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U.S. Border Patrol, ICE detain 9 individuals Friday

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – A dark vehicle heading west on Wolcott Street a little after 7 a.m., Friday, had its drive interrupted when a white vehicle behind it turned on its siren and lights, pulled around it and brought it to a stop. Behind it two other law-enforcement vehicles stopped too.

The vest of an armed officer in tactical gear who approached the car's door said border patrol according to an observer who asked to remain anonymous.

The vehicles blocked the west-bound lane of the bridge next to the

See **DETAIN, 5**

Less is more in observing, recording ICE activity

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – Several people who observed U.S. Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity Friday in Hardwick expressed concern about those who were detained, in one case referring to those who had left the scene of a traffic stop as having been kidnapped by ICE.

Another observer said they felt

See **OBSERVING, 5**



U.S. Border Patrol agents intercept a vehicle on Wolcott Street at 7:15 a.m., Friday, Sept. 26, as an agent dressed in tactical clothing speaks to someone through a vehicle's open door. Nine area residents were detained that day, only one of whom had been released as of Saturday. *courtesy photo*

Town asks for voluntary water conservation

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – In the face of the area's drought, Hardwick Town Manager David Upson asked all residents and businesses to begin voluntarily conserving water.

In a public notice issued last week Upson said “. . . our water system remains stable at this time,” and “With the Town of Hardwick experiencing ongoing drought conditions . . . we are asking all residents and businesses to do their part in conserving water.”

By conserving water now, the town is hoping to avoid mandatory water conservation measures.

“Voluntary conservation now will help protect our supply and reduce the need for mandatory restrictions later.”

Upson asked that those on the town's public water system limit outdoor watering of lawns

See **CONSERVATION, 3**

Vermont's drought straining communities, residents suffer

by Alice Finno and Charlotte Oliver



People walk along the beach at St. Albans Bay on Thursday, September 18, 2025. The drought has brought water levels on Lake Champlain to near record lows.

photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

VERMONT – In Berlin, an elder care facility that serves about 150 people saw all of its wells go dry. Now the town, which is getting 50% less water from its own wells, has to jury-rig a system to make sure Berlin Health and Rehabilitation Center stays up and running.

“I run a fire hose over to their storage tanks,” said Craig Pelletier, the town's public works supervisor.

Berlin isn't alone. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, almost 94% of Vermont is in a severe drought, while almost 24% of the state is in an extreme drought, with Orange County, Windsor County and Rutland County

See **DROUGHT, 7**

Nonprofit seeks to rejuvenate Goddard campus as arts hub

by Evan Witt

PLAINFIELD – The people trying to revitalize Goddard College's former campus are counting on the arts. They say the new program is starting to gain traction, with summer events drawing crowds and attention.

“What's going on here now is the dream come true,” said Kris Gruen, director of the nonprofit group The Creative Campus at Goddard and a Goddard College graduate. He praised developers Execusuite LLC for being, “open to the hopes and dreams of the local community.”

Gruen gave two examples of success from this summer: sold-out concerts and a retreat for playwrights that attracted international attention.

After closing in 2024, Goddard College was bought by Execusuite. Owner Mike Davidson asked the community of Plainfield to decide what should be done, resulting in the development of Creative Campus. “It's a nonprofit organization dedicated to cultivating a dynamic, intentional community where people of all ages come together to foster creative expression, live

See **GODDARD, 6**



The Haybarn Theater on The Creative Campus at Goddard is once again hosting events as it has since 1934, while Goddard College occupied the Plainfield campus. *photo courtesy of Kris Gruen*

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POLICE REPORT

Vermont State Police Fatal crash, robbery

DANVILLE – On September 5, at approximately 10:26 a.m., the Vermont State Police received a report of a burglary at the McDonald Farm Stand in the town of Danville. Troopers arrived on scene and talked to the owner. Upon review of the security footage, at approximately 6:58 a.m., an unknown individual entered the store. The same individual exited the store at approximately 6:59 a.m.. The suspect was later identified as Lucas Putvain, age 38, of Hardwick. Putvain was issued a citation to appear at Caledonia County Superior Court - Criminal Division on November 17.

MARSHFIELD – On Tuesday, Sept. 23, at approximately 9:32 p.m., troopers from the Vermont State Police Berlin Barracks responded to a report of a single motorcycle crash near the intersection of U.S. Route 2 and Onion

River Road in Marshfield. Upon arrival, the operator of the vehicle, Christopher Skinner (50), of Plainfield, was found unresponsive. CPR was initiated, but despite lifesaving efforts the operator was pronounced deceased at the scene by EMS.

Preliminary investigation indicates that the operator was traveling East on U.S. Route 2 in the town of Marshfield. As the vehicle was navigating a left curve in the area of Onion River Road, it took a turn too wide. This caused the vehicle to leave the roadway. The vehicle collided with road signs, a guardrail, and a parked vehicle. The operator was ejected from the vehicle, which came to rest on the southern side of the roadway. The crash remains under investigation. Anyone who witnessed the incident is encouraged to contact the Vermont State Police, Berlin Barracks at (802) 229-9191.

Hardwick Police Department Car crash, embezzlement

HARDWICK – On September 19, at 4:15 p.m., Carrie Gonyaw, 17, of East Hardwick and Samatha Wheeler, 27, of Hardwick were involved in a two-car motor vehicle crash in the area of 308 Vt. Route 14 South in Hardwick. Gonyaw had initiated a left hand turn out of the parking lot of M&M Beverage when, due to parked vehicles obstructing her view, she pulled out into the roadway and collided with Wheeler as she was traveling south on Vt. Rte 14 South. Both vehicles sustained significant contact damage to their front ends and were towed from the scene. Neither party reported any significant injuries.

On September 25 at 5 p.m., the Hardwick Police Department located Logan Ballard, 36, of

Woodbury at a residence in Mackville Road in Hardwick. Ballard was taken into custody without incident on three outstanding arrest warrants. One charge of Embezzlement from Vermont Superior Court, Caledonia Unit, on charge of Petit Larceny from Vermont Superior Court, Caledonia Unit and one charge of retail theft from Vermont Superior Court, Washington Unit. Ballard was processed at the Hardwick Police Department and lodged at Northeast Correctional Complex.

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

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POLICE REPORT

Vermont State Police

Alleged road rage by armed fugitives, theft and speeding



Justin French



Kayla Cabney

ST. JOHNSBURY – On September 20, the Vermont State Police (VSP), St. Johnsbury barracks, initiated an investigation into an alleged road rage incident that resulted in gunfire and occurred on U.S. Route 302 in South Ryegate. Based on their investigation, troopers obtained New England wide and New York extraditable arrest warrants for Justin French, 36, and Kayla Cabney, 33, both of Bradford for the following offenses; Two counts of 1st Degree Attempted Murder, a felony, Reckless Endangerment, misdemeanor, Criminal Threatening, misdemeanor.

Investigation into this incident indicates that this shooting was not a random act of violence and involved people who knew each other.

French and Cabney are considered armed and dangerous. They are known to frequent Orange, Caledonia, and Washington counties, and have strong ties to Grafton County, N.H. People with information on French and/or Cabney's whereabouts should not approach either of them. Instead, they should call 911, their local police department or the Vermont State Police barracks at (802) 748-3111. People can also submit anonymous tips by visiting vsp.vermont.gov/tipssubmit.

On September 20, at approximately 5:11 p.m., the Vermont State Police received a report of a road rage incident along U.S. Route 302 from Powder Spring Road to P&H Truck Stop in the towns of Groton, Ryegate and Newbury. Troopers arrived in the area but are still seeking assistance. Upon review of the security footage, an unknown vehicle was identified. Anyone with information

about this incident is asked to contact the VSP - St. Johnsbury barracks, via phone at (802) 748-3111 or submit an anonymous tip at vsp.vermont.gov/tipssubmit.

CAMBRIDGE – On September 23, Travis Daigle, 22, of Woodbury and Alex Maldonado, 22, of Greensboro Bend, were located by Vermont State Police and issued citations for Aiding and Abetting Retail Theft, two counts of Unlawful Trespass and Operating with a Criminally Suspended License. August 22, VSP was made aware of a retail theft that had occurred August 20, at Aubuchon Hardware in Cambridge. Two individuals had entered the store on August 20 and 22, removing merchandise from the rear door without paying retail value and drove away. Through investigative measures, Daigle and Maldonado were identified and issued citations to appear at the Lamoille County Superior Court on November 12, at 12:30 p.m.

WOLCOTT – September 27, at approximately 5:50 p.m., a trooper assigned to the Williston Barracks observed a passenger car traveling on Vt. Route 12 near the Worcester Town Line at a high rate of speed. The vehicle's speed was registered at 88 miles per hour in a posted 50 miles per hour zone, a violation of Title 23 VSA 1081(b), Basic Rule. A traffic stop was conducted, and the operator was identified as Michael Isabell, 23, of Wolcott. Isabell was issued a citation to appear at the Lamoille County Superior Court on November 5, at 12:30 p.m., to answer the charge of Excessive Speed. Isabell was also issued a Vermont Civil Violation complaint for the offense of Title 23 VSA 1081(b), Basic Rule, which held a waiver amount of \$572 and 2 points.

AWARE Report

HARDWICK – Twenty-six people used AWARE services between September 14 and September 28.

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.

Woodbury Fire Department Gas leak

WOODBURY – At 8:03 p.m., dispatched to 2519 West Woodbury Road for a possible gas stove leak.

Berlin Police Department Driving without a license

BERLIN – On September 29, officers from the Berlin Police Department were monitoring traffic on U.S. Route 302. They observed a motor vehicle and conducted a stop for a minor motor vehicle violation. During the traffic stop, it was determined that the operator, Alexander Trombly of Cabot, was operating without a license,

having received a no-license ticket earlier this year. Trombly was taken into custody without incident, and processed at the Berlin Police Department for a criminally suspended license. Trombly was issued a citation into Vermont Superior Court, Washington Criminal Division, on October 30, at 8:30 a.m.

Conservation

Continued From Page One

and gardens; avoid non-essential water use such as washing vehicles, filling swimming pools and hosing down sidewalks and driveways; take shorter showers and run only full loads in dishwashers and washing machines; and fix leaks promptly in faucets, toilets and hoses.

“Every effort makes a difference,” he said. “Together, we can ensure that our community's water needs are met throughout this dry period.

Upson concluded, saying, “Thank you for doing your part to conserve water.”

For updates, visit the town website hardwickvt.gov or call the town office at (802) 472-6120.



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WEATHER WATCH

No rain next seven days; warmer than normal weekend

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – The most substantial rain of the season fell in the past week, with a total of 1.25” recorded at this observation station. This was the lowest total when compared to nearby stations in Greensboro and Craftsbury, where amounts totaled closer to two inches. Most stations are still at least an inch behind on rain for the month, with the month expected to close with no additional precipitation.

It appears the foliage colors are starting to pass peak in several places, and it is notable along the immediate Lamoille River Valley. Reports from other parts of the region confirm fading foliage, although some spotty areas of robust color are still visible in places like Greensboro Village. Those leaves will continue to fall through the week. Remember that foliage on the ground can contribute as fuel for fires and given the weather conditions, fires can quickly spread

out of control from the smallest ignition source. A statewide burn ban remains in effect.

An area of high pressure associated with a strong ridge over the eastern United States remains in place today. A northerly flow will keep temperatures cool, with highs struggling to reach 60. Anyone with outdoor gardens that survived the last frost will want to consider protecting those plants, especially Wednesday night, as we approach freezing.

As the high slides eastward, we end up with light winds from the south slowly moderating temperatures throughout the forecast period. This high will also serve to deflect the spinning pair of hurricanes (Humberto and Imelda) located between the southern U.S. Atlantic Coast and Bermuda. High pressure stays in control through the weekend with sunny skies and highs reaching the upper 70s by Sunday, which is much warmer than normal for early October.



Mackville Pond dam reflects the sky over Buffalo Mountain with its slopes draped in fall color, Saturday, Sept. 27 photo by Paul Fixx

Our next chance of rain looks to hold off until at least Tuesday of next week when the ridge begins to break down and yield to some unsettled conditions. In the meantime, we'll dutifully log zeros from the rain gauge. Here are the forecast details:

Wednesday: Sunny. High: 58. Low: 30. North wind at 5 mph.

Thursday: Mostly sunny. High: 62. Low: 37. Calm wind.

Friday: Sunny. High: 69.

Low: 44. Light south wind.

Saturday: Sunny. High: 75. Low: 48. Calm wind.

Sunday: Mostly sunny. High: 78. Low: 52. Calm wind.

Tyler Molleur, MSN, RN, CEN, TCRN, CPEN, NRP, is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Nursing, and Lecturer; Initiative for Rural Emergency Medical Services. He has been reporting on local weather conditions since he was in eighth grade at Craftsbury School.

POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Police Department Media Log

HARDWICK – September 21: 911 Hangup, Vt. Route 14 S.; Medical, Vt. Route 15 W.; Medical, Hudson Ave.; Medical, Pumpkin Lane.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Citizen Dispute, High St.; Assist - Public, Granite St.

September 22: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Dr.; Assist - Agency, Mackville Road; Citizen Dispute, Granite St.

September 23: Medical, High St.; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Accident - Property Damage Only, Craftsbury Road; Citizen Dispute, Main St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Mackville Road; Fingerprints, High St.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Drive; Directed Patrol, Porter Brook Road; Fire Hazard, S. Main St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Bunker Hill Rd.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Assist - Agency, School Hill Drive.

September 24: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Juvenile Problem, N. Main St.; Assist - Agency, Sawmill Lane; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Cottage St.; Juvenile Problem, N. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15 W.

September 25: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Medical, Maple St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Suspicious Event, Vt. Route 14 S.; Assist - Agency, High St.; Wanted Person, Mackville Road; Transport, High St.; Suspicious Event, Mill St.

September 26: Found Property, High St.; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Lost Property, Vt. Route 16; Safety Hazard, Vt. Route 15; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Drive; Mental Health Incident, High St.; TRO/FRO Service, Prospect St.; Directed Patrol, Granite St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 14; Noise Disturbance, Mackville Road; Intoxication, Mackville Road.

September 27: Assist - Agency, Decker Drive; Assist - Public, Hardwick St.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 16; Medical, W. Church St; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.

September 28: Threats/Harassment, Dale St.; Assist - Agency, Eligo Lake Road.

September 29: Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.

Acronyms: TRO/FRO = Temporary Restraining Order, Final Restraining Order



A huge wasp nest was spotted on Montgomery Road, East Hardwick, on Monday, September 22. photo by Dawn Gustafson

Detain

Continued From Page One

Hardwick House of Pizza as other vehicles negotiated the narrowed street, observing the encounter.

Another anonymous observer said, “I saw a line of unmarked vehicles with Vermont plates and no lights or sirens and a South American man being walked in handcuffs by a white male. One truck had lights similar to first responders/firefighters around 7:15 a.m., Friday, Sept. 26.

Later, a white van was observed to arrive and soon left.

At roughly the same time and a little farther west, toward the entrance to the Tops market, a maroon Prius was pulled over by law enforcement vehicles on Wolcott Street, at its intersection with Charlevoix Street. Two women, who were recognized by a different observer as Hardwick residents, and two men left that vehicle with the law-enforcement officers. The maroon Prius was pulled into the abandoned convenience store near Tops for several hours and later collected by a tow truck.

Hardwick Police Chief Mike Henry confirmed that he had received a courtesy call that morning from the U.S. Border Patrol advising him they were conducting a targeted stop in Hardwick. Henry said the Hardwick Police Department was not involved in the incident and the border patrol did not

provide any details.

Will Lambek of Migrant Justice said they learned nine individuals had been detained in the Hardwick area Friday, in a coordinated Immigration and Customer Enforcement (ICE) action that involved five vehicles. When advised that one of the law enforcement officers had been observed to have been identified with Border Patrol insignia, he suggested it could have been a joint operation.

Later, Hillary Rich, an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Senior Staff Attorney in Vermont, said the jurisdiction of both ICE and the border patrol (an arm of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)) overlap in the area up to 100 miles from the border. Both agencies are under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and are known to work together in the 100-mile area near the border, which covers most of Vermont.

Lambek said all nine of the people who had been detained worked for the same construction company, that he did not identify.

One of the people being detained had been released by Saturday afternoon, he said. Families of many of the others had been contacted. In an update Tuesday Lambek said ICE has started to transfer them out of state, but they don’t yet know where.

Migrant Justice was working on the cases and Lambek was not

able to release the names of those being detained, or the person who had been released.

Some weeks ago there had been a rumor that ICE had stopped a vehicle at the Jiffy Mart gas pumps in Hardwick, but that stop turned out to involve unmarked Vermont State Police vehicles and plainclothes officers.

A number of unverified rumors Friday caused confusion among area residents, along with other rumors verified to be false. This time, despite a rumor to the contrary, Hardwick Elementary School students were not kept inside the building during recess, according to several adults who work in that school building.

The workers are apparently not farm workers, which was another rumor that circulated.

The last time U.S. Border Patrol activity was documented by The Gazette, was in a December 12, 2012, report of an accident in which an undocumented worker was arrested after driving a truck into Hardwick’s Yummy Wok.

In that incident, Gazette Reporter Tommy Gardner wrote, “A Peruvian man crashed an Italian food delivery truck into the Chinese restaurant building on South Main St., Thursday, and was subsequently taken away by the U.S. Border Patrol. No one was injured, and a false fire alarm may have prompted the incident.”

In that incident, a fire department ladder truck responded to an alarm at Hardwick Elementary School at around 1 p.m., while a delivery truck was parked near Yummy Wok and the driver, Anthony Bilatto of Staten Island, N.Y., was making a delivery to Positive Pie. His co-worker, Denis A Ramirez Cespedes, with a Perth Amboy, N.J. address, “went to move the truck into a vacant parking spot, and instead smashed into the building owned by Yummy Wok owner Wei Gao.”

After the accident, Bilatto was overheard asking his colleague, Cespedes, if he had his “documentos de trabajo” (work documents). Cespedes, a Peruvian, spoke no English, and later said the gas pedal stuck. No citations were issued by the Hardwick Police Officer who responded.

The officer remained at the scene, waiting in turn for the DMV, a wrecker service, and the border patrol, which is sometimes notified for translation help. The unnamed border patrol agent declined to say where he was taking Cespedes.

Robert Appel, then the outgoing director of the Vermont Human Rights Commission, said law enforcement officers have other interpreters they can call, to keep border patrol out of routine traffic stops and the like. Thursday’s incident, though, was not routine, wrote Gardner.

Observing

Continued From Page One

sick to their stomach the rest of the day over the incident and wondered what they could have done to help the targeted individuals.

Advice from ACLU staff is to first protect one’s own safety. One should not approach an encounter with law enforcement officers in which either party may be armed unless there’s 100% certainty that it’s safe, agreed American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Staff Attorney Hillary Rich.

Above all, it is best to remain calm to avoid escalating the situation, she said.

It’s most important to obey any directive from a law enforcement officer. An individual has the right to record any encounter involving ICE, a term which she said is often used to include, or interchangeably with, border patrol, an arm of Customs and Border Protection (CPB).

However, “ICE doesn’t always respect those rights,” and may lie, she said.

Anyone recording or taking photos should film openly and comply with any safety instructions they are given. It is acceptable to say, “I’m exercising my rights to document this,” said Rich.

She suggested thinking like an attorney. “Ideally it is best to focus on the actions of the agent and not the face of the person being targeted,” she said. The agent’s clothing can be an important identifier.

When documenting any ICE interaction,

think, “How can I build a record,” said Rich. Capture the context, pay attention to any documents the agents might offer. They may not necessarily have a warrant, but it’s acceptable to ask for documents, or under what authority they are detaining the person targeted.

A bystander asked to step back by law enforcement officers should do so and document their compliance with any instructions.

Rich noted that documenting an interaction can be in writing, and should be done as soon as possible after the encounter, while the events are still fresh.

A report should be made as soon as possible to an organization like Migrant Justice, or the Vermont Asylum Assistance project (VAAP). A form is available on the page at vaapvt.org/legal-support.

The ACLU will accept reports too, but is not equipped to respond as quickly as those other organizations, said Rich.

“Be aware that anything a bystander says may be used as evidence. Less is more,” said Rich. Do not offer any information about the person being targeted.

There is a locator for people detained by ICE or CBP available at locator.ice.gov/odls/#/search. It requires the name of the person suspected of being detained, or an A-number assigned to them, and the person’s country of birth. A note there indicates, “Use this page to locate a detainee who is currently in ICE custody or who has been in U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s custody for more than 48

hours.”

Rich said tracking those in CBP custody is often more difficult than for those in ICE custody.

The ACLU suggested several websites that might be helpful in handling interactions with ICE and CPB agents, including a CNN article, “Experts explain your rights – as an immigrant or a bystander – if you’re caught up in an ICE raid” at cnn.com/2025/08/23/us/immigrant-bystander-rights-ice-raid; several ACLU documents, including one that covers the 100 mile border zone reaching most of Vermont at aclu.org/know-your-rights/border-zone; this one that explains that “You have the right to share truthful, lawfully obtained information about law enforcement and tell people about their legal rights” at aclu.org/know-your-rights/talking-to-people-about-their-rights; and a page on the VAAP website linked to several ways of tracking ICE activity and detentions at vaapvt.org/icetracker

ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and Border Patrol are not the same agency; however, both are components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with distinct roles and jurisdictions. Border Patrol (part of CBP) focuses on securing the U.S. borders and enforcing immigration laws at and between ports of entry, while ICE focuses on interior immigration and customs enforcement, investigating violations and deporting unauthorized immigrants within the country.



The tower of the clockhouse is a landmark on the Creative Campus at Goddard in Plainfield, as it was on the former Goddard College campus before it. photo courtesy of Jeff Kent, Creative Campus webmaster

Goddard

Continued From Page One

holistically, create new models of community living,” Gruen said.

The primary goal of Creative Campus is to foster the creative arts, he said. Examples include concerts, plays, creative arts courses and retreats. “It’s really an invitation to people who want to bring their creative practice to a space that supports it, a space that has a community to engage around it,” Gruen said.

Another goal is to act as an economic driver for the town of Plainfield, filling the gap that was left by Goddard College. Many elements of Goddard College have been preserved through this new creative arts venue, including the Haybarn Theatre and the former college dorms.

This summer, Creative Campus hosted the Green Mountain Playwright Retreat, a four-day program run by playwright and Goddard graduate Erin Galligan Baldwin.

The retreat received submissions from playwrights in Vermont and beyond, resulting in a selective process of choosing which plays would be presented at the event, Baldwin said. “I got 600 submissions from all over the world when I posted it. It went viral.”

In addition to hosting playwrights, Creative Campus presented

plays in the Haybarn Theatre, which is well known in the community. “It’s been a theater space in Plainfield on the college campus since 1934,” Gruen said, “so it was one of the first things that got rejuvenated after the purchase of the campus last year.”

Nearby, Haybarn Restaurant and Lounge provides theater-goers and others somewhere to dine, including Vermont veggie burgers, avocado hummus and apple crisp. It’s closed for remodeling until Oct. 1.

In addition, Creative Campus rents out about 60 to 70 dorm-style rooms. Some are suites, but most are singles and double rooms, Gruen said.

The dorms provide a housing option for people coming from longer distances, giving them the ability to stay the night before or during an event.

The dorms, as well as other buildings at Goddard College, are in need of care. For example, some guests this summer were displeased when a bat got into the dormitories, Baldwin said.

“If you’re used to country living, it’s not a huge deal to have a critter. But I think in the future, if we’re catering to clientele from Boston or New York, we don’t want bats flying around,” she said.

As for the plans for developing housing on campus, Gruen said that

Execusuite LLC is still in the planning stages. Davidson did not respond immediately to an email requesting comment.

Baldwin said she was happy to be back on campus where she graduated and back at the Haybarn Theatre, and excited for the future of the community as well.

“Central Vermont, and all of Vermont, has been through a lot with the flooding and with

everything. I just thought this is a resurgence of an extremely important part of our state and part of our history and our culture here,” she said.

Learn more about The Creative Campus at Goddard at thecreativecampus.org

Evan Witt write for the Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship for The Hardwick Gazette.



The lower garden on the Creative Campus at Goddard with, behind it (from left) the Kilpatrick Dormitory, Clockhouse and Haybarn Theatre. photo courtesy of Jeff Kent.

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Drought

Continued From Page One being the most impacted.

Though many residents hoped recent rain would provide relief, any solace will be piecemeal. Rain-fall throughout the week of September 21 is “mostly going to be a drop in the bucket,” said Robert Haynes, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Burlington.

After September 28, warm temperatures accompanied with a high pressure system are expected to exacerbate the drought, Haynes said.

One effect of climate change is that it often leads to a “swing between extremes,” Haynes said. In 2023, Vermont had its wettest summer on record, while this year’s summer has been extremely dry, a huge change in just a matter of two years, he said.

According to the National Integrated Drought Information System, this past August has been the driest on record in Vermont since 1895.

With scientists predicting that drought will persist in the coming weeks, Vermonters say low water levels around the state are prompting towns to conserve water, affecting aquatic ecosystems, and creating barriers to recreation.

In Berlin, one of the town’s four

industrial-size wells recently went dry, Pelletier said. He estimates that the town’s overall water production is down by about 50%, he said.

The significant decline in production prompted Pelletier to issue a water conservation notice last week. The town issued the mandatory notice to its approximately 115 connected users, most of which are commercial businesses, Pelletier said.

Pelletier is working with state officials and well-drilling companies to see if the town can find a stopgap fix and reach some untapped aquifers underground to keep everyone up and running.

“They’re drilled really deep. You know, they’re supposed to have plenty of storage, and it’s just that bad, I guess,” Pelletier said.

Until then, he said, the town is carefully threading the needle.

Another Washington County town, Plainfield, issued a conservation notice on September 16. The town gets the majority of its water supply from a number of springs nearby, but those springs haven’t been able to meet the town’s demand in recent months, said Tristan MacGregor-Stewart, the town’s chief water system operator.

Luckily, the town has a number of backup wells that it’s begun to draw from periodically since August.

But pumping water from the wells is more expensive, MacGregor-Stewart said. The notice is a preliminary measure, to start conserving before the town has a big problem, he said.

Since August 22, the state has received 398 reports of drinking water supply shortages or outages, according to Ben Montross, with the Vermont Department of

Environmental Conservation, who said this is the worst drought he has seen statewide in 12 years. Of those reports, 77% represent shallow groundwater meaning a spring or a dug well, and 20% represent drilled wells.

Residents in Orange County, in the driest part of the state, submitted the most reports, making up

See DROUGHT, next page



The extremely low levels of Lake Champlain visible across the Burlington waterfront expose the 19th-century Pine Street Barge Canal Breakwater south of the Waste Water Treatment Facility.

Photo courtesy of Julie Silverman/Conservation Law Foundation & LightHawk Conservation

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 or call 802-888-8302

Register at: bikereg.com
 Event name: Copley Gravel Moxie

Drought

Continued from previous page

21% of all reported shortages.

At least five water systems across the state have also reported using alternate sources of water, according to Stephanie Brackin, a spokesperson for the Agency of Natural Resources. Those neighborhoods range in location from Pownal to Newbury.

In Corinth, an Orange County town that was one of the first in Vermont to see extreme drought conditions, residents are suffering.

People who live in town have been going to the town hall for water because their wells have gone dry, said Martha Brough, the town's clerk. Margaret Loftus, who owns a farm in town, said she's heard of people showering in local schools.

While sources of drinking water are drying up around Vermont, lakes, rivers, and streams have also been drastically impacted.

Vermont is experiencing at least five types of droughts at once, according to Dupigny-Giroux. A meteorological drought, driven by scarce precipitation, has dried out soil and led to agricultural drought. As conditions worsened, lakes, rivers and streams were hit by a hydrological drought, while the impacts on food production and prices pushed the state into a socioeconomic drought.

"A lot of the impacts that we're seeing were exacerbated by how quickly the summer drought kicked off, which is a flash drought," Dupigny-Giroux said. The flash drought, a rapid onset drought that deteriorates quickly, began between June and July but then ramped up in August, she added.

Although Vermont has experienced droughts in the past, what's unusual this time, Dupigny-Giroux said, is that the state has been experiencing a flash drought coupled with the hydrological drought since last year.

"I spent most of my life in and around Lake Champlain ever since I was a kid, and I really have not seen water levels like this before," said Julie Silverman, Lake Champlain lakekeeper with the Conservation Law Foundation.

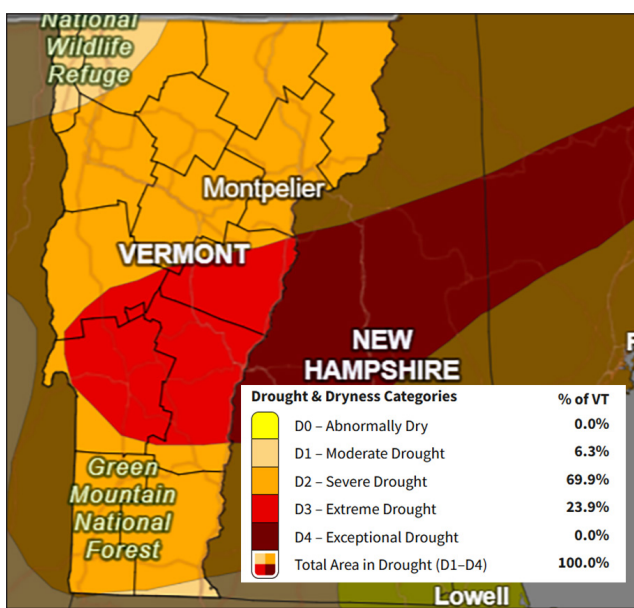
During her monitoring activities in the lake, Silverman said she was struggling to paddle to Law Island in Lake Champlain due to the lower water level. "People are actually able to walk to islands and other parts of Lake Champlain that they've never really had access to before by foot," she said.

The fluctuations the lake has experienced between floods and extreme drought impact the entire ecosystem, Silverman said. "These are really dramatic extremes that put a tremendous amount of stress on animals as well as plants."

"The lake is so low that we've lost a lot of shallow water habitat," said Jason Stockwell, director of the Rubenstein Ecosystem Science Laboratory at the University of Vermont. "The decrease in water level will affect the availability of such habitat for young fish to find food to eat and also to hide from predators."

As the water level decreases, and the water temperature rises, different species are forced to share a shrinking band of livable habitat, with surface waters too warm and low-oxygen areas at the bottom of the lake expanding, according to Stockwell.

The phenomenon intensifies competition among species, Stockwell said, leaving fish such as rainbow smelt, which would normally be in cold waters at the bottom of the lake, more vulnerable to predators and exposing spawning sites



to anglers, wind storms and waves.

According to Dupigny-Giroux, the state climatologist, collecting data on drought impacts can help determine if Vermont is also going through an ecological drought, in which the landscape changes and cannot be reverted to what it once was. If some streams become permanently dry or some species leave and don't come back next year, for example, the state would have experienced an ecological drought.

For this reason, Vermont officials encourage people to report drought impacts they notice across the state.

"Reporting impacts, reporting any observations are so critical for us to be able to piece together all of the parts of this jigsaw," state climatologist Dupigny-Giroux said.

While Vermont's water bodies run low, Vermonters are seeing their aquatic activities limited around the state.

In Burlington, "several weeks ago, we actually started to move boats that were in more shallow areas," said Robert Peterson, the city's Parks, Recreation and Waterfront's marina manager.

Peterson said they had to move 10 or 12 boats from Perkins Pier to the Burlington Boat-house Marina, which is deeper, and pull some boats at the Boathouse Marina further back into the water or move them to deeper slips.

"We've certainly had low lake levels before, but just not to this extent and not this early," he said.

Joe Tyson, state parks regional manager for the Northwest region of Vermont, said park staff have been contacting people with reservations at the park to inform them that, with water levels so low, it may be challenging to access the parks by boat or launch a boat from there, especially with motor boats.

"At Grand Isle State Park and Burton Island State Park, we proactively reached out to folks to let them know that it's going to look different this year than it has in the past," Tyson said.

Victoria Edwards-White, coach of the rowing team at the University of Vermont, said the team generally heads to Lake Champlain from the Lamoille River, but lately they have been facing some challenges due to the low water levels. While the boats used by the athletes aren't very deep, the coaches drive boats with outboard motors that go deeper into the water, which are needed to reach the athletes in case there are any problems.

"We're getting to the point where, if we don't see any rain in the next few weeks, we are at risk of not being able to operate at all," Edwards-White said, adding that a lower water level would risk damaging their equipment.

With low water levels, weeds and reeds are

getting stuck in the oars and the engines, Edwards-White said, and the team hasn't been able to access part of the river because of that.

On other bodies of water around the state, anglers are feeling the impacts of low water levels on their local fishing spots.

Nick Mahood, who oversees the fly-fishing program at the Woodstock Inn & Resort, said his guides usually lead groups on fishing trips into the Ottauquechee River, the White River and smaller tributaries near Woodstock. But this year's low water levels have completely changed the game.

"The water levels are so low, we've had to pretty much completely stop any sort of small stream creek fishing for brook trout or native wild trout. That's been really challenging," Mahood said.

His guides no longer consider smaller rivers suitable for fishing, and the program hasn't been able to fish the Ottauquechee River in the last five or six weeks, Mahood said.

Fishing for trout is usually a big part of the inn's program, Mahood said. But when water runs low, its temperature rises faster, even in large rivers.

Trout don't do well in water above 68 degrees Fahrenheit, and this year, water temps surpassed that marker early in the summer, leaving anglers to fish mostly smallmouth bass in the White River, he said.

Northeast of Mahood is Bob Shannon, who owns the Fly Rod Shop in Stowe, a business that also takes anglers out on guided trips. In the fall, he mostly books trips to fish brook trout on mountain streams. Usually he takes groups out to Miller Brook, Ranch Brook, Notch Brook and Gold Brook, but this year those streams are so low there isn't enough water to fish in them.

Shannon has adapted by mostly taking groups to ponds and lakes nearby, but sometimes that isn't the trip more experienced anglers want, and he's seen it affect his business.

"Most of our fly fishing clients would rather fish in moving water on, you know, a beautiful fall foliage stream," Shannon said.



Law Island is usually only accessible by boat, but is now walkable from the Causeway Recreational Trail on Colchester Point.

photo courtesy of Julie Silverman/Conservation Law Foundation & LightHawk Conservation

HED reviews plan to improve accountability, dam future

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Electric Department (HED) Board of Commissioners held two meetings in September. A revised organizational chart presented by General Manager Sarah Braese was adopted by the commissioners after a discussion in open session, followed by a half-hour executive session at a special meeting, September 8.

The draft chart shows staff responsibilities that Braese believes will improve accountability and streamline the utility's operations.

It proposed the department's general manager is responsible to the Hardwick Select Board and HED Board of Commissioners, with two direct reports: a business and finance manager and a utility operations manager, a position that will be filled on an interim basis by a current employee.

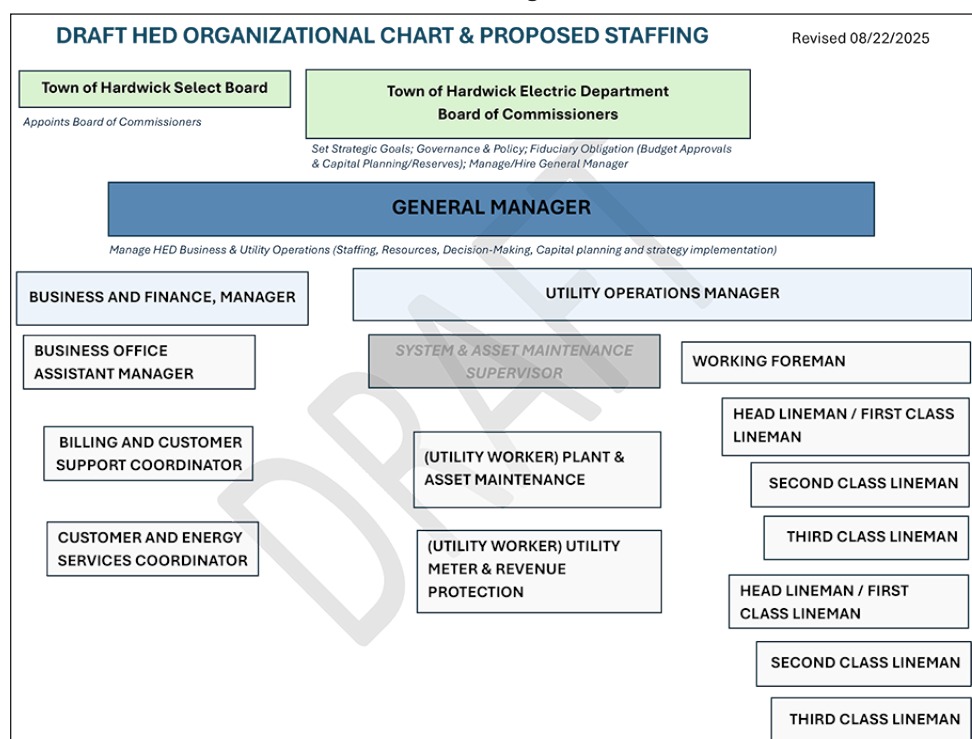
The operations manager then manages a working foreman and oversees utility workers who handle maintenance and meters-revenue production.

Braese proposed a potential future position as system and asset maintenance supervisor overseeing the utility workers.

Commissioners went into executive session during that meeting to discuss a customer issue that Chair Michael Ambrosino asked to have added to the agenda, but took no action upon exiting.

At the regular September 16 meeting commissioners authorized Braese to create a job description for the Utility Operations Manager position and begin looking for someone to fill the position at a salary they did not share publicly.

Stew Arnold with the Greensboro Association (GA) joined the meeting to request information about the status of the Caspian Lake dam, and asked that the GA be involved in future discussions. He shared recent concerns with lake water levels this summer and conversations he and others have had with HED staff and the State Agency of Natural Resources about them. There was discussion about the possibility of the GA or Town



of Greensboro becoming the dam's owner.

Braese and the commissioners agreed that HED, the Hardwick Select Board the GA and Town of Greensboro will continue to work together regarding Caspian dam.

Other routine business at that meeting concluded uneventfully, with a brief mention that the

utility's tax liability had decreased due to a change in the state's methodology for determining the value of utility plants and authorizing Braese to search for a legal firm with experience working with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The meetings were recorded and can be viewed at hctv.us.

Dam removal forum panelists teach river science

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – A roomful of people in the Jeudeview Memorial Library's Parker Ladd Community joined panelists Karina Dailey with the Vermont Natural Resources Council and Kassia Randzio with the Vermont River Conservancy for the third forum in the Ripple Effects series, titled "Dam Removal & Rivers," Wednesday, Sept. 24.

Panelists shared information about a Vermont Dam Removal Initiative that has resulted in 72 dams removed of the more than 1,000 in the state. The initiative is designed to raise awareness, identify derelict dams, prioritize potential projects to remove unnecessary dams and collaborate with all of the stakeholders during discussion of potential dam removal projects.

They gave an overview of river science and talked about how dams disrupt a river, degrade water quality and the aquatic habitat, restrict the movement of fish and other wildlife and can be a liability to landowners, as well as a public safety risk.

They explained the difference between run of the river dams that simply pass the same amount of water as is coming in, with a steady flow in and out, depending on what the weather brings. Those dams provide minimal flood protection, disconnecting the river from its pre-dammed watershed.

Flood control dams and those generating electric power offer dynamic storage, which can allow them to hold water back during storms, then later releasing is slowly. Because they have a key role in protecting communities they must be well-maintained and closely monitored.

Mention of a simple 10-step process for



Panelists Karina Dailey (left) with the Vermont Natural Resources Council and Kassia Randzio with the Vermont River Conservancy share information about river science and the benefits of removing unnecessary dams at the third forum in the Ripple Effects series, titled "Dam Removal & Rivers," Wednesday, Sept. 24. photo by Paul Fixx

dam removal drew a laugh from the audience because nothing about it is simple. Six steps are involved before dam removal can even begin. They start with project selection, developing support, fundraising, design, permitting and further outreach before removal begins. Following removal of a dam, restoration of the area and surrounding habitat is required, along with monitoring and, most importantly, time, they said.

Examples of work on Winooski River dams near Montpelier illustrated their points.

While the presentations weren't about the removal of any particular dams in the Hardwick area, most questions following the presentation were about Hardwick's Jackson dam on Wolcott Street, just before its intersection with Route 14 North and Route 15 West next to The Kwik Stop gas station and mini-mart. Close behind were concerns about the Shadow Lake dam, where the water level has been lowered significantly due to concern about the dam's integrity.

The final Ripple Effects forum, titled, "Climatology and the Future of Vermont's Watersheds – Including the Impacts of Drought" happens this week, on Wednesday, Oct. 1, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the Parker Ladd Community Room at the Jeudevine Memorial Library.

Lesley-Ann L. Dupigny-Giroux, Ph.D., Professor and Vermont State Climatologist and Current Chair of the Vermont Drought Task Force will have a presentation, followed by community Q&A. Light snacks will be provided.

The event is being sponsored by the Town of Hardwick in collaboration with Sea Grant Lake Champlain, the Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District, NVDA and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, River Corridor & Floodplain Protection Team.

The four-part forum series invites the community to explore how water connects us and how we can work together for a more resilient future.

All are welcome. No registration required. For questions, contact Kristen Leahy, Resilience & Adaptation Coordinator at (802) 472-1686 or zoning.administrator@hardwickvt.gov

Trees for Downtown project plants 30 small trees

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – Small trees have recently been popping up throughout Hardwick's

Designated Downtown area over the last several weeks, where wooden stakes had been marking places for them throughout much of the summer.

A \$33,487 Vermont Community Tree Planting Grant (CTPG) for the Trees for Downtown Hardwick project was secured by the Hardwick Downtown Partnership (HDP). Under the grant, Ecotone Landscapes & Tree Care co-owner and Hardwick Select Board Vice-Chair Ceilidh Galloway-Kane has been working with GMTCC intern Owen Skorstad to plant 30 trees at town buildings, businesses, nonprofits and in private yards.

Fourteen of the trees will be on municipal property and the other 16 on privately-owned parcels, said Tracy Martin.

Hardwick Tree Warden Geoff Fehrs, co-owner of Ecotone, helped to select appropriate trees for each location and will monitor the health of the trees for the first year. A variety of trees were planted, said Fehrs, who said Hardwick's downtown is more of an urban environment for trees. River birch groupings were planted in three wetter areas, crabapple and serviceberry shrubs were sited where there wasn't room for larger trees, and two oaks, a sycamore and larch were selected where there was room for them to grow.

Claudia Gohl said she appreciated the program to plant trees in town. She received two of them, one behind the Positive Pie

building and a serviceberry cluster in front of a S. Main St. property, to replace a crabapple she recently removed.

Gohl said she was glad the Downtown Partnership did the project because there are so many trees outside town, people don't realize how important they are in town. Trees on her property keep the ground underneath them at least ten degrees cooler in the summer heat, making the area safer for pets and what's in parked cars, she said.

The organization's "work plan for 2024 . . . identified a goal to 'collaborate with the Hardwick Conservation Commission and look for funding to establish a program to plant trees on Main, Mill, and Wolcott streets,'" said Cornish. Later, they expanded the "vision to include all of the streets within the bounds of the Designated Downtown.

"With support from the Hardwick Conservation Commission, we applied for and were awarded a CTPG (a joint program of the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Urban & Community Forestry Program and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission)."

The CTPG program recognizes the many benefits that have been shown to accrue to communities when tree cover is expanded. The Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program explains that planting trees "improves air quality, mitigates stormwater, provides shade, creates wildlife habitat, increases property value and improves public health and wellbeing."

"Fundors for the Trees for



Ecotone Landscapes & Tree Care owner Ceilidh Galloway-Kane (left) plants trees with GMTCC intern Owen Skorstad at Caspian Lake Lodge #87, 61 Church St. The project, to plant 30 trees at town buildings, businesses, nonprofits and in private yards in Hardwick's downtown area, is funded by a Vermont Community Tree Planting Grant. photo by Paul Fixx

Downtown Hardwick project were especially pleased with the group's 'Adopt-a-Tree' concept," said Cornish.

The Partnership invited both individual and business property owners in Hardwick's Designated Downtown to receive trees as part of the larger project. The trees, planted near streets, sidewalks and other public spaces, will benefit the community as a whole, she said.

Agreements with each property owner offer a three-year warranty, noting, "the tree may not be removed, pruned or otherwise altered without permission from the Hardwick Tree Warden during that time." Landowners will be responsible for the trees after that.

The Hardwick Conservation Commission contributed to the project by collecting soil samples at each of the planting locations. Those samples were sent to a lab at UVM to determine the suitability of each site, and the potential needs of the trees going forward.

"The HDP used a competitive bid process to procure the services of a professional landscaping firm, but struggled to find an available contractor, finally contracting

with family-owned Ecotone," said Cornish.

Signs accompanying some of the trees indicate, "This new tree was planted by the HDP & Hardwick Conservation Commission with support from a CTPG funded through the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission with Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation.

"The success of the Trees for Downtown Hardwick project could just be the start for our community. If another organization is interested in pursuing a Trees for Hardwick Neighborhoods effort, the HDP would be thrilled to offer up all that the board has learned through this process," said Cornish.

The HDP is a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. It was established in December of 2022 as part of a years-long effort to have Hardwick's historic business district designated as part of the Vermont Downtown Program. In January of 2023, Hardwick's downtown was granted that status. The HDP mission is to provide leadership to support the economic, social, cultural and recreational vitality of downtown Hardwick.

Plainfield Community to prioritize, seek volunteers on October 16

PLAINFIELD – Members of the Plainfield community met on Wednesday, Sept. 17, for the second step of the Plainfield Forward resilient communities process and set two priorities for the future of the town. All area residents, including those displaced from the 2023 and 2024 floods, may sign up for these priority groups online at Plainfield Forward and will meet on Thursday, Oct. 16.

As part of the Resilient Communities process, community members discussed and prioritized a list of 24 ideas and opportunities for action that were brainstormed in the first phase of the process on July 28. Through a two-round voting process, Plainfield residents identified two top priorities. These priority groups will work to create a housing strategy and build a

resilience hub.

Laura Cavin Bailey, VCRD Climate Economy Director says, "At the next meeting, community members will shape the direction of each priority group by defining next steps and developing plans. Now is a great time to join your neighbors and work on these action areas."

The third phase of the Resilient Communities process will take place on October 16, from 5 to 7:30 p.m., at Haybarn Theater at The Creative Campus at Goddard with a hybrid option via Zoom. Food and beverages will be served, and childcare will be provided. All members of Plainfield's extended community are encouraged to attend.

For more information, visit Plainfield Forward or contact Laura Cavin Bailey at VCRD at (802) 234-1646 or laura@vtrural.org.

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Redistricting forum identifies questions, few answers

by Paul Fixx

CRAFTSBURY – Roughly 45 people attended a community forum on Act 73 about the state redistricting plan for schools, held September 10.

Craftsbury Town School District Board Chair Kasey Allen opened the meeting with an overview and update on relevant information about Act 73, which the Legislature passed in June and Governor Scott signed into law in July. She said the forum was being held to get community input on which neighboring schools, districts and/or supervisory unions Craftsbury schools might potentially want to work with.

A legislative School District Redistricting Task Force is meeting now, with plans to generate maps of proposed new school districts by December 1, which the legislature will consider in January.

Craftsbury School Board

passed a motion and submitted a letter to the state task force on August 11, saying “The Craftsbury Town School District would like to remain within a Supervisory Union within a larger governance region,” and “work with our Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union board to reach out to contiguous school districts to explore combining into a larger supervisory union.”

The letter explained the “purpose is to optimize cost-savings and efficiencies where possible while maintaining local democratic engagement, oversight and accountability in order to achieve excellent educational outcomes for our communities’ children and youth at a cost Vermonters can afford.”

Margaret Maclean of the Rural School Community Alliance (RSCA) then spoke to say RSCA exists to represent small schools with under 300 students as a collective body. As of June,

102 towns were members.

While some areas of the state can support the proposed model with local elementary schools, central middle schools and regional high schools, many rural areas cannot, she said. New class size standards would put some schools on a path to closure. The ideal map doesn’t anticipate the many confounding factors, such as population, geography and travel patterns.

The RSCA is asking towns to make a decision between a supervisory union structure and district structure, which Craftsbury has already done.

During a time for public comment and questions those attending learned Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) currently has approximately 1,000 students.

The answer to how big an area it would take to reach the expected 4,000 student district envisioned by Act 73 will depend on what neighboring areas get included and what school buildings are available in it.

There was broad agreement on the need to collect community input through a survey that will be open until October 1 at forms.gle/bCCB6MXq5VYbETSk9

Another governance structure called Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) exists in New York State, where the state provides services to school districts.

Maclean suggested there are certain schools on the path to closure and a scenario under which Craftsbury could be one of them. The high school class size minimum is 18 students and the legislation says the Secretary of Education may take action. Hopefully a case can be made that geography and low population density allow rural schools like Craftsbury to continue serving the population they do now.

The state has never evaluated the cost savings of consolidation and the only real analysis was an undergraduate thesis

done by Grace Miller, who went to North Country, then studied the issue at Yale. A study from Arkansas has shown that there’s not evidence that consolidation of this sort saves a lot of money in rural states.

A school board member from Albany said Orleans Central Supervisory Union, just to the north, has six elementary schools all feeding into Lake Region. There are two school districts there, one for high school and one for elementary and middle school. Several years ago they decided to make a plan based on low class sizes, hiring challenges, and aging infrastructure. They started with sister schools at elementary and middle school levels, then hired consultants to present options. The one that saves the most money involves building a new elementary school on the Lake Region. It would be very expensive at more than \$100 million, but could save about \$700 million over the long-term based on the analysis.

A former Craftsbury student who now attends Lake Region said the drive is hard, but it provides more choice. They have made the decision to have access to more classes and more athletics. For Craftsbury, bringing students in or merging with somewhere nearby could mean minimal upheaval but could have some positive impacts.

A parent said she was devastated with her high school student’s choice to leave Craftsbury, but class size was really small and that made a lot of things feel very limited. “You’d have to pry the K-8 out of my cold dead hands” but at the older grades we could really gain some things out of that transition.

A final comment was made that the Public Assets Institute did some good studies of different ways to fund education that would be more equitable than the property tax-based mechanism. As citizens we can start advocating for what we want in terms of politics and influence.



Vermont 4-Hers Steven Werner, Maddie Perry and Morgan Michaud stand with their entries just after their classes. photo by Leslie Michaud

Vermont dairy 4-Hers bring home ribbons

BURLINGTON – Vermont 4-H youth showcased their talents and dedication at the 2025 Eastern States Exposition, better known as The Big E, held in West Springfield, Mass. Representing the Green Mountain State, these young leaders participated in a variety of competitions and exhibitions alongside peers. The Big E’s 4-H program welcomed over 2,500 youth from six New England states. The Big E is the largest agricultural event on the East Coast and serves as a regional showcase for 4-H members aged 12 to 18.

Local participants in the Livestock Program champions in the breed type categories included Holstein,

Dawson Michaud, East Hardwick, Spring Calf, 1st, HM Jr, Champion; Talon Michaud,

Greensboro, Spring Calf, 2nd; and Morgan Michaud, East Hardwick, Fall Yearling Heifer, 2nd.

Local participants in the Livestock Program Champions in the showmanship category winners included Jr. Showmanship A, Talon Michaud, Greensboro, 4th; Jr. Showmanship B, Dawson Michaud, East Hardwick, Champ Jr. and HM Supreme Showman; Sr. Showmanship B, Morgan Michaud, East Hardwick, 1st, HM Champ SR Showman; and Steve Werner, East Hardwick, 3rd;

Judging teams included Vermont A Team Brailey Livingston, Mackenzie Chase and Morgan Michaud; and Vermont B Team, Dawson Michaud, Talon Michaud, Steven Werner and Emmeline Paquet. Vermont A Team placed First overall and Vermont B placed Fifth overall.

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ADU provides local prescription access

by **Raymonda Parchment**

PLAINFIELD – Amid shrinking regional access to pharmacies across the state, the Health Center at Plainfield has a unique two-part solution for providing local prescription access.

The Community Health Pharmacy (CHP) is a mail-order retail pharmacy operating specifically for patients of Vermont health centers. Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) are able to offer this pharmacy service, called a 340B pharmacy, with prices equal to and often lower than other pharmacies.

Notably, an Automated Dispensing Unit (ADU) in the Health Center at Plainfield can provide short-term or starter packages of many prescription medications on site, saving patients time and travel expenses.

According to a 2009 Brattleboro Reformer article, the ADU is used by a pharmacy technician, requiring a bar coded paper to obtain the medicines. The ADU contains 122 drugs used to treat acute conditions requiring quick treatment. Other prescriptions are mailed to patients from the CHP pharmacy at no extra charge and generally arrive within a day or two.

The CHP mail order pharmacy is available to patients of the Hardwick Area Health Center, though an ADU is not.

Across the state, area health-care providers are adapting to the

accumulating losses in pharmacy retailers, which are creating pharmacy deserts. Pharmacy deserts are generally defined as places where there is no or limited access to a pharmacy. Communities in rural areas are considered pharmacy deserts if the nearest pharmacy is 10 miles away or more.

According to the state's Board of Pharmacy, 28 pharmacies permanently closed in Vermont between 2019 and 2024. In just this past year, all five remaining Rite Aid pharmacies in the state of Vermont were marked for either sale or closure. Numerous Walgreens locations have also closed, after the retail giant announced last year that 1,200 store locations would be permanently shuttered. So far, locations in Hardwick, Burlington, Newport, Morrisville and Montpelier have been closed.

Solutions are available for those living in pharmacy deserts, such as mail-order pharmacies. Some retailers like Kinney Drugs offer weekly deliveries. However, clinical pharmacists and pharmacist technicians provide more than just prescription access, offering services like seasonal vaccinations and immediate prescription expertise that cannot be easily imitated or replaced. Solutions like the CHP and ADU at Plainfield bridge some of these gaps, but the statewide issue of limited access still looms large.

To sign up for the CHP services, visit theplainfield.org/pharmacy/



This Community Health Pharmacy is available for patients at the Plainfield Health Center

photo by Raymonda Parchment

Local artists featured for open studio weekend

by **Raymonda Parchment**

AREA TOWNS – Vermont Open Studio will take place this upcoming weekend, October 4 and 5, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.. Open studio weekend is a celebration of the craft and artwork of Vermont artists across the state. 160 artists at 113 sites will showcase their respective works, divided into county-specific tour loops. Tour loops are



A bench by George Sawyer of Sawyer Made chair makers. Sawyer specializes in custom Windsor chairs and benches, available for purchase during VT Open Studio weekend Oct. 4 and 5.

a grouping of studios that are loosely connected via some of the state's main roads, making them easily visited in one day or over the course of the weekend.

The Caledonia tour loop includes local artists from Greensboro Bend, Woodbury, Calais, Marshfield and Hardwick. Visual storyteller Ashes Monroe will display a variety of multi-media artworks, as well as debuting their new community space for other area artists and creatives from their property in Greensboro Bend.

Monroe and their partner purchased the property five years ago. The top floor had suffered fire damage, so they've been hard at work ever since with a goal in mind, "We're trying to revitalize this property so that it becomes an artist sanctuary and a sculpture park. It's something that we're really passionate about. We'd like to get artists in the community involved. So, this is kind of like the opening of what we hope to be more of a community space to display."

Steven C. Bronstein of Marshfield will show contemporary



A sample fabric from Ruby Charuby Weavings by Ruby Leslie, who will showcase handcrafted woven items in VT Open Studio weekend October 4 and 5.

courtesy photo

ironworks, functional and sculptural. George Sawyer of Woodbury's custom Windsor chairs and benches will be on display. Hardwick creatives Ruby and Ken Leslie will showcase their respective works, Ruby Charuby Weavings

and an assortment of artists books and paintings. Alexandra Bottinelli of Hardwick will showcase a variety of collage paintings and assemblages with found wood.

For more information, visit www.vermontcrafts.com.

Receiver plans to dole out \$183,322 to Burke Mountain EB-5 investors

by Alan J. Keays, VTDigger

BURKE – More than 120 people who invested in the redevelopment of Burke Mountain, then were defrauded in a high-profile scandal that rocked Vermont, are set to receive some of their money back.

The foreign investors will get about one-third of their investment from the recent sale of the resort and a previous settlement with a financial institution.

Michael Goldberg, the lawyer overseeing the Northeast Kingdom's resort receivership for more than 10 years, gained approval last week from a federal judge to distribute \$183,322 to each of the 121 EB-5 investors in the Burke Mountain ski area.

Each of those investors put up at least \$500,000 through the federal visa program in hopes of obtaining permanent U.S. residency, or green cards. To receive that, their investment in the resort would have had to meet certain job creation requirements.

The resort eventually fell into receivership when the developers were accused by regulators of misusing funds they obtained from EB-5 investors for not only the Burke Mountain development, but upgrades and expansion at nearby Jay Peak ski resort and projects in

Newport.

Jay Peak resort had previously sold for \$76 million with EB-5 investors who put money into projects at that ski area also receiving pay-outs from proceeds of that sale.

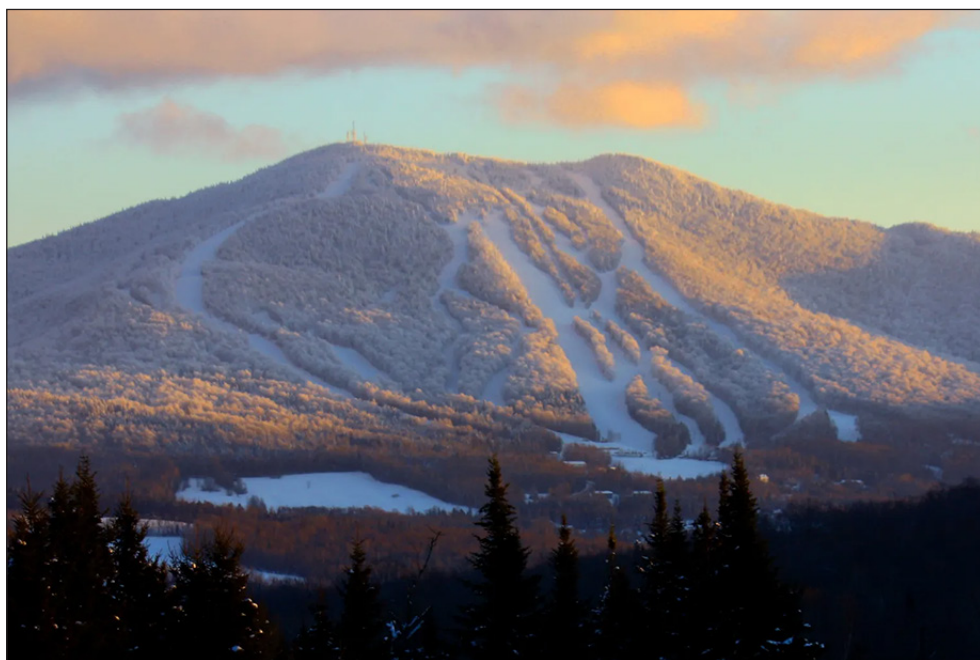
In April, Goldberg, a court-appointed receiver, reached a deal earlier this year to sell the Burke Mountain resort for \$11.5 million to Bear Den Partners LLC, a group of entities with longstanding ties to the ski area.

Goldberg late last week received approval to distribute the proceeds from that sale to the foreign investors as well as another roughly \$10 million from a larger settlement he had reached with the financial firm Raymond James. Raymond James had handled transactions for one of the resort's developers: Ariel Quiros, who owned both Jay Peak and Burke Mountain ski areas at the time.

All totaled, the receiver wrote in his court filing last week, he had roughly \$22 million to distribute equally to the 121 foreign investors in Burke Mountain, or \$183,322 each, representing about 36% of the \$500,000 they each contributed.

That resolution, Goldberg added, "treats all Burke investors equitably based on their original investments."

The EB-5 development



Burke Mountain Ski Resort

photo by Patrick McCaffrey via Wikimedia Commons

projects in northern Vermont were led by Quiros as well as former Jay Peak resort president and CEO Bill Stenger and attorney William Kelly, a close adviser to Quiros.

All three were indicted on federal criminal charges in 2019 and later sentenced to prison, specifically for their roles in one of the EB-5 financed projects in Newport that never came to fruition, the construction of a \$110 million biomedical research facility.

Goldberg has served as the receiver overseeing the properties at the center of the financial scandal since 2016. That's when the U.S. Securities and Exchange

Commission first brought a civil enforcement action in connection with the developments and the misuse of the funds.

Regulators brought that action in federal court in Miami, which was where Quiros resided in 2016 and where many of his other business entities were located.

Judge Darrin P. Gayles, who presides in federal court in Miami and oversees Goldberg's receivership, on Friday approved Goldberg's fund distribution plan to the Burke Mountain EB-5 investors.

Goldberg could not be reached Monday for comment.

NEWS NOTES

Solar For All program paused

by Paul Fixx

VERMONT – State Senator Andrew Perchlik, Energy Program Manager with the Vermont Public Service Department (PSD) shared news last month that all work and activities related to Vermont's Solar For All (SFA) program were paused on August 7 and

will remain paused until further notice."

The Vermont SFA program was slated to receive a nearly \$62.5 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). SFA aimed to expand access to solar energy for low-income households in Vermont by lowering their electricity bills and reducing greenhouse

gas emissions. It would have provided financial support to help low-income and disadvantaged families install small-scale, residential solar panels through programs like the Residential Assistance in Solar Energy (RAISE) program. The program also sought to accelerate the energy transition by attracting private investment and creating jobs in disadvantaged communities.

"Vermont received notice on August 7, from the EPA that Vermont's SFA award was terminated due to language contained in U.S. House Bill 1 (H.1) of 2025 that was signed into law by the president on July 4, 2025. All SFA awardees across the country received the same termination letter," wrote Perchlik.

The state and PSD, along

with many other states and SFA awardees, sees the action as a wrongful termination of a signed grant agreement funded by congressionally obligated funds, he said. "PSD, under direction of Governor Scott, has submitted a Notice of Administrative Dispute as well as a notice of objection to the EPA regarding their attempt to terminate Vermont's SFA award."

"The PSD, as part of the Scott administration, is working with the Vermont Attorney General's Office to identify other actions the state can take to regain access to the \$62 million SFA award, including joining litigation seeking to overturn the EPA's termination of the SFA Program," said Perchlik.



New staff at Hazen Union School are (from left) front row, Instructional Assistant Della Hall, UVM intern Ashley Cook and grades 7 to 9 School Counselor Betul Myra Zaimoglu; back row Middle School math teacher Maya O'Donnell, Instructional Assistant Christine Martin, Nurse Kimberly Cookson and UVM intern Joe Fiorentino. Missing from the photo is Instructional Assistant Crystal Bedor.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

OUR E-MAILS
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LETTERS FROM READERS

Alumni Assn. coin drop receives donations from motorists

To the editor:

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Academy/Hazen Union Alumni Association hosted a coin drop in front of the Hardwick fire station, Saturday, Sept. 20, and received many donations from motorists.

The Association took to the Wolcott St. location at around 9 a.m. and collected donations throughout the morning, finally calling it a day shortly after noon. Two groups collected money in two different directions, Association members Mike Clark and Dave LeCours collecting donations coming from town and Pat Hussey and Brenda Eastman collecting donations from the opposite side.

Meanwhile, a crew that included Gail Luther O'Brien, Lorrie Curtis, Greg Curtis and David Shepard set up a table in front of the firehouse and tabulated all the donations.

Traffic was heavy at certain times and drivers were generous and patient. The group saw license

plates from all over the country, the most distant being a driver from Hawaii.

“My gosh,” said association President Mike Clark. “We, as a group, were just blown away by the overwhelming financial support we got from our very generous local folks, all the out-of-towners coming through as well, we are just so thankful to all of them, we literally got donations from people from all over the country. Some gave huge amounts, some gave very generous amounts and a ton of people gave us what they could. We even got seven guitar picks, mostly from people dumping out the spare change in their ash trays.”

The association held a meeting in the fire station after the coin drop. One of the benefits of the fundraiser is a plan to increase their donations to the graduating senior students at Hazen Union.

Submitted by Hardwick Academy/Hazen Union Alumni Association

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

School Redistricting Task Force public engagement session, Oct. 10

by **Sen. Scott Beck**

MONTPELIER -- The Act 73 Task Force is wrapping up its September 29 meeting. We reviewed a map based on current CTEs (Career and Technical Education) and their regional advisory boards. Work will continue on this construct. There is still conversation around maps that could be based on counties,

regional high schools or a re-do of a proposal put forth by former Education Commissioner Richard Cate in 2007.

We have four meetings remaining and an additional four public engagement sessions around the state. The first is at Oxbow High School, 36 Oxbow Dr, Bradford, on Oct. 10 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Scott Beck is the Vermont Senator from Caledonia County.



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

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

Submissions of Content and Deadlines: The Hardwick Gazette is published late on Tuesday each week with Wednesday's date. Submit 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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YANKEE NOTEBOOK

But suddenly, with overnight company in the offing

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – It’s been a pretty peaceful and pleasant autumn here. The drought has been bedeviling farmers and orchardists, but it’s been perfect weather for my little convertible. The legislature and governor, though occasionally having differences of opinion, have at least not been calling each other names. The news from the national stage (I use that word in a literal sense, not metaphoric) has been horrendous, but I don’t see federal troops on Vermont’s horizon, as we have on others’. I’m able to get away now and then to visit a witty and utterly compatible young lady of only 78 down near Boston. Her car starts, too, so I get return visits.

Without seeming a Pollyanna, and recognizing our problems of housing costs, homelessness, rising insurance rates, imminent cuts to our social services networks, it’s still hard to imagine anywhere else in the United States less unpleasant to live than Vermont.

My constant companion, Kiki, and I have sort of settled together into our restful mature years. Decent days, we walk in the park or hit the coffee shop. Alternatively, we sit back to back in the office, each in their own chair. I try to pay bills when they come in; she snaps at buzzing cluster flies. I try to keep us in groceries and schedule appointments and routine maintenance; she roams a circle a couple of hundred feet from the house and keeps vicious predators from sneaking up on us by night.

Pleasant, serene, restful and sedate. All of those words have described our current existence. But suddenly, with overnight company in the offing, my microwave oven died horribly, sparking and sizzling as if about to explode. Moving hardly a muscle, I remained at my desk, looking for a replacement of the exact same size.

I was going nowhere with the effort, until I happened to mention it to my daughter, who lives just a few miles away. This triggered a lightning-fast visit from my son-in-law, about whom there ought to be a TV series starring a guy who can fix anything.

He gave me a lesson in new-age repairs. He opened the microwave oven door, whipped out his cellphone, and took a photo of the tag inside the door. “This thing was made in 2006!” he cried, as if that were before the Civil War. His phone gave him the number

of the proper replacement unit, and within minutes it was on its way.

I’m constantly dazzled by technology, but this was beyond amazing. I don’t know where the new unit came from, but it got here in about 48 hours. (It could have been quicker if I’d been willing to pay extra. Which I wasn’t).

About the same time, my son and daughter-in-law arrived from Arkansas for a visit. They were in a great big rented pickup truck (he’s a Jeep guy), and asked, when they got here, if I had a to-do list. Well, yeah. There was, for example, a pile of rubbish left over from my recent tenant’s clean-out downstairs. They wrestled it all out the big front door of the cellar, and in not much more time than it takes to tell it, handed me dump receipts for just over half a ton of stuff.

I could feel the energy level around the house rising swiftly, way too fast for me to keep up. The microwave arrived. The two boys removed it from its carton while I was going for a knife, and installed it, ventilating shroud, trim kit, and all, as I was still fretting about whether it’d fit. The boys (actually men of middle years, but their ages relative to mine assign them the permanent status of “the boys”) did seem to give grudging approval of my proper, to-code electric hookup of eighteen years ago, which pleased me secretly.

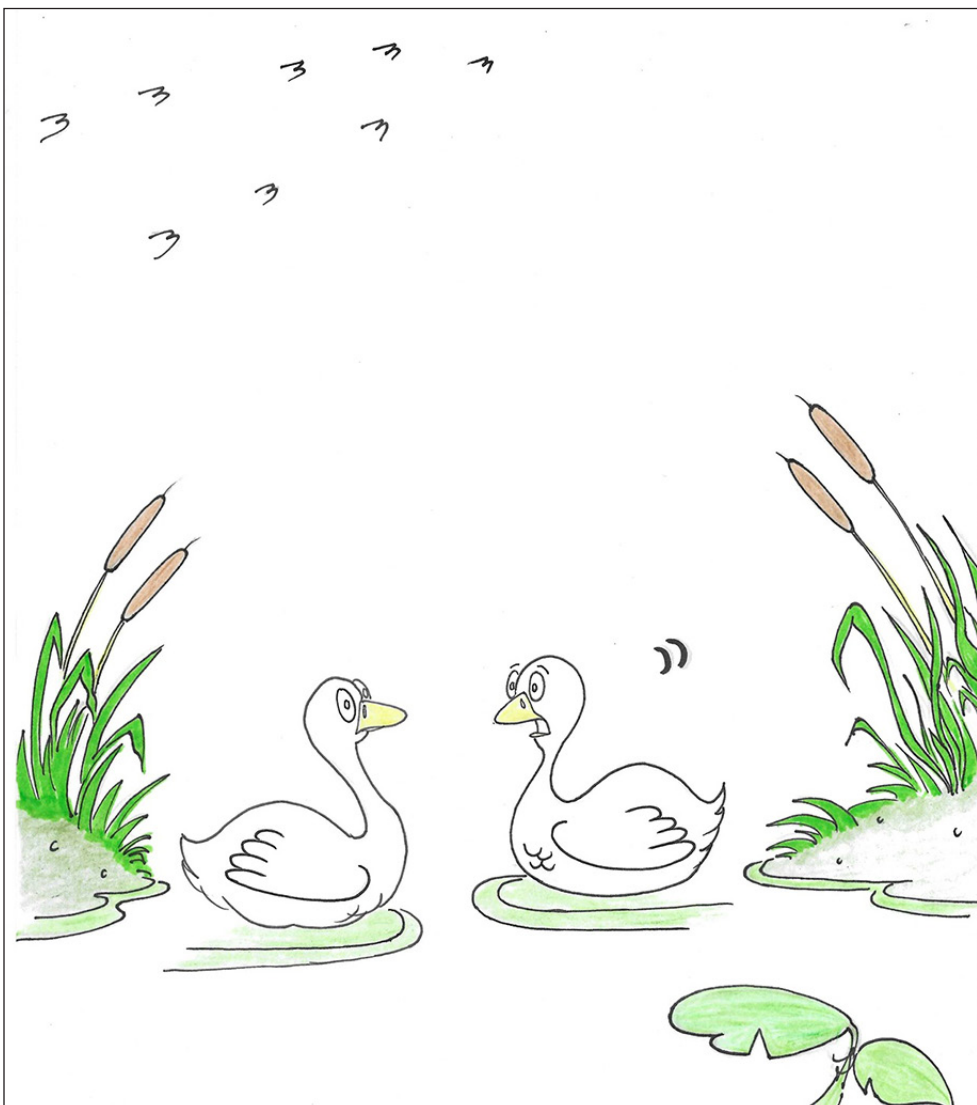
That’s pretty much the way things went for a few days. We were expecting more guests, the woman from Texas who fostered Kiki as a puppy in 2017, her husband, and a German friend who’s just written a book about the former death zone, now a green belt and wildlife preserve, between East and West Germany. So off they went to the Farmers Market and came back with plenty. Kerstin, my German friend, had brought a large Apfelkuchen with whipped cream.

It was Old Home Week.

I couldn’t help but notice, during both dinner and afternoon Kuchen, that the conversation was as fast and heavy as everything else that had happened those few days. I just sat back and listened. It was glorious. Next morning the kids left. I went to strip the guestroom bed and belatedly contribute to the group effort. I found my daughter-in-law had already washed and dried everything and remade the bed. Can it be that my progeny no longer need my leadership?

That makes me very happy.

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



“SOUTH CAROLINA? NO, WE’RE HANGING OUT ON LONG ISLAND!”

MEETING MEMO

Wednesday, October 1

Stannard Town School Board, first Wednesday, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., Stannard Town Hall.

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

Thursday, October 2

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

Tuesday, October 7

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

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

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

OSSU Board, first Tuesday of the month, 6 to 8 p.m., OSSU Central Office, Hardwick.

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

Wednesday, October 8

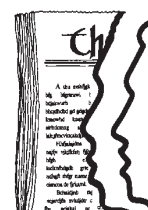
Craftsbury Town School Board, second Wednesday, 6 to 8 p.m., Commons Room, Craftsbury Academy.

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

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The Hardwick Gazette



PEOPLE SERVING PEOPLE

ANOTHER OPINION

We believe in the freedom to read

by **Sandy Scott**

HARDWICK – It is fundamental to our mission as booksellers that every person has access to the books they want to read. This month, Banned Books Week, October 5 to 11, is a national reminder that this is a freedom that needs to be protected.

You might come into our store, look around, and say, “Well, you don’t have the books that I’m looking for. Does that mean you banned them?” The answer is, simply, no.

We have a small store, with limited shelf space. We aren’t able to carry every book in print. No store can do that. We make decisions about what to carry based on our understanding of our customers

and our own likes and dislikes. However, we are willing to order what we don’t have on hand. We don’t have to like the books that you like – and vice versa. We don’t have to agree about the content of the books we read. It does not matter.

If you come to us and ask for a title that we have the ability to order, we will get it for you.

Additionally, we do not pass judgment on anyone for what they choose to read, and we don’t disclose our customers’ reading choices to anyone. Our commitment to both your freedom to read and your privacy are paramount. It is among the first things we cover when we hire new booksellers. We are proud to stand against censorship and for the freedom of speech.

The work to protect free speech through books is supported by a number of wonderful organizations, including the American Booksellers Association, the American Library Association, BannedBooksWeek.org, PEN America, the National Coalition Against Censorship, and the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression. All of these sites have great resources for anyone interested in taking action against book bans.

Here are a few very simple actions you can take, during Banned Books Week or anytime throughout the year: Read banned books. Form your own opinions about them. Find out what ideas they are challenging that might have led to banning attempts. Share them with others.

Support an author whose work is facing challenges and bans. Send them a postcard.

Support public libraries. We are very lucky to be surrounded by excellent libraries where we live. They are one of our most valuable resources.

Stay informed and share what you learn.

Most of all, stay curious. Book bans are meant to stifle curiosity and learning. They work to narrow the scope of our perspective. Reading opens doors into other ways of thinking and being; it increases our understanding and empathy; and it connects us with others across time and space. Access to all this is worth protecting.

Sandy Scott is co-owner of the Galaxy Bookshop, Hardwick.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Update on Redistricting Task Force

by **Rep. Leanne Harple**

GLOVER – Thank you to those of you who attended the September Legislative Coffee Hour at the Highland Center for the Arts today, and a big thank you to HCA for that delicious apple tart. For those of you who could not make it, I shared this update about the work of the redistricting task force, the group that is currently working on new school district maps to present to the Vermont Legislature in December. The task force decided upon a template to use to test whether the maps will work for Vermont. It was tested on a random map of a single statewide school district. More maps will be run through this template at the next meeting on Monday, Sept. 29, including a map based on counties and another based on tech centers. Jay Badams and Sen. Harrison did some work around county-level districts. Dr. Badams and Sen. Harrison will continue to develop the county model, including by addressing the following questions:

In what ways does a county district model make progress toward our goals?

In what ways does a county model make our situation worse?

Could county districts function as supervisory unions (SUs)?

What geographic limitations are there to a county model?

How would we deal with the

very small or very large outlier counties?

Is there any county-wide governance support available, any other potential partner agencies that are organized on a county basis?

The task force had hoped to have these maps for a thorough discussion at this meeting, but the lack of data from the Agency of Education caused this to be delayed until the next meeting. The task force still doesn’t have quality data from the AOE. This is a tremendous burden to the task force because they can’t create reliable maps without it, and it is also raising concerns about whether the AOE can truly support our schools as they go through the many changes required in redistricting.

The task force is working on where, when and how often to have public engagement and have decided to do this in addition to the 8 funded meetings. There will likely be three or four public engagement meetings across Vermont to ensure that they hear from as many Vermonters as possible, though it is not yet known how the public engagement and map creation timing will align. This is a concern as well. Kim Gleason and Sen. Wendy Harrison are working organizing these public engagement sessions. The task force proposes to hold meetings in Rutland and Bradford, and is looking for a third site in Windham County and possibly a fourth in Chit-

tenden County.

Finally, there have been many issues with the livestream. The Agency of Administration is working hard to ensure that the meetings are available for the public to attend, but has not been completely successful yet. Transparency of a process this important is crucial and we are hopeful that this will be fixed soon.

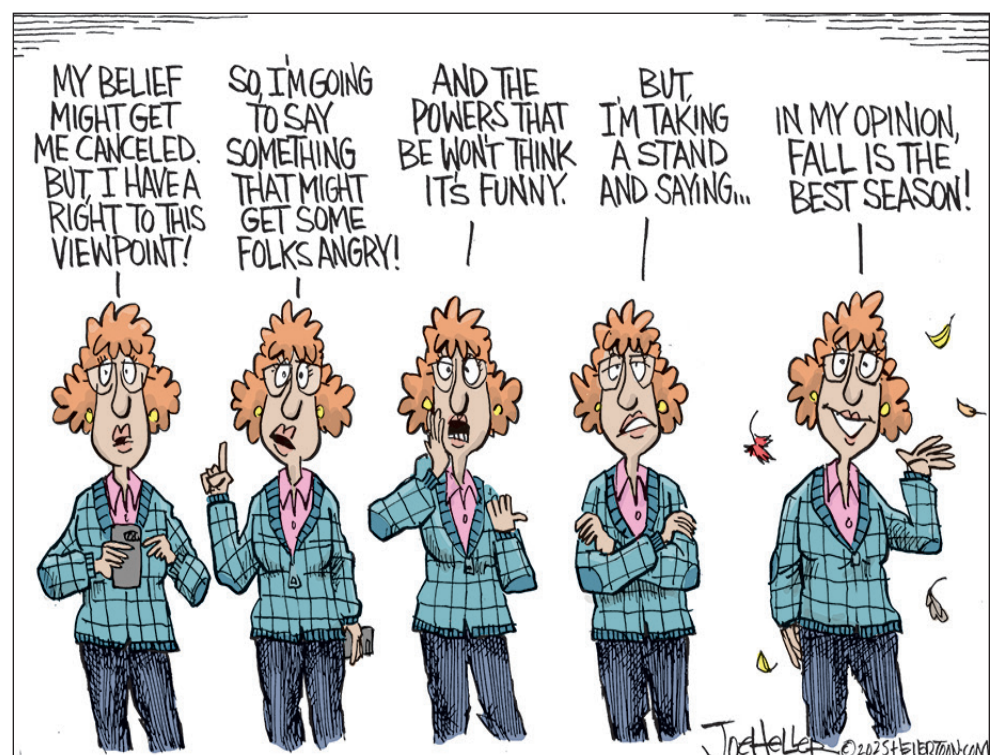
At the next meeting on September 29, the task force will review the revised problem statement and goals, discuss proposed modifications of the template and rubric for map proposals, and discuss what CTE

regions would look like (Sen. Beck and David Wolk), discuss county level proposals (Badams and Harrison), and discuss whether a map of regional shared services could be a tool for addressing cost, quality and fairness in service delivery in a more feasible way.

I will continue to provide updates on the task force following these monthly meetings. The next coffee hour will take place on Saturday, Oct. 25, and I would love to see you there.

Leanne Harple is the state representative for Orleans-4 House District that includes the towns of Greensboro, Craftsbury, Glover and Albany

Heller’s World by Joe Heller



OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Army National Guard veteran receives free Kubota tractor

by Paul Fixx

WALDEN – In what he called a “game-changer,” Rob Niles, a retired Vermont Army National Guard veteran, received a New Kubota L02 Series compact tractor as part of Kubota’s Geared to Give program, which honors military veterans pursuing careers in agriculture.

Niles received the free tractor after retiring with 26 years of service in the guard, including deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He now owns and operates Wild Woods Maple, a maple sugaring operation in Walden.

The new tractor was delivered September 4 by Champlain Valley Equipment General Manager Brian Carpenter and Sales Manager Tom Wood, who taught Niles the ins-and-outs of operating the tractor.

He learned about the “Geared to Give” program last winter, in January, and filled out the application, expressing his need for a tractor. In May he was surprised to hear from them with news that he’d be receiving one.

Niles has had a small sugaring operation in Cambridge, where he built a sugarhouse on the lawn with a few trees and sold sap. He knew they’d want a bigger sugar woods when he retired from the service. To do that, he and his wife Katie, bought land on Coles Pond, where he’s been setting up a second operation.

In 2020, Rob began building Wild Woods Maple, expanding to operate a certified organic, Audubon-recognized, bird-friendly

maple sugaring business on 108 acres.

The family made their first syrup last spring from 6,000 taps. Wild Woods Maple went on to win Best of Class and Best of Show ribbons in the 2025 Vermont Maple Festival “Maple Syrup & Products Contest,” for their amber rich syrup. (Long-time area producer Michelle Goodrich of Goodrich Maple in Cabot took home a Best in Class ribbon there for her maple sugar cakes.)

Niles gives most of the credit for the quality of their syrup to the Walden forest, with its trees and its soils, plus help from others, including the UVM Proctor Maple Center.

At the Vermont Maple Festival awards banquet, “We made our way towards the door at the end of the night and we were stopped by someone who had tasted our syrup during the judging process,” he said, “they really wanted us to know how much they loved the flavor of our syrup and that was special to hear. I took very little credit for the flavor and gave all the credit to the trees in our forest that give us the sap.”

“Our 2025 maple season was an absolute emotional roller-coaster. We were unable to tap all our trees in the beginning due to ridiculous snow depth. Adding to the drama, some sap lines were buried in the deep snow and needed to be dug out. I was keeping the roof of the sugar house raked off, which was a major chore, it is a large building.

“The warm days did come and the sap started to flow from



Delivering a new Kubota tractor to Rob Niles (from left), his wife Katie (wife), daughters Willa and Charlotte, is Champlain Valley Equipment General Manager Brian Carpenter, representing his local Kubota dealer, who made the delivery on September 4.

the half of our forest we had tapped. I got the reverse osmosis machine cleaned and all the equipment was working as it should. I made the usual rounds in the forest and fixed sap tubing leaks; all the woods were tight.

“We did our first couple boils and made some really good syrup in record time. I was immediately aware that I was much more efficient in the sugar house before and after each boil. The year prior was my first season at our new operation and I was sugaring at a much larger scale than I ever had before. I was slow that season, but it seemed as if I was moving much faster this season and it felt good!”

Niles put the Walden operation together by himself, running taplines and building the sugarhouse, except for help with the roof. He’s had a four-wheeler, but never any real equipment like a tractor, he said. He’s been shoveling out the sugarhouse by hand, and borrowing a tractor when he could. His new tractor came with a plow and loader, which he expects will be “a total game-changer.”

The new tractor has created its own new project though, said Niles. He now plans to build a shed to cover and protect the new equipment. He said he’ll be happy to use his new tractor to help others, since so many people have helped him over many years.

Niles, who grew up in Lyndonville, enlisted in the Vermont Army National Guard in December 1997. He deployed to Ramadi, Iraq, in 2005 as a squad leader with Task Force Saber, later he worked as a mountaineering instructor at the Army Mountain Warfare School,

and deployed to Afghanistan in 2012 as a mountain warfare operational advisor with the Asymmetric Warfare Group.

While Coles Pond is a remote, relatively high Vermont elevation, Rob said he’s been to many “off-the-radar places” that are more remote and even colder. On his own, with time off from the guard, he’s been mountaineering in Nepal, where he climbed Ama Dablam, a mountain in the Eastern Himalayas range of Koshi Province, Nepal. The main peak is 6,812 metres (22,349 ft), and considered a more technical climb than Everest.

Based in Waco, Texas, Farmer Veteran Coalition’s (FVC’s) mission is to assist service members and veterans transitioning out of military service into careers in the agriculture sector or assist them with starting their own farms or ranches.

Kubota Tractor Corporation and the FVC partner annually to provide five farmer veterans with new Kubota equipment through the Geared to Give program. Since its inception in 2015, more than \$1 million has been donated in support and 51 pieces of equipment to farmer veterans nationwide, empowering veterans with the tools they need to serve their communities a second time, by helping to feed them. For more information, see kubotausa.com/kubota-cares/farmer-veteran-coalition and farmvetco.org.

Wildwoods Maple offers a wide range of maple products, including infused syrups and a bourbon-barrel-aged offering. For more information, see wildwoodsmaple.com.



Retired Vermont Army National Guard veteran Rob Niles (left), learns about the ins and outs of tractor from Kubota Sales Manager Tom Wood (center) with Champlain Valley Equipment as his daughter looks on. He received the brand-new Kubota L02 Series compact tractor for free from Kubota’s “Geared to Give” program.

ANOTHER OPINION

How do news outlets decide what to cover?

by Paul Cuno-Booth

KEENE, N.H. – Should we chase down this tip? Is this meeting worth covering? How can we shed new light on this issue?

Editors and reporters face those kinds of questions every day. So how do they decide what to cover, and how to cover it?

“A question I often get asked is, ‘What is the one thing that you wish everybody knew about the newspaper, but they don’t?’” said Julie Hirshan Hart, editor of the Laconia Daily Sun. “And my answer is always, ‘We want to cover everything. We just don’t have the resources. You know, if we could cover every story idea that comes in, we would.’”

Hirshan Hart said story ideas can come from anywhere: reporters, editors, other staff members at the news organization, tips from community members and sometimes confidential sources. Then, it’s a matter of prioritizing how to use her limited reporting staff, with two reporters covering 18 Lakes Region communities.

“Is something time-sensitive? Is something happening for the first time? Is something happening in more than one community?” she said.

Laconia and the neighboring towns of Belmont, Meredith and Gilford make up the core of the newspaper’s coverage area, so they’re the focus of more coverage than other communities in its market. Reporters and editors are also guided by which issues are most important to community members.

For instance, she said housing, including housing insecurity and development, and lake health and conservation are big issues locally right now.

At the Berlin Daily Sun, reporting resources are even more limited; editor Lisa Connell is the only full-time journalist.

Connell said she always covers the city council meetings in Berlin, as it’s the biggest community and only city in the region. She also monitors school boards and reports on major crimes.

“It’s really like the bread and butter of town government, because I just feel a real obligation to getting correct information out there,” she said.

Connell keeps an eye on local Facebook groups, and said that can inform her coverage. If she sees that false or misleading information about local issues is circulating in the community, she’ll do her best to

correct the record.

“There’s a lot of incorrect information out there,” she said. “So if those questions come up in a city council meeting . . . I am careful to correct the information in my story.”

At the Concord Monitor, each reporter is responsible for covering certain towns, as well as particular topic areas such as education or health. Stories often come from reporters paying attention to those beats and then discussing what to prioritize with their supervisor, said editor Jonathan Van Fleet. Members of the public can also send in ideas and tips.

“There’s a fair amount of stories that we choose not to pursue,” he said. “If somebody makes wild claims that are very difficult to substantiate. Or if somebody says, regarding police accountability for example, ‘This bad thing happened to me,’ and they have filed no paperwork, no complaints, no anything, well, we tell them that maybe it’s better that they speak to a lawyer instead of the newspaper.”

The Monitor also has a reader advisory board, which meets monthly. Van Fleet said that’s a good forum for big-picture conversations about how and why the paper covered (or didn’t

cover) certain issues.

Those editorial decisions aren’t going to make everyone happy all the time. For example, Chichester has had a “revolving door” of town administrators. Van Fleet said the select board doesn’t want to talk to the Monitor’s reporter anymore because they’re tired of her writing about it.

“There’s almost fatigue from some communities like, ‘Why do you keep covering this issue?’” he said. But of course, it’s important for the paper to cover it, “because it’s the biggest issue in town in terms of how town government is functioning or not.”

Alongside hard news, Hirshan Hart of the Laconia Daily Sun said she looks out for human interest stories that celebrate positive things in the community.

“We’re particularly always interested in people stories,” she said. “If somebody did something cool.”

This story is part of Know Your News, a NENPA Press Freedom Committee and Granite State News Collaborative initiative on why the First Amendment, press freedom, and local news matter. Learn more at nenpa.com/press-freedom-and-local-news-collaborative/.

How The Gazette decides what to cover

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – For the most part, how we decide what to cover at The Hardwick Gazette is similar to the New Hampshire outlets in Paul Cuno-Booth’s story. As a small hyper-local, and mostly digital, news organization, we are never able to cover everything we’d like to, but each week we think we do a slightly better job of collecting and delivering what our community tells us it wants.

The issues we now see as most important in this area include local government and elections, police and fire activity, flood recovery and resilience planning, school redistricting, housing, medical care and post-secondary education, and this year, the local impact of federal policies.

We cover news in Hardwick and ten nearby towns, with one half-time reporter, who also helps with production, and me to report on meetings, events and activities I would likely be attending anyway.

A photographer mostly stays close to Hardwick, covering sports and events beyond that when they seem interesting.

Our sports reporter, who grew up in Hardwick, but now lives in Texas, stays tuned in to what’s happening here, watching games and working with coaches whatever the season.

Hardwick, for which we’re named, and Greensboro, where our office is now, see more news coverage than other places, mostly because we’re there more than anywhere else. We try to cover most select board meetings in Woodbury and Craftsbury too. Walden and Wolcott get less meeting coverage, then Cabot, Marshfield, Calais

and Plainfield less still. Stannard gets almost no coverage because the town doesn’t have a website, so doesn’t post meeting minutes or recordings we can easily access.

When we know there are big issues coming up, we will cover select board meetings in all those towns, and we generally don’t cover school board meetings.

In the medical domain, we keep an eye on Copley Hospital, and other hospitals to a lesser extent, Hardwick Rescue, and the Hardwick and Plainfield health centers.

With the demise of Goddard College, Craftsbury’s Sterling College has become the only post-secondary school in the towns we cover, so we think activity there is more important than ever. Over the last year, we’ve added some coverage of what’s happening at the Vermont State University campuses in Lyndon and Johnson too.

In addition to the sources for stories named by Julie Hirshan Hart in the accompanying story, every week we usually see one or more stories from community members, interns or businesses that choose to write about what’s important to them, so it’s not just us making decisions about what’s important.

Readers tell us they enjoy reading stories about their neighbors, so we’re planning to bring back the Our Neighbors section in our op-ed pages. Those pages are among the most important, with letters to the editor, cartoons, our regular weekly and monthly columnists, In the Garden, The Outdoor Story and the new Voices of Spirit column seems well-received.

I keep an eye on local social media and Front

Porch Forums for help in what’s important to community members and for story ideas.

We’ve cultivated relationships with town managers and clerks, schools, libraries, civic organizations and businesses, to build our events calendar into the go-to place for what’s happening in the coming weeks throughout the area.

The Gazette’s production staff, reporter and board members with journalism and media experience, serve as an editorial sounding board when questions arise that I need a broader perspective on and offer suggestions as they feel compelled to.

We’re working to fill out the board of Northeast Kingdom Public Journalism that serves as the Gazette’s nonprofit publisher. As a nonprofit, our only responsibility is to the communities we cover. We’d very much like to expand board membership beyond the five Hardwick and Greensboro members we have now. Contact us if you have an interest in helping support this organization that’s devoted to the public good as the local representative of the only industry protected by the U.S. Constitution.

Beyond that, we’re planning community meetings in each town. Since the first successful one in Greensboro last year, we’ve got one coming up for Hardwick; to share our initiatives and gather input from the community about what’s working and what’s not, October 26 at the Jeudevine Library.

Paul Fixx volunteers as The Hardwick Gazette’s editor, reports on what he can, handles tech issues, oversees the part-time staff book-keeper and advertising.

WEEKS GONE BY

HED Rate Hike Delayed, Hardwick Gazette, September 30, 1980

HARDWICK – A 18.6 percent rate increase which the Hardwick Electric Department had planned to implement in October has been postponed, and it may be several more months before the village trustees get a response from the state Public Service Board (PSB) on their request for higher rates.

In last week's issue of The Gazette, the village trustees notified the customers of the Hardwick Electric Department that the rates would be going up an average of Oct. 1, 1980 billing. That notice has been rescinded in this week's Gazette.

Village Clerk Carmeline Williams said she had been told that the rate increase is being delayed because a decision on the rate case is expected this week, but PSB Clerk Susan Hudson said last week that a decision still may be months away because the hearing examiner has not written his report for the case. The report will have to be reviewed by the parties involved in the case before it goes to the three-member Public Service Board for a final decision.

Mrs. Hudson said that the Electric Department doesn't have the authority to raise the rates on an interim basis as it had planned because of the way the supporting data was filed last winter.

The Hardwick rate case began in February of 1979, when the trustees filed a request for a new tariff schedule to take effect April 1, 1979, which would raise the rates about 26.7 percent. The rate

increase request varied from class to class, and the increase for residential customers was just about 30 percent.

When the PSB failed to reach a decision in the rate case within six months, the Electric Department exercised its option to implement the rates on an interim basis. The department filed a bond to cover any money it might have to pay back if the PSB did not go along with any part of the rate increase request.

Last January the Hardwick rate increase case was delayed further when the Electric Department asked to submit data to justify an additional 15.4 percent increase in its rates. The second rate increase ended up at 19.6 percent.

At the time the parties involved in the rate case stipulated that the new information would not be treated as a new rate increase request, but rather an updated testimony on the original rate request.

That stipulation prevents the Electric Department from imposing the additional rate increase on an interim basis, according to Mrs. Hudson.

Last week Mrs. Hudson returned the \$20,000 bond which the Electric Department had filed to cover any possible return payments which might be necessary if the second rate increase is eventually turned down by the PSB.

Mrs. Hudson wasn't too optimistic about a speedy resolution of the rate case that has been going

on for almost 20 months. She said the hearing examiner has been involved in the New England Telephone rate case, which has involved numerous court appeals.

Variety of rumors troubling selectmen

HARDWICK – At their regular weekly meeting last Thursday the Hardwick Selectmen tried to figure out a way to combat rumors that have been circulating recently about town government.

"Rumors are running wild." Town Manager Ernie Laird told the selectmen.

Laird was concerned about a rumor in town that the selectmen were trying to block the plan of Woodex of New England to locate a plant in Hardwick.

Since the beginning of the year, the selectmen have been working with the Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA) to develop an industrial park in town, and have been involved in confidential negotiations with Woodex, which produces wood pellets for heating fuel.

The selectmen affirmed their support for having a new industry locate in Hardwick. It was noted that some people in town are claiming that the plant would create too much traffic, deplete the forests in this area, and lower the water table.

Selectman Wayne Shepard said that some people in town want to "protect the status quo."

Selectman Roger Slayton said that public support for the indus-

trial park is important. "The people have a choice to either remain in a bedroom welfare community or to become a progressive town," he said.

Laird reported that he himself has been the target of some rumors which he didn't consider worthy of comment. "I have made enemies," Laird acknowledged, noting that people seem to hold things against him personally.

The selectmen were sympathetic. "It's so easy to criticize, and so hard to contend with all the problems," said Slayton, noting that people are free to attend weekly meetings.

Laird indicated he has been taking some criticism for not releasing the names of people who did not pay back their HUD loans to the town, as has been requested by Erlene LaViolette.

Laird told the selectmen he has also had some problems with Al Anair over the earth moving work in progress at the industrial park. To clear up any misunderstandings, Laird obtained a letter from NVDA Executive Director Charlie Carter stating that the Hardwick Selectmen and Laird were in charge of the excavation work being done by the Hardwick and Greensboro crews.

While reporting on the industrial park, Laird said that more usable sand has been found than anticipated, and that both Greensboro and Hardwick should get a three year's supply out of the deal.

ANOTHER OPINION

Let's welcome new neighbors, build homes

by Mateo Kehler

This year over 17,000 workers will retire from Vermont's labor force and approximately 5,300 students will graduate from Vermont high schools. Many of those high school graduates will leave Vermont for college and stay for opportunities outside of Vermont; in fact Vermont measures dead last in the country for retention of college graduates with nearly 60% leaving Vermont upon graduation.

As a state, we are getting much older, much more quickly than we ever have. Vermont's population only grew 2.8% over the last decade compared to 4.1% in the Northeast, and 7.4% overall across the United States.

Over the same period, the age

composition of Vermont's population shifted significantly, with the 65-plus age group growing faster than any other cohort, rising from around 77,000 in the year 2000 to over 144,000 in 2023.

In my town of Greensboro, the oldest town in the state, the median age has risen from 48 to 68 in the last decade and there have been fewer than 15 babies born in Greensboro since 2018.

This demographic shift happening in Greensboro and across Vermont will continue to have real consequences over time. Our local elementary school is likely to be closed as the supervisory union struggles to balance a declining number of children across our region with the escalating cost of educating them.

Copley Hospital, our local

hospital, plans to shutter its birthing center because the volume of new births has declined to the point where it is not economical to maintain the service.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont is near bankruptcy; Vermont hospitals are all cutting services and the Big Beautiful Bill's cuts to Medicaid threatens to force small regional hospitals and clinics out of business altogether.

Our healthcare system is at a breaking point with businesses and a shrinking number of working Vermonters shouldering the rapidly escalating costs of caring for the Boomer generation's ravenous consumption of healthcare.

Just 20 years ago there were over 30,000 more working-age Vermonters than there are today. Because we have the lowest

fertility rate in the nation, we aren't going to breed our way out of this conundrum, we will need to attract and embrace new Vermonters if we are going to slow and ultimately reverse the slide we are in.

Kevin Chiu the executive director of the Vermont Futures Project, estimates we will need to grow the population of the state to 800,000 residents over the next 10 years if we are going to get in front of the escalating cost of being a Vermonter. This means attracting 135,000 new working age Vermonters to boost the economy, pay taxes and reverse the crippling trends we are currently experiencing.

We can achieve this if every town in Vermont grows by just 2% per year for the next 10 years.

See HOMES, next page

Homes

Continued From Previous Page

To their credit, the Vermont Legislature has laid the groundwork by passing the Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIPs) Act for communities to finance both infrastructure and new housing development. But there are real issues with the State's growth mapping process (Act 181), it is too incremental and will leave many rural communities that lack administrative capacity behind.

I have seen the preliminary maps for Greensboro, and we need to go much further than what the Regional Planning Commission is presently envisioning if we are going to add the number of working families in Greensboro needed over the next 10 years to solve for affordability.

Last year the Vermont Housing Finance Agency reported that the current median cost of new single family home construction in Vermont was just over \$600,000, with over \$170,000 (nearly 30%) of the cost being attributed to regulations. It's no wonder that new housing starts have been decelerating for the past 30 years and are

now at historic lows, even as the acute need for housing continues to rise.

Real estate values which skyrocketed during the pandemic put the opportunity of homeownership out of reach for most young Vermonters. The national vacancy rate for rentals is around 6.5% but in Vermont that rate hovers just over 3% making access to affordable rental units a real challenge. HUD estimates that half of Vermont households are rent burdened, spending over 30% of earned income on housing. There is a supply and demand problem, but one that the market is not rising to meet.

We have made it very hard and costly to build anything here. And yet, building more housing is the lynchpin to solving for affordability.

The real question is, "Do we have the will?"

At a recent forum on housing and land conservation sponsored by the Headwaters Community Trust, Gus Selig executive director of the Vermont Housing Conservation Board, was asked what the root causes of the housing crisis in Vermont are. His reply, "wealth inequality."

This is specifically true in

Greensboro, literally a town with two villages. The village of Greensboro on the shores of Caspian Lake, where 80% of the housing stock is comprised of seasonal second homes, and the rest primarily occupied by older, wealthy retirees. The other, the village of Greensboro Bend, where the town's 25 school age children live in families struggling to keep up with escalating taxes and a cost of living that has been outstripping their growth in income for years. Greensboro is a stark reminder that there are two Vermonts and two very different experiences of the economy.

The Greensboro that I arrived in to start a business is fading to black and yet the resistance to intervention and change here is organized and the conversation around growth and change is tense.

One thing is certain, we can't solve the education, property tax and healthcare challenges on our doorstep if we can't build new homes, attract new members to our communities, think bigger and create a more equitable economy with room for more of us.

I would ask those among us who are living comfortably, particularly those of us that are older, to think about the legacy and the

Vermont we are leaving the next generation. Will we take action in service of generations we will never know?

Who among us is doing the work that will make Vermont livable for our grandchildren and great grandchildren?

Who among us is planting the vines from which they will never taste the wine?

As we age, will we become elders? Or just older?

There is an opportunity for vibrancy.

Let's welcome new neighbors, let's create space for our descendants and for new Vermonters in our communities.

Let's build homes.

Learn more and consider joining at letsbuildhomes.org/

Learn more about the state of housing in Vermont at [outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/Housing/Housing-Needs-Assessment/2025-2029/VT-HNA-2025.pdf](https://vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/Housing/Housing-Needs-Assessment/2025-2029/VT-HNA-2025.pdf)

Mateo Kehler is the owner and cofounder of Jasper Hill Farm in Greensboro and a board member at Let's Build Homes, a statewide housing coalition working to advance policy solutions to address the Housing Crisis in Vermont.

VOICES OF SPIRIT

Listening for the sounds of silence

by **The Rev. Anthony E. Acheson**

GREENSBORO – The philosopher Nietzsche famously had a fictional character declare that "God is dead." That was, to be sure, a metaphorical statement, and one that was meant to be predictive of things to come. (Traditional religion was still prevalent when Nietzsche wrote in the 1880s.)

We might think of that declaration as an early warning signal, by which Nietzsche was pointing toward a coming shift in Western culture by which the traditional Christian religion of his era, was starting to lose its ability to speak effectively to many people; and that hearing the voice of God was becoming less and less credible to more and more people, especially among the more highly educated of his day.

Though I don't share Nietzsche's atheistic world view, I do think he was onto something. In the 140 years since he wrote, he's

been proven right that for millions of people, the voice of the Divine does seem to have gone silent in their personal experience. What are we to make of this "silence of God?"

One common answer to this question comes from atheism: that God doesn't exist; and that the discoveries of rationalism and science have awakened more and more people to that reality.

There is another approach, offering a different perspective; namely, that the voice of God seems to have gone silent in our time, because the patterns of our current culture have strongly programmed us against honoring the value of silent stillness. Indeed, most of us have lost the capacity to be silent for very long; or to study the skills of stilling our bodies and minds in such a way that we can learn the language of spiritual silence, and reap the benefits of quiet stillness.

To me, one of the main factors in this seeming silence of the Divine can be found precisely in

the degree to which we moderns tend to be resistant to the experience of silence itself. Our culture has an overwhelming tilt toward distraction. It is relentless in the myriad ways it programs us to keep busy, be active, stay on the move, become higher achievers, make more money, buy more things and consume more and more goods.

In the process, almost all of us have become deeply accustomed to surrounding ourselves with endless distractions. Whether we are on our devices or in our cars, scanning social media, waiting on hold for customer service or watching sporting events, movies or TV shows, we have let ourselves be inundated by a constant drumbeat of attention-grabbers that fill our eyes, ears and minds with anything but silence.

There is, however, another way: making room in our lives for a regular spiritual practice; taking daily time for spiritual reading; and making time each day to be silent and still, whether in the form of contemplation, centering

prayer or meditation, by whatever name you may call it.

There is a wonderful story in the Old Testament where Elijah was trying to seek God's guidance. He tried to do so by turning his attention again and again to loud dramatic things outside himself: first in a strong wind, then an earthquake, then a fire. Eventually he found something surprisingly different; the only place he could hear God's voice was in the "sound of sheer silence." (1 Kings 19:12, NRSV translation).

There's some good wisdom for us moderns there as well: to make time and space to listen for the Divine voice in a similar way, by listening for the sounds of silence, the core language of the spiritual dimension of this remarkable universe.

The Rev. Acheson is the retired former pastor of the Greensboro United Church of Christ. He welcomes comment and conversation at acheson.anthony@gmail.com. Samples of his writing are at anthonyeacheson.com.

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THE OUTSIDE STORY

Loon population doing well, still facing threats

by Eric Hanson

VERMONT – Loons are doing really well in Vermont. It is hard to imagine with all the threats they face that the overall loon population has recovered, for now.

Back in 1983, only seven loon pairs nested in all of Vermont. In 2025, the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) Loon Conservation Project documented 115 nesting pairs with a record 103 chicks surviving into late August.

It is still sad to see a loon die from a human-related cause like lead tackle, so VCE and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department encourage anglers to deposit their lead tackle in one of the 34 collection tubes at boat access statewide, including at Caspian Lake and Lake Elligo.

If you see a loon diving nearby while fishing, reel in for a short time or move down the lake, so loons do not learn to associate anglers with an easy food source

Four loons died of lead poisoning from fishing gear in the past two summers on Caspian Lake, Fairfield Pond, Spectacle Pond and Maidstone Lake. Three others died from complications with fishing line and hooks on Cedar Lake in Monkton, Joe's Pond and Sunset Lake in Benson.

On the natural side of things, four loons were killed by other loons in territorial fights on Green River Res., Little Hosmer Pond, Mollys Falls Reservoir and Lake Salem.

In the past year, bald eagles have learned that loons on Caspian Lake are a source of food. Last January a chick of the year became frozen-in and a bald eagle showed

up a few hours before I did to rescue it. We do not know if it was the chick raised on the lake or another one that flew in.

More recently on Caspian Lake, a bald eagle grabbed one of the two chicks a month ago.

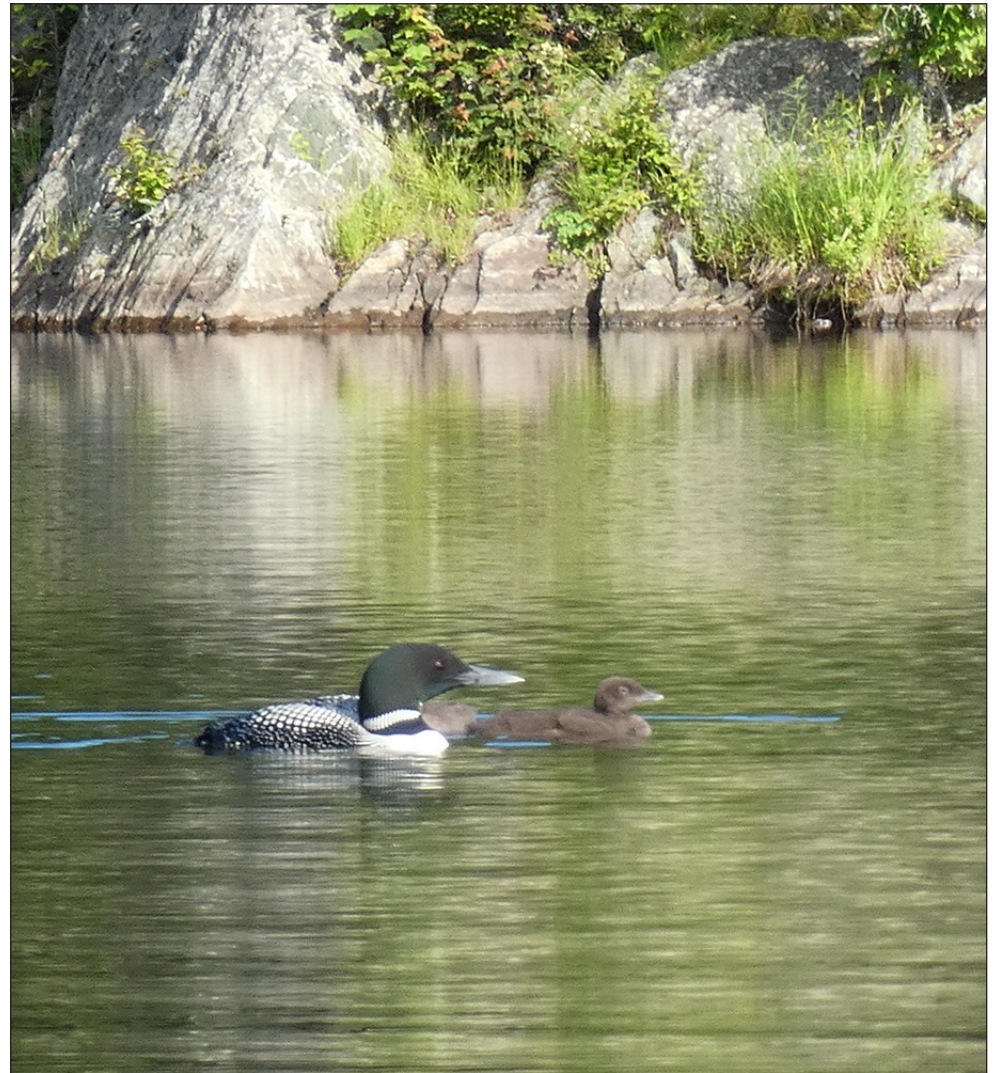
Caspian Lake and Green River Reservoir have both contributed to the return of loons to Vermont.

Caspian Lake has one nesting loon pair, but almost more importantly, provides habitat for non-breeders and visiting loons. Boaters often observe groups of five to even 15 loons hanging out.

Somehow the territorial pair has been able to defend the northwest section of the lake from these other loons and successfully raise many chicks over the past decade. The loon pair first nested on Aspenhurst Point in 2016, but raccoons took the eggs within days. VCE placed a floating nesting raft nearby, and the loons have used it consistently since. Having the loons nest on the raft reduces potential conflict with human shoreline activity as well.

Stew and Becky Arnold are the primary VCE volunteers on the lake who help with the nesting raft, nest warning signs and monitoring the status of the pair.

The future of the Green River Reservoir (GRR) hydroelectric dam has been in the news a lot recently. A loon pair has called GRR home since statewide loon monitoring began in 1978. It provides some of the best loon habitat in the state, with all its bays and islands, and now supports four pairs of loons. The bays provide defendable territories in the 60 to 100 acre range, and the islands provide ideal nesting locations away



Two recently hatched loon chicks and one of their parents swim on Green River Reservoir in Morrisville.
photo by Eric Hanson

from shoreline predators.

Morrisville Water and Light (MWL), the current owner of the GRR dam, has been able to keep the water levels relatively steady during the May to July loon nesting period, which prevents nests from flooding too often. Occasionally nests do flood from large thunderstorms that cause water levels to rise.

In contrast, Hardwick Lake, which is a flow of river reservoir, fluctuates dramatically during rain events, and the loon pair there has only had success using a floating raft; all natural nest attempts have flooded out.

The controversy around the GRR dam has to do with water level fluctuation from fall to spring and its impact on water quality. MWL says they need to be able to fluctuate the water more to make the dam financially viable. Because the state won't permit that, MWL would like to sell the dam to

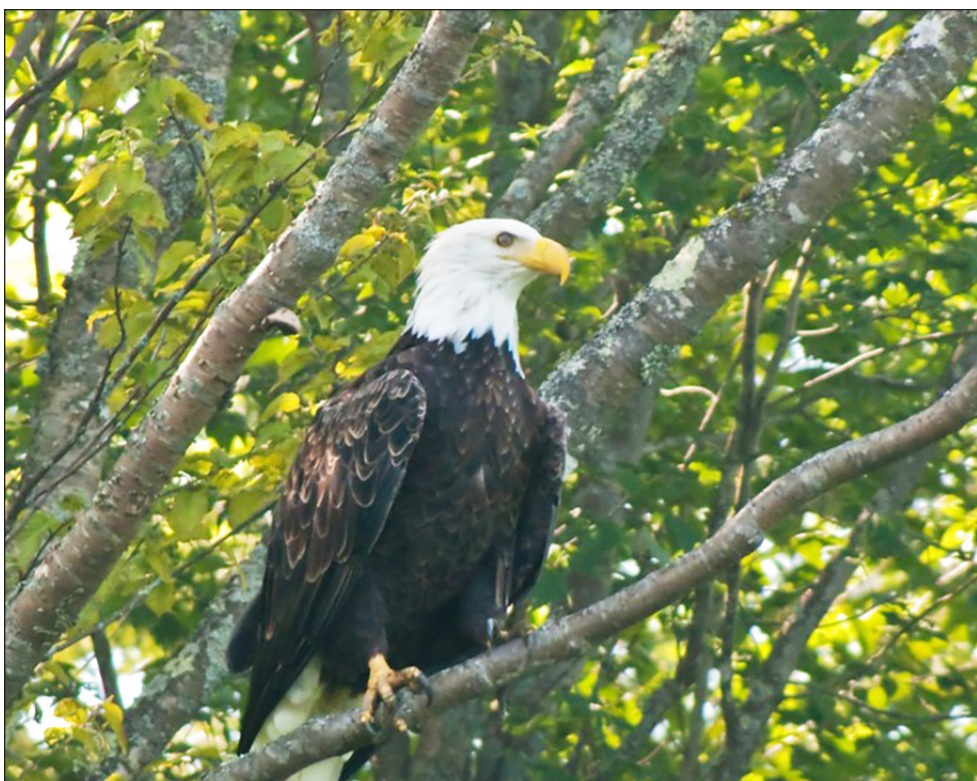
the state of Vermont. State officials are undertaking studies about the dam's safety, but are still hesitant about wanting to own another dam.

Hopefully a long-term solution can be found to ensure that both loons and people have access to the GRR waters and shorelines.

Lakes need to be healthy for loons to breed successfully, but loons can also tolerate a wide range of conditions. Hardwick Lake, for example, is often very murky, and it is mostly drained every winter, yet the pair there has been able to raise many loon chicks over the past 20 years.

If you would like more information about loons in Vermont, visit the VCE website, vtecostudies.org. The New Hampshire Loon Preservation Committee website has lots more information about loon behavior and natural history, <https://loon.org/about-the-common-loon/>.

Eric Hanson is a Vermont Center for Ecostudies Loon Biologist.



A Bald Eagle looks for its next meal on Green River Reservoir.

photo by Ron Kelly

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THE OUTSIDE STORY

In the footsteps of a chipmunk

by Anissa Bejaoui

SHAWANGUNK, N.Y. – As autumn nears, I find myself returning to botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer’s line in “Gathering Moss” where she describes ecological succession as “a tale of the interwoven fates of mosses, fungi, and the footfall of chipmunks.” The phrase evokes the quiet, entangled choreography of life in transition. Since first reading it, I’ve become more attuned to the subtleties of that unfolding. It has sharpened my awareness of the mosses thickening under reddening maples and giant goldenrod, and it has tuned my ears to chipmunks: not only their footfalls, but the ways that they and other small mammals shape the landscape through their daily activities.

Kimmerer has observed that even the seemingly incidental movements of these animals, darting, halting, and brushing against the forest floor, can carry and scatter moss fragments across the understory. With each pass, chipmunks create micro-opportunities for new growth, leaving behind trails of possibility as they go.

During autumn, chipmunks’ movements take on a heightened, almost frenetic urgency as they gather and store food for winter. Amid the foraging rush, a keen observer may notice individual animals as unusually conspicuous and unmistakably curious. Around the woods of my Catskills home, one particularly expressive chipmunk began to feel familiar. I came to call her H.

H’s main burrow entrance sits just beyond my glass door at the base of a few concrete steps flanked

by drooping mugwort. To the north stands a multicolored wall of rose of Sharon and to the east and west, there are twin burning bushes. I developed a habit of watching her and noting the spatial pattern her presence creates in this corner of the yard. Around the entrance, the moss grows especially lush despite being blanketed in a drift of crimson burning bush leaves. Her regular comings and goings trace a faint ribbon through the understory, and the moss seems to hold its ground there. What’s more, it has begun to creep across the rounded stepping stones and onto the stairs leading to the house, places where, in previous years, moss never spread. Other chipmunks have passed through, but none used that path, and none were bold enough to venture up the stairs. H, however, did so regularly. Has the moss followed in her wake? Caught on her fur and been carried along the way? Has her behavior directly encouraged its spread?

Animals, much like humans, display personality traits that can affect their habitats. Ecologist Alessio Mortelliti leads a research group at University of Maine dedicated to studying how the personalities of small mammals influence ecological processes, including seed dispersal and, as a result, plant community dynamics such as the composition and distribution of species.

Mortelliti’s research demonstrates that individual animals contribute differently to these processes, depending on traits such as boldness, anxiety, and sociability. These behavioral tendencies (or personality) influence how animals handle seeds, which in turn affects



Chipmunk

plant recruitment and forest regeneration. Mortelliti focuses primarily on deer mice and voles, although the underlying principle applies to many small mammals, including chipmunks. The removal or loss of certain “keystone individuals,” whose behavior disproportionately affects ecological outcomes, could have cascading effects on entire ecosystems.

Mortelliti’s research also suggests that human-driven changes to land use, such as silvicultural practices or forest management, may alter the distribution of personality types within wildlife populations. These changes can favor bolder, more exploratory individuals in newly disturbed habitats, while reducing the prevalence of shyer, more cautious types that depend on stable, undisturbed conditions. Such shifts could, in turn, influence the overall ecological functions these

populations perform. This emerging body of research signals a growing recognition that individual animals are not simply interchangeable units of a species. It also indicates that the individuality of wild animals matters ecologically.

As leaves begin to fall and seeds scatter, I find myself thinking about how animals like H remind us to reconsider what we think we know. Mortelliti’s research shows that individual animals are agents of change, shaping the world with their own tendencies and choices. Chipmunks like H are threads in the ecological tapestry playing out around us – animated lives that shape the texture of a place in an enduring way.

Anissa Bejaoui holds an M.S. in wildlife management and is currently completing a M.S. in anthropology. She lives in New York’s Shawangunk Ridge. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.



Volunteers (from left) Ava Purdy, Mae Searles, Natalee Kneeland and Kata Gilbertson build loon nest warning signs at Green River Reservoir. Because so many kayakers and canoers use the reservoir, nest signs have become an important part of management to reduce human disturbance to nest sites.

photo by Eric Hanson



Two recently hatched loon chicks and one of their parents swim near one a nest warning signs on Green River Reservoir. The signs help provide a quiet area for nesting when loons are most vulnerable to human disturbance and are removed shortly after chicks hatch.

photo by Eric Hanson

OUR COMMUNITIES

“Why We March” video, discussion, Oct. 2

HARDWICK – “Why We March,” a video screening and discussion will be held Thursday, Oct. 2, at 6 p.m., at the Parker-Ladd Community Room of the Jeudevine Memorial Library. The event, presented by Indivisible Hardwick, is an exploration of how nonviolent civil disobedience works as a strategic response to governments who overreach their lawful power. Indivisible Hardwick is a new chapter of the national grass-

roots organization, Indivisible, which was founded in 2017. A core principle behind all Indivisible and No Kings events is a commitment to nonviolent action. All participants are expected to seek to de-escalate any potential confrontation and to act lawfully at these events. Weapons of any kind, including those legally permitted, should not be brought to events.

For more information email IndivisibleHardwick@gmail.com.

International Observe the Moon Night, Oct 4

ST. JOHNSBURY – Saturday, Oct. 4, a moon party will be co-hosted by Northeast Kingdom Astronomy Foundation and the Fairbanks Museum starting at 7:30 p.m. The moon will be approaching

fullness, and Saturn will make an appearance. The Fairbanks Museum is located at 1302 Main Street in St. Johnsbury Vermont. For more information, contact (802) 748-2372.

House plant swap, Oct 4

CRAFTSBURY – The Craftsbury Public Library will host a houseplant swap on Saturday, October 4, from 10 a.m. to noon. Plant enthusiasts can bring extra houseplants or cuttings to pass along to other people, and pick up new plants from others. Make sure all plants are pest and disease free. There is no cost to partic-

ipate in this exchange, and no complicated rules, just an informal exchange of extras. Plants can also be dropped at the library starting October 1 by those who do not plan to attend to pick up plants.

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

AWARE craft fair, Oct. 4

HARDWICK – AWARE’s annual fall foliage craft fair is coming this Saturday, October 4 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Hazen Union High School. (126 Hazen Union Drive, Hardwick). This year’s fair will have more than 50 local and regional vendors bringing tables filled with their handmade work. Refreshments and food

will be provided by the American Legion Post No. 7 Auxiliary, with a homemade pie sale benefiting AWARE. The event is hosted by AWARE. Admission is free. There will be a 50-50 raffle and lantern auction, with proceeds supporting AWARE’s work with survivors of domestic and sexual violence in the community.

Geology Walk, Oct. 4

HARDWICK – Saturday, Oct. 4 at 9 a.m., a geology walk will take place beginning at the Hardwick Trails trailhead kiosk behind Hazen Union School. Dave Mitchell and Hardwick Conservation Committee Chair Lucy Zendzian will lead the walk to explore the geology and soils of Hardwick Trails.

The ice sheet that once covered all of New England may have melted away thousands of years ago, but there are still plenty

of features and many clues that reveal the subsurface and glacial history of Hardwick.

This is a free event sponsored by the Hardwick Trails Committee and the Conservation Commission. Participants should be prepared for a two-mile walk. Wear sturdy shoes and bring walking stick-poles. In case of rain, the event will occur Sunday, Oct. 5, at 9 a.m. For more information, email mitchell.ds@live.com

Pumpkin walk, Oct. 5

HARDWICK – The annual pumpkin walk will be held Sunday, Oct. 5, at 6 p.m., on the Hardwick Trails located at Hazen Union School. All the community are invited to the event sponsored by the Hardwick Trails Committee. Park in the Hazen Union parking

lot and follow the pumpkin signs to the Pumpkin Walk trailhead. Cider and donuts will be served.

In the event the fire ban is not lifted by the event, alternatives are being planned. Battery-operated tea lights have been purchased for the pumpkins.



Mike LaPierre (right) works with his sons Lewis (left) and Corbin (center) to replace the ramp at the rear of the Greensboro Town Hall, Monday, Sept. 22. The work was scheduled following the April 29 town vote to abandon a plan to create housing in the building, which would have demolished the deteriorating ramp.

photo by Paul Fixx

Celebration for Meredith Holch, Oct. 6

EAST HARDWICK – Meredith Holch’s birthday is this Sunday, Oct. 5. On Monday Oct. 6, at 6 p.m., the Caledonia Grange is hosting a screening of two of her

films, together with music, food and an opportunity to share stories. Holch was an active member of the Grange and contributed to the community. All are welcome.

Author Ted Levin, Oct. 7

HARDWICK – Tuesday, October 7, at 6:30 p.m., award-winning nature writer Ted Levin will speak at the Jeudevine Memorial Library. Levin will discuss his new book, “The Promise of Sunrise: Finding Solace in a Broken World,” which is a chronicle of rediscovery of his hillside home in Thetford, Vermont, during the isolation of COVID. Copies of his

book will be available at this event, from The Galaxy Bookshop.

This will be held in the Parker Ladd Community Room at the Jeudevine, located at 93 N. Main Street in Hardwick, and is event is free and open to the public.

For more information, call (802) 472-5948 or visit <https://jeudevinememoriamlibrary.org/>

Public Notice:

NOTIFICATION OF DESTRUCTION OF EDUCATION RECORDS

FOR: All graduates, former students and parents/guardians of students with disabilities and adult students with disabilities who have attended schools in the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU), including Craftsbury Schools, Hardwick Elementary, Hazen Union, Lakeview Elementary (Greensboro and Stannard), Wolcott Elementary and Woodbury Elementary.

The educational records of all students who have graduated, dropped out, transferred or become ineligible for services prior to and including **June 30, 2018**, will be purged after **October 31, 2025**. This means that any educational records which are no longer needed to provide educational services, including psychological, medical, disciplinary, court, special education, 504 records and recommendations will be destroyed. This information may be needed to establish eligibility for certain adult benefits, e.g. social security.

If you **do not want** this information destroyed, please contact the OSSU Central Office before October 31, 2025. You may request this by calling **Wanda Webster at 802-472-2908** or Christine Gifford at **802-472-2909**. The district will maintain without time limitation directory information including student’s name, academic record, date of birth, degrees and awards received, date separated, attendance record and pupil progress record.



ORLEANS SOUTHWEST
SUPERVISORY UNION

OUR COMMUNITIES

Final harvest at community garden

GREENSBORO – The final harvest of the season from the Greensboro Community Garden yielded 11.6 lbs of produce that was delivered to the Hardwick Area Food Pantry. Community members may join others of the community in the garden Saturday, Oct. 4, at 9 am, to help put the gardens to bed after another growing season.

Support for those seeking refuge, Oct. 8

ST. JOHNSBURY – An interactive presentation by the Northeast Kingdom Asylum Seekers Assistance Network (NEKASAN) will be given at the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum on Wednesday, Oct. 8, at 7 p.m. The program will offer advice on supporting seekers of refuge and a new home and focuses on how to foster a welcoming community and to support the most vulnerable asylum seekers who have fled violence and persecution in their home countries.

In partnership with other key community organizations, NEKASAN provides services to meet the basic physical, emotional, vocational, legal and financial needs of asylum-seeking guests until they can move toward a safe and stable independent future. This event is free, ADA accessible, and open to the public. The Athenaeum is located at 1171 Main St. For more information, call (802) 748-8291.

Garment swap, Oct. 10-11

HARDWICK – Hardwick HUGS (huge used garment swap) will be held Friday, Oct. 10, from 2 to 7 p.m., and Saturday, Oct. 11, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Hazen Union School gymnasium. Unwanted clothing, textiles and footwear may be dropped off Friday. Clothing and footwear should be clean and in good condition. Bags should be labeled with the contents, including rags. All are welcome on Saturday to select free clothing. take whatever you would like from all the clothing we have available. There is a modest entry fee, but donations are accepted, with no one turned away for lack of funds. Volunteers are needed. Contact Jennifer Skorstad at njskorstad@gmail.com For more information, contact Deborah Hartt at deborah.hartt@gmail.com

Gravel Ride, Oct. 11

HARDWICK – Saturday, Oct. 11, Riverside Cycles will hold a for a Class IV Gravel Ride, to benefit the Hardwick Area Food Pantry. Lead by Joe Cruz, the ride will begin at 10 a.m., with registration beginning at 9 a.m., no pre-registration required. Entry is by donation. riversidecyclesvt.com/news-events/gravel-ride

Craft fair, flea market, Oct. 11

EAST MONTPELIER – The Twin Valley Senior Center will hold their craft fair and flea market on Saturday, Oct. 11, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the center at 4583 U.S. Route 2. Artisans will be selling a variety of items, including jewelry, candles, rugs, ceramics, along with Halloween and Christmas items and flea market vendors will offer antiques, tools and other hard-to-find items. The Just Food Hub Equal Exchange will have products from around the world. Volunteers will grill hamburgers, black bean burgers and hot dogs and offer homemade cookies, pies, pickles and relish. Gift cards from local merchants will be raffled and there is a 50-50 for cash. Those interested in being a vendor should call Dyne at (802) 229-1549 or for more information contact Denise at (802) 223-3322 or director@twinvaleyseniors.org.

Plainfield Forward planning meeting, Oct. 16

PLAINFIELD – Thursday, Oct. 16, from 5 to 7:30 p.m., a planning meeting will take place in the Haybarn Theater at the Creative Campus at Goddard. Everyone is welcome to join whether or not they were at previous events in the process with an opportunity to engage in the future of Plainfield. Sign up to join one or more groups at the Plainfield Forward website.

Lamoille Housing Partnership member meeting

MORRSVILLE – October 14, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:15 p.m., the annual membership meeting of Lamoille Housing Partnership Inc. (LHP), will be held at 26 Hutchins Ave.. Members will consider the proposed affiliation between LHP and Downstreet Housing and Community Development, Inc., under which LHP will become a subsidiary of Downstreet. Members will be asked to vote on proposed bylaw amendments to implement this affiliation. For more information or a copy of the proposed amendment, visit downstreet.org/lhp-annual-meeting or contact nlandry@downstreet.org.

Advanced directives workshop, Oct. 16

HARDWICK – An advanced directives workshop will be held Thursday, Oct. 16, 10 to 11 a.m., at St. Norbert Church in Hardwick with Fr. Gregory Caldwell: Fr. Caldwell will present information about advanced directives and answer on advanced directives decisions in general, how the advanced directives come into play, and why advanced directives need to be up to date. The workshop is sponsored by Catholic Financial Life Chapter N443 St. Jean. There is no charge. Light refreshments will be provided.

TOWN OF GREENSBORO Warning for Special Town Meeting

The legal voters of the Town of Greensboro are hereby warned and notified to meet at Fellowship Hall at the United Church of Christ in said Town, October 22, 2025 at 6:00 pm to transact the following business:

1. Shall the voters of the Town of Greensboro authorize the Selectboard to borrow up to \$500,000 for the purpose of purchasing a fire truck?
2. Shall the voters of the Town of Greensboro authorize the Selectboard to purchase a fire truck?
3. Shall the voters of the Town of Greensboro authorize the municipal property tax exemption for the Caspian Beach property, owned by the Town of Hardwick, for a period of 5 years, including an exemption for the 2025 municipal taxes?
4. Shall the voters of the Town of Greensboro approve implementing a 1% local options tax on rooms, meals and served alcohol?

Dated at Greensboro on the 10th day of September, 2025

s/Macneil
s/Tim Brennan
s/Ellen Celnik
s/Mike Metcalf
s/Judy Carpenter

THE Hardwick Gazette

WE ARE
HIRING

ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVE

The Hardwick Gazette is seeking qualified interns and experienced sales representatives to join our team selling ads and sponsorships for our digital publication and website.

We will provide training, sales tools, and lead sources. We are as committed to your success as you are; our goal is to have you up and running quickly and building a book of business.

We offer generous commissions paid bi-weekly with mileage reimbursement. The position may be full or part-time depending on the candidate's experience and ability to commit time to the position.

The Gazette sales territory is primarily in Hardwick and extends across the eleven towns we cover, then west to Morrisville, Johnson and Stowe; north to Newport and Derby; south to Barre and Montpelier, and east to the Interstate 91 corridor north and south of St. Johnsbury. One or more sales reps may be offered all or part of the territory.

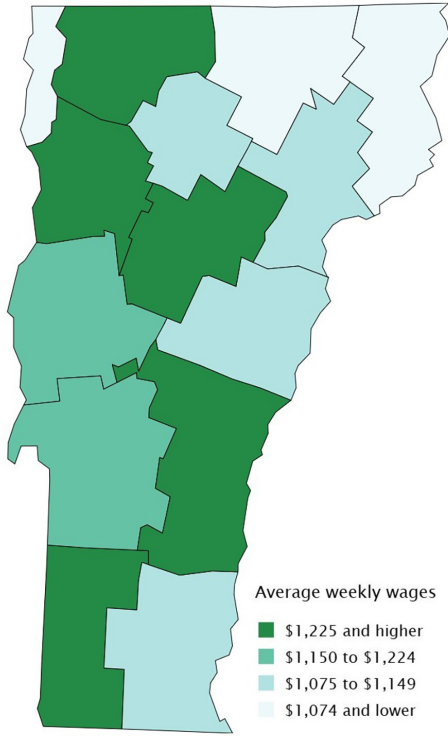
This is an exciting opportunity to use your communication skills getting to know the businesses and civic organizations in our communities while helping to build a solid financial foundation for the community-owned, nonprofit Hardwick Gazette.

Some sales experience preferred. Must have own vehicle.

Send letter of interest to ads@hardwickgazette.org

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Unemployment rate declines to 2.5% in August, 1Q area wages fall



Department of Labor Commissioner. “Vermont’s economy depends on a strong and engaged workforce, which means we all have a role to play in building it. There are many ways to retain talent and draw more people to Vermont, including housing solutions, education transformation, service opportunities, and everyday training and job support.”

The Vermont seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 2.5 percent in August. The comparable United States rate in August was 4.3 percent, an increase of one-tenth of one percentage point from the revised July estimate. The seasonally-adjusted Vermont data for August show the Vermont civilian labor force decreased by 910 from the prior month’s revised estimate. The number of employed persons decreased by 838 and the number of unemployed persons decreased by 72. No changes were statistically significant in the seasonally-adjusted series.

The August unemployment rates for Vermont’s 14 counties ranged from 2.4 percent in Addison and Chittenden Counties to 3.6 percent in Essex County (note: county unemployment rates are not seasonally-adjusted). For comparison, the August unadjusted unemployment rate for Vermont was 2.6 percent, an increase of one-tenth of one percentage point from the revised unadjusted July level and an increase of two-tenths of one percentage point from a year ago.

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Department of Labor released data on the Vermont economy September 19, for the time period covering August 2025. According to household data, the seasonally-adjusted statewide unemployment rate for August was 2.5 percent. This reflects a decrease of one-tenth of one percentage point from the prior month’s revised estimate. The civilian labor force participation rate was 64.6 percent in August, a decrease of one-tenth of one percentage point from the prior month’s revised estimate.

“Over the past seven months, an estimated 5,000 Vermonters have left the labor force, in part due to retirements. While demographic shifts present real challenges, this is also an opportunity to continue connecting Vermonters with good jobs, training, and career pathways,” said Kendal Smith, Vermont

218Vermont first quarter 2025 county employment and wage data released in August showed wage levels for the 13 smaller counties outside Chittenden were below the national average. Washington reported the highest average weekly wage (\$1,336). Essex reported the lowest average weekly wage (\$959) in the state.

Wages fell in all four area counties, with employment growing only in Caledonia County, while it fell in the others.

Caledonia County employment was 10,976 in

March, up by 205 from December, with wages down by \$45 to \$1,076 from December’s \$1,131.

March employment in Lamoille County was down to 12,761 from 12,933 in December and wages fell by \$59 since December, to \$1,133.

Orleans County employment fell by 371 to 10,499 in March, with wages falling by \$93 since December, to \$964.

In Washington County, employment fell to 33,134, down 538 from December, with wages down by \$39 since December, to \$1,336.

OBITUARIES

Ruth L. Rathburn

WOODBURY – Ruth Lillian Rathburn, 89, of South Woodbury, died on September 24, at the Mayo Residential Care Center in Northfield. She was born December 12, 1935, in Woodbury; the daughter of the late Daniel and Mary (McGill) Cookson.

A complete obituary will appear in a later edition.

Pending arrangements are in the care of Dian R. Holcomb of Northern Vermont Funeral Service, 60 Elm Street, Hardwick. Online condolences are welcomed at: northvermontfuneralservice.com

Barry D. Baldwin

EAST HARDWICK – Barry D. Baldwin was born in Morrisville, on January 25, 1951, and passed away peacefully on September 25.

He leaves his wife of over 50 years, Karen Baldwin, his three loving daughters, Tamara, Sara (pre deceased in 2018) and Nora. His three grandchildren, Nevin, Anaiah and Sophia. Barry leaves many nieces, nephews and his brothers, Tommy and Jon.

Barry had a positive impact on so many folks, close and far. He was deeply loved by his family and his community. Barry could be seen with a smile and a big bear hug down at the Buffalo Mountain Co-op where he worked for over 25 years.

There will be a graveside



Barry D. Baldwin

service at 3 p.m., on Wednesday, Oct. 1, at Branch Cemetery in Craftsbury on North Wolcott Road, followed by a celebration of life at Barry’s home, at 258 Pumpkin Lane. All welcome, love and light.



New staff at Walden School (from left) are, Principal Jessica Kenyon, Long-term Administrative Assistant Jaylin Bennett and Kindergarten Teacher Chantelle Micheli.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Northern Vermont Funeral Service

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802-472-6861

Dian R. Holcomb
Funeral Director

PRENEED
PLANNING

Catamount Arts issues call to artists

ST. JOHNSBURY – Catamount Arts is accepting online submissions for its annual Arts Connect at Catamount Arts Juried Show, an opportunity to feature new and exciting work by emerging and established artists. The exhibition is scheduled for December 2, through April 5, 2026, with an opening reception on Saturday, Dec. 13. Online applications will be accepted through November 1.

Artists are invited to submit up to three works created within the last three years. Work in all media is encouraged. Submissions are being accepted online through 11:59 p.m., November 1. No late submissions will be accepted.

Winners of the Juror’s Choice Prizes will be announced at a reception at Catamount Arts on December 13 as follows. Prizes include the Robert Manning First Prize of \$500, second prize of \$250, third prize of \$100 and six non-monetary honorable mentions.

The juror will be Alexa René Rivera, a creative and maker from Poughkeepsie, N.Y., currently living and working in northern Vermont. She is the program coordinator at Vermont Studio Center, an internationally recognized artist residency program, and the owner-founder of a small business rooted in handmade basketry and community workshops.

Artists interested in submitting work for consideration in the exhibition must register at catamountarts.org to complete the

application process and upload image, video and audio submissions. All work must be submitted online. A Catamount Arts Membership (valued at \$50) is included as part of the \$50 submission fee and allows admission discounts to Catamount Arts films, KCP Presents performances and online events. Applicants who are already Catamount Arts members will receive a one-year extension on their current membership.

Applicants will be notified of status by e-mail by 7 p.m., Friday, Nov. 10. Selected work must arrive presentation ready (framed or with appropriate installation materials) by November 23. Shipped work must be received by Monday, Nov. 24, in reusable wrapping with check or prepaid label for return shipping. In-person drop-off will be held during Catamount Arts regular business hours from Tuesday, Nov. 11, until Sunday, Nov. 23. Work must remain on exhibit through April 5, with pick-up between Tuesday, April 7, and Sunday, April 12.

All selected work will be included in an online catalog on the Catamount Arts website and be officially on view from December 13, through close of exhibition.

Arts Connect at Catamount Arts is a competitive juried exhibition. Submission does not guarantee participation in the show. For more information, visit catamountarts.org/visual-art/juried-exhibitions-call-to-artists.



Chris Demars, Karin Stevenson, Fred Patchen and Augie Stevens play characters in “The 39 Steps,” presented at the Hyde Park Opera House through October 12. *courtesy photo*

Lamoille County Players presents “The 39 Steps” in Oct.

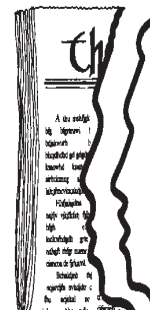
HYDE PARK – Lamoille County Players’ 73rd season at the Hyde Park Opera House continues with John Buchan’s “The 39 Steps,” directed by Heather Mandigo.

In the play, a man with a boring life meets a woman with a thick accent who says she’s a spy. When he takes her home, she is murdered. Soon, a mysterious organization called “The 39 Steps” is

hot on the man’s trail in a nationwide manhunt that climaxes in a death-defying finale.

The play runs October 3-5 and October 10-12 at the historic Hyde Park Opera House, 85 Main Street. Shows begin at 7 p.m., on Friday, and Saturday nights, with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are available online at LCPlayers.com.

The Hardwick Gazette



PEOPLE SERVING PEOPLE

We welcome VISA and MasterCard for donations and advertising.



THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

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news@hardwickgazette.org

Lamoille County Players Founded 1952

PRESENTS

JOHN BUCHAN'S

THE 39 STEPS

Directed by Heather Mandigo
Produced by Gene Heinrich

Adapted by Patrick Barlow - From the movie of Alfred Hitchcock
Licensed by ITV Global Entertainment Limited and an original concept by and Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon

October 3-5 & 10-12

At The Historic Hyde Park Opera House

To purchase tickets go to: www.LCPlayers.com

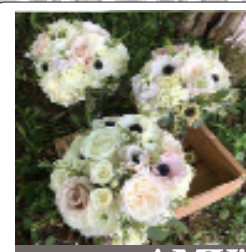
Tickets available at the door (802) 888-4507
\$20 (adults) • \$15 (students & seniors)
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Wedding Policy

The Hardwick Gazette provides space for engagements and wedding news as a free service.

Wedding announcements and photos should be received by our office within two months of the ceremony.

Photographs supplied will be returned when accompanied by a SASE.

Use of engagement and wedding information, as well as accompanying photographs, is at the discretion of the editors.

For information about advertising in the Wedding & Party Planner call The Hardwick Gazette at 472-6521!

Knoll ballpoint pen drawings on exhibit at Hexum Gallery



"The Small Within the Large," ballpoint pen on paper, 30" x 22", 2025, Phil Knoll

MONTPELIER – "Phil Knoll Saves the World," a collection of ballpoint pen drawings on paper by artist Phil Knoll, is on view from October 3 through November 14, at

Author talk and recipe tasting, Oct. 16

HARDWICK – Welcome cookbook authors Nora and Jenna Rice to Hardwick on October 16 at 6:30 p.m., for an author talk and recipe tasting. Vermont Farm to Table is a project by two sisters: Nora, a chef, and Jenna, a photographer. Both sisters grew up in Vermont and share a passion for local food.

The Vermont Farm to Table Cookbook is full of recipes that can be made using only Vermont-grown ingredients. Nora and Jenna, along with staff from the bookstore and library, will have tasting samples of a few of the recipes to show that placing limits can be a catalyst for exploration and exciting discoveries. The Galaxy Bookshop will have copies of the cookbook available for purchase at the event.

This event is free and open to the public in the Parker Ladd Community Room at the Jeudevine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main Street. For more information, please contact the library at (802) 472-5948.

**The
Hardwick Gazette**
~ *Since 1889* ~
**News,
Opinion,
Entertainment,
Sports
& More!**

the Hexum Gallery, with an opening reception for the artist on Friday, October 3, from 4 to 8 p.m.

Knoll thrives on the seemingly impossible challenges he sets for himself, most recently to draw masterpieces with ballpoint pens, and not arty ballpoints (if such a thing even exists) but the humble Pilot G2 Fine Point, sold by the dozen at Staples. As he puts it, "to make something serious by not taking myself seriously."

The results of one are a tapestry-like tangle of wrestling goblin-esque characters; another is packed with random images and logos representing the letters of the alphabet (not in alphabetical order, of course) and there's his massive cluster of heart symbols that



"Kabuki," ballpoint pen on paper, 10" x 7", 2025. Phil Knoll

subvert sentimentality by becoming frames for motifs as disparate

as Abe Lincoln, clocks, an owl, the Pepsi logo or toilet paper, to name a few.

Philip Knoll (b. 1959) studied art at The University of Texas before receiving his M.F.A. from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1991. Knoll has shown extensively in the United States and has had solo exhibitions with Morgan Lehman Gallery (New York, NY) and most recently with Hexum Gallery, Montpelier. Knoll currently lives and works in Berkshire County, Mass., with his wife, artist Sue Muskat Knoll.

For inquiries, contact John at hexumgallery@gmail.com. Visit @hexumgallery on Instagram for updates. The gallery is located at 16 State St., 2nd floor.

FALL FUNDRAISE

SEPTEMBER 26-OCTOBER 12, 2025

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**2 WEEKS OF SPECIAL PROGRAMMING,
PRIZES & SURPRISES, RAISING \$25K
FOR THE STATION**




GIVE AT WGDR.ORG



Members of the Second City comedy troupe perform at Fuller Hall in St. Johnsbury on October 4. *courtesy photo*

Sketch comedians come to Fuller Hall

ST. JOHNSBURY – The KCP Presents Performing Arts Series presents Chicago’s Second City at to St. Johnsbury Academy’s Fuller Hall, October 4, at 7 p.m. The Second City performs its trademark brand of sketch comedy.

The company opened its doors on a Chicago night in December of 1959, and a comedy revolution began. This small cabaret theater, performing sketch comedy and improv, developed a unique way of creating art, feeding Saturday Night Live and other show business productions, and

fostering generations of superstars. Second City alumni read like a Who’s Who of comedy, including Bill Murray, Tina Fey, Jordan Peele, Keegan-Michael Key, Bill Hader, Ed Asner, Alan Alda, Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi.

Tickets for the show are on sale now. Student admission is free to St. Johnsbury Academy and Lyndon Institute shows. To buy tickets or learn more, visit catamountarts.org or kcppresents.org or call (802) 748-2600 or visit the Catamount Arts box office at 115 Eastern Ave.

Fall dog party at Dog Mountain, Oct. 4

ST. JOHNSBURY – Dog Mountain celebrates the season with the annual Fall Dog Party, Saturday, Oct. 4, noon to 4 p.m.

This year’s festivities include live music from Whiskers of Odd, dishes from San Song Kitchens, hot dogs and chili dogs in the NEK by Rocky’s New York Style Hotdog Cart, treats from Makin’ Maple and other local vendors.

Dogs will have their moment in the spotlight with the Doggie Walk of Fame with Pup-arazzi, the

Pup Pie Eating Race, Ball Toss and other dog contests.

Dog Mountain features 150-acres of meadows, ponds, hiking trails, the Dog Chapel and the Stephen Huneck Gallery. The event is free to the public and will be held rain or shine. A dog-friendly, wheelchair-accessible shuttle will run between the St. Johnsbury Welcome Center and Dog Mountain throughout the afternoon. For the full shuttle schedule and RSVP details, visit dogmt.com/events



Dogs can participate in the pup pie eating race at the Fall dog party at Dog Mountain, October 4. *courtesy photo*

VSO Jukebox Concert, Oct. 15

ST. JOHNSBURY – The Vermont Symphony Orchestra (VSO) will present a Jukebox Concert focused on strength and hope at the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum art gallery on Wednesday, Oct. 15, 7:30 p.m.

VSO’s Jukebox chamber music series launched in 2017. Jukebox is a flexible approach to a concert experience, crossing into different

genres, playing in non-traditional spaces and experimenting with a classical music concert. In this Jukebox, the VSO looks to composers who have created music for hope, resistance and change.

The concert is hosted and curated by Matt LaRocca. The concert is free but requires advanced registration at stjathenaeum.org



A Jukebox Concert from the Vermont Symphony Orchestra will be presented on Wednesday, Oct. 15, at the Art Gallery of the St. Johnsbury Antenaem. *courtesy photo*



Dana Robinson will play new songs for his upcoming album in a solo concert at the Back Stairs at Harry’s Hardware in Cabot on October 14. *courtesy photo*

Robinson Concert at Back Stairs, Oct. 14

CABOT – Dana Robinson will present a home-town solo concert at the Back Stairs at Harry’s Hardware on Tuesday, Oct. 14, at 7 p.m. He will debut new songs from his upcoming album, “Sound Of The Word,” to be released this winter.

Robinson’s songs tell stories about life in rural Vermont. For

over 30 years, he has been a fixture on the folk and acoustic music scene in the United States and Great Britain, playing a blend of contemporary songwriting with traditional influences.

Seating is limited. For tickets and information go to robinsongs.com. The Back Stairs is located at 3087 Main St.

OUR E-MAILS

news@hardwickgazette.org
ads@hardwickgazette.org

Stamey concert evokes cowboy life

REVIEW

by David K. Rodgers

GREENSBORO – Singer-songwriter Dave Stamey came all the way from California to give a concert of country western music at the Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro Saturday evening, performing more authentic evocations of the life of a cowboy than is usually depicted in Hollywood movies.

The program was opened by a local group of impressive musicians, the Kingdom Trio, consisting of Alice Perron and Jess O'Brien on guitar and Randy Bulpin on guitar and dobro, with shared vocals.

Their first number was a song made popular by Judy Collins, "Someday Soon", which O'Brien sang with a strong expressive voice, for the fine melody and lyrics about hoping to find love. Bulpin got in more imaginative improvisations on the theme with the unique sound of his dobro. Perron gave a lovely rendition of a piece from an aunt's old song book, about herding cattle.

Bulpin switched to guitar and Perron to an accordion in a song about someone looking forward to a relationship after wandering for a while, which Bulpin sang with feeling, containing some humorous verses.

Changing back to their original instruments, Bulpin and Perron joined O'Brien in a delightful number giving the advice of "Don't let your babies grow up to be cowboys", saying "They never stay home and they're always alone, even with someone they love."

Yodeling was featured by Perron in their last song about wanting to become a cowboy, again with engaging improvisations on the dobro by Bulpin.

Dave Stamey was born in Montana and presently lives in the Central Valley of California. Over the years of his long career he has received many accolades for his live music from significant country western related institutions. He accompanied himself on his guitar masterfully and his voice had a natural warmth and color. He immediately connected to the audience with real stage presence and he was able to be continuously entertaining for a good two hours with his amusing stories and

original songs.

His first selection celebrated the landscape of the west, with its powerful mountains and beautiful deserts, but mixed with the "broken dreams" of some human involvement.

The next piece recounted "the trouble cowboys can get into when they have too much time on their hands", in this case a somewhat improbable venture into skydiving, with humorous results. Another comic song had the refrain, "I'm not old, just been used up," about some regrets of reckless things he did when he was young.

He began writing his own songs about cowboys to contradict the often cliché idealistic images, instead painting the reality, like "cold fingers still in the morning." The following song continued this theme, referring to working conditions and pay that weren't that good. Cowboys are not known for being romantic, but the "mountains of the heart", a deep love of the land, are a compelling motivation to seek this way of life. This was a particularly well developed number with poetic lyrics.

A piece with an historical background in the 1870s and 1880s when Texas cattle got pushed up into Montana grazing areas had drama, including a murder.

A song about his dumb dog was endearing, especially how it loved to go in his truck with his head out the window and the wind in his face. A curious song was about his late wife wanting a buckskin colored horse. The following one was a humorous account of trying to feed goat milk to young heifers, rather than the powdered variety. His trip to Steelhead Lake on the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada inspired a song about trusting a horse to find his way back after he got lost. His last number of the concert suggested that, judging from the horse show in Stockdale, Ariz., the life of a horse was quite nice; just standing around all day in an air-conditioned barn being groomed by young girls who fed them carrots.

Altogether Dave Stamey gave a straightforward appreciation of cowboy life combined with a deep attachment to the Western landscape in a very positive, upbeat manner to which the enthusiastic audience showed their gratitude with a standing ovation.



Emily Zenteno (left) and Nicky Foster (right) of Bridport Creamery offer samples of a variety of flavored cheese curds during the annual Cabot Cheese and Culture Festival Saturday, Sept. 27, on the village common.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



David Rewinkel (left) and his wife Suzanne Cassano (right) of Saco, Me., pick out gourds from the Cabot Smith Farm Squashapooza at the Cabot Cheese and Culture Festival Saturday.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Cabot Community Contra Dance, Oct. 10

CABOT – The Cabot Community Contra Dance will take place on Friday, Oct. 10, featuring the calling of Don Stratton, and live music by Pam Bockes, Franklin Heyburn, Kenric Kite and David Van Houten. The dance takes place at the Willey Building from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Admission is on a sliding scale, but nobody is turned away for lack of funds.

Bess O'Brien, the Vermont documentary filmmaker, will be at the dance for the first half hour or so to capture some footage for

her new film "Every Day: Big and Small." All participants are welcome to be included in the film or to opt out.

Everyone is welcome; no partner is needed, and families are welcome. Contra dancing is an age-old Vermont tradition. All dances are taught, and the dances are easy to learn, but newcomers are encouraged to arrive at 7 p.m., as the caller will start with the simplest dances.

The Willey Building is located at 3084 Main St.

EVENTS

Wednesday, Oct. 1

RIPPLE EFFECTS: Watershed Forum, Climatology & the Future of Vermont's Watersheds, with Dr. Lesley-Ann L. Dupigny-Giroux (UVM, Vt. State Climatologist), 6 to 7:30 p.m., Jeudevine Memorial Library, Hardwick. Information: (802) 472-1686 or zoning.administrator@hardwickvt.gov

TEENS DECORATE THE LIBRARY, 3 p.m., Jeudevine Library, Hardwick. For ages 12-18. Information: jeudevineyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Thursday, Oct. 2

WHY WE MARCH, film and discussion, 6 p.m., Parker-Ladd Community Room, Jeudevine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main St., Hardwick. Sponsored by Indivisible Hardwick. Information: IndivisibleHardwick@pm.me.

Saturday, Oct. 4

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

GEOLOGY WALK, 9 a.m., Hardwick Trails, beginning at the trailhead kiosk behind Hazen Union School. Lead by Dave Mitchell and Hardwick Conservation Committee Chair Lucy Zendian. Be prepared for a two-mile walk. Rain date is Sunday, Oct. 5. Information: mitchell.ds@live.com

FALL DOG PARTY, noon to 4 p.m., Dog Mountain, St. Johnsbury. Live music, food. Rain or shine. For shuttle schedule and RSVP details, visit dogmt.com/events

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVE THE MOON NIGHT, 7:30 p.m., Fairbanks Museum. Co-hosted by NEK Astronomy Foundation and Fairbanks Museum. 1302 Main St., St. Johnsbury. Information: (802) 748-2372.

HOUSEPLANT SWAP, 10 a.m. to noon, Craftsbury Public Library. Information: (802) 586-9683 or director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org.

ANNUAL FALL FOLIAGE CRAFT FAIR, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Hazen Union School, 126 Hazen Union Drive, Hardwick. Hosted by AWARE.

VERMONT OPEN STUDIO WEEK-END, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Features area artists. Information: vermontcrafts.com.

Sunday, Oct. 5

VERMONT OPEN STUDIO WEEK-END, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Features area artists. Information: vermontcrafts.com.

ANNUAL PUMPKIN WALK, 6 p.m., Hardwick Trails, Hazen Union School, Hardwick.

ANNUAL ORLEANS COUNTY "LIFE CHAIN", 2 to 3 p.m., 100 Main St., next to Emory Hebard State Office Building, Newport. Information: lifechain4Newport@gmt-mom.com, (802) 586-2899, www.LifeChain.org.

MEMORIAL FOR MEREDITH HOLCH, Caledonia Grange No. 9, East Hardwick, 3 p.m. Community members invited to watch some of

her films, hear music and share stories.

Monday, Oct. 6

JEUEVINE PLAYERS PLAN AND REHEARSE for the upcoming play, 3 p.m., Jeudevine Library, Hardwick. New members welcome. Ages 6 and up. Information: jeudevineyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Tuesday, Oct. 7

NATURALIST BRYAN PFEIFFER presents his 21-year search for the elusive Elfin Bog Butterfly, 6 p.m., Plainfield Town Hall and Opera House. Information: Angela at the Cutler Memorial Library, (802) 454-8504 or email angela.m.ogle@cutlerlibrary.org.

Wednesday, Oct. 8

DEATH CAFE, 6 p.m., Albany Public Library, 830 Main St., Albany. Refreshments provided. Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION by the NEK Asylum Seekers Assistance Network, 7 p.m., St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, 1171 Main St. Information: (802) 748-8291.

Ongoing Events

KIDS' CHORUS, Tuesdays, 3 p.m., Jeudevine Library, Hardwick. For ages 8 and up. Vocal warm-ups, musical games and group singing. Information: jeudevine youthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

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 (& Cease-fire) VIGIL, Thursdays, 2 - 3 p.m., Hardwick Peace Park, S. Main St., Hardwick. (beside the river).

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

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE practice group, every Thursday, 2 p.m., John Woodruff Simpson Memorial Library, 1972 East Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury. Information: (802) 586-9692, jwsimpsonmemorial.org.

FRIENDS OF THE JEUEVINE 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 DRAGONS for Young Adventurers, first and third Mondays, Craftsbury Public

See EVENTS, Next Page

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EVENTS

Library, for children ages 8-13. Reserve a spot to play by contacting director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org. **EARLY LITERACY STORY-TIME**, 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.

MAGIC ON TUESDAY. A group of youngpeoplegettogetheratTheCivicStandard, 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.

ALL HANDS TOGETHER, Community Crafting Group, Tuesdays, 4:30 to 6 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, 122 School St., Marshfield. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, call (802) 426-3581, or jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

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.

STORY TIME, Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. Books, songs, art activities and more for ages 5 and under, Jeudevine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main St. Information: jeudevineyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov, (802) 472-5948.

CHAPTERS IN HISTORY BOOK GROUP, second Saturday of the month, 2 p.m., Sept. 13 through Dec. 13, Jaquith Public Library, 122 School St., Marshfield. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, call (802) 426-3581 or visit jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

ADAPTIVE BIKING MONDAYS on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, 2 to 3 p.m. and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., begin-

ning at the trailhead parking lot on Creamery Rd. in Hardwick. Sponsored by Adaptive Sports Partners. Reservations or information: kerry@adaptivesportspartners.org or call (802) 427-4116.

Exhibits

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

VASILIOS GLETSOS: New Work. Using common materials: cardboard, paper, staples and wire, the art of Vasilios Gletsos references objects of rural culture and playful expressions, Parker Pie Art Gallery, 161 County Road, West Glover, through October 7.

RANDEE LEIGHTCAP EXHIBITION, Athenaeum Hall Gallery, 1171 Main St. Through September. Information: (802) 748-8291.

ART AT THE KENT 2025, Holding, Mementos Kept, Memories Kindled, through October 12, Calais. Information: kentscorner.org.

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

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Gouin powers Lady Cats in high scoring week

by Ken Brown

DANVILLE – Isabelle Gouin continued to score at a record pace and the defense was perfect last week as the Hazen Union girls soccer team blanked Caledonia United, Missisquoi Valley and Richford, improving to 7-2 on the season.

Isabelle Gouin, Taylor Thompson and freshman Kennidee Gouin all found the back of the net to lead a balanced Lady Cat scoring attack in a 3-0 road win over Cal United last Monday. Isabelle Gouin put the visitors ahead just sixty seconds into the match and younger sister Kennidee made it 2-0 Hazen thirteen minutes later from the top of the 18-yard line. Thompson connected on a long-range rocket to make it 3-0 with seven minutes left in the first half to end the scoring on the day. Ella Renaud recorded two saves to preserve the shutout. Eliska Siebenbrunner made nine stops for Cal United as they fell to 3-4-1. They'll look to get back on track this week as they travelled to Vergennes on Tuesday before hosting Richford on Friday.

Autumn Dailey fed Isabelle Gouin for the only score of the match as Hazen held off Missisquoi 1-0 at home on Wednesday. Dailey hit a streaking Gouin towards the right side of the box where she beat multiple Lady Thunderbird defenders for the game winner 15 minutes into the match. Kelsie Rivard made five stops to help the Hazen defense record a clean sheet. Leah Thompson made seven saves for Missisquoi, who fell to

3-4-2 on the season. The match was a makeup from Homecoming Weekend that was postponed then due to thunder and lightning.

"Missisquoi put pressure on us all game, but I felt like we did a good job dominating possession throughout the match," said head coach Megan Mercier.

Isabelle Gouin reached a career milestone with the 50th goal of her career, adding two more scores and an assist as the Lady Cats routed Richford at home on Friday 6-0. Thompson, Rivard, and Kennidee Gouin rounded out the scoring with a goal and an assist apiece as the Lady Cats exacted some revenge on the defending Division IV champions. Richford has knocked Hazen out of the postseason the last two years but is in full rebuild mode this season, falling to 1-7-1. Ella Renaud made three stops to secure the fifth shutout of the season for the Lady Cat defense.

"It was a highly anticipated match up for the girls against this team. We did a good job dominating play throughout the match and their keeper made several dramatic and impressive saves," said Mercier.

Gouin has now amassed 52 goals in her stellar career, including 17 this season. The 2024 Vermont All-State selection is now just two away from tying Kaitlyn Forant's school record of 54, set in 2008.

Gouin and the Lady Cats could make history in a busy week on the road that saw them square off against Paine Mountain on Tuesday, before traveling to Oxbow on Thursday and Enosburg on Friday.



Isabelle Gouin of Hazen Union receives a pass in front of Missisquoi's goal during action on Hudson Field Wednesday. In back (at left) is goalie Leah Thompson and (right) Lillianna Fournier of Missisquoi. Gouin scored the only goal of the game with Hazen winning 1-0. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Hazen Union ninth-grader Marina Smith (right) controls the ball around Jillian Wagner (center) of Missisquoi at Hazen September 24. Kennidee Gouin (left) follows the play. Hazen edged by their opponents 1-0. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Hazen Union varsity senior Isabelle Gouin (front left) is presented with a signed soccer ball by her coach Megan Mercier (right) after reaching her 50th career point milestone, September 26, at Hudson Field. Holding balloons are her parents Ross and Jessica Gouin of Hardwick. Isabelle is three goals away from breaking the all-time school record made by Kaitlyn (Forant) Jacobs in 2008. Jacobs, who now lives in Irasburg, has held the record of 54 goals for 17 years.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Isabelle Gouin holds a signed soccer ball as she is surrounded by her teammates and coach after reaching her 50th career point at Hudson Field, September 26. Teammates include (from left) front row, Eliza Bunten, Jade Griggs, Eloise Foster, Taylor Thompson, Isabelle Gouin, Kennidee Gouin, Marina Smith, Kelsie Rivard, Brianna Holbrook, Mya Lumsden Ora Nobel and Jayla Gayle; back row, Ada Allen, Ella Luther, manager Danica Patridge, Ella Renaud, Julia desGroseilliers, Autumn Dailey, Coach Megan Mercier and Adelina Augsberger. photo by Vanessa Fournier

Cal United boys cruise to seventh straight win



Caledonia United's Kaiden Rogers, No. 11, of Twinfield splits the defenders as teammate Charlie St. John of Danville looks on in Danville September 26. At right are Colton Kittel, No. 15 and Cody Bartels, No. 6, of Richford. Caledonia United defeated Richford 13 - 0. photo by Vanessa Fournier



Twinfield student Sean Lehoe (right) of Caledonia United races towards Richford's goal as Kaden Deuso, No. 11, follows during play Friday in Danville. Caledonia United won 13 - zip. photo by Vanessa Fournier

by Ken Brown

BRADFORD – The Caledonia United (Twinfield-Cabot-Danville) boys soccer team gutted out a road win against Division III Oxbow last week, before blasting Richford with 13 goals to stay perfect on the season at 7-0.

Jola Otten and Sam McLane scored two goals apiece to power Cal United to a 4-2 road win over Oxbow last Monday. After a 1-1 stalemate through the first half, Otten found the eventual game-winner in the 57th minute. McLane gave the Cal United defense some breathing room minutes later with a top corner rocket before Jayden Huntoon netted his second score of the day on a laser from 25 yards out to make it 3-2 with seven minutes left in regulation. Otten put the match away,

finishing off a beautiful header from Connor Winn. Josh Petersen made five saves for Cal United. Landon Welch made nine stops for the Olympians, who fell to 1-6 on the season.

“We started slow in the first half. Oxbow came out aggressive and we just weren’t stepping to the ball quickly enough. We made some adjustments at halftime, and the boys did a better job dictating the pace of the match. The defense stepped it up in the second half as well, limiting them to one shot and Josh made some critical saves for us early on in the match,” said head coach Peter Stratman.

It was all systems go for Stratman’s club on Friday as Otten, Eli Russell and Sean Lehoe each recorded hat-tricks in a 13-0 blowout home win over Richford. Sam McLane added two more

goals to his impressive start to the season. Hunter Eastman and River Thibault got into the action with their first goals of the season. Russell and Connor Winn each tallied four assists apiece on the day. Petersen turned away a pair of shots to preserve the shutout. Syrus Gendron made 9 saves as Richford fell to 1-4.

“The boys did a good job attacking with precision and pace in what was a clinical performance. Their effort in the first half was relentless. Their keeper was phenomenal, making several acrobatic saves. It was great to get our younger players some valuable time and experience in the second half, with Hunter delivering several dangerous crosses and converting a nice penalty,” said Stratman.

McLane has returned with a

vengeance from a season ending injury late last fall to lead the team in scoring with 15 goals. Russell has backed up his 2024 Vermont All-State selection with 14 scores of his own and Otten has had a breakout senior campaign with 10. Cal United remains perfect near the top of the Division IV standings behind perennial powerhouse Twin Valley (9-0). Grace Christian sits third at 5-0-1 and Proctor rounds out the top four at 5-2.

Stratman’s club should have gotten a true test on Tuesday with a home match against Division III Vergennes. The Commodores have posted shutout wins over Middlebury and Enosburg already this season. They wrap up a busy week with road match-up against Sharon Academy on Thursday before hosting Paine Mountain on Friday.

Wildcat defense posts third straight shutout

by Ken Brown

ORLEANS – The Hazen Union boys soccer team continued to play stingy defense last week, running their record to 6-1-1 with a pair of shutout wins over Lake Region and Lamoille.

Jeter Demers scored the game-winner and Grayson McNaughten led the defense last Monday as the Wildcats gutted out a tough 1-0 road win over Lake Region. With under ten minutes left in regulation, Ari Jurkiewicz beat a Ranger defender in the corner and found a streaking Jeter Demers, who buried a one-timer in the corner for the only score of the match. Both goalkeepers were outstanding, with Konnor Farley making 15 stops on the day for Lake Region as they fell to 1-5-1. Senior Grayson McNaughten turned

away a dozen shots to preserve the shutout for Hazen.

“We played a well-fought match with both teams having scoring opportunities all the way through. I thought we squandered some really good chances in the second half, so it was good to see the team show grit and determination with Ari and Jeter shifting the run of play on the game-winner. At the halfway point of the season, we’ve still got a lot of work to do but are proud of the effort and earned a hard win on the road,” said head coach Harry Besett.

Kobe Smith curled in the game-winner ten minutes into the second half and McNaughten posted his third straight clean sheet to lead Hazen to a 1-0 home win over Lamoille last Thursday. Smith gathered a free kick from Lincoln Hill, turned and fired

a shot that beat Lancer keeper Ben Turner in the upper right corner. McNaughten battled heavy rain and a muddy field to make seven saves, preserving the sixth shutout of the season for the Wildcat defense. Turner made nine saves in the loss. Turner and the Lancers posted an impressive 1-0 win over Stowe two days later, improving to 3-4-1 on the season. Besett and his young team felt like they let one get away in their season opener at Lamoille, letting up a late penalty kick in a 1-1 draw.

“The boys were pretty frustrated on the bus ride home from Lamoille in our first match, so it felt great getting our third straight win and sixth shutout of the season. Grayson has been so solid for us all season and our defense did a great job staying focused and disciplined

in bad weather to clear out the ball each time it slipped loose. We’re looking forward to another close battle against Thetford this week,” said Besett.

Hazen is currently ranked second in the current division III standings and got its second litmus test of the season against perennial divisional power Thetford Academy on Tuesday. A powerhouse Stowe team halted a three-match win streak by the Wildcats two weeks ago with a dominating 9-0 win. Peoples Academy sits atop the Capital League standings with a perfect 8-0 record.

The schedule doesn’t get any easier for Hazen as they travel to two-time defending Division II champion Harwood on Friday. All home games can be streamed live on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).



The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is loaded with railroad cars, depots and other memorabilia like this caboose in Greensboro. photo by Marty Basch



The Fisher Covered Bridge in Wolcott is an excellent stop for a photo along the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. photo by Jan Basch

Vermont's Lamoille Valley Rail Trail showcases rural richness

by Marty Basch, The Conway Daily Sun

WOLCOTT – “That’s an odd-looking dog,” I said to myself. The slim creature with the perky ears then revealed itself and two others as I neared a bend in Wolcott, by the winding Lamoille River. The trio had no interest in meeting me; instead, they did an about-face and gave me a triple white-tailed moon to start my day on northern Vermont’s Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT).

That wasn’t the only moon I saw along the sublime route. When the morning was clear, I’d look up while crossing the many bridges or riding by countless acres of corn to see a nearly full moon in the great big blue sky.

I’ve been biking pieces of the 94-mile LVRT since September 2015, beginning at the eastern end, from St. Johnsbury to Danville, when it was still in its sectional stages. I last returned for the western terminus between Sheldon Junction and Swanton in summer 2024.

With a few days to spare earlier this month, I cycled some 90 or so miles from the outskirts of St. Johnsbury, bypassing a hilly detour west of town caused by 2024 floods, to Swanton. There was one minor signed detour west of Danville to negotiate but beside that it was pure, blissful dirt. My wife Jan drove the SAG (support and gear) wagon, ensuring we were never far from necessities like lodging and food.

The long trail cuts a swath through Vermont’s dirt road kingdom, a rural land of woods, rivers, farms, small towns, miles of maze-like maple syrup lines, cool rock-cut passageways that allowed trains to proceed and rippling mountains. Cows chomped away on grasses. Herons and blue jays flew about. Gentle breezes made

leaves flutter, looking like waves of one-handed applause.

Along the way, there are a multitude of trailheads with parking, many with creative touches to the path’s railroad history from bright murals to vibrant gardens. There are interpretive signs, toilets, maps, tool stations, picnic tables and more for trail users to enjoy.

The pathway also crosses other well-known Vermont trails like the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail, hiking’s Long Trail and skiing’s Catamount Trail.

Key to appreciating the trail is being prepared before the ride. The excellent Vermont state trail website railtrails.vermont.gov has information about detours, maps and other useful resources.

The leaves were beginning to turn color with muted tones because of the nasty drought. Some were already falling, landing among grounded apples. The air at times was crisp, and also sporadically pungent with agriculture’s acidity.

Strolling morning moms made way to cyclists of all types on mountain bikes, e-bikes, trikes and ancient hybrids with rubber brake pads. Saddlebag toting bicycle travelers pedaled away as did locals on fitness runs.

Traveling east to west meant a few head winds, morning sun in the rearview mirror and best, an elevation profile that had the first 20 or so easy miles going uphill before a nice gentle downhill slope, or so it seemed, the rest of the way. Though there were a few hilly swells in there too. Which way should you ride?

Either way is fine. But come on, just ask your wife and she’ll tell you.

Cycling mid-week, non-holiday is always best if it can be done.

The trail with its myriad grades of crushed stone surfaces

certainly is growing in popularity, finally fully connected along its 18 towns in 2023 when Wolcott came online. It seemed like it was an AARP pathway with loads of seasoned cyclists pedaling about in both directions. I met several riders from upstate New York along the way, stopping to take photos at a multi-colored cow statue, and later bumped into them at the Smugglers Notch Inn in Jeffersonville, not far off the trail, where we bedded that night. One of the riders was wearing a Mount Washington Bicycle Hillclimb long sleeve jersey. He had done the race once and was proud not to have come in last.

The 30ish miles between Hardwick and Cambridge seemed to be the most active with riders

and facilities. One of the joys was picking up local cheeses and meats. One disappointment was seeing the Cabot cheese store in Hardwick closed on a Monday. Despite that, four cyclists were sitting outside enjoying the lunches they had brought. But that’s what happens when husbands plan trips.

Nonetheless, there was redemption.

The store was open on the drive home. So we indulged in the samples, bought cheese and enjoyed some with Vermont smoked general store pepperoni around our kitchen table.

Marty Basch writes for *The Conway (N.H.) Daily Sun*. Reach him at conwaydailysun.com/users/profile/mbasch



Hazen Lady Cat Ella Luther, No. 9, dribbles past Missisquoi defender Regan Howrigan during play in Hardwick on September 24. Hazen edged by Missisquoi 1-0. photo by Vanessa Fournier

Welch takes King of the Mountain championship

N. WOODSTOCK, N.H. – Perfect fall weather made for a finale to the 2025 season at White Mountain Motorsports Park. Everything started with the second annual King of the Kids challenge for the Kids Division. It was a wild finale to the season for the kids with several drivers forced to drive back to front after getting caught up in cautions. Through it all, young Owen Dupuis took his time to get to the front and never looked back, for the win over Gracen Gorham and Cameron Beattie at the finish.

The Late Models were first on the field with Quinny Welch having already clenched the 2025 King of the Mountain track championship in heat race qualifying action. During the feature, it was Brian Whalley and Mike Bailey at the front throughout the first half, both dogging plenty of challenges from Richie Brown before a pair of late race restarts. The restarts saw the team cars of Kyle Goodbout and Kasey Beattie, along with 2024 track champion Tanner Woodard on a rare visit, join the front after a slow climb to the top. On the final restart Woodard got the jump and the win just two laps later over Goodbout and Beattie.

The Late Models returned for an exciting new twist with the 20-20 \$hootout, a pair of twenty lap segments as a replacement for the semi-feature of old. Fourteen cars were eligible based on their 80% or higher participation during the 2025 season and lined up by handicap for the first segment. It was a pair of sophomores in Thomas Smithers VI and Colin Cornell who put on a show to finish one, two in segment one but the invert found them dead last in the second segment. Using knowledge gained by decades on the high-banks, Quinny Welch powered back to take the 20-20 \$hootout and the \$1,000 grand prize with a combined six points over Cornell,

Beattie, Bailey and Smithers in the top five.

The Dwarf Cars and Mini Late Models rounded out the season in twin 20 lap, segment competition. Jason Wyman went wire-to-wire, driving up through both Dwarf Car segments to claim the final win and the championship in grand style. Ethan Tyrrell hard-charged his way through both segments to claim second in the overall with Dave Gyger rounding out the Dwarf Car podium.

Like Tyrrell, Cody LeBlanc found himself at the bottom of the handicap sheet and drove up through both 20 lap segments in the Mini Late Model season finale. LeBlanc's two runner-up finishes earned him the tiebreaker over teammate and 2025 Mini Late Model champion Nick Miller, while Garrett LaBounty rounded out the top three.

It was the closest battle of the night to the very end in the Strictly Minis with Tyler Thompson, Jacob Roy and McKenna Merchant within five points of each other. The three raced side-by-side, inside and outside of each other for laps on end with Nick Pilotte and Donnie Baumgardner joining the fight at times as officials dulled their pencils keeping track of the championship chase. In the end, McKenna Merchant powered through to her fifth win of the season and, with Jacob Roy stuck in third behind Nick Pilotte at the line, it was enough to earn a one point advantage and take the season long track championship to boot!

The Flying Tigers wrapped up the season with their 35-lapper following Saturday's race during their doubleheader weekend. Rookie of the Year Todd Derrington had a rear-view mirror full of two track chaser Logan Powers right from the get-go until Powers made his move to the front prior to the halfway point. From then on Powers was dogged



Quinny Welch and crew celebrate their 10th King of the Mountain Late Model track championship at White Mountain Motorsports Park, Sunday afternoon. Johnny Racer photo



Shane Sicard and company celebrate a fourth career Flying Tiger track championship at White Mountain Sunday night, clinching the title by taking the green in their final 35-lap main event of the year. Johnny Racer photo



McKenna Merchant did everything she could, including taking the final win in the Bar Harbor Bank & Trust Strictly Minis to claim her first career White Mountain track championship point by just one point!

Johnny Racer photo

by Shane Sicard until five laps to go when Owen Cheney motored to the outside and took a veteran move to claim second around the 2025 track champion. At the line Logan Powers made it win number three on the season with Owen Cheney second and four-time track champion Shane Sicard in third.

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

Late Models – (50 Laps)
17. 92VT, Jaden Perry, Hardwick, Vt.

Hometown (Seg. 1 Fin. + Seg. 2 Fin. = Overall Score)

13. 92VT, Jaden Perry, Hardwick, Vt., (13+14=27)

Flying Tigers – (35 Laps)

5. 23NC, Chandler Potter, Plainfield, Vt.

10. 23VT, Matt Potter, Marshfield, Vt.

12. 62VT, Jamon Perry, Hardwick, Vt.

Kids Division – King of the Kids Showdown (20 Laps)

8. 23, Madison Potter, Marshfield, Vt,



It took over 100 laps of clawing their way to the top, but fans were treated to a battle of the ages between D.J. Shaw and Johnny Clark over the final 25 circuits until Clark eventually came out on top to claim the \$7,000 winner's share of the PASS Super Late Model 150.

photo by Johnny Racer

Clark Stays on top for late race PASS 150 win

N. WOODSTOCK, N.H. – With two features on the season’s finale weekend, the Flying Tigers started off feature racing on Saturday with Kyle Willis and Todd Derrington duking it out side-by-side. Rookie Derrington took off with the early lead before the lap-nine caution for a stalled Mike Clark. Matt Potter would find himself in the top spot following the restart with top point chaser Luke Peters and Shane Sicard in tow on the inside line. Potter would lose the lead with a spin cycle in turn four to set up a fight between championship hopefuls Sicard and Peters over the final eight laps. It was Shane Sicard who went back-to-back for the win over Peters and Owen Cheney at the line.

Alex Smith launched off with the lead in the PASS Modified 75-lapper with the field quickly settling into single-file with nothing but time ahead. Spencer Morse was the first to jump to the outside groove on lap-15, making it work with a long march ahead. Morse would lead lap-23 as

Chanler Harrison began to walk up the wide-open outside groove before a pair of single car spin cautions just after the halfway point. Nothing stood in the way with Spencer Morse taking the 75-lap win over Kyle Hewins and Chanler Harrison under the checkers.

It was a pair of former Oxford 250 champions with Austin Teras and Jeremy Whorff at the head of the PASS Super Late Model 150. Teras was quick to grab the lead as Whorff and Ryan Kuhn went to battle for second as D.J. Shaw, last week’s winner Johnny Clark, Gabe Brown and Joey Doiron drove mired deep in traffic out back. Using the lap car of J.P. Josiasse, Jimmy Hebert took over the lead from Teras on lap 45 as Shaw and Doiron entered the top five behind Kuhn. The top five cars found themselves trapped in around four lap cars with Hebert amazingly able to hold onto the lead as Teras fell under attack by D.J. Shaw.

After running around the White Mountain quarter mile, Hebert



The NEMA Lites put on a stellar 50 lap showcase for the Jim O’Brien Memorial, the first NEMA event at White Mountain Motorsports Park since 1995.

photo by Johnny Racer

and Gabe Brown made contact in turn-four, sending both slam-banging into the infield to call out a lap 107 caution. On the restart, Shaw and Doiron went to war at the front of the pack, right before another caution for the spinning Pat Corbett and Mike Scorzelli in turn one. The restart set up a final twenty-five lap dash between Shaw and Johnny Clark, with Clark launching into the lead and never looking back to take the \$7,000 win over Shaw and Joey Doiron.

The NEMA Lites took the stage for the Jim O’Brien Memorial 50, their first visit to the track since 1995. Mike Pernesiglio would quickly nab the lead, jumping to the head of the pack and staring down the barrel at 50-laps ahead. Pernesiglio Dennis Potter and Ben Mikitarian split the lap cars of Greg Clar and Mitchell O’Brien on the backstretch, amazingly able to keep things righted at over eighty-miles-an-hour. Mikitarian would lead at the halfway point but Pernesiglio would not yield as they swapped lanes in and around continued bouts with lap traffic.

Mitchell O’Brien brought out the first caution on lap 32, stalled just off the white line in the infield at the start-finish line to call out the yellow. Mikitarian once again launched with the lead, grabbing almost a half lap advantage before the final caution on lap 48 after a Matt O’Brien spin in turn four, halting him dangerously broadside in the middle of the racing groove. The green-white-checker finish saw Ben Mikitarian take the dominant win over P.J. Stergios and Mike Pernesiglio in a spirited showdown of the ages for the NEMA Lites.

The Thunderstock Crown Vics rounded out Saturday’s program with eleven cars making the inaugural White Mountain trip and ten cars starting the 40-lap feature. Tyler Moore and Karson Hewins duked it out at the front for much of their feature racing action, with Moore taking the win over Hewins and Spencer Moore.

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

(local competitors)
Flying Tigers – (35 Laps)
10 23VT Matt Potter, Marshfield, VT



In PASS Victory Lane at White Mountain Motorsports Park were, (from left) Joey Doiron (3rd), winner Johnny Clark, D.J. Shaw (2nd).

photo by Johnny Racer

KEN BROWN’S RUNNERS ROUNDUP

Chargers go into home meet with momentum

MONTPELIER – The Craftsbury Academy (CA) cross-country team held their own against the biggest fields of the season last week at the U-32 Invitational as they ready for their first home meet of the season.

Freshman Aemilia Terrone led the Chargers over the weekend with a seventh-place finish in Division III, crossing the line with a time of 24:07.60 in the girls 5,000m. Danville sophomore Peyton Winn posted an eleventh-place finish in the division at 25:18.20. Sophomore Ersa Goldenrose paced Hazen Union in the division, finishing just inside the top twenty. Stowe’s Brinley Hirce was the top runner in Division III finishing

in 22:01, besting Casey Wiedrick of Oxbow by more than 18 seconds. Green Mountain’s Desi Broadley was the top overall winner crossing the line at 19:13.90.

In the boys 5000m, Danville freshman Landon Garrand posted a seventh-place finish in Division III with a time of 18:28.30. Charger freshman Oakley Crawford continued his strong start to the season with a fourteenth-place finish in the division in 19:49. Hazen sophomore Kaiah Cloutier finished just outside the top twenty in the division at 21:10. The CA boys team finished third on the day in Division III. BFA-Fairfax senior Gage Magnuson bested 145 other runners to finish first overall

with a time of 16:02.50. Former Hazen Union standout Manny Fliegelman finished fourteenth overall for St. Johnsbury Academy.

The Chargers will host their first meet of the season on Wednesday at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

English continues to ride strong season

GROTON – Hazen Union track and field coach and Craftsbury Academy cross-country coach Maxfield English captured his fourth race title of the year earlier this month at the 25K Groton Forest Trail Run.

The 49-year-old blitzed the field with a time of 1:51:09.1, besting 23-year-old runner-up Waylon Kurts

by over sixteen minutes. English followed up his latest win with a runner-up overall finish (23:44) at the Sodom Pond four-miler ten days later. Eric LiPuma bested the field with a time of 21:40.

English has dominated the Central Vermont Runners/Onion River Outdoors race circuit in 2025 with titles in the Birdland 5K Trail Run, Bear Swamp 5.7 Run, Berlin Pond Five Miler, and now Groton. He took over the CA cross-country program last fall for legendary head coach Mike LeVangie, who won four consecutive Division III state championships. English has rebooted the program quickly with young talent. The Chargers captured their first regular season title under English two weeks ago at North Country.

Team of five shoot 11-under-par 59 to claim Mayor's Cup

by Patrick Hussey

GREENSBORO – With a record crowd on hand and record warmth greeting them, the Tuesday Night League at Mountain View Country Club capped its season on Sunday with the annual battle for the Mayor's Cup.

The end-of-the-season championship is named in honor of Richard Brochu, whose nickname was "The Mayor." Brochu was a longtime participant in the league and after his passing in 2022, the league purchased a silver cup and dedicated its season championship to him.

On Sunday, Course Superintendent Steve Parker and his crew had the course in excellent condition. Despite a summer-long drought, the course was very receptive to good golf and the freshly aerated greens were completely healed and rolling true once again.

Evidence of the course's condition was in the scoring from the five-some of Landon Thompson, Xavier Hill, David Rogers, Mike Clark and Corey Pollard. They lit up the layout with a sparkling round of 11-under par 59 to claim the 2025 Mayor's Cup in the league's 18-hole scramble tournament.

They got it going early, birdying their first hole, the eighth, and completed their second nine by eagling the seventh hole. In between, they birdied one, two and the difficult fourth, posting seven three's on their first nine and made the turn with a six-under 29. They laid down another five birdies over their final nine holes and posted a 30 to win by two strokes. The

margin of victory came on their final hole, the seventh, when Corey Pollard chipped in for an eagle three from 15 feet out.

Back in second place with a nine-under 61 was the foursome of Arron Molleur, Mike Nixon, Bill Hunt and Derek Chamberlain. They came out of the gates strong, starting on the ninth hole, and birdied their first three holes. Their only shortcoming was the third hole, which they bogeyed on both nines, otherwise they would have tied for the championship.

That foursome had five birdies on the front nine for a four-under 31, and had six birdies on the back nine for a five-under 30.

One stroke back in third place was the five-some of Matt Kiley, Nate Brown, Steve Parker, Karl Ferland and Cole Leroux, with an eight-under 62. They posted five birdies on their front nine to post a 30, then added another three birdies late on the back nine to post a three-under 32.

Continuing a trend of strong participation, the league drew 49 golfers to its Mayor's Cup championship day, the most ever. It was also one of the warmest tournament days, with sunny skies all day and temperatures topping out at 75 degrees.

A draft of players was held prior to the 10 a.m. start time, nine five somes and one foursome made up the field. At the conclusion of the tourney, the champions kept alive the tradition of drinking from the cup once victory was in hand.

There was a two-way tie for fourth place with rounds of 63. The five some of John Stone, Adam Whitney, Rich Ahern, Roger Boone and Rob Montgomery shot a 31-32.

That tied the group that included Brendan Moodie, Dan Mencucci, Andrew Whitney, Andy Lemieux and Dave Campbell, who tied for the low front nine with six birdies and a 29, but only managed a 34 on the back nine.

Back in a fifth place tie with nine hole rounds of 33-31 and a 64, was the five-some of Dan Miko, Kip Doyon, Dan Rogers, Jadon Baker and Dale Hall. They were joined by the five-some of Brian Niemi, Ryan Hall, Darwin Thompson, Jeremy Kaufman and Dale Rowell, who shot nine hole rounds of 30-34.

Two rounds of five-under 65 were posted, the first by John Sperry, George Gattone, Brad Ferland, Eric Stratton and Doug Allen. They tied the group that included Bob Fair, Jaxson Hussey, Jamin Flanders, Gavin Stratton and Richard Coolbeth.

The final group at four-under 66 included Andy Hunt, Dan Gauthier, Dennis Pudvah, Dan Judkins and Pat Hussey.

Closest to the hole winners in two shots on one were Bob Fair on the front and Landon Thompson on the back nine. Closest in two shots on eight were won by Matt Kiley on the front and Adam Whitney on the back. On the par three holes, no one won on the third hole on the front, but Dan Rogers won on the back nine. On five, it was Brian Niemi winning on the front nine and Brendan Moodie on the back nine.

The Tuesday Night League enjoyed another great season with an average of just over 50 players each week. A total of 106 different golfers played at least one night during the 22-week season, which concluded on Tuesday, Sept 30.



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A new fire hydrant is being installed at Brett and Marjorie Urie's pond in East Craftsbury by the Craftsbury Fire Department, by (from left) Asst. Chief Steve Perkins, Captain Robert Hoyt, Lieutenant Andrew Marckres in the pond with the yellow suit, Secretary/Treasurer Thomasina Jacobs and Chief Jeremiah McCann in the excavator, Saturday, Sept. 20. The new hydrant replaces one closer to Greensboro on the same road, that was made unusable when the pool it pulled water from was filled in by 2023 and 2024 flooding.

photo by Bruce Urie

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