnings had been issued so far in 2025. Meanwhile, there were 13 overall in 2024 and 13 in 2023.

Dan Dillner, the state forest fire supervisor, said the current conditions were abnormal compared to the past 20 years. “I don’t know what normal is anymore,” he said.

In July, the state spent weeks fighting an 11-acre wildfire in Fair Haven. The last time a wildfire of that size had broken out in July was in 1988.

Vermont Reaches “Very High” Fire Risk

He urged Vermonters to follow safe fire practices. Along with avoiding open burns, anyone lighting a grill or campfire should keep it away from vegetation, monitor the embers and make sure it’s always attended. People also should be careful with cigarettes and other small burning items.

“When you get to ‘very high’ fire danger, even flicking a cigarette into brush can cause a fire,” he said.

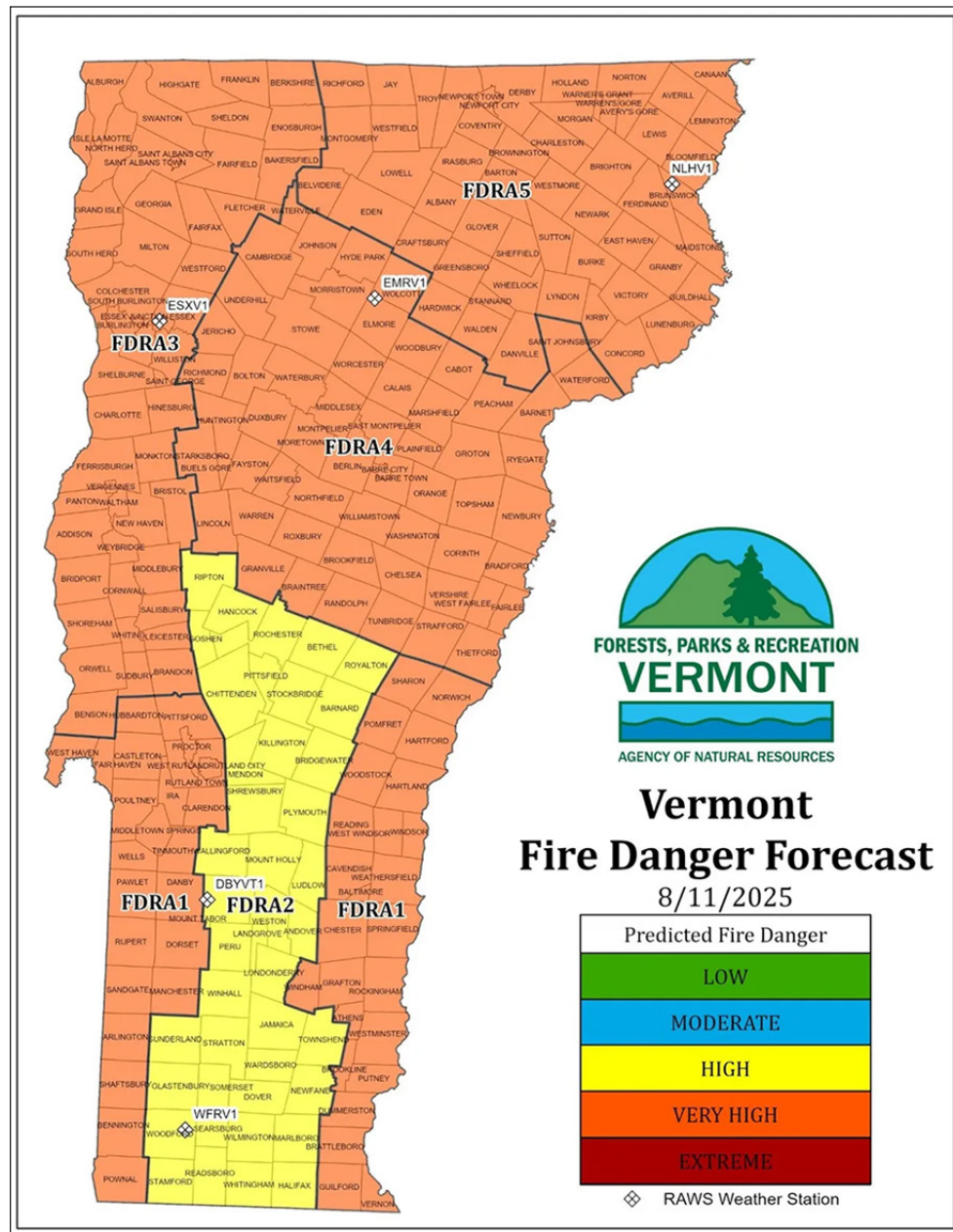
Forty-five wildfires have been reported in Vermont so far this year, totaling 46 acres of damage. One was attributed to a lightning strike. The rest are human-caused.

“We in the Northeast need to remember our Smokey the Bear,” the famous mascot for fire safety, Dilner said.

The alert came as the state entered a new phase of hotter temperatures in an already hotter-than-average summer. The National Weather Service issued a heat advisory for Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle and western Addison counties for Monday and Tuesday. Burlington is expected to reach temperatures in the mid-90s on both days, the weather service said.

The Vermont Department of Health maintains a list of cooling centers across the state and tips on staying safe in the heat on its website.

Recent days have also seen less rain than expected for this time of year. Burlington has received 6 inches of rain in total since June 1, the



Map via Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

start of meteorological summer. By contrast, the average rainfall during that time between 1990 and 2020 was over 9 inches.

Roughly three-quarters of

Vermont has been reported to have “abnormally dry” conditions by the U.S. Drought Monitor, a research project from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Vermont Summer Camps Prep for Safety

by Kate Lewton

BURLINGTON – They are made up of cabins scrawled with old camp signatures, wide lawns, friendship bracelets, campfires, lake games, tearful partings, first friendships and childhood delight. Summer camps have been the launching ground for life lessons for decades of American kids, but the latest threat to preserving that magic could be climate change.

In light of the recent flooding at Camp Mystic in Texas, dangerous weather such as flooding presents a very real threat to these organizations. Now, Vermont summer camps are working to learn from the tragedy to better ensure camper safety.

Summer weather has been big news in recent years, including extreme flooding, heat waves and wildfire smoke. Locals have noticed these effects, said Scott Whittier, the warning coordination meteorologist in Burlington for the National Weather Service.

He said that the most noticeable change is the variations of weather extremes and how long they last. Whittier explained that in past Vermont summers, people might experience higher heat days, but soon after a cold front would rush in to provide some relief. However, within the last five to 10 years, periods of high heat last longer.

On June 22, Burlington reached 99 degrees, the fourth-highest temperature on record for the city in history.

A warmer atmosphere can hold 4% more water vapor for every one degree Fahrenheit of increased temperatures, according to Whittier.

“If we’re continuing to have a climate that is warmer and warmer, that gives us more potential for more water in the atmosphere to eventually rain down,” Whittier said, which also means heavier rain events.

Over the course of the last half-century, annual precipitation in Vermont has increased about 20%, according to Whittier. But the frequency of heavy rainfall events up to 4 inches have seen a 200% increase. Vermont is seeing more heavy

rainfall episodes, and in between those episodes are drier, hotter periods that last longer.

The American Camp Association, a membership organization that has accredited more than 3,500 overnight summer camps, plays a crucial role in promoting safety precautions to camps certified in their network by looking at the health and safety standards of each accredited camp.

While Camp Mystic was not ACA accredited, the organization released a statement in regard to the tragedy and the aftershocks it sent through the camp world.

“In times like these, the loss of even one life touches every camp, because the camp community is and has always been deeply interconnected,” said the ACA in an online statement. “We stand together in sorrow, in solidarity and in support.”

This ACA statement said it was working as a resource to support those impacted by the tragedy and to provide camps with more resources to listen to local needs.

Michele Rowcliffe, executive director of the ACA’s New England office, spoke to Community News Service prior to the tragedy at Camp Mystic about the work being done to combat the changing climate in the camp world. Prior to the event, Rowcliffe said the shifting environment is something camp professionals were taking seriously.

“It has been a heightened conversation. I’d say camping is a really resilient and flexible industry. I think that camps and camping professionals are super nimble,” Rowcliffe said. “As part of licensing, as part of accreditation, having emergency action plans are required. So there’s always a plan A, a plan B, a plan C.”

Even with the shifting environment, Rowcliffe reiterated the important transformative experiences that summer camps provide youth.

“While the world changes so fast, there are some of these traditions of camping that haven’t changed, and it’s basically working together, learning group work, learning conflict resolution, making decisions without a parent or caregiver being there, being out in nature,” Rowcliffe said.

While flooding is on the forefront of everyone’s mind, high heat can also pose a potentially dangerous threat to campers if not properly prepared for. Hosmer Point, in the Northeast Kingdom, and Camp Farewell, located in Newbury, are both ACA-accredited camps pivoting their programming under climate change.

Hosmer Point Camp Director Carrie Glessner extended her condolences to all those affected by the Camp Mystic tragedy, and she expected the ACA to release new guidelines for all accredited camps later this summer. But, while flooding is an issue Hosmer Point was aware of at other camps, its location meant it wasn’t an issue on their property, Glessner said.

“Hosmer Point is on a hilltop, and although our cabins are next to Great Hosmer Pond, the pond itself is at the top of the watershed. No rivers drain into it, so there is no appreciable flood risk at our site,” Glessner said.

But after the floods in 2023 and 2024, though Great Hosmer Pond was unaffected, the camp realized that if local roads were closed, they needed emergency routes off the property. Glessner said more food is now kept on the property in case of delivery delays.

Glessner says the biggest issue for the camp is frequent thunderstorms because their location on a hill puts them at greater risk for lightning strikes. This threat, mixed with unpleasant weather, means camp activities must be moved inside.

“We’ve been investing more time and budget on indoor activities to improve that area of our programming, but it’s still a challenge for staff to bring the enthusiasm if we have multiple days in a row of thunderstorms,” Glessner said. “We have a detailed protocol for thunderstorms: when to keep biking and boating trips near shelter and when to bring everyone indoors.”

Camp Farewell, which also wasn’t affected by flooding in 2023 or 2024, has also learned to pivot in the event of heavy rainfall. Camp Directors Rachel Morgan and Marley Hansen emphasized that in light of rain, flexibility is key, but so is preparation.

The same flexibility is key in potentially dangerous heat.

“For us, it means turning every activity possible into a water activity, not planning running-in-the-sun activities, lots of coolers of lemonade, making sure campers have bedding for hot weather and really doubling down on the reminders to drink water,” Glessner said. “There are more hot days now, but it doesn’t change what we do for them.”

At Camp Farwell, altering activities like turning regular tennis into water balloon tennis helps cool down campers, or switching out baking classes with smoothie making.

“Pivoting and making the best situation can be really positive and leave really great memories, especially when it’s impromptu and the kids haven’t experienced it before,” Hansen said.

In the wake of tragedy and change, summer camps are looking toward the future.

“One thing that I’d want to point out is the resiliency, the flexibility, the loyalty and passion that folks have in this industry,” Rowcliffe said. “So many people have been in it for decades and we really believe in what we’re doing and making a difference in young people.”

Kate Lewton writes for the Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship.

Continued Speeding Through Common Reported

by Paul Fixx

CRAFTSBURY – Roads and drivers were a big topic, with a concern submitted by Stark Biddle, about motorcycles and sometimes trucks occasionally speeding through Craftsbury Common at 50 to 60 miles per hour being very dangerous, noisy and disruptive. Distracted driving was noted as an increasing issue for concern nationwide.

The board decided to ask the Orleans County Sheriff to attend an upcoming meeting to discuss options for patrols and how that might affect Vermont State Police coverage.

The select board approved paving the town garage bridge with asphalt early next year, after obtaining permits. The new town truck has arrived, and an applicant for road crew foreman has withdrawn, but another candidate has shown some interest.

In the FEMA update, all 2023 reimbursements have been received and nearly all for the 2024 flood too.

Issues with a tax sale on an un-landed mobile home are being given careful attention as tax sales are rare in Craftsbury and care is

being taken to ensure the process is handled appropriately, with a board of civil authority meeting pending input from justices of the peace.

Town Clerk Michelle Warren reported there have continued to be issues with telephones during the last several weeks and she will get quotes for other options.

It was agreed to continue allowing the town hall to be used as the emergency evacuation site at the request of the Craftsbury School. Students will be able to remain under school supervision until parents can pick them up.

An issue with tree trimming on the Common came up for which there is no budget. Board members decided to let Hardwick Electric Department trim trees on its schedule and try to have a forest committee representative present to help guide work.

The town porta-potty has been placed too close to a tree on the Common and must be moved.

The select board will hold its next meeting Tuesday, Aug. 19, 7 p.m. at the Craftsbury Town Hall.

Association Welcomes All with Town Connections

by Paul Fixx

GREENSBORO — The Greensboro Association’s (GA) annual meeting last Wednesday was attended by over 50 people in the barn at Jennifer Ranz’s Turning Stone Farm on a warm and sunny afternoon.

The association’s membership accepted revisions to the bylaws recommended by the governance committee supporting outreach efforts by the membership committee for creating a more inclusive and representative association, enhancing transparency in nominating members to leadership roles and supporting efforts to connect with the next generation of members.

Members no longer need to be a year-round or seasonal resident, or the owner or lessee of Greensboro property; they now need only have a connection to the Greensboro community and support the association’s mission statement.

Committee reports were shared before the meeting, with Stew Arnold of the Lakes & Environmental Stewardship Committee delivering a summary at the meeting. He noted three greeters are stationed at the Caspian Lake Boat Launch from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., every day of the week, where they assess the risk from each boat entering the lake, inspect it for invasive plants and animals, then assist with decontaminating it, or turn it away.

Lake monitoring for clarity and phosphorus readings shows improvement from effects of July storms the past two summers, said Arnold.

Loons continue to be active, with an average of 10 to 12 average and a mating pair that were successful at hatching two chicks that are growing fast, he reported.

A LakeWise assessment was completed, with Caspian Lake scoring high in all categories: driveways and runoff, structures and septic, recreation areas and lakeshore. More assessments are planned this season.

The lake is now about an inch over the spillway, which is about four inches below its historical average, and well below the last two years post-storm levels, said Arnold. The dam’s weir opening has remained four inches above the 2019 to 2024 base setting as an experiment to find the best year round setting.

Almost 1,000 trees and shrubs were planted on two properties along the Lamoille River in late-May and early-June through the Streamwise program with some GA funding. Culverts have been adopted by about 35 people and there’s a proposal being considered to enroll

in the national Adopt-a-drain program to educate citizens and prevent water pollution from debris that is washed into local waters.

Arnold reported the town’s petition to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to ban wakeboats on Caspian was denied. The committee continues to work with Responsible Wakes for Vermont Lakes, the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds and the Caspian Lake group to plan next steps. Hardwick Electric maintains a ban on wakeboats launching at the Caspian Lake boat ramp.

Following Arnold’s remarks, some lakeshore property owners expressed concern about silt that’s collected in shallow areas used by children and the effect of water levels on those activities, which, it was suggested, should be a higher priority than the time spent on concerns about wakeboats. Arnold said the two activities needn’t detract from each other and indicated more attention can be given to maintenance and management of the dam by working with Hardwick Electric Department, the town and the state.

In other reports, the GA maintains a fund for Greensboro to invest in organizations, infrastructure and initiatives supporting its mission, with a Caspian Lake Reserve Fund dedicated to lake and watershed protection through community education and targeted programs to prevent, eradicate or mitigate environmental threats.

GA grants in the last year provided support to a variety of community organizations and initiatives, with the grants committee awarding \$32,000 in annual grants to 21 grantees that will support community programming, town initiatives and general operations for organizations that provide essential services to the Greater Greensboro community. The Community Relief Fund awarded \$9,150 to three organizations addressing food security and emergency services.

The membership committee continued its efforts towards greater inclusivity and broader outreach by proposing the expanded membership eligibility definition in the GA’s bylaws to ensure it remains a welcoming and representative organization for both full-time and part-time residents. The committee report by co-chairs Chloe Cabbage and Joann LaCasse, said it is prioritizing targeted outreach through community events and increased communications efforts designed to raise awareness of the GA and encourage participation across all segments of the Greensboro community.

The GA Communications Committee reported it is undertaking a



Naomi Ranz-Schleifer (right center in blue sweater) leads the Greensboro Association meeting held in the barn at Turning Stone Farm, Wednesday, Aug. 13. photo by Karen Gowen

complete redesign of the website with work, guided by Betsy Hunt, expected to be completed before 2025 is over.

The GA uses social media and area news media to communicate with its greater Greensboro community, said Meaghan Meachem, communications committee chair, in her report.

The many community initiatives and events supporters or organized by the GA include February’s Tour de Greensboro cross country skiing event; the Funky Fourth Independence Day weekend celebration; the July Caspian Challenge,

with around-the-lake and 5K running and walking age group events; a Bend Block Party in August; the Caspian Lake Sailing Series; the Greensboro Community Garden; Pollinator Friendly Greensboro; a new community meals series and the Caspian Lake Swim Program at the public beach.

The GA Mission Statement says simply, “Our Mission is to advance initiatives that connect and enhance our greater Greensboro community, protect our lakes and environment and support a vibrant local economy.” Learn more at greensboroassociation.org.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Community Action Information

by Paul Fixx

AREA TOWNS – A wide range of community actions are scheduled with weekly area gatherings.

On the Democratic and liberal side of the ledger, the Mobilize website has been created to gather nationwide events and volunteer activities in one place that can be sorted and filtered by location and a wide range of special interests. That website, at Mobilize.US, combines information from groups who’ve been turning out big crowds nationally: 50501, Working Families Party, MoveOn, Show Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) and Indivisible.

The Democratic Party website at democrats.org lists some activities too.

Republican and conservative

events can be found on websites for the Republican Party at gop.org and the Republican National Committee at rnc.org. The voice of the movement guiding the U.S. federal administration’s political conversation can be found on Truth Social at truthsocial.com.

The National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW) website at nfrw.org/events lists upcoming events, including zoom meetings, conventions and state-level events; the Republican Jewish Coalition (RJC) website at rjchq.org/events and the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) at cpac.org are sources of upcoming activities.

Special interest group websites and social media groups are also a source of information about local activities.



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Greensboro Bend Block Party. Saturday, August 9



The Greensboro Bend Methodist Church will be transformed into a space for the community in the coming years.

photo by Chris Steel

GREENSBORO BEND - Residents and visitors in Greensboro Bend braved the heat on Saturday, August 9, for a joyous block party that included basketball, a band, a barbecue picnic and tours of the developments at the Methodist Church and Habitat for Humanity home.



Kent Hansen, Habitat for Humanity Greensboro Initiative Chair, and Bill Hardy, Project Manager, take a break from leading tours at the Habitat for Humanity home.

photo by Chris Steel



A new Habitat for Humanity duplex home is being built at 1119 Main St.

photo by Alex Strand



Nick Parker of the Vermont Council on Rural Development discusses the future of the Greensboro Bend Methodist Church.

photo by Alex Strand

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Greensboro Bend Block Party, Saturday, August 9



Recommendations shared by Greensboro Bend residents for the future use of the Methodist Church are recorded on poster boards.

photo by Alex Strand



Kaziah Haviland of the Vermont Council on Rural Development and B.J. Gray of Greensboro work at the Methodist Church to contribute ideas for its future use for the Greensboro Community Trust.

photo by Chris Steel



Rick Ely gives tours of the new Habitat for Humanity home to visitors.

photo by Alex Strand



The Millers of the Bleeding Hearts Band play at the block party.

photo by Alex Strand



Liz Steel and Beth Meachem of the Greensboro Energy and Climate Action Committee share ways for residents to improve their home efficiency.

photo by Alex Strand

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VCBB Offers Grants for Affordable Broadband

by Vermont Community Broadband Board

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) has a program to help Vermonters afford to get connected to broadband. The Affordable Long Drop Program will provide grants to eligible providers to cover connection costs for long or nonstandard drops, including underground installations.

Providers currently pay costs that exceed routine installation fees to connect addresses that are considered standard drops. Those are for houses that are closer than 500 to 2,000 feet from the fiber that runs along utility poles on the road, depending on the provider. Customers are required to pay additional costs to connect their homes if they're farther from the road. That cost can be many thousands of dollars, making getting connected to broadband impossible for some Vermonters.

Christa Shute, executive director of Northeast Central Broadband (NENEKCV) has seen this firsthand. "The Affordable Drop Program will allow NEK Broadband and CVFiber to serve hundreds of potential customers that have signed up but could not afford to put in the necessary underground conduit from the pole line to their house. With 71 towns and three of the lowest income counties, NEKCV is focused on maximizing the value of the program for our rural residents." She encourages

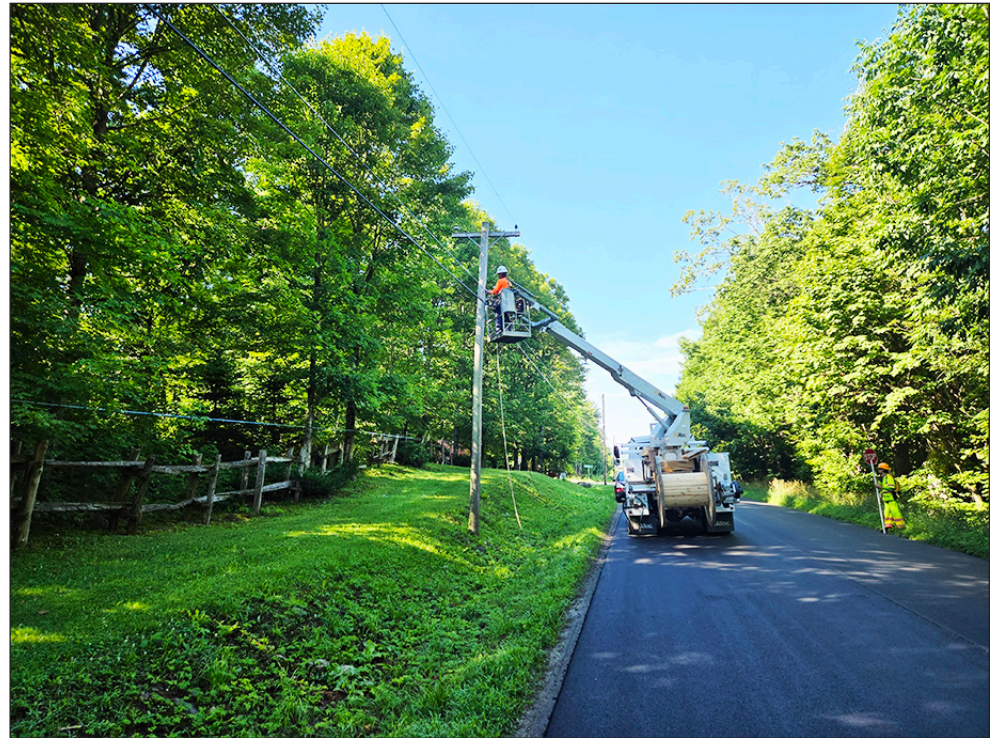
all Vermonters that will need an underground or other nonstandard drop to their home to visit their Communications Union District website to sign up for service and benefit from this program.

The Affordable Long Drop Program will prioritize funding for manufactured home communities, low- and moderate-income Vermonters and customers at eligible addresses who have signed up and committed to service.

"Having high-speed internet in your neighborhood means nothing if you can't afford to connect to it. This program is designed to be the final push that turns availability into true accessibility, opening the world of opportunities that come with a reliable broadband connection, from jobs to education, telehealth, social and so much more," said VCBB Digital Equity Officer Britaney Watson.

"While grant programs such as the Vermont Community Broadband Fund have helped CUDs bring fiber-optic service to underserved areas, funding to connect every household remains a challenge. The cost of some of these connections is simply too high for households as well as rural providers such as CUDs," said Ellie de Villiers, chair of the Vermont Communications Union Districts Association (VCUDA) and executive director of Maple Broadband. "The Affordable Long Drop Program will directly address this issue."

Eligible providers are Communications Union Districts



A crew under contract to NEK Broadband installs fiber optic cable on Center Road in Hardwick near Montgomery Road. To check availability of service in your area visit get.nekbroadband.org photo by Paul Fixx

(CUDs), small communications carriers, or internet service providers working in conjunction with a CUD to expand broadband service to unserved and underserved Vermont locations as part of a plan to achieve universal broadband coverage in the district. All applicants must have an approved universal service plan and a viable business plan.

Applications from eligible providers will be accepted starting August 29, until September 12. Find more information on the VCBB at publicservice.vermont.gov/vcbb Contact a CUD to find out if you could benefit from this program. If a town is not part of a CUD, email the VCBB at VCBB.

info@vermont.gov with your town name and any information you have about the nonstandard drop you will require.

NEKCV is a Communications Union District (CUD) serving Vermont's Northeast Kingdom as NEK Broadband and Central Vermont as CVFiber. NEKCV provides, or plans to provide high-speed internet access to 71 towns across the Northeast Kingdom and Central Vermont, including some or all of the 11 towns covered by The Hardwick Gazette. It is a community-driven organization committed to bringing affordable, reliable internet to rural and underserved areas. Learn more at nekc.org.



An excavator lines a Greensboro Lakeview Road ditch with rock, August 11, as a means of rainwater management. photo by Hal Gray



Piles of rock await distribution in the ditch by the excavator as a means of rainwater management. along Greensboro's Lakeview Road. August 11. photo by Hal Gray

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Craftsbury Old Home Day, Saturday, August 9



Linda Ramsdell (left) of Craftsbury and Nell Urie (right) of Albany ride in the Horace Strong Bike Brigade during Craftsbury's annual Old Home Day parade, Saturday. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Sarah Morgan of Hardwick wears an original outfit of Craftsbury's Miss Jean Simpson as she rides on her chariot in the Craftsbury Old Home Day parade, August 9. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Arlo Thomsen, 6 (left), of Waltham and Matthias Martinez, 5 (center) of Craftsbury watch Jon Greenia (right) of Wolcott make a balloon animal as they eagerly await theirs. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Craftsbury Assistant Fire Chief Steve Perkins (left) and Captain Andrew Marckres (right) grill hot dogs and burgers August 9, under the Craftsbury Fire Department food tent during Old Home Day activities. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Left: Craftsbury Saplings teacher Emily Gletsos (back left) and Victoria LaGuardia (front right), ride on a float with friends in the Craftsbury Old Home Day parade, August 9. Miniature cardboard replicas of buildings located in East Craftsbury are displayed around the float. The school is hosting a Harvest Dinner, November 26. photo by Vanessa Fournier

Supervisory Unions Meet to Influence Redistricting

by **Corey McDonald,**
VTDigger

The night before the state's school redistricting task force met for the first time, more than two dozen school officials from the Northeast Kingdom met to discuss the possible effects of the task force's work, and how they could advocate for themselves.

The mood was stark at the Thursday night meeting, with many officials expressing resentment for attempts to further consolidate Vermont's school districts. But the ad hoc group of board members and school officials from the North Country, Essex North and Orleans Central supervisory unions planned to develop a shared plan to try and lobby the task force.

"We do believe that given what's coming, we may have a chance to influence where things are going," Praneet Menon, the chair of the North Country Supervisory Union, said during the meeting.

On Friday, the 11-member School Redistricting Task Force had its inaugural meeting, which was mostly procedural. Created under Act 73 to craft new school district boundaries for Vermont's public education system, the task force, made up of legislators, former superintendents and school officials, went over logistics and laid out what they hoped to accomplish.

"This is our moment to create significant change that will benefit our children," Dave Wolk, a former state senator and former president of Castleton University who was appointed to the task force by Gov. Phil Scott, said at the Friday morning meeting.

As the work to overhaul Vermont's public education system begins in earnest, supervisory unions and school districts are bracing for impact. Some, like the three Northeast Kingdom supervisory unions, are coordinating how to influence that process.

Part of Act 73, Vermont's sweeping education law passed during this year's Legislative session, the new task force will work to consolidate Vermont's 118 school districts contained within the 51 supervisory districts or supervisory unions into anywhere from 10 to 25 future districts.

These new larger districts would oversee a minimum of 4,000 prekindergarten through grade 12 students, but no more than 8,000 students "to the extent practical," according to the law.

The law's new mandates around class size minimums and consolidations has created anxiety for school districts and their local communities. Rural communities fear the law's

implementation will eventually force the closure of their schools.

"What you're working on right now has the potential to have a massive impact on the quality of life for young families and children in our state," Cheryl Charles, the chair of the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union board and the chair of the Rural Schools Community Alliance, said during the Friday task force meeting.

In the Northeast Kingdom, "there's a lot of concern among our constituents that what they're suggesting at the state level will not work for us given the rurality of our area," Menon, who organized the ad hoc committee, said in an interview this week.

The goal, Menon said, is to formulate a unified plan to present to the task force. That could mean devising an in-house consolidation plan among the three supervisory unions to present to the task force. Or to tell the task force they reject the premise of their work altogether.

"Either way we go, I think it is somewhat of a push back, because in one way, we're saying, 'Here's what we want,' and the other way we're saying, 'We don't want anything that you're suggesting whatsoever,'" he said. "What we want to do out of this is influence the task force's end result so that we can carve out something that is favorable to our constituents, our students, and the regional needs of our area."

"The mentality is, this is coming, and if it is coming, then we might as well try and figure out how we can influence the process," Menon added.

The task force is taking on a significant task on an ambitious timeline: about five months to draw up no more than three new possible configurations to the Legislature by Dec. 1.

"We will do the best we can with the time that we have," Rep. Edye Graning, D-Chittenden-3, said during the task force meeting. Graning, who together with Sen. Martine Gulick, D-Chittenden Central, was named a co-chair of the task force.

The Legislature plans to take up the task force's recommendations during the next legislative session, but they are not bound to accept their recommendations.

Much of Act 73's sweeping provisions hinges on the Legislature eventually agreeing to a new map next session during an election year. In the Northeast Kingdom, some officials on the ad hoc committee questioned whether the process will move forward at all.

"There's a strong possibility that the whole thing just goes away," said John Castle, a board member with the North Country Supervisory Union and the executive director



The School Redistricting Task Force convened for the first time on Friday, Aug. 1.

of the Vermont Rural Education Collaborative.

"Now, I can't guarantee you that. I don't know that," he said during the meeting, "but there's a part of me that feels like we should be the biggest pain we possibly can be, and join others in the state to be a real pain, to see the whole thing go away."

There was plenty of skepticism during the task force's meeting as well. The consolidation proposed under Act 73 would mark the "biggest governance reform in 100-and-something years," Rebecca Holcombe, D-Windsor Orange-2, said during the meeting.

She was skeptical of the state's ability to see such a process through.

"It's pretty clear we are not capable of doing what we already have on our plate," she said.

Others on the task force expressed optimism that the work over the next five months could help transform Vermont's struggling public education system.

Jay Badams, recently retired as superintendent of School

Administrative Unit 70, said he led his former district through a consolidation effort that "ultimately ended up closing five schools, eliminating 300 teaching positions and cutting central office in half."

"We saved money by consolidating. We saved significant sums of money," he said during the task force meeting. "And for us to get better outcomes, to bring equity where I would argue there isn't right now, or even substantially equal resources for all of our kids, is going to require some hard choices."

He said the task force should involve the public in the work and be transparent. He also said the task force members will have to "acknowledge that if we're going to be successful in this work, there will be sacrifices that we'll be asking some entities to make."

"I think you as legislators will have tons of pressure from people who will oppose a lot of those ideas," he said. "But it can be done."

The redistricting task force has yet to schedule its next meeting.

Beck Joins First Redistricting Task Force Meeting

by **Paul Fixx**

MONTPELIER – Following the School Redistricting Task Force's first meeting, Friday August 1, Caledonia County State Senator and Senate Minority Leader Scott Beck said, This is going to be really difficult and important work for the next four months.

Beck joined two senators, three representatives and five nonlegislative members on the task force.

At the meeting, Task Force member Dave Wolk passed out magnets to all, that read, "Keep Smiling," which Beck called "good advice."

Minutes of that first meeting indicate the committee brainstormed a long list of data they felt would be necessary to accomplish their work. They asked, "Why do some states provide a very good education at a lower price with fewer school districts in both public and private schools?" They looked for data on implementing a system with services shared across districts, as exists in other states; the distance of schools to kids; governance models; the status of facilities with ratings; the capacity of the Agency of Education (AOE); the state of hiring; what kinds of support are needed to implement changes; birth rates; population projection; projections of optimized school locations; career and technical education programs, what Districts send students to private schools; turnover data; and "how are student outcomes measured?"

More information can be found at tinyurl.com/School-Task-Force.

Future meetings of the task force are scheduled twice a month through November, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with the next scheduled for August 19, at the Waterbury State Office Complex.

Historical Society Learns of Great Maple Syrup Bubble

by Paul Fixx

GREENSBORO – “The Great Maple Syrup Bubble” was the subject of a talk by Greensboro resident and Northwestern University Emeritus Professor of History Tim Breen, following a brief Greensboro Historical Society business meeting led by President B.J. Gray, last Monday, Aug. 4.

The business was gotten through quickly with all officers reappointed and Jan Terwiesch appointed as a new trustee.

Notable successes in the past year include receiving funding to add UV protecting window shades in the society building’s Hill exhibit, Dan Penrice’s editing of this year’s Hazen Road Dispatch, fundraising and sitting of a memorial bench for Tom Hurst in the society’s garden and two newsletters edited by Jenny Stoner.

Renee Circosta was named as the year’s outstanding member and Harvard protein chemist John Tillotson Edsall will be the subject of next summer’s exhibit.

Breen’s talk identified an economic bubble involving the production of maple sugar from sap, between 1789 and 1792. Promoters insisted it would transform the economy of the United States. Breen identified its causes and effects, involving the greed, hype, misinformation and

gullibility required for the making of all good bubbles. Those looking for a connection to Greensboro had to wait for the end, where Breen finally made the Greensboro connection.

Like all good bubbles, this one had its winners and losers, with the founders of Greensboro being among the land speculators who capitalized on the failed bubble, said Breen.

Breen cited three ingredients for the making of a bubble: First there is the belief that a source of wealth exists, second is the opportunity for ordinary people to benefit and third are persuasive testimonials.

In 1790 maple sugar satisfied all three, he said.

Sugar was then mostly a product of the West Indies and had transformed American and British diets, said Breen. “What was once an extravagance was now a necessity.”

Making for the bubble was the possibility of replacing West Indian sugar, made by the blood and sweat of blacks, with a Vermont product, he said. Adding to the moral dimension was a 1790 visit to Vermont by Thomas Jefferson, before he became President.

Interestingly, while replacing the work of black people in the West Indies with the work of Vermonters, there was no hint in newspapers of the time taking



Tim Breen (left) talks with Stefanie Cravedi after his talk, “The Great Maple Syrup Bubble,” following the Greensboro Historical Society’s annual meeting, Monday, Aug. 4, in Fellowship Hall. photo by Kyle Gray

notice of the condition of enslaved people in the U.S., said Breen.

It was said maple sugar was a patriotic act, driving immigration, recommending itself as a benefit to small business. And of course, promoters said, “Making maple sugar was easy.”

“Inconsistencies abounded,” said Breen, and books about the process abounded as well. It was clear from them that the process was complicated, with a long and expensive list of equipment required. In addition any number of accidents, from overheating, to ash falling into the product, could cause it to be worthless.

Answering a question after his talk about who benefited from the bubble, Breen suggested it was those who provided the equipment, not least of which were the manufacturers of the copper kettles preferred over steel kettles, prone to rust.

Seeing an opportunity, the

Dutch Holland Company sent two representatives to survey the market. They journaled their activities, writing, “There is in the whole state of Vermont, a considerable number of maple trees.”

In the end, transporting maple sugar was difficult and expensive because of its density. And white sugar, supplied from the West Indies, was preferred over the brown product produced from the sap of Vermont’s maple trees, said Breen. Most farmers apparently found more lucrative work in animal husbandry, where the fruits of their labor could be sold locally.

Discovering that, the Holland Company representatives, and others, saw another great opportunity in land speculation. Some speculators went bust, said Breen, and at least one in the area landed in jail. Greensboro’s founding land speculators seem not to be among either of them, Breen later confirmed.

Hardwick Health Center Recognized for High Vaccination Rates

WATERBURY –The Vermont Department of Health has recognized the Hardwick Health Center among the 72 primary care practices across the state for achieving high vaccination rates and helping to protect children, teens and adults against vaccine-preventable diseases that can be serious or even deadly.

The health center is recognized in the Silver Level Adult category that includes the top 10% coverage for Tdap (dose within 10 years), Hep B (UTD ages 19-59), HPV (UTD ages 19-26) Pneumococcal (UTD ages 65+) and Zoster (UTD ages 50+).

“Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to protect yourself and those around you from serious disease,” said Merideth Plumpton, Vermont Immunization Program manager. “Now more than ever, we want to recognize the importance of this work in our communities and the professionals who are leading the way to keep Vermonters healthy.”

Practices are honored at the Gold or Silver level based on their immunization coverage rates, according to data from the Vermont Immunization Registry. The full list of this year’s awardees can be found on the Department of Health’s website.

According to the health department, vaccines help prevent severe illness and help stop the spread of diseases like measles, pertussis (whooping cough), and cancers caused by HPV. The Vermont Immunization Program helps protect the health of all Vermonters by ensuring vaccines are accessible and safely administered. The program provides free or low-cost vaccines for children and adults (aged 19 through 64) to participating providers across the state. The program also supports health care providers with training, resources, and technical assistance to ensure proper vaccine storage, administration and reporting. To learn more about recommended vaccines for children, teens and adults go to healthvermont.gov/vaccineinfo.



This week’s last Center for an Agricultural Economy Monday Meal of the summer season drew a larger than usual crowd, with 35 visitors from the People’s Agroecology School of Vermont, a project of Rural Vermont. The usual Hamburgers and hot dogs were supplemented by spaghetti, beans with beef, several salad choices, watermelon, zucchini cake, zucchini bread and maple ice cream, with a cone, or without one.

photo by Paul Fixx

Vermont School Districts Seek Guidance

by **Corey McDonald,**
VTDigger

WOODSTOCK – The Woodstock Union High School and Middle School building is in bad shape. Its HVAC, electrical and sewage systems, products of the mid-1960s, are now well past their useful life, according to school officials.

Sherry Sousa, superintendent of the Mountain Views Supervisory Union that operates the school, said the district “can’t guarantee, based on where our systems are now, that our sewage system is going to work.”

For those familiar with Vermont’s public education system, this sort of story is hardly new. Districts throughout the state routinely deal with general disrepair and disruption caused by aging school buildings.

Over the years, education officials have pleaded with the state to restart a long-dormant state aid fund for school construction, which previously supported up to 30% of construction costs. But Act 73, the new education reform bill Gov. Phil Scott signed into law last month, is creating optimism among education officials that state aid could begin again.

Mountain Views Supervisory Union officials are banking on that. Last week, members of the school board and central administration announced they would press ahead with a new working committee to oversee plans for a new high school and middle school building under the terms of Act 73.

“We’ve decided that we can’t wait. We have to move forward. We need a new school,” Keri Bristow, the Mountain Views Supervisory Union’s board chair, said in an interview. “We have to do something before we have a catastrophic failure.”

Vermont’s new education law seeks to address the state’s “languishing” school infrastructure through implementation of a new state aid for school construction fund. Act 73 provides preliminary rules around what schools could be eligible for state aid, and which projects should be prioritized.

The newly created State Aid for School Construction Advisory Board, set to first meet on or before September 1, according to state Board of Education Chair Jennifer Samuelson, will work with the Agency of Education to further develop and finalize those parameters before the School Construction Aid Special Fund is officially created July 1 next year.

The advisory board is one of the first facets of the new law to

get off the ground. The School Redistricting Task Force has already started work to consolidate Vermont’s 118 school districts, contained within 51 supervisory districts or supervisory unions, into anywhere from 10 to 25 future districts. The school construction advisory board will work concurrently with that task force.

David Epstein with the Burlington architecture firm TruexCullins has worked with a number of Vermont’s school districts’ on facilities needs. He called the new framework in Act 73 a “positive sign.”

But he and others have cautioned that while the law sets up a framework for a revived school construction fund, the law does not directly address where funding will come from.

“Until a funding source is identified and the scale of that funding source is understood, it’s hard for me to be too optimistic,” Epstein said.

In a press conference Thursday, Scott said school construction is “going to be very important” once new school district maps are drawn and plans for consolidation are considered by the Legislature.

“That’s an appropriate time to talk about school construction,” he said. “We should be prepared for that, I realize that, but I think we’d be putting the cart before the horse in terms of school construction.”

Vermont’s schools are the second oldest in the country and have continued to depreciate since state lawmakers paused construction aid nearly 20 years ago.

The Agency of Education has previously estimated schools will need upward of \$6 billion in infrastructure investment over the next two decades.

“The level of investment has not been keeping up with the needs, and so there’s a tremendous amount of need,” Epstein said.

The disrepair in school facilities has forced districts to try and finance fixes through voter-approved bonds. Last year, the Colchester School District put forward a \$115 million bond to modernize its aging schools, which, similar to the Woodstock High School, were built in the mid-20th century.

Colchester residents narrowly approved the bond proposal in November, but other districts that have floated bonds have not had such luck.

In March 2024, residents of the Mountain Views Supervisory Union’s seven member towns voted down a \$99 million bond measure, throwing in flux plans to



A once-temporary but now permanent fix to the heating system are seen in pipes suspended along the hallways of Woodstock Union High School.

photo by Glenn Russell, VTDigger

replace the Woodstock High School building.

And in 2021, voters in the member towns of the Harwood Unified Union School District sunk a \$59.5 million construction bond. Without voter approval, the district is now stuck using general fund dollars to complete patch work repairs.

“We’re spending a lot of money on capital needs for things that really require wholesale renovation, new construction,” said Michael Leichter, Harwood supervisory union’s superintendent.

Leichter said the Harwood school district hired TruexCullins to conduct a review of its buildings, which he said should be completed by the end of August.

The Orleans Central Supervisory Union also hired TruexCullins to conduct a facilities assessment of school buildings. Dan Roock, the chair of the facilities committee there, said the district has \$108 million in deferred maintenance across its eight school buildings.

Officials there are hoping to begin a community outreach campaign to gauge willingness for any new renovation projects.

Uncertainty over taxpayers’ appetite for million-dollar bond investments has created a tricky calculation for districts that fear catastrophic failure in their school buildings.

The more they wait, the more expensive repairs will cost, Roock said.

“We know we’ve got to do something,” he said. “We know it’s going to cost a lot of money, even if

it’s no new construction, just fixing what we have.”

“We’ve been patient’

For districts with construction plans in the works, like Orleans Central Supervisory Union, the decision whether to proceed with bond votes has been further complicated by the redistricting process underway.

“Some districts are waiting to see what the new districts are like,” Epstein said. “Some districts want to move forward with projects while they still can, while they still have control of their destiny, so to speak.”

Uncertainty around whether state lawmakers will even fund the new state aid construction fund only complicates that decision.

Sen. Seth Bongartz, D-Bennington, chair of the Senate Education Committee, said there is “a general recognition that we have to figure out a way to help with school construction funding.”

“But there’s also a recognition that, right now with what’s happening nationally, we’re in uncharted waters, and we’re really going to have to see where we are come January and see what kinds of immediate crises we may be facing, or not,” he said.

In the Mountain Views Supervisory Union, officials say they can’t afford to wait any longer.

“I think we’ve been patient, and the board has been really responsible,” Sousa said. “Now, we really have to fill in the gray spaces of Act 73. We want to work with the Agency of Education to fill in that gray space and acknowledge, how does this school district move forward?”

THANKS

FOR SAYING YOU SAW IT IN THE HARDWICK GAZETTE

EDITORIAL

Northeast Kingdom: The World's Most Resilient Place

After over two months this summer at the Gazette, I would love to share some closing words and gratitude. Firstly, I'd like to thank UVM for the opportunity to live and work in Craftsbury and Paul and the entire Gazette team for teaching me the subtle styles of the paper while putting up with me.

As a UVM student from a major metropolitan city, who has barely so much as driven through rural towns, when I found out I would be working at a non-profit newspaper with one editor and one writer in rural Vermont this summer, I was less than excited. I don't love Burlington. It's a town that constricts you. It lacks the charm of a medium town, despite being one, and instead embraces the concrete, construction, trashed streets and general unrest of a city thrice its size. Maybe getting out of Burlington for the summer could be good, I told myself.

Soon, I found myself unpacking in a new home at Sterling College, as smells of animals and compost wafted into my windows.

Small town is a deceiving term. If I were to use a hundred words to describe the Northeast Kingdom, none of them would come close to small. Expansive, loving, diverse, even divine. When one drives, it feels as though you go and never stop, and that the hills will just keep rolling ahead. There is no end nor beginning.

With every local story I have gone to cover, whether it's in Wolcott or Greensboro Bend or Craftsbury, families have surrounded me. Food is laid out on tables. A guitarist or band plays live, and children toss balls in the field.

More importantly, there is an overwhelming air of welcoming and of strength. Finding myself in communities where I know no one, and am quite frankly very clearly an outsider, has been intimidating, but I have learned so much from these communities. They can and will better their home, they are sure of it.

I am now a proud regular at the Genny, and have brought groups of my friends up from Burlington to escape to the cool waters of Caspian Lake and the zany shows at Bread and Puppet. They love it every time.

I see your strength everywhere I go, and I am proud

to call this place my home, however brief my time. Out here, nearly every day is a free community dinner. The sun is bright, and the green of the maples blooming even brighter. Food is a right, and in abundance for all. No one

goes forgotten. It's all we need. Thank you, Northeast Kingdom, the most resilient place in the world. I hope to see you again soon, though maybe not in the wintertime.

Alex Strand,
UVM Intern

LETTERS FROM READERS

Dog Control Ordinance Should Be Revisited

To the editor:

I was happy to read the August 6 editorial by Paul Fixx about keeping dogs on a leash while walking the LVRT and about properly disposing of canine feces, as I am also aware that clashes between dogs and other trail users can be a problem.

Another point to note, however, is that local leash laws apply to portions of the trail as it passes through each town.

It is my understanding that the Town of Hardwick can post signs indicating that all dogs must follow the Hardwick Dog Control Ordinance while using the trail in Hardwick. These signs can be mounted on the kiosks and as the trail enters the town. The signs should also give the amount of penalty for violations and a phone number and email address for reporting violations.

Unfortunately, these signs can not say that dogs must be leashed because Hardwick's ordinance does not actually mandate that dogs be on a leash. It says they must be leashed or clearly under the verbal or non-verbal control of the owner or hunting with the owner. That, to

me, is a potential problem that can lead to a "he says - she says" situation. Perhaps the select board can modify the language of the ordinance so that, in addition to being under the control of the responsible person, it indicates something like "a leash is required when walking dogs on public roads and public trails in the town of Hardwick and in the Urban Compact of the Town of Hardwick or within the Central Business district or Compact Residential district of East Hardwick."

The ordinance addresses pooper-scooping within the specified business and residential districts, but should be updated to specifically include public trails and roadways. It currently reads "The person in control of a dog that defecates . . . (in the urban or residential districts) shall immediately remove the fecal material and dispose of it in a sanitary manner or face penalties and costs . . ."

The select board should also consider expanding the pooper scooper section to include horse feces on the public trails and in the business and residential districts.

Cheryl Luther Michaels
East 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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Submissions of Content and Deadlines: The Hardwick Gazette is published late on Tuesday each week with Wednesday's date. Submit community event information, announcements, opinions, press releases, paid ads and business news the Friday before publication by 5 p.m. Local news and sports items, letters to the editor and church submissions are due Monday by noon. Deadlines may be earlier for holidays. Obituaries may be submitted at any time. We make every attempt to confirm receipt of obituaries. Call to confirm receipt of any obituary submitted Tuesday if it is important it appears in that week's edition. Photos capturing news and community events are welcome with details with the full name of each identifiable person, what is happening, when and where the photo was taken and why it is newsworthy. When sending photos, send unedited files in the largest size available to ensure the best page and web presentation.

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

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The new gazebo on the green across from Willey's Store received the last of its white paint recently to complete work planned by the Caspian Critters 4-H club, who presented the idea to the town ARPA committee and received funding for it. It was built by Mike Lapierre and his son Corban.

photo by Paul Fixx



Marshfield Farmers Market vendors at the Old Schoolhouse Commons on Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. offer fresh eggs, pastured frozen whole chicken and low sugar jams. Other vendors have coffee, fresh food, fresh vegetables and a variety of handmade items.

photo courtesy social media

LETTERS FROM READERS

When A Republic Trembles

To the editor:

There's a sound that nations make when they begin to fall. It's not always the chaos of civil war or the thunder of invasion. Sometimes, it's quieter: the erosion of trust, the rise of fear, the corrosion of institutions. Sometimes, it's the steady drip of power into the hands of a concentrated few while the rest of us are told everything is just fine.

In recent years, particularly in the last few months, it has become increasingly clear that our American Republic is in decline. Not just in military or economic terms, but in moral and democratic ones. And like all empires before us, we seem unable, or unwilling, to see the danger until it's too late.

History tells us how this story goes.

The Roman Republic gave way not because of outside invasion, but because of inequality, corruption and the slow erosion of norms that once held it together.

Germany's Weimar Republic collapsed not overnight, but through legal means: elections, courts and laws used to hollow out democracy from within. The people handed over their freedom for a promise of strength.

The same signs are showing here.

We have watched the slow and legal dismantling of voting rights. We've seen key administration positions filled with boot-licking

lackeys, know-nothings and nationalists. We watched rights rolled back and power consolidated.

A former president, convicted of crimes, is elected with the full backing of a party that once claimed to be the guardians of law and order. Incendiary rhetoric is now normalized. Governmental checks and balances are treated as inconveniences rather than essential safeguards, and are removed or ignored.

In Vermont, we may feel far from Washington, but we are not insulated from these national tremors.

Democracy doesn't disappear all at once; it disappears when people stop believing their voices matter. It disappears when disinformation replaces truth, when fear drives policy, when apathy becomes a survival mechanism.

This is not alarmism, it's a reckoning.

It's time to decide what we value more: comfort or conscience, control or community.

We cannot claim to love the Constitution while abandoning the principles it was meant to uphold.

We cannot pretend to be a beacon of freedom while embracing authoritarianism.

Empires fall. But democracies? They have to be given away: piece by piece, lie by lie, silence by silence.

**Jeff Pierpont
Walden**

OUR E-MAILS

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The Craftsbury Community Care Center is seeking a part-time Cook to join our kitchen staff, working a minimum of 20-plus hours per week. Duties include preparing and cooking meals according to recipes, ensuring timely food preparation, and maintaining cleanliness in the kitchen.

Salary range: \$18.50 – \$22/hour

Requirements: Previous kitchen experience preferred. Excellent customer service and communication skills. Ability to multi-task and communicate respectfully and effectively with co-workers and residents. Benefits include a collaborative working environment, flexible schedules, as well as health, dental, and 403B investment plans for those who qualify.

Apply today. For more information or to apply, please contact Kim at (802) 586-2415 or email kroberge@craftsburycarecenter.org. You can also download, print and complete an application from our website, craftsburycommunitycarecenter.org/employment



The Craftsbury Community Care Center is seeking a float pool staff member to join our center, working a minimum of 16 hours/week. Duties will include assisting residents with personal care needs, as well as preparing the dining room for lunch and supper meals, serving drinks and meals, and cleaning up.

Salary range: \$16.75 – \$18/hour

Requirements: Previous kitchen experience preferred. Experience working with elders a plus. Excellent customer service and communication skills. Ability to multi-task and communicate respectfully and effectively with co-workers and residents. Benefits include a collaborative working environment, flexible schedules, as well as health, dental, and 403(b) investment plans for those who qualify.

Apply today. For more information or to apply, please contact Kim at (802) 586-2415 or email kroberge@craftsburycarecenter.org. You can also download, print and complete an application from our website, craftsburycommunitycarecenter.org/employment

WEEKS GONE BY

Cabot School Districts No. 5, No. 6, Merritt and Read Schools

by Jane Brown

CABOT—The school in Cabot's District No. 5 was located on the road to South Walden, about three miles from Cabot Village. Over the years, the school was referred to by whatever family either lived nearby or had several youngsters going there. However, why it was referred to as Merritt School when it closed in 1943, is a mystery. No one seems to recall a family by that name living in the area.

One of the earliest settlers on that road was Daniel Webster Rogers, born in 1824. He was the son of Hanson and Hannah Webster Rogers, and married Louise Whittier (1826-1907), daughter of John Whittier Jr. They had five boys, James, Franklin, Charles Henry, Robert Harvey and Herman Alonzo and one daughter, Florence, who married Sam Norris. Florence and Sam eventually took over the Rogers farm sometime after the turn of the century when her parents moved to the village. That farm was later owned by Phil Pike Jr. For a few years the school was known as the Rogers School and later Smith's School before it became Merritt School.

The original schoolhouse was a small one-story building, but as the population in that area grew, a new school was built directly across the road. Addie Arthur taught there in the 1920s. She earned \$17 a week and paid \$7 a week board. Addie Arthur later married Earle Pike and had to give up teaching. Married women were not generally allowed to teach in most Vermont towns at that time. That policy changed radically during World War II when teachers were in short supply.

When Eunice Fifield taught at Merritt School in the early 1930s, she had from 20 to 25 students. Children from Amadon, Houston, O'Brien, and Gochey families attended during that time, also five Pike and four Searles youngsters. By 1937 there were only 13 students. In an interview for the Cabot oral history book, Cabot Vermont, A Collection of Memories From the Century Past, published in 1999, Marjorie (Searles) Gendron described what it was like going to school when she was there.

She said, 'We pledged the flag

and the teacher read a passage from the Bible each day before classes began. There were two outhouses, one for the boys and one for the girls. In the winter you didn't dilly-dally long when you were out there.'

Like most of Cabot's one-room schools, either a parent or one of the older students served as janitor and was responsible for shoveling a path in winter, starting a fire in the big woodstove that heated the classroom and bringing a jug of water for drinking and washing hands. School was never canceled unless the teacher was too ill to be there. Most teachers boarded nearby, sometimes having to change boarding places every few weeks to distribute the privilege.

Donovan Houston told about his brother, Howard "cutting up" when Mr. Phelps was the teacher at Merritt School. "Phelps picked Howard up by the collar and was swinging him around and around. Howard's feet hit a pail of water we'd brought up from a nearby spring and the pail flew right over Myrtie Salls head. She was on her knees getting a book or something, so she wasn't hit. Nobody dared to laugh."

Donovan said that when Dora Ennis taught there, she used "a big wide ruler to strike the palm of their hands if you misbehaved."

Howard Walbridge went to school there when his aunt, Elsie Walbridge, was the teacher. He had strict orders to call her "Miss Walbridge," never "Aunt Elsie."

Merritt School finally got electricity in 1940, but by that time there were few students in the district and in 1943 the school closed and the building was sold. The few remaining youngsters from that area went to the Village School.

Everett and Mary (Lyford) Walbridge's buildings are gone now. The house was taken down in 1982 and some of the lumber used to build a shed for Mike and Sally Rushman. Cabot's Town Farm was on that road, but few people today remember when overseers like C.M. Fisher and later Ned Barnett helped destitute citizens through hard times and the Depression years at that farm.

In place of productive farms with mowed hayfields and pastures

dotted with cows, now there are single-family homes tucked behind stately trees along the paved two-lane highway that is South Walden Road. A spacious recreation fieldhouse shares parking space with the impressive Cabot Fire Department building. Further along the road is where the relatively new highway department garage stands and beyond that about 900 acres are preserved as the Cabot Town Forrest. The dairy farms with large families of youngsters needing schooling are gone, along with any evidence of the school that once served them.

Across town and high on Danville Hill, Read School was located in District No. 6 on the west side of what is now Urban Farm Way, and at the intersection of an old road that used to go west towards what is now the Langone farm. It is unclear when this school was first opened, but it appears on a map of Cabot dated 1858. That building was described in the Superintendent of Schools Report in 1885 as being "less than worthless." Some of the families living in the area at that time were E. P. Reed, D. W. Reed, C. Russell F. Hall, N. Davidson, several Morses, and A. Heath, so there were sufficient students to warrant building a new schoolhouse. The superintendent's report described the new schoolhouse as being "a few rods away on land purchased from Mr. Batchelder," and "the best fitted and furnished house in town."

When Arecca (Gamblin) Urban first attended Read School, Jesse Beaton was the teacher. Arecca remembered there were cloakrooms at the entrance, lots of windows for good light, a big stove in the middle of the classroom for heat and the customary communal water jug. Unfortunately, the schoolhouse burned down in 1918. Authorities thought that mice chewed the matches in the teacher's desk, starting a fire. Florence Smith, one of Allan Smith's daughters, was teaching there that year and the Gamblin children and the Smith's youngsters were her only students. After the building burned, classes were held in the Smith's living room for the remainder of that year and the following year students were sent to school in the village.

Arecca drove a horse to school picking up fellow students with a pung sled or buckboard wagon along the way, a little over two miles to the village. There was a road that came from what is now Urban Way to where Menards (now the Langone farm) lived, and Arecca said it was bitterly cold some mornings going down through there. She was only in fifth grade when she began driving the school bus, and did it for several years.

Only a few people knew about the Read School or where it was located until Arecca's daughter, Velma (Urban) Smith had a sign made in about 2013 so that the school where her mother and so many other youngsters in the Danville Hill area first trudged to classes each day would not be forgotten.

Cabot's one-room schoolhouses served their communities well for many years. They were where children not only learned their three Rs, reading, writing and reckoning (arithmetic), they also learned social skills by joining with adults at neighborhood parties, special school events and celebrations.

It was not uncommon for a teacher to have 20 or more students learning at different grade levels. Older students sometimes helped tutor younger students and because classes were held in one large room, students learned from hearing the recitations of upper grade students.

The teacher's word was law and if a student disobeyed the rules, punishment was usually strict and immediate. It might be a whack or two on the hands with a ruler, staying after school to finish assignments or helping with manual labor such as bringing in wood for the woodstove. It was rare for parents to question a teacher's discipline methods. Most often, having been disciplined at school meant more punishment when the errant youngster arrived home.

The school bells that called students to class in these little one-room schoolhouses are silent now and the memory of them fades a little more each time a former student disappears from our midst.

Jane Brown is a member of the Cabot Oral History Committee.

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YANKEE NOTEBOOK

Today, No One Remembers

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – It's often difficult, given the evidence all around us, not to be pessimistic about the future of the human race. We seem to progress at a rate significantly slower than we regress or remain fixed in place, which is pretty much the same thing. The prime example, of course, is the early astronomer Galileo, who was able to discern scientifically that the sun was the center of our planetary system, as opposed to the Biblically derived belief that the earth was the center. For this apostasy he was imprisoned and threatened with death by the ecclesiastical authorities, which were then much more powerful than they are today, at least at the moment.

Galileo's predicament illustrates perfectly that, while science marches on (however uncertainly), belief strives mightily to hold it back, lest it threaten any established articles of faith. Most of us dwell securely under the illusions that the earth we live on and the laws we live under are too fixed to be affected by our insults to either. It takes an astronaut, gazing down on earth from space, to see it for the tiny orb that it is, suspended in the vast, profound blackness of space. Scott Kelly for one, during his year-long sojourn aboard the International Space Station, noticed the same phenomenon others have mentioned: the thin layer of "very, very fragile" atmosphere that supports all life on Earth. He described it as a "film over the surface, almost like a contact lens over somebody's eyes."

Looked at that way, a great number of the daily political, religious and cultural concerns that dominate our attention seem quite absurd and childish. The Epstein files, so-called, if they exist, are no doubt explosive, if not surprising; but how do they compare in importance to the probable death of the Gulf Stream? The kerfuffle over redistricting in Texas (and perhaps California, Washington, New York, et al) is an existential threat to our democracy, itself as fragile as our atmosphere; but how does it stack up in importance to the record-breaking temperatures of the oceans that breed hurricanes and cyclones? Any one of us could go on in this vein; but the point is that, for all our dark suits, sober miens and legalistic language, we're essentially mice playing between the paws of a sleeping cat.

Last week I wrote about the experiences of a friend, Hideko Tamura, who survived the atomic bomb blast in Hiroshima eighty years ago in

August 1945. It was a world-altering event. But when a high school teacher mentioned Hiroshima recently to one of her classes, they looked at her, she reports, with uncomprehending and even uninterested, eyes. It would be easy to blame them for not having learned that lesson from history. But the charge would hardly stick in the face of the cavalier way many of our politicians and even military leaders speak of the use or threat of nuclear weapons. The only one of them old enough to have any personal recollection of Hiroshima is Senator Chuck Grassley. Clearly, we're doomed.

Recently, during one of his frequent wars of words (skirmishes, really), President Trump announced portentously that he was moving "nuclear submarines" to strategic locations nearer to Russia. This was clearly chum for his base; all our submarines are nuclear-powered, and all cruise at strategic locations. I'm not sure the president knows the difference between nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed. (My favorite, named SSN Corpus Christi (Body of Christ), a fast attack sub loaded with nuclear-armed missiles, has been decommissioned. I often imagined the captain, giving the order for a launch of apocalyptic MIRVed missiles, intoning the priest's words as he dispenses the host: "The Body of Christ...")

My friend Hideko has spent her adult life telling her story, describing the horrors of nuclear warfare, and preaching for the abolition of nuclear weapons. That last genie clearly is not going back into the bottle; almost nobody is alive anymore who remembers a world before it became possible to incinerate most living creatures on the planet. I do remember, though, a speech by that optimistic idealist, Jimmy Carter, who dreamed out loud about a world without nuclear weapons. As he spoke, I found myself sitting in my truck with tears running down my cheeks. Now I have an almost identical reaction, for a diametrically opposite reason, as a blustering nincompoop moves nuclear-armed missiles around under the sea like chess pieces.

I don't know how we can ever again prosecute foreign policy without the threat of the ultimate weapon. There was for a while, during the Cold War of the '50s, a Woody Guthrie-style treatment of nuclear warfare titled "Old Man Atom." It was removed from distribution for its anti-war sentiments (which to many sounded like Communism). Today, no one remembers, which means, if the truism is sound, that we are condemned to repeat the history of only eighty years ago. If that's not grounds for pessimism, what is?

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



"ONE MAPLE CREEMEE. THAT'LL BE \$100!"

MEETING MEMO

Wednesday, August 13

Greensboro Select Board, second Wednesday of month, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, August 18

Caledonia Central Supervisory Union Full Board of Directors' Regular Meeting, 6 p.m., Danville School and remote access is available.

Tuesday, August 19

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

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

Hardwick Electric Department Board of Commissioners, third Tuesday of month, 6 p.m. unless otherwise warned.

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

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

Wednesday, August 20

Wolcott Select Board, third Wednesday 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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OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Seriously, Get Thee To the Funnery

by **Raymonda Parchment**

GREENSBORO – For 27 years, the Get Thee to the Funnery summer camp has served as a home for any and all interested and willing to participate in the longstanding tradition of performing Shakespeare. Established in 1998 by former Craftsbury Academy music teacher Andrea Brightenbach and Peter Gould, the camp began after teachers felt there just wasn't enough room in the schedule to teach Shakespeare during the school year.

"So we said, fine. We'll start a camp instead," began Gould. "And that's how the camp started, but little did we know it would go on for 27 more years and still counting."

Get Thee to the Funnery's longevity is no simple feat. Gould spends the bulk of his year preparing for the camp, "But it's a full time experience for everybody. The kids, it grows so beyond those two weeks that they spend together. They stay in touch all year long, they think about it all year long. They count the days until it starts again. The effect of some of the exercises that we do, the activities that we do, they stay with you forever. It's a life camp," he said.

Campers and staff members wholeheartedly agree. Camper Rachel Mullin shared her experience, "I've been going here for about five, six years now. The people are always just so welcoming and kind to everybody, regardless of if it's your first year or you've been here for ages. The environment you are in is just one full of creativity and one that is full of taking chances and trying new things and there's no judgment."

Mullins is from Maryland, spending summers and winters in Greensboro with her grandparents, who introduced her and her older sister to the camp. Mullins first year at the camp coincided with the pandemic, meaning participants used the Zoom application to connect remotely. Like many, she found it somewhat difficult to connect over an online platform. "But the next year, when I decided I would give it a try in person, it was one of the best decisions I've ever made because I just found people who are amazing and I'm so happy to come back," Mullins reflected.

Jacob Elliot, a second-year camper, cited two reasons for his return; "I have to say the extremely friendly environment, and probably my mom." Elliott most looked forward to the various group activities available. "Funnery has a ton of super fun games," he said.

Last year, Elliott wasn't able to participate during week two because he had Covid-19. "But I still got a role, and still got to do the play, and I just love how flexible the Funnery is, and how some characters you can really have fun with," he concluded.

Sophie Lyon initially began as a Funnery participant back in 2013, and is now a member of the staff. "I'm 26 and this is my thirteenth year," he said. Similarly, first year staffer Neo Walsh participated in the camp for seven years, and now is happy to be a member of the camp staff.

"It's a really special place, for a lot of really special kids. I'm dyslexic, as is Dory. I know we have a bunch of campers with learning differences, some who really excel at school, but might struggle socially, or some who might really struggle in school. Just the way we teach things here, I feel like we're able to include everyone no matter what," Lyon said.

Current camper Agnes Derrenginger gave her experience thus far a glowing review. "The methods are really unique, down to the pattern of daily activities. Like meditation, it gives a lot to the environment because everyone gets a chance to find themselves before going back out onto



Quinn Molleur as Banquo's ghost (left) appears to Rae Mullen as Macbeth after his betrayal. Winnie Emerick as Lady Macbeth tries to calm Macbeth, but cannot see the ghost during a scene from "Macbeth," performed by a cast of 30, August 9, in front of Simpson Hall in Craftsbury.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

stage ... I've seen a lot of kids just like go, go go, to the next activity, so I've really appreciated that. I don't have much of a theater background, I came here because it was Shakespeare, and I had done a Shakespeare play before and had kind of gotten hooked. But in that play, I hadn't had much opportunity to grow because it was just a short class ... This camp has really helped me to grow in a lot of ways, not just memorizing lines and acting, but developing a character voice. The main part, I'd say, is self confidence too."

Longtime camper Winnie Emerick agreed. "Especially because we split roles, you can be a first year camper and still get the lead, because you can have a certain chunk. So it really depends on your comfort zone, so there's so many opportunities for everybody."

Get Thee to the Funnery campers and participants begin their day at 9 a.m., greeting



Maeva Porter as Malcolm, Juniper Book as King Duncan and Poppy Gletsos as Donalbain, are welcomed to Macbeth's castle during the Get Thee to the Funnery production of "Macbeth" held outside Simpson Hall in Craftsbury on Old Home Day.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

each other with a hug. A warm welcome to the day's activities, according to Gould the campers then begin their particular brand of proprietary yoga followed by breath and voice exercises. For the first two days of camp, they sit in a circle and read through the play in its entirety. Gould and staff then get together to make casting choices. Familiar audiences know Funnery roles are often shared. "The reason we share roles is that it's a very short camp. We don't want to give any kid in the world all those lines in a short time."

The campers then spend some time breaking up into small scenes, for things like blocking. However, this is only temporary. Group activities are an important feature at Get Thee to the Funnery. "because it's really a life camp, because the group really fall in love with each other, they really want to be with each other, we don't want to break up into small scenes rehearsing every day all day long, we need to come up with all sorts of activities that make the whole group stay all together too."

Get Thee to the Funnery has seen a number of host locations, its current physical home being the Highland Center for the Arts, in Greensboro. "We've been at Craftsbury Academy, on the old gym floor. We've been at Heartbeet, we're here under the tent on the lawn at the HCA. It's definitely a Northeast Kingdom program. Local kids or kids who come up in the summers with grandma and grandpa. I always find a few people from far away that I really think should come to this camp, and arrange lodgings and home-stays for them," Gould said. This above-and-beyond attitude extends to the entire Funnery family. Most participants are at least on a one-third scholarship, some on full scholarships. "We've never held an audition, and we've never turned anyone away for lack of funds," said Gould.

"It's very important for us to keep the camp affordable, for campers whose families can't afford it," agreed Lyon. Get Thee to the Funnery is dependent on the generosity of community donors, and arts funding, to continue its operations for which Gould expressed his gratitude, "We're very grateful to the donors that allow us to help with funds: Concept2 in Morrisville, the Multimedia Foundation, and we are an official camp of the Vermont Humanities Council."



Winnie Emerick as Lady Macbeth (left) entertains her guests Raz Mille, Lucy Sevigny and Mackenzie Zornow-Figueroa during a Get Thee to the Funnery scene from Shakespeare's "Macbeth," at Simpson Hall, August 9.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

MONTHLY MUSINGS

TRISH PASSMORE ALLEY

Positive Possibilities

SHELBURNE – “The unknown is where all outcomes are possible; enter it with grace.” That was the wisdom on my Yogi tea bag this morning. I sipped and sat with Grace as I welcomed the positive possibilities of the day. A few I could name. Most would be a surprise.

A hummingbird hovered outside my window, savoring a thistle’s nectar. Her seemingly iridescent wings stirred up enough breeze to help a neighboring flower release a puff of fluff. A monarch butterfly joined the feast. It was a magical moment.

Grace is fond of reminding me to look for positive possibilities. She introduced me to Louis Pasteur who said that chance favors the prepared mind. Vincent Harding invited me to love myself and others into new possibilities. Many have speculated that chaos creates opportunity. There is an

abundance of positive possibilities in these chaotic times.

People are increasingly, peacefully and respectfully organizing to protest in favor of peace, democracy and reproductive rights. Others are feeding the hungry, housing the homeless and helping their neighbors with flood recovery and remediation. We are mentoring children and reading to the elderly.

The Vermont Community Leadership Network, hosted by the Vermont Council on Rural Development, recently convened a virtual discussion on nonprofit collaboration in Vermont. Fifty women and six men shared our community collaborations and connections across disciplines. It reminded me of the book I was reading: the 2025 Edition of “Disasterology: Dispatches from the Frontlines of The Climate Crisis,” by Dr. Samatha Montano.

Part memoir and part

well-researched guide, Samantha begins her story as a 16-year-old in Maine who volunteered to go to New Orleans to help clean up after Hurricane Katrina. The experience changed her life. She now holds a Ph.D. in emergency management and is an assistant professor at Massachusetts Maritime Academy. She is the co-founder of the Center for Climate Adaptation Research. In her book, she chronicles how we sow the seeds of natural disasters and fail miserably as a country to manage the damage. Her hope lies in local and regional community collaboration before the next disaster. July flooding in Texas provided a painful picture of her point. The American Red Cross is taking her advice as they rebrand and invest in preparedness in addition to disaster response.

Preparedness is a key precursor to manifesting positive possibilities. The thistle outside my

window germinated from a seed from my neighbor’s bird feeder. My botanist mother told me that weeds with beautiful flowers aren’t weeds, they are “volunteers.” Water them by volunteering in your community. Show up with the gift of Graceful Mischief for the Common Good. Imagine the positive possibilities.

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.

VOICES OF SPIRIT

The Fruit of the Spirit Changes Us

by Reverend Avril Cochran

HARDWICK – It’s hard to look at all the things happening in our world and think we can have an impact. It’s difficult to know how to make a difference. How can we live out our lives in ways that are meaningful, important and life-giving to our world?

One overarching way is described in the book of Philippians (2:3-5): “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.”

How can I not be selfish or vain or conceited? How can I be humble and value others above myself, looking to their interests instead of my own? How can the relationships I have in my family, with my friends, at work, in the community and at play be relationships that nourish, build and create positive experiences?

This verse tells us to have the mind of Christ. To think as He did. He only followed God. He gave of Himself in healing, teaching, praying, mentorship and sacrifice. The rest of the

verses after these tell of Jesus being in very nature God, but did not think equality with God was something to be grasped instead He humbled Himself and became a servant to all.

This mind of Christ is beyond my reach; too hard to grasp. I cannot fathom it. But Christ said, when He left His earthly form behind, He would leave a Comforter, an Advocate, One who would remind us of all Christ said. One who would work through us. The Holy Spirit comes to be with us, takes residence up in us, so that we can have the mind of Christ.

The fruit of the Spirit, what the Spirit produces, is outlined in the book of Galatians. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things, the scripture says, there is no law.

How can that be?

Because these things benefit all who practice them and all who receive them.

These qualities of the Spirit bring people together in community.

These qualities are the epitome of inclusion, compassion and justice.

These qualities are the

opposite of selfish ambition and vain conceit.

These qualities hold strength and power that are other-worldly.

When we look to the interests of others and not just to our own, we are operating with the

mind of Christ. And that changes things, including ourselves.

Rev. Avril Cochran is currently the pastor at The United Church of Hardwick and a registered nurse working as the clinical director for Orleans/Essex VNA and Hospice.



Center for an Agricultural Economy staff supporting Monday meals in the pavilion at Atkins Field are (from left) Harmont Peets, Ben Gomo, burger and hot dog chef Maya Bakowski, Reeve Basom and Hayley Williams, Not in the photo is Bethany Dunbar.

photo by Paul Fixx

IN THE GARDEN

Glorious Goldenrod Common but Beneficial

by **Bonnie Kirn Donahue**

NORTHFIELD – Many common flowering plants growing on roadsides and fields are more beneficial than you might think. One of these plants that you should consider letting flower this year is goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.).

Native to the Northeast, goldenrod is an incredible host plant for caterpillars and a pollinator plant for butterflies, bees and other pollinators. According to research from the University of Delaware, goldenrod is considered a “keystone plant” or one of a special group of plants that play a large role in overall ecosystem health, providing habitat to large numbers of insects.

Along with goldenrod, other keystone plants include oaks, willows, asters, wild plums, cherries, birch, pines, aspen and blueberries. These plants feed and house many species of caterpillars, which in turn feed birds who eat caterpillars for a great source of protein and fats for energy.

Insects and their caterpillars are critical to biodiversity and without them the earth wouldn't be able to support as many species of birds. Allowing native plants to grow, even opportunistic ones like goldenrod, help to support this interconnected

web of species.

While there are many species of goldenrod, one of the more common species in the Vermont area is Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*). It grows four to five feet tall, with bright yellow, arching panicles of blooms that almost look like fireworks frozen in time.

Goldenrod, which grows best in full to at least partial sun, prefers well-drained soils. It has rhizomes that make it very effective at spreading, which is something to keep in mind when considering whether you want goldenrod in your garden.

If you have a more natural-looking garden where plants blend together loosely, goldenrod would compliment this style. A more traditional garden, where each plant has its own distinct place, might not be the best place for this plant.

Goldenrod gets a bad reputation as being responsible for seasonal allergies. In fact, this plant is pollinated by insects, not the wind, so its pollen generally does not irritate eyes and noses. Ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), on the other hand, is wind-pollinated, blooming at the same time as goldenrod, so it is the most likely allergen culprit in late summer.

Interestingly, while goldenrod is



Goldenrod, which is commonly found in roadsides and fields, is an important host plant for caterpillars and a food source for caterpillars, butterflies, bees and other pollinators.
photo by Bonnie Kirn Donahue

native to North America, it is considered invasive in Europe and China. It is important to keep this in mind when thinking about the potential spread of introduced invasive species. Many countries have shared plants back and forth over the years, so it is a widespread, human phenomenon to have plants from one part of the world get a little too comfortable in another area.

You can also let goldenrod grow where it chooses, such as in meadows, fields and at the edge of roads. You will be supporting a vast ecosystem of insects and birds that rely on

plants like it for food and habitat. If desired, goldenrod plants or seeds can be purchased at native plant nurseries.

For help identifying pollinator plants or other gardening questions, contact the University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener Helpline at (802) 656-5421 (Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. through October 30) or online year-round at go.uvm.edu/gardeninghelp.

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

Soil Properties of Successful Gardens

by **Benjamin Block**

MONTPELIER – What makes good soil and what does “good” mean? Most of us would likely answer that good soil is full of readily available nutrients for our vegetables and flowers to uptake and robustly grow.

There is, of course, more to good soil than nutrients. Otherwise, why would we bother to grow plants in soil at all?

Soil, being an ecosystem, is teaming with life that supports plant growth, if conditions are right. The physical and chemical properties are what support soil biology, which in turn supports plant growth. Soil texture, structure, drainage, water and air are all important to consider whether you are growing vegetables or flowers.

Texture, which refers to the combination of different sized soil mineral particles, mainly depends on the amounts of sand, silt and clay present in your soil. Loam is the ideal combination of these soil particles.

The combination of particles leads to various properties of the soil. For example, sandier soils

tend to hold less water and so have better drainage than clay, while clay tends to hold moisture and is more susceptible to compaction but can be more nutrient-rich.

Structure refers to the arrangement or aggregation of soil particles. A good soil structure is one where the structure is loose and porous, similar to a sponge with its pores and channels. This allows for roots to spread and easy flow of air and water. A good structure also supports healthy biological communities that include microorganisms, such as fungi and bacteria, and macro-organisms, such as insects and spiders.

Drainage is the rate that water moves through the soil. Too much or too little drainage is equally undesirable. Macro-pores promote good aeration and increase drainage, whereas micro-pores help retain water. Ideally, one-half of the soil's pore space is occupied by water.

Lastly, air. It may come as a surprise that high quality soil has a substantial amount of air between soil aggregates. The best soil for plant growth contains about 50% solid material and 50% pore space. Imagine your garden bed and think



The best soil for plant growth contains about 50% solid material and 50% pore space.
courtesy photo

that ideally 50% of that volume are the pores surrounding the soil aggregates that allow for air flow to and from the roots.

In many parts of Vermont, gardeners are challenged with clay-dominated soils. In those cases, adding organic matter (through compost or shredded leaves) may help improve soil texture and structure. Take care to avoid the “too much of a good thing” approach.

Since clay soils hold on to nutrients, overapplying compost may lead to excessive nutrients.

Avoid this by monitoring your soils through regular soil testing (<https://go.uvm.edu/soiltest>).

We can also learn to limit practices that negatively impact soil properties such as routine tilling and compaction through repeated walking or driving. Ultimately, the more we learn about soil properties, the more we understand that “good” soil extends beyond fertility.

Benjamin Block is a UVM Extension Master Gardener intern from Montpelier.

IN THE GARDEN

Arranging Flowers, Visiting Botanic Garden, Putting up Tomatoes

CORNISH, N.H. – Ever year on the third weekend in August, my hometown of Cornish, sponsors a country fair. Not only does it have junk food and rides for the kids, it has ox and horse pulling competitions, woodsman's events and more. The school is full of photography, art and crafts, 4-H and a chance to show off your best and biggest zucchini. Flower arrangements of all sorts fill a whole room full.

If you want to compete in a flower competition, start a week ahead of time. Test out flowers to see if they will look good for three days (the length of the fair). Will black-eyed Susans still look good? How about bee balm?

It's best to pick flowers for an arrangement in the morning when they are fully hydrated and before the heat of the day has had a chance to dry them out. Watering your flowers the night before helps if you're in a dry spell. Bring a picking bucket when you collect flowers. As soon as they're cut, plunge them into deep water, but don't submerge the blossoms. It's best to pick flowers that are just opening up, not in full bloom.

When you actually make your arrangements, make sure no leaves go in the vase as they will decompose and invite bacteria that will clog up the stems. And re-cut the stems before using them, removing at least 3/4 of an inch of stem. Some folks do this in a bowl of water, but I just cut them and quickly put them in a vase.

What kind of vases work best? That depends on the flowers to be used. I tend to like vases with relatively narrow openings, as they keep the flowers upright.

Use heavy vases to keep tall arrangements from tipping over. Pick plenty of stems, and then choose the best to use.

How tall should an arrangement be? An eight-inch vase looks good with the tallest stems about 12 to 16 inches tall. You may want to start an arrangement with a low filler, something with stiff stems that will help keep taller stems upright. Boxwood branches are good for that. Place three, five or seven stems of a particular kind of flower in the vase. Use medium-height flowers then add another variety with slightly taller flowers until the vase seems almost full. Some people obsess about making colors complementary, but I feel all flowers are beautiful, and look good together. You'll know what looks good as you make the arrangement. White flowers add a nice counterpoint to the others.

August is a good time of year to visit a botanical garden. It can give you ideas about new plants and interesting designs for your



A nice flower arrangement can be simple with just a few flowers.

courtesy photo



Pick plenty of flowers so you have many to choose from when arranging them.
courtesy photo

garden. My wife, Cindy, and I recently visited the New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill in Boylston, Mass. (near Worcester). It has acres of well-planned gardens on 200 acres with hundreds of perennials, trees and shrubs, all artistically placed.

One of the things I especially appreciated at Tower Hill was their effort to have readily visible labels for most things, with both English and Latin names. I came away with the desire to find two plants I had not seen before: a tree called hornbeam maple (*Acer carpinifolium*), and a perennial called rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccafolium*).

Within a week or so I found rattlesnake master at Rocky Dale Nursery in Bristol, VT. It is related to sea holly, but has leaves like a yucca. At maturity it can get to be four- to six-foot tall with greenish-white, thistle-like blossoms and a basal rosette of yucca-like leaves. It is hardy to zone 3, and is native to the Midwest. I had seen it once in Ohio in the wild. It likes hot, dry, sandy soil, preferably in full sun.

The hornbeam maple tree was intriguing. It is in the same genus as our maples, but its leaves look nothing like our maples. It is from Japan, and the leaves are like those of a hornbeam. It was growing as an understory tree in the shade garden area at Tower Hill. I loved the smooth gray bark which is a little like our native beech trees. It can get to be 20 to 30 feet tall, is hardy to Zone 4, and does best in full sun to part shade. It's a gorgeous small tree and I'm keeping an eye out for one.

For me, August is a great

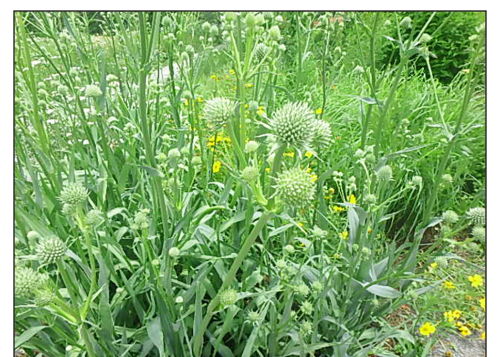
month in the vegetable garden. I can eat fresh veggies every day and still have plenty left to put up for the winter. My favorites are the tomatoes. I often eat them three times a day or more, if you count the cherry Sungolds I snack on in the garden.

I planted 37 tomato plants last spring, and plan to freeze lots of tomatoes for winter use in soups and stews. The simplest method for this is to fit clean, dry tomatoes into zipper bags and put them in the freezer. To use, just run them briefly under hot water in the sink, wait five minutes, then rub off the skins (if you like) or just chop them up and cook with them. No canning work involved.

I also dry tomatoes in my food dehydrators. Mainly I dry cherry tomatoes, cutting them in half and arranging on the trays. When dry, the tomatoes can be stored in the pantry, no need to freeze them. I put them in soups and stews where they provide a burst of flavor.

The garden keeps me young: I get exercise, good food and beauty. Who could ask for more?

Homeyer writes his column once a month. Write him at PO Box 364, Cornish Flat, NH 03746 or email him at henry,homeyer@comcast.net.



Rattlesnake master at Tower Hill.

courtesy photo



Freezing tomatoes extends the season, feeding me even in winter, for which I am grateful.
courtesy photo

OUR COMMUNITIES

Living Room Concert, August 15

by The Civic Standard

HARDWICK – Franklin and Ray will be at the Civic Standard living room for an evening of tunes that span traditions from Kentucky to Quebec and Maritime fiddling, to traditional and contemporary folk songs, 6:30 p.m.

Franklin Heyburn is a self-described French-speaking Yankee Vermonter from Kentucky. He started out playing harmonica, banjo and basketball, later learned

to fiddle from the Henrie family, and was an original member of the Dee Wells Tenor Banjo Band. Professionally, he taught science and kept Vermonters in honey.

Ray Lewis is a multi-instrumentalist and sugarmaker who lives in Walden. He learned folk singing and traditional music from his parents and has played guitar across many genres for over 40 years.

The Civic Standard is located at 42 South Main St.

Robotic Milkers Free Workshop, August 19

by UVM Extension Service

BURLINGTON – On August 19, the University of Extension Dairy Herd Management Team, in collaboration with Stonyfield Organic, will host a workshop and tour of two Franklin County farms that use robotic milking systems. Participating farmers will share their experiences transitioning to automation, including key decision points, robotic milking unit selection, facility design and modification, herd management changes and lessons learned throughout the process.

The workshop will begin at 9:30 a.m., at Moo Acres Farm in Fairfield. Owners Ben and Hillary Williams will discuss the costs and logistics of managing a bedded pack and the impact of barn and robot integration on milk quality. They will also talk about their barn design and experience using robotic milkers as participants tour the newly constructed bedded pack barn with its two GEA robotic milkers.

After lunch, sponsored by Stonyfield Organics, participants

will visit Windy Hill Farm in Enosburg, owned and operated by Brendan and Marcy Schreindorfer. At this location, they will tour the retrofitted barn and three used robotic milking units and learn about how the Schreindorfers integrate robotic milking and grazing and calculate feed formulation and nutrition to support production.

Automated milking systems, also known as robotic milkers, not only save time and labor but may lead to increased milk production as cows are less stressed as they choose when they want to be milked. These systems also collect data on individual cows, including milk yield and milking frequency, enabling farmers to make informed decisions about feeding and animal health. The workshop is free with lunch included although registration is required. To register, go to <https://go.uvm.edu/robotic-milking>. Registrations will be accepted until August 18. For questions, call or email Whitney Hull at (802) 656-7563 or whitney.hull@uvm.edu. To request a disability-related accommodation, please contact her by July 29.

“Join or Die,” Film about Civic Life, August 21

HARDWICK – “Join or Die,” a documentary film about the importance of joining in civic life, will be presented by the Friends of the Jeudevine Library and Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor, Thursday, August 21, at 5:30 p.m. in the new community room of the Jeudevine Memorial Library.

“Join or Die” is a film about why the fate of America depends on those who join in the civic life of their communities. In this feature documentary, social scientist Robert Putnam follows the half-century story of America’s civic unraveling. Putnam’s “Bowling Alone” research into America’s decades-long decline in community connections could hold the answers

to our democracy’s present crisis.

Flanked by fans and scholars, as well as groups building community in neighborhoods across the country, Putnam explores three urgent civic questions: What makes democracy work? Why is American democracy in crisis? And, what can we do about it?

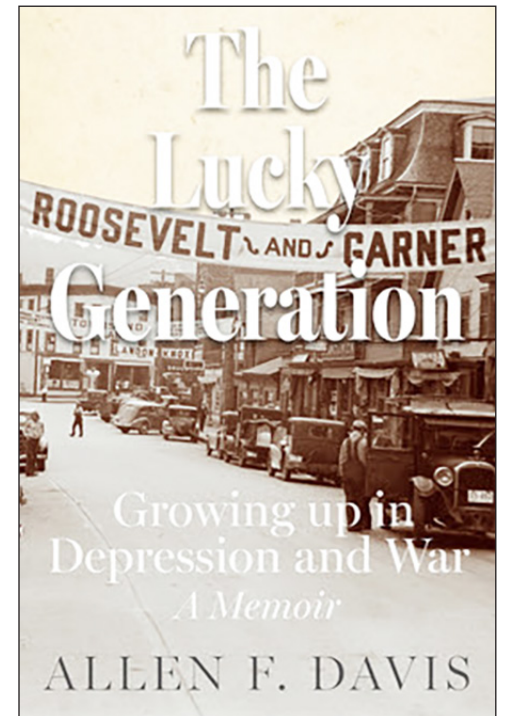
Area organizations will be on hand after the film to briefly share their stories, and a discussion will follow. This program is free and open to the public in the Parker Ladd Community Room of the Jeudevine Memorial Library at 93 N. Main St. The entrance is at the new parking lot on the lower level. For more information, call the library at (802) 472-5948.

Davis to Talk of Memoir, Aug. 20

Allen Davis, HA ‘49, will talk about his memoir in the Parker Ladd Community Room at the Jeudevine Memorial Library on Wednesday, Aug. 20, at 7 p.m.

Born in 1931, Allen grew up in Hardwick. Although his childhood and youth spanned the Great Depression and World War II, he titled his book, “Lucky Generation: Growing up in Depression and War.” The book ends as he enters Dartmouth College.

In it he recalls a town whose physical appearance has changed some, but whose culture has changed tremendously. A culture of baked beans every Saturday night, sneaking into the pool hall because your mother didn’t approve, going to the movies at the Idle Hour Theater, reading everything within reach at the Jeudevine Library, and exploring Buffalo Mountain and the Woodbury Gulf with friends and alone. A shy, bookish kid, Davis became a historian and he tells his story with an eye to the historical



context that shaped his life and the life of his hometown which he has returned to every summer of his life, except one.

Free and open to the public, the library is located at 93 N. Main St. in Hardwick. Access the community room from the parking lot by the lower level of the building.

Learn About Moose, August 23

GREENSBORO – Saturday, August 23, from 6 to 8 p.m., the Greensboro Conservation Commission will host Vermont Fish and Wildlife biologist Josh Blouin to

share about moose, at the Highland Center for the Arts, located at 2875 Hardwick St. Learn about the life history of moose, their habitat requirements and conservation.

Tai Chi at Senior Center

EAST MONTPELIER – Tai Chi is available at the Twin Valley Senior Center on Tuesdays, 10 a.m., with advanced Sun Style (Fall Prevention); Fridays, 9:15 a.m., Introduction to Fall Prevention Sun Style for beginners; and Fridays, 10:15 a.m., Yang 24 and Qigong continuing practice and open to beginners. There is no

fee for classes or membership fee required. Classes are taught in person and all leaders are certified by Tai Chi Vermont and supported by Central Vermont Council on Aging.

The center is located at 4583 U.S. Route 2. For more information call (802) 223-3322 or visit twinvalleyseniors.org.

Cliffs Clear to Hike and Climb Again

by Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

MARSHFIELD-WOODBURY – Hikers and rock climbers can return to Marshfield Mountain in Marshfield, and Nichols Ledge in Woodbury, now that peregrine falcon nesting season has ended. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and Audubon Vermont have confirmed that the majority of young falcons have learned to fly and should not be disturbed by human presence on the cliffs.

According to Audubon biol-

ogist Margaret Fowle, who coordinates the monitoring effort on behalf of the Fish and Wildlife Department, biologists and volunteers monitored peregrine pairs that occupied at least 40 Vermont cliffs in early spring and summer.

“The young peregrines have fledged, and many of Vermont’s falcons had another successful year,” she said, “The success is due to a combination of factors, including good weather and cooperation from hikers and rock climbers who observe a respectful distance from the nests during this critical period.”

OBITUARIES

Denise M. Fradette

EAST HARDWICK – Denise M. Fradette, age 97, of East Hardwick, died peacefully at her home, on August 9, 2025. She was surrounded by her family. Denise was born on February 27,

1928, in Plessisville, PQ, Canada. She is the daughter of Alphonse Michaud (d) and Alice Marcoux (d).

Denise was the beloved spouse of Arsene Fradette who predeceased her on July 18, 2001.

On September 4, 1959, Denise and Arsene moved to East Hardwick where they raised their family of eight children and where they shared work on the family farm.

Denise was a very active member of her church. In addition to attending worship services she was the church organist for many years, she was on the parish council, and other committees. She was always freely giving of her time and talent to benefit her church community.

Denise was a graduate of L'Ecole Normal de Levis, PQ, Canada. Her early education and formation taught her skills that she shared with her family. We all cherish the socks and mittens she knitted and the clothes, quilts and blankets that she made for us. The jams she made filled us with not only their wonderful flavor but the love and joy she had for all of us.

Denise taught at a one-room school in Quebec to children in first to eighth grade. In the US, Denise taught French at Sterling Academy in Craftsbury.

Additionally prior to being married, Denise worked at the Plessisville Farmer's Cooperative. Denise valued education and encouraged all of her children to pursue higher education, providing support and guidance to all. Denise created a welcoming environment in her home. Many days, especially during the summer, children from the neighborhood could be found sharing a meal with the family. There was always room at the table for others. She used her many talents living a simple life while doing the hardest job in life, rearing a family with love. Beside her eight children Denise loved, fed, provided care and the warmth of home to grandchildren and great-grandchildren along with many others who were hungry.

Bereaved at this time are Denise's children and their families: Rene (Sharon (d), Hardwick; Claire Pace and Kathleen Rusnak, Grantham, N.H.; Mario (Mary Jane), East Hardwick; Lise Hamel (Larry), East Hardwick; Robert (Katherine (d), Limington, Me.; Alain, East Hardwick; Johanne (Vernon Nelson), Burlington,; and Micheline Woolson (David) of Plainville, Mass.

Denise leaves many grandchildren: William Pace, Christine Owens, Thomas Pace, Amy Whitney, Jensa Bushey, Sddita Blackburn, Kathryn Farnham, Julie Parker, Marie Cloutier, Serena Stancliff, Andrew Hamel,



Denise M. Fradette

Joseph Hamel, Laura Hamel, Justin Fradette, Lucas Fradette, Christopher Fradette, Joseph Fradette (d), Ellen Fradette, Denise Fradette, Carol Fradette (d), Kevin Fradette, Aimee Ganter, Jacob Woolson and Eric Woolson. Additionally there are numerous great grandchildren: Olivia, Lila, Henry, Riley, Adeline, William, Kenley, Brooklyn, Jacob, Julia, CJ (Christopher Jordan), Nicholas, Jaden, Rebekah, Chloe, Grace, Zedekiah, Gunner, Orion, Ezra, Greyson, Wren, Devin, Bryson and Tristan. Denise was the sister of beloved brothers and sisters: Joseph (d) (Rita Gagne (d); Gemma (d) (Henri Breton (d); Roland (d) (Francoise Baril; Sr. Lucille M.I.C (d); Sr. Gabrielle M.I.C. (d); Jean-Louis (d) (Micheline Lajeunesse (d); Jean-Louis Fradette and his spouse; Marguerite (d) (Jean-Louis Fradette (d); Yvon (d) (Marie-Paule Cote (d); Jacques (d) (Aline Gosselin (d); Therese (Gerard Johnson (d); Georgette (Claude Alain (d); Solange (d) (Laurent Cormier (d), Julienne (Alphonse Arseneau (d) and Jacques Galarneau (d); Donald (Nicole Begin); Helene (Ghislain; Girard); Andre (Lise Roy); Raymonde (Jean-Noel Cossette (d).

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 16, at Mary Queen of All Saints - St. Michael's Catholic Church, located at 270 The Bend Road, Greensboro Bend. The burial will follow Mass at St. Michael's Cemetery. Family, friends and loved ones are welcome to join in a reception meal at St. Michael's Church Hall. Arrangements are with the des Groseilliers Funeral Home, 97 Church Street, Hardwick.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Denise's memory can be given to the Hardwick Food Pantry, P.O. Box 1075, Hardwick, VT 05843.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Co-op Celebration, Aug. 13

HARDWICK – Buffalo Mountain Co-op will celebrate 50 years as a co-operative with a community part, Saturday, Sept. 13, at Atkins Field for an evening of live music and food, beginning at 4 p.m. until 10 p.m.

The event includes live music with The Miller Brothers, 4 to 5 p.m.; Atom and the Orbits, 6 to 8 p.m.; and The Backline Collective, 8 to 10 p.m.

Food from Stag & Thistle, Mexirico, and Adobo Bowl, plus free food from the co-op kitchen will be available. There will be a bounce house for the children and games for all ages.

New member sign-up will be available and special-edition 50th anniversary t-shirts and hats.

Guests are encouraged to bring their own plate, bowl, cup, and utensils. Compostable dishes and tableware will also be provided.

The event is free and open to everyone.

Volunteers are welcome. Those interested in lending a hand with setup, cleanup, or light event support can sign up at forms.gle/vUbQ92u2Ak7gBMDV7 or stop by the store. Volunteer hours count toward the co-op's working member program.

For more information, visit the Co-op at 75 Mill St in Hardwick or call (802) 472-6020 or

info@bmfc.coop.

Join us in honoring 50 years of cooperation, community, and good food.

Constitution Community Reading, Aug. 13

CRAFTSBURY – The John Woodruff Simpson Memorial Library will host a community reading of the U.S. Constitution, Wednesday, Aug. 13, 6 p.m. This is not a political discussion, everyone is welcome to an opportunity to

read together. Everyone will be invited to be a reader, but no one is obligated to read.

The event is facilitated by Abigail Stockman.

The library is located at 1972 East Craftsbury Road.

Library Evolution Discussion, Aug. 18

CRAFTSBURY – Architectural historian Polly Seddon Allen will discuss the cultural and physical development of the J.W. Simpson Memorial Library, Monday, Aug. 18, at 6 p.m., at the library. From Nineteenth Century general store to community library, Allen recently authored a National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the

library and will share the strands that underlie the property's nearly two hundred years of development as a community center. The discussion will be joined by stories from community members who grew up in and around the library and its steward, Miss Jean Simpson.

The library is located at 1972 East Craftsbury Road.

Housing Design Workshop, Aug. 23

GREENSBORO – On Saturday, August 23 from noon to 4 p.m., the Greensboro Planning Commission invites all residents and property owners to participate in a community lunch and housing design workshop at the United Church of Christ Fellowship Hall, located on East Craftsbury Road. This hands-on, collaborative event is part of the town's ongoing effort to explore options for housing development that respond to Greensboro's growing affordability and housing access

needs. There will be a zoom call on August 14th 5-6 PM to provide more information on what to expect at the Community Workshop: Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8245586005?omn=88417035741>

Lunch will be provided, attendees are encouraged to bring a dessert to share. RSVP by August 17th via [this link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfs-sE1xdgPWBgFwxNN7ssjQN-0VejiYK3c7t0DJB43Yp6vSCDQ/viewform).

OBITUARIES

Beatrice (Bickford) Hicock

GREENSBORO - MANCHESTER, Conn. – Beatrice B. Hicock, of Manchester, Conn., and Greensboro, died peacefully on July 11, at her home at the age of 101. She was born on June 26, 1924, in Springfield, daughter of the late George F. Bickford and Louetta (Haynes) Bickford. She was raised in Grafton, Mass., but her roots were in Hardwick.

She attended public schools in Grafton, The Oakwood School in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and graduated from the University of Vermont. While at UVM, she joined the Pi Beta Phi sorority, which provided her with friendships that lasted her entire life. After graduation, she was a technician in the Botany Department at Dartmouth College, where she met Burton Hicock. In 1949, they married and moved to Minneapolis, Minn., for his graduate studies. In 1954, they moved to Manchester and raised their family.

Bea and Burt moved into the Arbors of Hop Brook in 2004. They spent their summers in Greensboro. She was an active member of Center Congregational Church for many years, was a Scout leader, teacher's aide, was involved with Manchester Area Council of Churches, food pantry, soup kitchen, clothing bank, Hockanum River conservation efforts, as well as other volunteer activities in town.

She worked for a time at the U.S. Geological Survey in Hartford. Her experience of the Great Depression made her value natural and man-made resources and led her to promote conserving and recycling passionately.

She loved many creative activities, including rug hooking, painting, and woodworking. Her beautiful quilts were family treasures.



Beatrice (Bickford) Hicock

In recent years she knitted mittens for HeadStart children.

She played tennis into her eighties, was excellent at ping pong, and was considering taking up pickleball at the time of her death. She loved sailing, canoeing, cross-country skiing, and all of nature, especially wolves, cardinals and chipmunks.

Her greatest joy came from her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband, Burton, and her brother George H. Bickford. She is survived by her children, David and Katherine Hicock of Syracuse, N.Y., Jane Rudolph of Cape Cod, Mass., their spouses and significants, five grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and nieces Susan and Palma Bickford and nephew Robert Bickford.

The family wishes to extend our love and gratitude to the wonderful staff of the Arbors, Beacon Hospice, and the team of home care aides who made it possible for her to live at home until the end. There are no calling hours. A memorial celebration will be held at the family's convenience. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be sent to the Manchester Area Council of Churches.

Meredith Holch

EAST HARDWICK – A memorial for Meredith Holch will be held at the Caledonia Grange No. 9 on Sunday, October 5, at 3 p.m. Community

members are invited to watch some of her films, hear music and share stories about all the ways she made the community a better place.

John Wayne Montgomery

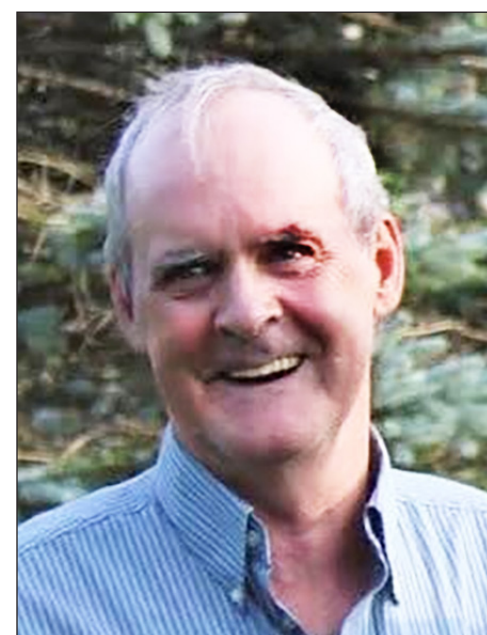
SURPRISE, Ariz. – It is with a heavy heart and cherished memories that we announce the passing of John Wayne Montgomery at the age of 72. John passed on July 30, surrounded by loved ones after a short battle with cancer in Surprise.

John, a longtime resident of East Hardwick, Vt., moved to Surprise to be close to his son, Beau Hudson and Misty and his grandchildren. The son of Craig Montgomery and Louise (Noyes) Montgomery, he graduated from Hazen Union High School in 1972. John worked at Hardwick Knitwear in his early years. He was employed by various concrete contracting firms and also worked as a carpenter.

He was an active member of the East Hardwick Congregational Church and in 2007, John was presented with a Community Citizen Award, recognizing his years of being a good neighbor. His friends and neighbors noted the various ways he helped others during the year. Walkways were mysteriously shoveled during the winter months, mail was delivered to sick friends, telephone calls were made asking if help was needed, advice for some of homeowner's chores, errands to the store, planning the children's parade, and the ever-diligent attention to the local church and Grange Hall, just some of the many, many examples of his community spirit.

John always had a smile. He loved life and family and his friends. He was a genuine, funny, and caring man, who was always ready to pitch in. John loved going on treasure hunts for antique bottles in his early years. He liked hunting, fishing, reading and photography. While in Arizona, he added a new hobby of Frisbee golf.

John treasured his friends Ken and Patty Eastman, Dave Ewertz



John Wayne Montgomery

and Debbie, Renaud and Maureen Demers, James (Donna) Casavant, and the list goes on and on. He also made many new friends during his time in Surprise. Among them are Brenda Heath, Clayton Heath, Sherrie Nice, Robert Nice, Gwen Scott and Erin Spencer.

He was predeceased by his parents, Craig and Louise Montgomery, Brenda Withers Montgomery (wife) in 1981, Charlene St. John Montgomery (wife) in 2019, and his high school buddy and lifetime friend, Joe Fecteau (who also died from cancer).

He is survived by his son, Beau Hudson and Misty Hudson; his grandchildren, Nick, Samantha, Aunna, Lily, Bryce, and Ava.; his siblings, Nancy (Dennis) Lacroix of Charlevoix, Mich., Marylou Wells (Ronald) of Plainfield, Dennis (Lorraine) Montgomery of Walden, Deb (Tony) Lacasse of Barre, and his twin brother Jeffery Montgomery (Shelly) and many nieces, nephews, cousins, friends and neighbors.

A celebration of John's life will be held on August 23, at Montgomery Barn on Montgomery Road in East Hardwick, 5 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Vermont Cancer Society and Science Care in Phoenix, AZ.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Lecture: Froze to Death, August 21

GREENSBORO – Thursday, August 21, from 5 to 6:30 p.m., historian Howard Coffin will present his lecture, "1800 and Froze to Death" at Greensboro United Church of Christ' Fellowship Hall. This is a Vermont Humanities event hosted by Greensboro Free Library.

The year, 1816 is known as the

year without summer. Vermonters experienced a year of frosts every month, dark skies, and mysterious lights in the night sky. The cold year seems to have hit Vermont harder than any other state, but the effects of the disaster were very much worldwide., with failed crops, scarce food and religious



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OBITUARIES

Eric Michael Worden

WATERBURY – Eric Michael Worden, 29, of Waterbury, unexpectedly passed away on July 30. He was born on July 19, 1996, in Morrisville, to Yvonne Michelle Gelineau and Rodney Clarence Worden Jr.

Eric was a bright light in the lives of all who knew him, known for his infectious laugh, easy smile, and the way he could lift the mood in any room. He deeply loved people, always eager to connect, share, and bring joy to those around him.

From a young age, Eric was drawn to the outdoors. Whether exploring the woods, working on engines or spending time with animals, he found happiness in nature, movement and the freedom of the world outside. He especially



Eric Michael Worden

cherished time spent on his grandparents property, where blackberry picking, driving on the dirt road, building forts and enjoying life's

simple pleasures made up some of his happiest memories.

He studied at Hazen Union High School and the Green Mountain Technology and Career Center (GMTCC), where he focused on carpentry. Through determination and hard work, he graduated a year early, a proud achievement for both him and his family. Although he later moved to Waterbury, Eric remained deeply connected to the friendships he formed in Hardwick. His gregarious personality also helped him create new, lasting bonds in Waterbury, where he enjoyed spending time with friends.

In addition to carpentry, Eric pursued a career in automotive work, a craft he learned side by side with his father from a young age. Both trades suited his passion for working with his hands and helping others. He worked as a professional auto body technician at Worden's Autobody, a shop that he proudly owned and operated. His goal was to make all the vehicles he worked on look "like a mirror" when he was done. He went on to work at several auto body shops

in the Burlington area. He was meticulous, hardworking and always willing to lend a hand. Whether fixing something, sharing tools, or simply showing up when someone needed him, Eric gave generously of his time and talents.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Yvonne, in 2016. Eric is survived by his father, Rodney Worden Jr. of Waterbury, his grandmother, Beatrice Gelineau of Hardwick, his sister, Morgana Yax, his brother-in-law; and his niece of Craftsbury. He also leaves behind his aunt, uncles, cousins, close friends and a community of people who will always cherish his warmth, humor and kind heart.

Eric will be remembered for his adventurous spirit, his generosity and the way he made others feel seen and cared for. He will be deeply missed.

A service in his memory will be held Saturday, August 23, 11 a.m., at Maple Street Cemetery in Waterbury Center. The reception will be held immediately after at Hope Davey Park Pavilion in Waterbury Center.

David Baron Linck

CRAFTSBURY – Never a fan of mornings, David Baron Linck (80) departed his final one early Friday, August 8. He went to the Great Mallard with his bride of 52 years by his side, two children and three grandchildren wishing him peace.

Dave spent his childhood at West Point, the eldest of six boys who regarded it as their personal playground/hunting ground. For one year of high school he lived with relatives in Finland, cultivating his lifelong affinity for saunas. Dave graduated from Union College and earned his Masters at Syracuse University. As an undergrad he made the papers by trying (and failing, explosively) to produce gunpowder in his fraternity house. For many summers he led canoe trips from Raquette Lake, N.Y., as a Lynx Camp counselor, optimistically planning to find fish and blueberries for at least one day's rations. Though he was sometimes lost, he never lost a camper.

When he "grew up" (chronologically speaking) Dave taught for decades at Sterling College, joined Herrick's Rangers to re-enact the Revolutionary War, kept bees and was active in the Craftsbury Historical Society. He also worked for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, which gave him an excuse to scamper through streams at his beloved West Point with his children in tow as assistants. After retiring from Sterling he became a devoted metal detector, always a pirate at heart.

Dave will be remembered by all his students and friends for his sense of play. He delighted in building toys: from trains, ships,



David Baron Linck

swings, castles, rockets, treasure hunts and puzzles to an exact replica of each grandchild's barn. Few people have had so much fun or so many interests. No one has ever put so many notes and plastic army men inside fish for their dissection classes. Other people have said "arrrrgh" and worn an eyepatch, but how many have worn two eyepatches, sailing a cannon and a chicken down the Hudson River in a homemade boat with their kids? The man had a good run.

Dave is survived by his wife Jane, children Jennifer and Robert, grandchildren Stig, Posey and Alice, and by his brothers Alan, Dana, Walter and Bob Linck, plus Irwin Langer. He was predeceased by his brother Jon and nephews Nathan and Sean. While the family works out details for a fall memorial, they suggest three ways to honor Dave Linck. Be silly: build a pillow fort. Be practical; donate to the Craftsbury Historical Society. Be considerate: if you are driving too slowly and someone wants to pass you, pull over.

WEEKEND SERVICES

Hardwick

UNITED CHURCH OF HARDWICK. 216 South Main Street. 802-472-6800 for information. Sunday Service, 10 a.m. In person, Zoom or Livestreaming. Communion Service first Sunday of month. Rev. Avril Cochran, Pastor. Jean Hackett, Music Director. We are an Open and Affirming Congregation. All are welcome. Masks optional. ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH. 39 W. Church St., 802-472-5979. Office hours Wed. 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. All invited; all welcome. Sunday 10 a.m. Rite II Service with music. Coffee hour immediately following service. ST. NORBERT CHURCH, a part of Mary Queen of All Saints Parish, Father Raj Madri, S. Main St., PO Box 496, Hardwick, VT 05843; mary_queenofallsaints@comcast.net; 802-472-5544. Office Hours: Thurs. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass - 4:00 p.m. and Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Confessions before Masses. HARDWICK BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH, 296 S. Main St. Sunday Services: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and noon; Thursday 6:30 p.m. For transportation or information call 802-472-5294. THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, Heartbeat Lifesharing, 218 Town Farm Road, Hardwick, 9:30 a.m. children's story; 10 a.m. children's

service, 10:30 a.m. The Act of Consecration of the Human Being. Information: thechristiancommunityvt@gmail.com.

East Hardwick

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, (NACCC). Worship led by Jim Casavant, Interim Pastor, 11:00 a.m. TOUCH OF GRACE ASSEMBLY OF GOD, corner of Rts. 15 and 16, E. Hardwick; Sunday a.m. worship, 10 a.m.; 9 a.m. adult Sunday School and Prayer. Thursday Prayer at 5:30 p.m. Information: touchofgraceagvt@gmail.com

Albany

ALBANY METHODIST CHURCH. Route 14, Albany, Vt. "Join us in getting to know Jesus and the life He gives." Sunday services: 10 a.m. Worship and Sunday School.

Cabot

UNITED CHURCH OF CABOT. Tel. 802-563-2278. Sunday Service at 10:00 a.m. Light refreshment and fellowship immediately following service. All welcome.

Calais-Woodbury

CALAIS-WOODBURY United Church, Worship and Sunday School, Rt. 14, South Woodbury Church, Sundays, 10:15 a.m. Communion Sunday, the first Sunday of the month. Church Phone: 802-232-1013. Information: 802-456-1557.

“Mementos Kept, Memories Kindled” Through Oct. 12

CALAIS – Art at the Kent’s once-a-year exhibition runs every Friday through Sunday, October 12, “Holding: Mementos Kept, Memories Kindled,” includes the curated creations of 22 Vermont artists. Visitors can view these works inside the historic structures of the Kents’ Corner State Historic Site.

The exhibition looks at memory, lost and found, vivid and fleeting, Media of exhibited work spans clay, wood, fiber, paint, metal, paper and photography. Brattleboro artist Vaune Trachtman’s photos meld present and past when she merges her own images with those captured by the father she knew only briefly. North Chittenden farmer and painter Bonnie Baird brings back the land she worked with her family as a child in her landscapes. Middlebury woodworker Tom Dunne’s turned bowls show how trees hold memories and Burlington’s Veronica Pham recalls connections to her family’s homeland in Vietnam through traditional papermaking that contains watermarks of her father’s handwriting.

Artists on display include Bonnie Baird, North Chittenden; Paul Bowen, Williamsville; August Burns, North Middlesex; Daryl Burtnett, East Montpelier; Jordan Douglas, Jericho; Tom Dunne, Middlebury; Terry Ekasala, West Burke; Elizabeth Fram, Waterbury Center; Kate Gridley, Middlebury; Chip



“Specimen #43, After Theodore Chasseriau 1843”, box construction, 15x12.50x2.50” by Jennifer Koch

Haggerty, Stowe; and Jennifer Koch, Burlington.

Also on display are works by J. Langdon, Montpelier; David Maille, New Haven; James Paterson, Burlington; Victoria Y Pham, Burlington; Stephen Procter, Brattleboro; Leonard Ragouzeos, Newfane;

Jon Roberts, Burlington; Olaf Saaf, Marlboro; Vaune Trachtman, West Brattleboro; Graziella Weber-Grasssi, Whiting; and Susan Wilson, Burlington.

Additionally, Art at the Kent will host a variety of associated events which visitors can experience, including “Words Out Loud,” a Sunday afternoon reading series, September 14, 21 and 28, at the nearby Old West

Church. An array of events and programs can be found at the Art at the Kent website events page, including multiple artists talks and demonstrations, a basket-making workshop, and a presentation exploring oral histories collected during Covid in Vermont: kentscorner.org.

Art at the Kent is a program of Historic Kents’ Corner, Inc., in partnership with the Vermont State Curator’s Office and the Vermont

Division for Historic Preservation. For over a decade and a half, contemporary art exhibitions have been presented to engage and challenge audiences by providing unusual exposure to mid-19th century architecture enhanced by the art of our time. The Kents’ Corner State Historic Site is owned by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.

The museum is located at 7 Old West Church Road.

“Taming of Shrew” Aug. 21-30

by Tom Blachly

PLAINFIELD – The Green Mountain Shakespeare Festival will present the final production of its inaugural season, “The Taming of the Shrew,” by William Shakespeare, August 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, and 30, at 7 p.m., and August 24, at 2 p.m., at the Haybarn Theatre on The Creative Campus at Goddard Directed by Virginia

Monte, this production will bring the art of clowning to Central Vermont. A prix fixe Elizabethan-themed meal will be served before the curtain by Master Chef Zack Fugazy. Tickets to both events are available at theaterengine.com/companies/626. The theater is located at 123 Pitkin Road. Tom Blachly is the artistic director of the Green Mountain Shakespeare Festival.

VSO Names Hoffman to Board

BURLINGTON – The Vermont Symphony Orchestra (VSO) has named Amanda Knox Hoffman, formerly of East Calais, as the newly-elected member of its board of directors at the organization’s annual board meeting on June 19. Spencer Knapp was elected as chair, and, Peter Miller, Marc A. Scorca, and Prospero Gogo were elected as members.

Hoffman brings experience in nonprofit leadership, philanthropy and organizational development. The first executive director of a financial literacy nonprofit for high school girls and former director of development for Girls on the Run Vermont, Hoffman is a native Vermonter now residing in Charlotte, and UVM alum

who grew up attending VSO concerts with her family.

“Music is a connective tissue in Vermont. The VSO creates moments where Vermonters, whether urban or rural, can come together to enjoy world-class performances, often right in their own towns,” explained Hoffman. “The access the VSO provides to orchestral music across the state is incredible. It’s not elitist; it’s inclusive. That’s what makes it so special.”

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Birdhouse Band Comes Together for The Beatles "Abbey Road"

REVIEW

by Paul Fixx

GREENSBORO—"Abbey Road," the last studio album recorded by The Beatles, offered a creative outlet for the many talents of the Birdhouse Band and its guests during a sold out show this past Saturday evening at Highland Center for the Arts (HCA).

Birdhouse Band's standard line-up includes Mavis MacNeil (vocals, acoustic guitar, flute, tenor saxophone and various effects), Annie Rowell (upright and electric bass, vocals), Roy MacNeil (acoustic guitar, violin, vocals) and Andrew Kehler (keyboards), with the evening's guest performers Randy Bulpin (electric guitar) and Andrew Palumbo (drums).

Before intermission and the main event, the full group warmed themselves and the audience up with two covers that hinted at the harmonies to come.

First up was Lake Street Dive's "Bad Self Portraits." Gloria Gaynor's 1978 hit, "I Will Survive" came next, energizing the appreciative crowd as each of the performers highlighted their considerable talents before the band segued into "Les Yeux Noirs" (Dark Eyes) by Django Reinhardt, beautifully sung by Rowell.

The core group shared three original songs, first a tender, well-crafted tear-jerker of a tune, "Milkweed" written and sung by Mavis bemoaning a lost love. Rowell then sang her "When Will I See You Again," another love song, followed by Roy's "No One is Born."

A cover of Brian Wilson's "Love and Mercy," from his first solo album, took the band into a break.

Their performance, billed as, "A Homage to The Beatles," proved to be just that as the six-person line-up returned after a longish break, performing the entire "Abbey Road" album, mostly uninterrupted.

Their amazing recreation contained just enough of their own creative interpretations to make it interesting, while staying true to the essential aspects of The Beatles' last recorded studio album, from 1969.

The original is so densely layered, I had my doubts about the ability of six performers to recreate even a small portion of it live. Those doubts were unfounded as critical aspects of the Beatles' rhythm section were masterfully handled by Plainfield's Palumbo on drums and Rowell's electric bass.

Wherever I expected the performers to go after what is most certainly hundreds of times I've heard the album (and might even be thousands), they went with dynamics

and energy that didn't disappoint. They laid a foundation that would be the envy of even McCartney and Starr, given their inability to substitute second takes in the evening's live performance.

Details of the performance are essentially irrelevant because the entire 47 minutes and 23 seconds must be taken as a whole by anyone familiar with the original.

Following the performance, Mavis said, "It was a really daunting project to take on, given how iconic and complex of an album it is. . . . We had so much fun figuring out how to cover as many important lines as possible."

My ears caught just one missed cue that brought a pleasant laugh from the performer, but was essentially irrelevant, as one could see the joy evident in every member of the band. Given their obvious pleasure in playing together, which came through from beginning to end, they brought something new to the album that the original doesn't have, despite its technical mastery, as The Beatles were beginning to dissolve, and Lennon is said to have already informed his bandmates of his intention to leave after "Abbey Road."

Birdhouse Band's interpretation lasted a bit longer than the album for just a few instrument changes and a standing ovation following the climax of the album's final "Medley." That interruption of the original's 20 second silence before McCartney's final "Her Majesty," brought smiles to the faces of all the band members. Roy then insisted the audience settle into the required silence before the band launched into "Her Majesty."

Of particular note were sound effects bubbles blown by Mavis under the sea in the "Octopus's Garden," her various effects with a rain stick, a bird call and others best experienced yourself. "I always love an opportunity for a playful sound effect," she said after the performance.

Roy's enthusiastic rendering of the melodies and effects on both violin and guitar throughout were too numerous to catalog. Ditto on seeing him perform for yourself.

Rowell expertly recreated what I once referred to as "McCartney's lead bass" sections in the original album's side one ending, "I Want You (She's So Heavy)." Again, attend one of the next two performances to hear her for yourself.

Kehler had a challenge recreating the sounds of the original that came from a Moog synthesizer, a Hammond organ, a Fender Rhodes electric piano and a Steinway upright, in places played by Billy Preston. Kehler was up to the challenge and, hidden in a mostly unlit back corner of the stage, drew little



Birdhouse Band members and guests (from left), Randy Bulpin, Roy MacNeil, Andrew Palumbo, Mavis MacNeil, Andrew Kehler and Annie Rowell receive an extended standing ovation before the final short number during their performance of the entire Beatles "Abbey Road" album, Saturday, Aug. 10, at Greensboro's Highland Center for the Arts. photo by Paul Fixx

attention, except through his masterful playing, sometimes bringing color to the rhythm section and sometimes taking on the melodic line.

Palumbo knocked it out of the park with his own particular flair, recreating Ringo Starr's only drum solo in the entire Beatles catalog in the final "Medley," during "The End." There too Bulpin showed his chops on the guitar solos, originally performed two bars at a time in sequence by McCartney, Harrison and Lennon, then repeated twice more. Hear that and

pay particular attention to the wonderful expressions on Palumbo's face throughout the performance when Birdhouse Band and friends perform The Beatles' "Abbey Road" twice more for those wanting to experience it themselves, or again.

Another HCA performance is scheduled September 6, at 7 p.m., with tickets at highlandartsvt.org. They will then be at the Plainfield Opera House, with Jess O'Brien, September 20, at 7 p.m. Get tickets at the door.



Peter Gould holds up a tee-shirt for sale at this year's production of *Get Thee to the Funnery* "Macbeth". He and Andrea Brightenback founded the camp in 1998. photo by Vanessa Fournier

Caspian Music, August 10

GREENSBORO – A Caspian Music program, *Timeless Conversations: From Beethoven to Boyd Meets Girl*, performed at Highland Center for the Arts, August 10.



Beetle's Dance, Boyd Meets Girl duo by Chrystian Dozza is played by Rupert Boyd, guitar (left) and Laura Metcalf, cello.

photo by Kyle Gray



Igor Leschishin, oboe plays Benjamin Britten's *Phantasy Quartet for Oboe, Violin, Viola and Cello*.

photo by Kyle Gray



Antonin Dvořák's *Sextet in A Major* features (from left) Matthew Hakkarainen, violin; Mark Berger, viola; Solomiya Ivakhiv, violin; Laura Sacks, viola; Rebecca Patterson, cello and Laura Metcalf, cello.

photo by Kyle Gray



The *Phantasy Quartet for Oboe, Violin, Viola and Cello* by Benjamin Britten, being performed by Solomiya Ivakhiv, violin (left front); Mark Berger, viola (left rear); Laura Metcalf, cello (center) and Igor Leschishin, oboe.

photo by Kyle Gray



Winter Prentiss (left), 8, of Woodbury takes the blindfolded Kids Taste Test to identify vegetables from Luna Sinnema (right), 10, of Woodbury, during the Community Farm and Food Celebration, August 1 at the Hardwick Farmers Market. Running the taste test is Reeve Basom, place-based education coordinator for The Center for an Agricultural Economy. Participants received a \$5 certificate to buy fresh produce at the market.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



William Bridwell of Hardwick, makes bubbles during the Community Farm and Food Celebration at the Hardwick Farmers Market, August 1.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

EVENTS

Wednesday, August 13

DEATH CAFE, 6 p.m., Albany Public Library. Facilitated by Kelsey Crelin. Refreshments provided. Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

TOWN OF HARDWICK meeting on pedestrian and traffic safety improvements, 6 p.m., Parker Ladd Community Room, Jeudevine Memorial Library. Virtual access details at hardwickvt.gov.

CONSTITUTION COMMUNITY READING, 6 p.m., John Woodruff Simpson Memorial Library, E. Craftsbury. Everyone welcome. Everyone invited to read if they wish.

Thursday, August 14

A2VT PERFORMS, 6 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, Marshfield. Book and bake sale, food vendors. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary.org,

(802) 426-3581.

VERMONT PUBLIC MIXER, 5:30 to 8 p.m., Harry's Hardware, Cabot. Reserve tickets at (802) 552-4880.

CELEBRATE COLOR OUR WORLD Summer reading theme, 10 a.m., Highland Center for the Arts. Information: Emily Purdy, youth services librarian, Greensboro Free Library, greensborokids@gmail.com

Friday, August 15

LIVING ROOM CONCERT, with Franklin and Ray, 6:30 p.m., The Civic Standard, Hardwick, 42 S. Main St. Playing traditions from Kentucky to Quebec and Maritime fiddling, to traditional and contemporary folk.

Saturday, August 16

SKETCHING IN THE WOODS with Susan Sawyer, 1:30 - 3 p.m., Hardwick Trails. All are welcome. Information: hardwicktrails.com or find them on Facebook.

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

Sunday, August 17

ROCK SKIPPING WORKSHOP, 10 to 11 a.m., Woodbury Community Library, (meet at the library at 9:30 a.m.) or contact the library for directions: County Road side of Greenwood Lake. Information: librarydirector@woodburyvt.org.

CIRCUS SMIRKUS, final two shows, in Greensboro. Tickets and show information available at smirkus.org.

Tuesday, August 19

CABOT ARTS presents Sap Line, a traditional folk group, 6 p.m., Cabot Village Common, 148 Main St. Stag and Thistle will be the food truck.

TWO-TOWN HONK & WAVE with Indivisible Hardwick and Indivisible Calais, 10 a.m. at Hardwick Peace Park, 34 Main St., Hardwick. Information: IndivisibleHardwick@pm.me.

Ongoing Events

PLAINFIELD FARMERS MARKET, 4 to 7 p.m., Fridays, 13 Mill St. Food and craft vendors, baked goods, fruits and veggies and more.

HARDWICK PEACE (& Ceasefire) VIGIL, Thursdays, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m., Hardwick Peace Park, S. Main St., Hardwick. (beside the river).

MONTPELIER CONTRA DANCE, 8 - 11 p.m., Capital City Grange.

See EVENTS, Next Page

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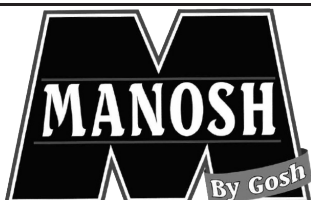
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EVENTS

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

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 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 begin 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.

PILATES, at the Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common. Mondays (level 1), 9 a.m., Wednesdays (Mat Level 2), 9 a.m.; Fridays (level 3), 9 a.m.

MENDING MONDAYS, 3 p.m., Craftsbury Public Library.

DANCE, Mondays and Thursdays, 5:30 p.m., Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

COMMFIT, 6 p.m., Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

QIGONG, Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m., at the Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

CRAFTFIT, Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m., Thursdays, 4:30 p.m. and Saturdays, 2:30 p.m. Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

ALL LEVELS TAIJI, Tuesdays, 6 p.m. Fridays, Intermediate Taiji, 10:15 a.m., Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

CHAIR YOGA, Wednesdays, 9 a.m., Traditional Yoga, 5 p.m., Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

CRAFTSBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, open 10 a.m. - noon.

FOOD SHARE, noon to 2 p.m., United Church of Craftsbury.

CRAFTSBURY FARMERS MARKET, Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. on the Common.

LEGOS & LISTENING, 3:30 p.m., Craftsbury Public Library.

TAMING KNOTWEED, Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. and Saturdays, 11 a.m., Town Highway 19 across from Little Hosmer Dam. Offered by the Craftsbury Conservation Commission. Bring water, bug spray, gloves and assorted clippers and shovels.

Exhibits

LULU WOOTTON exhibits her art at the Hardwick Town House, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 2 to 6 p.m. through July 23 and during Thursday evening concerts.

BEN BARNES, NEK landscape artist, at the Hardwick Inn, 4 S. Main St. on the third floor, through September.

PERENNIAL INSPIRATION: Floral Art from a Mother and Daughter, artwork from Natalya Zahn and Anci Slovak, Woodbury Community Gallery. Exhibit up until the end of August.

PAINTINGS OF THE LANDSCAPE and creatures of the Northeast Kingdom by James Hudson, July 22 to September 2, Parker Pie Art Gallery, 161 County Road, West Glover.

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Please send cover letter and resume to:
Lamoille Family Center
480 Cady's Falls Road Morrisville, VT 05661
jhunsberger@lamoillefamilycenter.org

KEN BROWN'S SUMMER HOOPS

Spaulding Claims Third Straight Hazen Summer Hoops Title

HARDWICK – The Spaulding Alumni made it a three peat last week, holding off the Average Joes to win the Hazen Summer League Championship for a third straight year.

Spaulding outlasted the Average Joes 80-75 in the championship game last Thursday night at the Cat Den to cap off an undefeated season. They are now one of only three teams to go unblemished in the Hazen Summer League since its inception nearly twenty years ago. Only Cobra Kai made up of Hazen Union coaches have more titles with five, including three straight undefeated seasons from 2010-13.

Hazen varsity boys head coach Aaron Hill and his program wrap up a busy summer with another worthy summer league champion, along with success of his varsity team at both the Profile Summer Showdown and Castleton Hoop Camp. Hill led the Wildcats to their fourth straight trip to the Division III state title game at the Barre Auditorium last winter and returns a young talented roster next season.

Late last month, Hill hosted close to 100 campers for a second

straight year in the 24th iteration of his renowned Hazen Hoop Camp. Former Wildcat champion head coach Steve Pratt also returned to the community last week to host a two day skills camp at the Cat Den. Pratt led the Wildcats to the 1996 Division III state title with Hill as an assistant. He since founded Full Package Athletics out of Chicago where more than 80 total coaches and players have come through his program and ascended to NCAA Division I programs, the WNBA and NBA.

Trojans Cap off Summer with Youth Hoop Camp

MARSHFIELD – Reigning Division IV Coach of the Year Kris Bador put a bow on a busy summer for his Trojan boys basketball program last week with his second Annual Twinfield-Cabot Youth Hoops Camp.

Bador, Lady Trojan head coach Jack Whalen, along with their coaching staffs, and current and former players hosted a well attended co-ed camp grades 3-8 last Monday to Thursday.

Bador's young squad took the Trojan program back to the Barre Auditorium for the first time in nearly a decade last winter. He returns his entire team and then some next season and will be a



The 2025 Hazen Summer League Champs. Spaulding Alumni, included, (from left) Elvin Stowell, Isaiah Terrill, Taylor D'Agostino, Tavarius Vance, Cooper Diego, Mason Keel, Jackson Lamere and Riley Severy.

courtesy photo

title contender behind three time Vermont Outstanding Underclassmen selection Tej Stewart and leading scorer Eli Russell. He'll also get the services of a healthy Sam Churchill and Sam McLane, along with the return of Omar Miksic-Knibb, who wowed fans on both the soccer pitch and the hardwood last season as just a freshman.

"Camp was great and huge thanks to all that helped out last week! It was a great summer for the program and I believe this group is read for the high expectations this

coming winter. Tej and Eli have become better leaders on and off the court this summer, putting a lot of work into their games, and we're proud of them as a staff. Omar has gained a lot of experience playing AAU for Green Mountain Select this summer and he's going to surprise a lot of teams next season with how he's developed his game. We wish all the student athletes a successful fall sports season and are counting down the days to get back in the gym this coming winter," said Bador.

KEN BROWN'S SPORT NUGGETS

Run Ends in Regionals for St. Jay Legion Baseball

WORCESTER, Mass. – The St. Johnsbury Post 58 Legion baseball team's incredible summer run came to an end over the weekend after splitting four games last week in the Northeast Regional American Legion Baseball Tournament at Holy Cross Fitton Field.

After a pair of dominant wins over Maine and Connecticut to start the tournament, Post 58 suffered losses to New York and Massachusetts over the weekend to see their incredible run come to an end. St. Johnsbury opened the tournament with an offensive explosion, belting three homers and a pair of triples in a 14-1 five inning rout over Maine's state champion out of Farmington. St. Johnsbury Academy's (SJA) Carson Finn kept the offense

rolling in their second game against Connecticut (Waterford) last Thursday, smashing a trio of doubles on his way to a four-hit day to power Post 58 to a 15-7 win. Lyndon Institute's Wyatt Mason earned the win on the mound.

The bats went cold over the weekend as tournament favorite New York (Greece) dealt Vermont its first loss in lopsided fashion 11-1. Massachusetts (Shrewsbury) spoiled a top notch outing from SJA's Rex Hauser on Saturday with a 3-2 walk-off win in the bottom of the seventh inning to end Vermont's Cinderella run. The reigning Vermont Gatorade Player of the Year in both baseball and basketball struck out four and walked only one over five plus innings of work. Mason belted a triple for Post 58 in the loss. New York outlasted Connecticut 7-5 in the championship game to win the tournament.

It truly was a local all-star

cast for Post 58, who captured their first ever American Legion State Championship late last month. Hauser was the Player of the Year in the Metro, with Hill-topper teammates Will Eaton and Finn earning First Team honors on their way to capturing a Division I state title. Mason was the Player of the Year in the Capital League for a Viking's team that went undefeated in the regular season. Blue Mountain's Kason Blood (Mountain League POY) and Brody Kingsbury (Mountain League First Team) rounded out the roster after leading Blue Mountain to a third straight Division IV state title.

Richards Shows Game in Missed Cuts

TORONTO – Despite missing a pair of cuts north of the border on the PGA Tour Americas circuit, former U-32

and University of Rhode Island (URI) golf star Bryson Richards showed promise, carding the two lowest rounds of his young professional career late last month.

Richards fired a season-low five under 67 in round two in Ottawa at Eagle Creek Golf Club to bounce back from a shaky start (77) in round one on July 24. He followed that up with a second round 69 in Toronto at the Heatherlands the following week to finish under par for the tournament for the first time on the PGA Tour Americas. Richards is 0-4 in cuts made in his young PGA Tour career, but is starting to show the game that won him a school-record six collegiate wins at URI, along with two Vermont State Amateur titles. The smooth lefty will look to make the field at the Manitoba Open in Winnipeg next week.

Streeter and Woodard Split Tiger Wins

BARRE – The night kicked off racing for the month of August and set the tone for what is to come in the dog days of summer ahead.

The Late Models saw Barre’s-own Scott Coburn lead the way as Graniteville’s Stephen Donahue tracked him down to overtake the lead on lap 37. Donahue kept it lean and green in the caution free 50-lap trophy dash to take his first win of the season in an emotional tribute to longtime car-owner and longtime Thunder Road campaigner Norm Andrews who passed over the winter. Scott Coburn took down second place, his best run in eleven seasons on the Barre highbanks and Darrell Morin stole third.

Barre young-gun Connor Rueda led the Street Stocks from the drop of the green flag as the mighty four-cylinder division looked to crown their Triple Crown champion. The lone caution flew on lap 21 for Paige Whittemore after a hard lick with the Widow-maker front stretch wall as her right front wheel vacated the vehicle. The restart found Rueda and Tommy Smith side-by-side where they remained until the bitter end, a scoring recheck of the finish was too close to call with electronic scoring awarding the win to Smith over Rueda by 0.002-seconds. Curtis Franks took a strong third place run while Dean Switser Jr. wrapped up the Triple Crown.

After starting the night with Kevin Streeter’s dominant win in the rain-delayed feature event, the Flying Tigers returned later on for their 40-lap trophy dash with Barre’s Logan Farrell launching into a strong early lead. Everything changed at the halfway caution for a front stretch dust-up between

Matt Ballard and Adam Maynard as Jason Woodard powered around Farrell on the restart and never looked back. Jason Woodard returned to Thunder Road victory lane followed by Logan Powers and Kevin Streeter making his second visit in third.

The Road Warriors entered the arena for their 50-lap Challenge to round out the program on Thursday. Just one caution ended the day early for hopeful victor Neal Foster as he careened into the turn one tire barrier after contact with lap car John Pecor. Back under green it was all Derrick Mann as he led the final forty-six laps en route to win the annual Challenge over Mike Slingerland and Eddie Thompson at the line.

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

(local competitors)

Road Warriors – Annual Challenge (50 Laps)

- 19. 17, Cayden Green, Marshfield
- 21. 34, John Pecor III, Cabot

Street Stocks – Triple Crown No. 3 (25 Laps)

- 13. 32, Kylee Potter, Marshfield
- 21. 34, Patrick Tibbetts, Plainfield
- 24. 18x, Walker Fitch, Marshfield

Late Models – Squier Cup Championship 100

- 11. 86VT, Marcel J. Gravel, Wolcott
- 18. 01VT, Stephen Martin, Craftsbury Common

Flying Tigers – (40 Laps)

- 9. 5NH, Brendan Moodie, Wolcott
- 20. 22VT, Travis Patnoe, Wolcott

Rain Postponed Feature Originally Set on Thursday, July 17 - (40 Laps)

- 5. 5NH, Brendan Moodie, Wolcott
- 23. 22VT, Travis Patnoe, Wolcott



Stephen Donahue (middle) gave his longtime car-owner and bonafide Thunder Road legend Norm Andrews in his first win of the season as Scott Coburn (R) took his career best run of second place over Darrell Morin (L) after eleven years in the Late Model division. photo by Alan Ward



Electronic scoring had Williamstown’s Tommy Smith (No. 22) ahead of Barre’s Connor Rueda for the Trophy Dash while Dean Switser Jr. cleaned up the Triple Crown. photo by Alan Ward



Derrick Mann (middle) dominated the annual Road Warrior 50-lap challenge with Eddie Thompson (L) and Mike Slingerland (R) rounding out the podium. photo by Alan Ward

2025 Northeast Kingdom Sunfish Regatta, Aug. 16

GREENSBORO – The 2025 Northeast Kingdom Sunfish Regatta will take place on August 16, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Caspian Lake in Greensboro. For the first time in over 40 years Caspian Lake is once again hosting a Sunfish regatta. Five races are planned, with Sunday being held as rain day. All are welcome and

encouraged. The \$25 registration fee includes lunch and a T-shirt. An awards ceremony on the public beach will follow the races. Please read the waiver and complete the form. Stay tuned for an invite to the Zoom skippers meeting on the evening of Friday, August 15, 5 p.m. Register here: <https://forms.gle/tC6Sx72A6cpKtAV6A>





The Pro Truck Challenge made their first visit to White Mountain Motorsports Park with Ryan Kuhn (middle) taking the inaugural win with Todd Taylor (L) and Nikolas Frechette (R) rounding out the podium. photo by Johnny Racer



In Late Model victory lane were (from left) Quinny Welch (3rd), winner Keegan Lamson and Jaden Perry (2nd).

photo by Johnny Racer

Lamson Breaks Tough-Luck Summer with Late Model Win

N. WOODSTOCK, N.H. – A battle between Jason Ball and rookie Jackson Hunt started the night off at White Mountain Motorsports Park with the Strictly Mini 25-lap main. As the polesitters battled, they succumbed to Makenna Merchant who took charge at the head of the field on lap-six. Without the aid of a caution flag to re-rack the field, Merchant ran away with her fourth win of the season in a 2.569-second over second-place finisher Jacob Roy and point leader Tyler Thompson in third.

The Dwarf Cars returned for twin 20-lap segment racing competition on the highbanks. After running away with Segment No. 1, Dave Gyger was unable to drive up through the field in Segment No. 2 but all eyes were on Jeff Ainsworth. Ainsworth was able to jump up through the middle of the pack and set sail at the front to win Segment No. 2 and the overall with a three-point total. Chad Dufour took second in the overall with five points and Gyger held on to collect six points overall.

Austin Sicard and Todd

Derrington brought the Flying Tigers out of the pit area for their 35-lap trophy dash. Sicard showed the way early as Kyle Willis and Luke Peters made their way underneath Derrington in the opening ten laps. Going for the lead, Willis went sideways in turn three, holding onto his Chevy Monte Carlo in a full drift and falling back to fifth as Peters, Matt Potter and Nate Hamblett poured the pressure on Sicard. With fifteen laps remaining, Logan Powers made his way to fifth as Shane Sicard motored into fourth with Peters taking over the lead as his rearview mirror swelled.

Five laps to go saw a three-way fight for the lead between Peters, Powers and Shane Sicard with Powers taking over the lead under the two-to-go popsicle sticks. Logan Powers came from second-to-last on the field to come home with the win over point leader Shane Sicard and Luke Peters under the twin checkered flags in the race of the evening.

Ryan Kuhn led from the outside pole of the inaugural Pro Truck Chal-

lenge Northern 55 on Saturday with Jason Paquette and Bert Ouellette in hot pursuit. The first-ever event for the full-bodied trucks went off with just two short caution periods slowing the pace as drivers took on the White Mountain highbanks for the first time. Through it all, Kuhn never faltered and took the Northern 55 win over Nikolas Frechette and Todd Taylor, a pair that fought among the top ten throughout the event and ran a smart race to end up on the podium.

Keegan Lamson brought out the Late Models for their 50-lap closer to Saturday night's racing activities. Lamson ran uncontested at the front as Thomas Smithers VI, Colin Cornell and Kyle Goodbout ran hard among the top five. Cornell and Reilly Lanphear would go around just before the halfway

mark with Goodbout getting the shove to the back of the pack for his involvement. Again, Lamson took off like a rocket sled on rails to win his first in a tough season filled with DNF marks as mechanical woes have plagued the team. Jaden Perry held his own to take home second while point leader Quinny Welch rounded out the top three.

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

(local competitors)

Late Models – (50 Laps)

2. 92VT, Jaden Perry, Hardwick, Vt.

Flying Tigers – (35 Laps)

4. 23VT, Matt Potter, Marshfield, Vt.

6. 62VT, Jamon Perry, Hardwick, Vt.



Children practice basketball drills at the Greensboro Bend Block Party, August 9, with Hardwick Elementary School soccer coach Simon Cohen.

photo by Chris Steel



A basketball competition at the Greensboro Bend Block Party, August 9, tested youngsters on timed three-point shooting, a 10-shot foul shot competition, and silly events with dizzy and blindfolded shooting. Simon Cohen, Hardwick Elementary School soccer coach (left) joins competitors, some displaying raffle prizes of gift certificates to Smith's Store and basketballs awarded to six age group winners (from front, right of Cohen), Kolby Kroeger, Karson Kroeger, Isabella Albertini, Viv (last name unknown), Vittoria Albertini, Solace Cohen, Karter Kroeger (back, from left), Kendrick Kroeger, Willis (last name unknown), Lewis Lapierre, Kaleb Kroeger and Corban Lapierre.

photo by Chris Steel