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Wednesday, October 8, 2025

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## Demolition of 24 Sawmill Lane set as FEMA buyout

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – This Wednesday, Oct. 8, the first property in Hardwick to be demolished as part of the FEMA buyout program due to damage from the July 2023 flood, will be taken down. Demolition of the property at 24 Sawmill Lane, across from Poulin Lumber, is being managed by ReArch Construction, the same

company that managed construction of the new addition at the Jeudevine Memorial Library

Work is expected to occur during normal daytime hours. “Asbestos and other hazardous materials are being handled separately, following all required safety protocols,” said a notice to neighbors from the Town of Hardwick. It continued, “Please be advised that demolition activities may result in additional noise, dust and

construction vehicle traffic in the area.”

The notice suggested that, as the first demolition in the state under the FEMA buyout program, it may attract “visitors from the State of Vermont and local media outlets.”

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Hardwick Zoning and Floodplain Administrator Kristen Leahy, (802) 472-1686, zoning.administrator@hardwickvt.gov

## Lockhart Named Vermont Art Teacher of the Year

by OSSU staff

HARDWICK – Hazen Union School art teacher James Lockhart has been named the Vermont Art Teacher of the Year by the Vermont Art Educators Association (VAEA), recognizing his 28 years of dedication to art education at Hazen Union and his lasting impact on students’ creativity and confidence.

Lockhart was surprised by the announcement at the VAEA Fall Conference at Lake Morey Resort on October 3.

“It was a total surprise. I still can’t believe it,” he said. After his fellow art teacher, Cindy Camber, announced his name, Lockhart’s wife and family came from around the corner to celebrate. “It was a very emotional moment!”

Throughout his career, Lockhart has

inspired students to explore creativity and self-expression through open-ended projects. For him, the heart of art education lies in balancing structure with freedom.

“Nothing hampers creativity like good directions,” he said. “I say that kiddingly, but I like to leave individual choice within assigned projects to foster creativity.”

Lockhart’s classroom is a space where every student, even those who claim they’re “not artistic,” is encouraged to explore their creative potential. “Everyone is artistic. It’s in there,” he said. “If you can write or draw the alphabet, you have the ability to draw as a master drafts-person. I can’t teach students how to draw, but I can teach them how to see differently.”

See LOCKHART, 5



Hazen Union art teacher James Lockhart, here with his wife, Ronda Berns, was named Vermont Teacher of the Year at a conference at Lake Morey Resort, October 3. *courtesy photo*



Replacement of the pedestrian bridge has been delayed because a final pre-construction meeting is on hold due to the furlough of USDA employees while the federal government is shut down. Work on the bridge replacement is now expected in 2026, following work on the Main St. retaining wall, for which engineering work is underway.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

## Seven detainees being deported

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – Seven of the nine construction workers detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at a convenience store and along Vt. Route 15 in Hardwick, on

See DETAINEES, 3

## Circus Smirkus weathering financial challenges

by Paul Fixx

GREENSBORO – A letter to the Circus Smirkus community shared concerns about the future of the organization and a need for immediate funding, September 16. “We are facing a short-term funding gap that must be addressed immediately in order to continue operating our

core programs, support our staff and community and avoid bankruptcy.”

Ten days later they shared more detail, and some success toward their goal, saying, “we’ve raised \$100,000 toward our \$400,000 goal.

The message was signed by both Board President Kate Hayes, a camper and member of the touring company from 1991 to 97, and Executive & Artistic Director Rachel Schiffer, who was a camper and toured from 1995 to 2004. They said, “This summer we experienced a number of unexpected serious programmatic and financial challenges. . . this is a moment of real uncertainty around the future of Smirkus.

Amid the uncertainty, they express the possibility of a positive outcome, saying, “It is also a moment of opportunity to reimagine what Circus Smirkus truly brings to our communities to ensure that we emerge from 2025 even better equipped to serve young people, families, our partners and the circus community as a whole.”

For more than a decade, from 2011 through 2021, Circus Smirkus operated in the black, or only slightly in the red. It then successfully weathered the Covid-19 pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, with increased donations more than

See CIRCUS, 4



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

photo by Vanessa Fournier



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

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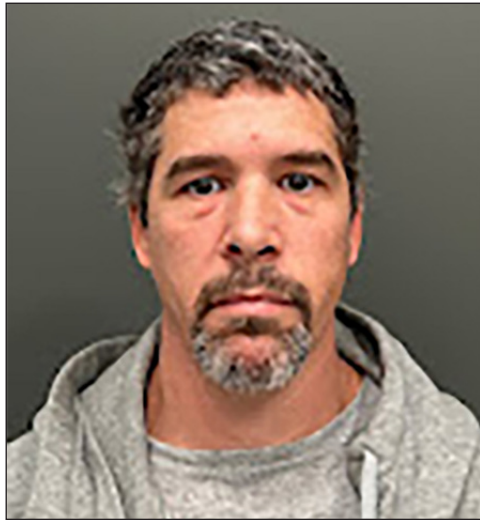
# POLICE REPORT

Vermont State Police

## Road rage fugitives caught, disorderly conduct

GROTON – Monday, Sept. 29, fugitives Justin French, 36, and Kayla Cabey, 33, both of Bradford, were apprehended in the state of Massachusetts. French and Cabey were considered armed and dangerous, attempting to flee charges of First Degree Attempted Murder, Reckless Endangerment and Criminal Threatening following a road rage incident at P&H Truckstop.

MARSHFIELD – On August 26, troopers from the Berlin Barracks responded to a report of a citizen dispute in the town of Marshfield. Through further investigation it was revealed Dominick Hough had committed the offenses of Aggravated Assault

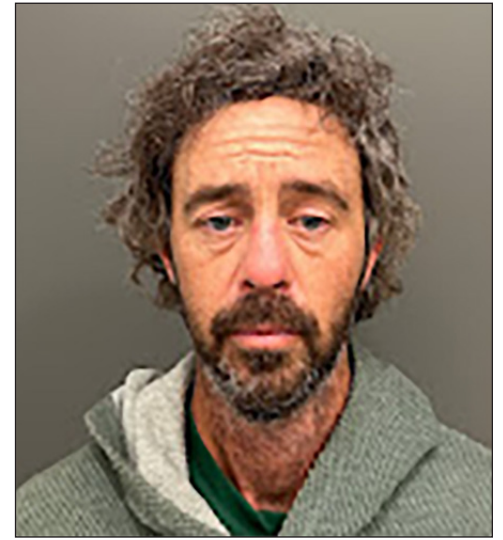


Dominick Hough

by attempting to cause serious bodily injury to a household member. On October 2, Hough was arrested and transported to the Berlin Barracks for processing. He

was released and cited to appear in Washington County Criminal Division on October 9, at 8:30 a.m.

PLAINFIELD – On October 1, at approximately 7:23 a.m., the Vermont State Police received several nonemergent phone calls from 42-year-old Cormick Cantwell, in which he harassed and threatened emergency dispatchers. Troopers from the Berlin Barracks responded and determined that Cantwell violated several of his active conditions of release and acted disorderly. Cantwell was arrested for Violation of Conditions of Release and Disorderly Conduct By Phone and transported to the Berlin Barracks for processing. Cantwell was issued a criminal



Cormick Cantwell

citation and is scheduled to appear in Vermont Superior Court, Washington County, Criminal Division, on October 1, at 12:30 p.m., to answer the above charges.



**October 8 - October 14**

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# WEATHER WATCH

## Forecast starts cold; yesterday's rain only other event



Fall color has come to the shores and hills around a perfectly still Mackville Pond, Saturday, Sept. 27. photo by Paul Fixx

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – A surge of warm weather brought us out of the seasonable conditions we have experienced as of late, with both Sunday and Monday high temperatures remarkable for reaching the upper-70s to mid-80s. Montpelier's new record of 84 degrees on Sunday surpassed its old record of 82 set back in 1951. For Monday, the same station broke its old record of 79 set in 1990 by reaching 82 degrees. The heat was accompanied by low relative humidities, causing forest fire concerns to persist.

We also wrapped up a ten-day streak with no precipitation whatsoever at the observing station.

As of this writing, a cold front

crossing the northeast on Tuesday night is expected to provide a soaking rain that will provide some protection from slipping further into the drought, as the pattern sets up for another period of several days without any rain in the forecast.

That front exits midday Wednesday, with a chance for showers in the morning, followed by gradual clearing. Areas of frost will again occur Wednesday night as low temperatures drop into the upper 20s. By Thursday, an area of high pressure builds overhead, leading to strong radiational cooling and some areas reaching the low 20s by Thursday night. As the high slides eastward, some slow moderation occurs in temperatures, with highs in the 60s and

lows in the 30s.

Some clouds build in by Saturday night and Sunday, associated with a weak trough moving through Quebec and some additional influence from a low to our south. It appears we avoid precipitation in this scenario. In fact, the start of next week also features very little probability of precipitation. Now, onto the forecast:

**Wednesday:** Mostly cloudy in the morning, becoming mostly sunny. A chance of showers in the

morning. High: 57. Low: 29. Northwest wind 5-10 mph.

**Thursday:** Sunny. High: 51. Low: 24. Northwest wind 5-10 mph.

**Friday:** Mostly sunny. High: 58. Low: 30. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

**Saturday:** Mostly sunny. High: 62. Low: 36. Light and variable wind.

**Sunday:** Partly sunny. High: 64. Low: 39. Light and variable wind.

## Detainees

Continued From Page One

Friday, Sept. 26, have been transported to Louisiana, according to WCAX and confirmed by a spokesperson for Migrant Justice.

The Migrant Justice spokesperson said at one time they had all worked on the same construction crew, though whether that is still the case is unknown. They confirmed that the seven now being detained in a Louisiana facility are all in the process of being deported and have legal representation.

One of those detained was released before being jailed on September 26, and the other remained in Vermont, though WCAX has since reported that person had been moved to Massachusetts.

Their names, their employers' names and their addresses are unknown. Information about the residence of some of the detainees led to a worker at the address saying four of them had lived there, though the property owner, who said he was Puerto Rican, and still automatically entitled to U.S. citizenship, as far as he knew, denied any had lived there, and offered another location, which could not be verified.

Maggie Zuccardi posted on social media to say, "These were my friends. Hardworking, caring lovely people."

Migrant Justice said the detainees are Nicaraguan, Colombian and Ecuadorian. No criminal charges have been filed and all are facing removal proceedings. "They've all been part of the same construction crew, I'm not sure if on the day of the detention they were all on the same contract or not."

"The people that were arrested last week are decent people. I've worked with every single one of them. Five of them I trained myself," said an area resident. "I don't want my name mentioned and want to be anonymous. I have a migrant worker that works for me who is legal but I want to protect him."

He said, "five of them worked

for a contractor out of Hardwick. The other four worked for a company out of Wolcott. These people were not criminals at all, they were just looking for a better life and home."

In talking about the detentions, he said, "The Nicaraguans were my friends. I hope they are OK."

Another person in the construction business said, the companies are builders and remodeling contractors. "These workers did a lot of work fixing up old buildings/houses in town and making them look nice again."

"We personally know three of them and they were hard working and amazing folks. I get they were not legal but I think the way this is handled is unnecessary," Margo Shawn Baker wrote in a Facebook reply, "We have sex offenders, drug dealers, thieves, etc that are treated better and given 100 chances, yet hardworking people who've made a name for themselves and are building a life are not even given the grace of '90 days to leave' or whatever. . . why not give them time to get their affairs in order? Give them respect!"

Among many other rumors, it was said that those detained were known to Hardwick Police, who had notified ICE of their whereabouts. Hardwick Police Chief Michael Henry said that's not the business of his department or officers. Department police expressly forbids sharing information with ICE, he said.

The targeted stops of people who ICE suspected of being non-citizens, while they were headed to work in the morning, points to it being likely ICE personnel had advance knowledge of the people and their activities.

Though it may be unrelated, at least some sentiments in the area seem to indicate a certain disdain for foreign workers. Reliable sources said they had heard from contractors who said they bid on jobs, which they then lost to people they referred to as Mexicans, with mixed reports on the quality of work done by the foreign workers.



On Sunday, Oct. 5, about 9 p.m., the Cabot Fire Department responded to a report of a grass fire near a barn with animals. The incident was an unpermitted burn. The fire was quickly extinguished and the surrounding area doused. Mutual aid partners from Marshfield and Walden also promptly responded to the incident. Vermont remains subject to a statewide burn ban based on our severe drought conditions and lack of recent rainfall. In Cabot, Sunday's fire danger was rated as "high," while just to the north in Walden, the danger is rated as "very high." courtesy photo

# Select board lawyers up for Swenson Act 250 case

by Paul Fixx

WOODBURY – Swenson Granite company's requested quarry expansion and yet-to-be-scheduled Act 250 permit hearing, led the select board to engage its town attorney, Tarrant, Gillies and Shems, to provide representation at its September 22 meeting. Swenson Granite Company has submitted an application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for review of a substantial expansion of its operation as a non-conforming use, with a plan to operate a crusher for up to 45 days each year, resulting in 20,000 cubic yards of crushed granite, which will lead to up to 50 loaded trips per day.

Board member Diana Peduzzi asked Larabee to consider repairs or improvements to Cabot Road that might be needed to support the additional 100 truck trips per day expansion at the Swenson Quarry would bring. Larabee said the most dangerous spot is the curve just west of the new quarry entrance.

Incoming tax revenues, depletion of reserve funds, the now usual road work and FEMA funding items filled the rest of the meeting.

In addition, Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department President Retta Dunlap took the opportunity to make a public comment, and asked the town to take over payment of utility bills for the old fire station from the fire department to the town. It must be heated through the winter to keep the water pipes from freezing since they serve the town hall and the post office building too. Select board member Lilly Higgins agreed to oversee the switchover.

Dunlap also reported USDA funds for the addition of a storage area to the new fire station are still expected, with construction to begin in the spring.

Town Clerk Robin Durkee said things at the town office have been slow, with research

and recording picking up somewhat. She noted a call from Carol Ray wondering why the reflectors on the new bridge for TH 24 are smaller than the other new bridge on TH 23. Road Commissioner Alfred Larrabee explained that state standards for reflector sizes on Class 3 roads, like TH23, differ from those for a Class 4 road, like TH24.

Town Treasurer Lilly Baron said she's establishing a new tracking system for the reserve funds and is working on a spreadsheet with schedules for highway equipment replacements. \$547,362.37 in tax revenue has come and the education tax payout by the town, is anticipated for sometime early in November, soon after the state finalizes the amount owed by each municipality in the state.

She said three town reserve funds, the Reappraisal Fund, the FEMA Mitigation Fund and the HERF represent \$709,000 of the \$1.2 million dollars designated as town reserve funds currently available and are expected to deplete over the next three years. In the past, reserve funds have been used to cover the three month low point in the town's coffers before taxes start coming in, offsetting the need to borrow money from the bank.

A request from Dexter LeFavour to bury a sewer pipe six feet under Sand Hill Road for a property there was approved by Larabee because most of the site's small lot is designated as wetland, as is the roadside ditch.

Larrabee and Michael Gray, reporting on the status of town highway grant projects, saying work has been completed for the King Pond Road and Wilbur Road projects, with funding being handled.

Vermont Construction is now under contract for replacement of the town hall and town office roofs, confirming plans to complete work by October 17.

The town office basement waterproofing RFP has been

advertised and posted, with bids due on September 25 and only one contractor attending the site visit.

An RFP for replacement of the town office windows is still being worked on, with concerns raised about increasing costs.

Other mitigation projects involving culvert replacements on County Road are on hold, with hydraulic studies completed by VTrans, but design work underway that won't be available in time to do the work this year.

Skip Lindsay has been working on a project to review Woodbury's emergency service providers and the 911 maps to determine what some marked structures are. He will work with listers to collect the necessary information that must include indications about possible hazardous substances.

The road crew has been focused on the Wilbur Road project, which was completed last week, and the hauling of winter sand, said Larabee. About 1,000 yards of sand remain to be

hailed of the 3,000 purchased from Gravel Construction, he said.

The road crew had just started on the rail trail project and received a complaint from a property owner close to the trail, whom Larabee was to meet with to resolve the issue.

The new 10-wheel truck has been promised by the dealer to arrive at the garage ready to go, all set up with its winter equipment, sometime in late October.

No one had applied yet to fill a road crew position, though one person had picked up an application, said Durkee.

Peduzzi suggested the town advertise for a third driver for the winter months, with the possibility of becoming permanent full-time in the spring, depending on the result of the road commissioner search, which the board agreed with.

Gray said concerns about illegal tire dumping during Green-Up Day will be addressed with adequate signage for next year.

## Circus

Continued From Page One

offsetting lower program revenue.

However, the last three years of losses likely impacted the organization's financial stability as a result of reduced ticket revenue this past summer following the cancellation of 12 shows after an accident involving a member of the touring troupe.

In the three years from 2022 through 2024, tax returns indicate the organization has lost a total of \$681,000. During that time revenues increased by just under half a million dollars and expenses increased by just over half that, at a quarter million dollars, while assets fell by \$1M, from \$5,500,000 to \$4,500,000. The organization had not provided further context as of press time.

The increased cost of the program over the last three years has clearly created a challenge as the September 26 message indicated. "This past season, however, brought challenges that tested us deeply. We faced real hardship,

including financial strain, the emotional impact of a rigging accident, and the ongoing question of what a sustainable future looks like for Smirkus. It's been a time of reflection, resilience, and recommitment [sic].

The organization has reduced its staff, asking board members to fill in, saying, "Operationally, we are rethinking how we align our work with the values that have always defined Smirkus. We are working with a pared down staff to support ongoing operations and relying on our board to help fill critical need gaps.

In her follow-up message, Schiffer prepared supporters for more changes and to expect to hear more about what the organization is planning to land on a sustainable financial path, saying, "We'll be sharing more updates soon and more ways to get involved."

On October 3, another message from Schiffer announced a \$100,000 matching gift opportunity. Learn more about gift opportunities at [smirkus.org](http://smirkus.org)

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# 3SquaresVT continues as SNAP cuts take effect

by Vermont Treasurer Pieciak's staff

MONTPELIER – Vermonters receiving food assistance benefits through 3SquaresVT, the Vermont name for the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) should continue using the program, Treasurer Pieciak and local food security leaders announced today at Capstone Community Action.

Despite the federal government shutdown, all eligible Vermonters will receive their October 3SquaresVt benefits without delay.

As federal changes to the program took effect October 1, 3SquaresVT is a tool to fight hunger and ensure families can put food on the table. With cuts placing added pressure and demand on food banks and local service providers, officials asked Vermonters to help feed their neighbors by

making a donation to the Vermont Foodbank and trusted local service providers like Capstone.

“SNAP keeps tens of thousands of Vermonters healthy and productive, while pumping over \$150 million into our local grocers, farmers, and small businesses every year,” said Treasurer Pieciak. “Nobody should go hungry in the richest country in the world, but President Trump has made this choice to fund tax cuts for billionaires. Our priority now is to make sure Vermonters can access the assistance that they, and our state, depend on.”

Over 65,000 Vermonters receive assistance from 3Squares VT with 85 percent being older Vermonters, people with disabilities, and households with children. Last year, the program contributed \$155 million to the Vermont economy, supporting over 650 grocery stores, co-ops, farmers, and country stores statewide.

October 1 marks the start of the federal fiscal year, when federal updates and benefit changes to 3SquaresVT take effect. Work requirements will be imposed for beneficiaries including veterans, individuals experiencing homelessness, older Vermonters and parents with children.

Vermont officials emphasized, however, that 3SquaresVT will remain available for Vermonters regardless of work requirements until February 2026, through the state’s discretionary exemptions.

Under new federal rules, asylees and refugees residing legally in the United States have lost eligibility for benefits as of

October 1, impacting nearly 1,500 non-citizen Vermonters who were able to receive 3SquaresVT assistance previously. “We thank Treasurer Pieciak and community partners for their leadership in this moment,” said Molly Gray, Executive Director of the Vermont Afghan Alliance. “Our newest Vermonters are working tirelessly to grow our workforce and contribute to the Vermont economy, making sure they can feed their children is the very least we can do.”

For more information on federal changes to SNAP and resources for accessing 3SquaresVT and other benefits, Vermonters can visit vtfoodhelp.com.



A variety of unique painted works by Ken Leslie were available as part of Ruby and Ken Leslie’s joint exhibition for Vermont open studio weekend.

photo by Raymonda Parchment

## Lockhart

Continued From Page One

In addition to his teaching, Lockhart is a practicing artist who has exhibited and sold wood carvings, bronzes, paper mâché sculptures, fired clay sculptures, assemblages, drawings and paintings. He credits mentors such as the late Canadian sculptor Mark Prent, with whom he worked for about 30 years at Pink House Studios, and Professor Ken Leslie with the MFA program at Johnson State College (now Vermont State University) and the Vermont Studio Center, for helping shape his artistic journey.

A firm believer in art education, Lockhart has seen exponential growth in students’ creativity and process skills through art. According to Lockhart, their

questions and desire to learn about art manifests in deep, analytical conversations and ultimately, increased self-esteem. “Art is a universal language that everyone can understand,” Lockhart said. “Learning about creative thinking and process is a powerful experience. I try to encourage my students to go a little further into their projects so that their finished artwork surprises them with their own abilities.”

The Vermont Art Educators Association presents this annual award to an educator who exemplifies excellence in art teaching, advocacy and creative leadership. For Lockhart, it’s a recognition of nearly three decades of inspiring students to see the world and themselves through the lens of art.



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## Granite Street neighbors' experiences shape flood resilience plan

by **Kristen Leahy, Andrea Phelps and Katt Tolman**

HARDWICK – The Granite Street Neighbors project is bringing together historical records, engineering analysis, neighborhood photos and residents' lived experiences to shape flood solutions. In partnership with neighbors, the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE), the Town and SLR International, the effort aims to ensure the Granite Street Historic District is better prepared for future storms.

Fifteen residents of the Granite Street neighborhood gathered with representatives from SLR International to share their experiences from the 2023 and 2024 floods on September 15. The meeting was a step toward developing a Granite Street Historic District Flood Resilience Plan.

The project is funded through a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG), as a collaboration between the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE), the Town of Hardwick and neighborhood residents.

In 2023, the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) hired SLR International Corporation, an environmental engineering company, to create a model for the Lamoille River and several tributaries, including Cooper Brook in Hardwick. Building on that work, the Town of Hardwick engaged SLR to assist with developing a Flood Resiliency Plan for the Granite Street Historic District.

Thirty-two households have completed surveys, and residents at the September 15 provided firsthand accounts of where floodwaters traveled, how high the waters rose and how impacts differed between the Lamoille River and Cooper Brook. Neighbors shared personal photographs of flooding, which provide tangible evidence of water elevations and will be incorporated

directly into the plan.

The Granite Street project builds on lessons from previous neighborhood conversations, which helped identify a potential flood mitigation project on the Lamoille River downstream of the Cooper Brook confluence.

On September 25, the Town submitted a Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery grant application for a flood storage project in that area to restore 1980s flood benching that has deteriorated in the years since. If funded, the restoration will provide more flood storage for the Lamoille River and Cooper Brook during high water events.

Next spring, the project team will host a workshop series on emergency preparedness topics such as assembling go bags. While designed in response to requests from neighbors participating in the Granite Street Neighbor project, the workshops will be free and open to the wider community.

The neighborhood is working with the town to strengthen communication during emergencies, including exploring a warning system for dam failures, floods and other hazards. The town is actively working to connect residents with funding opportunities to elevate and protect basement utilities, such as furnaces and hot water heaters, that have been damaged in past floods.

Archival research with Elizabeth Dow at the Hardwick Historical Society has uncovered photographs documenting past flood events. Those images reveal two distinct patterns: flooding from the Lamoille River, which has historically affected upstream areas such as Elm Street (notably during a 1964 ice jam), and flooding from Cooper Brook, which tends to push higher waters into the Granite and Cottage Street area.

Several residents commented that the chance to share their



Residents of the Granite Street neighborhood listen to SLR International representatives Jessica Clark Louisos and Josephine Alling, as they introduce a project at Hardwick's Atkins field pavilion, on September 15, to develop a Granite Street Historic District Flood Resilience Plan. Residents then shared their experiences from the 2023 and 2024 floods to help SLR develop the plan.

photo by Caleb Kenna, courtesy State of Vermont

experiences helped them feel heard, a reminder that resilience planning is not only about infrastructure and data, but also about building community and recognizing lived experiences.

Kristen Leahy serves as

the Town of Hardwick Resilience and Adaptation Coordinator, Katt Tolman serves the Center for an Agricultural Economy as grants manager and Andrea Phelps is a resident of the Granite Street Historic District.

## Land Trust receives Wolcott property bequest

by **Northern Rivers Land Trust staff**

WOLCOTT – The Northern Rivers Land Trust (NRLT) has received the largest single donation in its 19-year history. Long-time Wolcott resident Alton “Tony” Smith, who died on August 30, willed his 55.5-acre property to the land trust. Smith’s estate recently transferred the property to the NRLT at a closing in Hardwick.

In the year prior to his death Smith was working with the NRLT to place a conservation easement on the property. While his poor health prevented completion of the easement process, Smith’s Last Will and Testament granted the property to the NRLT with a requirement that it be conserved and donated to the Town of Wolcott.

The property borders the recently-established Wolcott Community Forest. On August 20 of this year the Wolcott Select Board agreed to add 53.5 acres of the property to the community forest. The residence and two acres will be sold, and the funds from that sale will be used to create the Alton Smith Conservation Fund at the NRLT.

The funds will be used by the land trust to further its mission to support landowners in conserving and protecting the ecologically important and working lands at the headwaters of Vermont’s Winooski, Lamoille and Black Rivers for the benefit of future generations.

“I know Tony would be delighted that his property now will be protected and used as part of the Wolcott

Community Forest for generations to come,” said Jack Travelstead, NRLT Board chair.

Smith lived in Wolcott for nearly 50 years. His love for the land led him to pass it on to NRLT “to be conserved and preserved for future generations to enjoy.”

A dedicated outdoorsman, hiker and conservationist, Smith was the 21st person to climb, with his pals George Putnam and John Sharp, all the 4,000-foot mountains in New England and New York in the winter.

Smith and Sharp continued their adventures and scaled the rest of the 100 highest peaks in New England in the winter. When he was not hiking, Smith was helping people find jobs through his position at the Vermont Department of Employment and Training. He retired in 2010.

Putnam, the executor of Smith’s estate, said: “This transfer of Tony Smith’s property to the Northern Rivers Land Trust is a major step toward realizing Tony’s dream. Tony purchased several parcels of land that he wanted to preserve for future generations — land encompassing forests, streams and beaver ponds. Thanks to the NRLT and the Town of Wolcott, most of Tony’s property will be added to the Wolcott Community Forest, fulfilling Tony’s dream beyond his early hopes and expectations.”

The NRLT serves the towns of Albany, Craftsbury, Greensboro, Hardwick, Walden, Wolcott and Woodbury. For more information and to contact the NRLT, go to [northernriverslandtrust.org](http://northernriverslandtrust.org).



Wolcott Street near Elm Street in Hardwick, on March 5, 1964, during flooding due to a Lamoille River ice jam.

photograph courtesy Hardwick Historical Society

# Last mass at Our Lady of Fatima, Oct. 11

by **Raymonda Parchment**

CRAFTSBURY – The last Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Craftsbury will be held on Saturday, Oct. 11, at 6:30 p.m., with the rosary beginning at 6:15 p.m..

Regular Masses have not been held at Our Lady of Fatima since 2022. With declining Mass attendance, the decision was made to close Our Lady of Fatima.

With the pending approval of the bishop, the property will be put up for sale in the coming months.

Longtime parishioner and chairman of the Parish Council, Jeannine Young, provided more details about the property, as well as its beloved statue feature. “There’s a shortage of priests. When we first stopped having regular summer masses there, it was when we were getting a new priest, and we weren’t sure if we were going to have full-time priests or visiting priests, so we didn’t plan any summer masses.”

She continued, “With the lowering attendance at St. Michael’s and St. Norbert’s as well, it wasn’t really feasible to keep Our Lady of Fatima open. Personally, it’s a pretty sad day, that was my childhood church.”

“I am quite attached to it, so it’s pretty hard for some of us. It’s a beautiful little church. But time changes. The first mass was November 11, 1951, and it’s had a rich history of being appreciated in town,” Young reflected.

In 1950, a census in the Craftsbury population found there were enough Catholics to justify the celebration of Mass there on a regular basis. The first Mass was held in the Craftsbury Academy auditorium, with about 100 in attendance. Masses were then celebrated in the Craftsbury Grange Hall. Land was

purchased from the Emma Conant Estate in January 1951 to construct the church.

The new church dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima was built in the summer of 1951 and Bishop Edward Ryan, Bishop of Burlington, celebrated the first Mass.

Young says some are curious about the fate of the Our Lady of Fatima statue, “It’s going to be missed by everyone, not just the Catholics. I’ve had people, other denominations ask, well, what’s going to happen to the statue because it’s a central part of the village.”

The statue and part of the altar in front of it will remain within the parish, according to Young. However, they will be relocated to the flower garden at St. Norberts in Hardwick, on the hill where the old church used to be.

In 2009, Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church joined with St. Norbert Church in Hardwick and St. Michael Church in Greensboro Bend to form the Mary Queen of All Saints Parish, where Craftsbury parishioners continue to worship.

“Anyone’s welcome to attend the last Mass, especially those who are former parishioners or anyone who has an interest in the church. It’s going to be a sad day for some of us.”

The pandemic marked a turning point for many churches, with pre-Covid-19 attendance never really recovering. Young was in agreement, “A lot of churches have struggled since Covid-19, when people didn’t go for a couple months, over a year and, they just got out of the habit of going to church and just don’t go anymore. It’s not just the Catholics. A lot of different churches have had that problem, Anyway, we’ll keep going. We don’t go to church for the building, we go to church for the Lord.”



Greensboro Community Garden volunteers who prepared the garden beds for winter were (from left) Joan Feffer, Carol Calcagni, Cathy Hansen, Liz Steel, Sara Slater and Jenny Bayles. *courtesy photo*

## Community garden ends season

by **Jenny Bayles**

GREENSBORO – Volunteers put the Greensboro Community Garden to bed on October 4. During the season, from July to September, 10 active volunteers planted, tended, harvested and distributed 334 pounds of vegetables, herbs and flowers the garden produced. Approximately 370 volunteer hours were required to produce and deliver all that food. The Greensboro Association provided financial support.

In addition to growing and distributing vegetables to the Hardwick Area Food Pantry and Smith’s Grocery in Greensboro Bend where the produce is offered for free to the community, volunteers also participated in local events. On August

5 and September 2, garden volunteers donated vegetables and helped chop, cook and arrange flowers for two of the free Greensboro Community Meals in Fellowship Hall. Fresh green beans and dip were offered at the annual Bend Block Party and picnic on August 8, and on August 16 garden volunteers facilitated Greensboro Community Garden Bingo with more fresh vegetables as prizes at Greensboro’s Art Fest on the town green.

Volunteers included Jenny Bayles, Carol Calcagni, Heidi DeBrino, Joan Feffer, Cathy Hansen, Betsy Hunt, Beth Meacham, Miriam Rogers, Sara Slater, and Liz Steel with additional support from Carol Bayles, Holly Cook, Liz Hatch, Emma Janicki and Ed Sunday-Winters.

## Three Orleans Deputies join Sheriff’s department

by **Paul Fixx**

ST. JOHNSBURY – Caledonia County Sheriff Brandon Thraikill’s plan to stabilize the department has taken a step forward with the addition of three veteran law enforcement officers

The three deputies are Orleans County residents, who have left the Orleans County Sheriff’s Department to sign on with Thraikill.

Since he took over the position on April 30, Thraikill has announced he plans to move forward with a plan for a new patrol division developed by Sheriff James Hemmod, who he replaced after Hemmond died in March.

The patrol division of two to four officers would help the department serve the 10 towns it is under contract to provide law enforcement coverage for. Thraikill has said the department hasn’t been able to provide full coverage for those towns as staffing has dropped from more than 25 people in 2019 to fewer than 10 before the recent hires.

That coverage includes patrol time in Walden to supplement

Vermont State Police coverage.

Joining the department are Deputy Tom Hanlon, who spent 25 years with the Vermont State Police and the last 18 with the Orleans County Sheriff’s Department, where he’s provided security at the courthouse.

Deputy Dale Woodworth worked with the U.S. Border Patrol for 23 years before his last three with the Orleans Sheriff. And Deputy Doug Morrill was with the Orleans Sheriff for the last eight years.

In a recent Caledonia Record story, the new officers expressed discontent over inconsistencies in pay and a lack of training in their former positions with the Orleans County Sheriff’s Department.

Thraikill said the three new deputies will mostly provide courthouse security as he works to hire other deputies for patrol duties and provide training for those already working for the department to fill that role.

The department is currently advertising for five part-time deputies.

Get the free newsletter featuring notable news, arts, sports and opinion. Sit back, relax and catch up.  
[hardwickgazette.org](http://hardwickgazette.org)

or help at [hardwickgazette.org/donate](http://hardwickgazette.org/donate)

# Vermonters set to lose Medicare Advantage option

by Olivia Gieger, VTDigger

VERMONT – Nearly all Vermonters on Medicare Advantage (MA) individual plans are expected to lose their current health insurance for 2026. New data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services reveal all but one provider in the state will discontinue coverage for 2026.

Neither UnitedHealthcare nor Vermont Blue Advantage has renewed its individual MA plans for the 2026 year, CMS data show. These plans cover the large majority of the more than 51,600 people insured by MA plans in Vermont. Vermont Blue Advantage's individual plans alone currently serve 26,000 people in the state. An additional 7,800 people will lose their UnitedHealthcare coverage.

Humana will continue to offer its MA plans in Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orange, Windham and Windsor counties. CMS's data for the coming year did not show any 2026 MA plans available for individuals living in the state's other counties to enroll in.

"Without a doubt, it's very disruptive for seniors to have limited options to these plans," said Kaj Samsom, the commissioner of the Department of Financial Regulation.

These changes impact only the market for individual MA plans. Large employers may offer their retirees continued coverage with MA insurance plans it manages for retired teachers will transition from Vermont Blue Advantage to HealthSpring. Vermont Blue Advantage is run by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont in conjunction with its counterpart and parent company in Michigan.

MA plans are an option for people eligible for Medicare, a federal health insurance program for those 65 years and older and those with certain disabilities. The MA plans, sometimes called Part C plans, are operated by a private company but receive funding from the federal government. They often include broader coverage, including prescription coverage, than standard Medicare, and they have a cap on annual out-of-pocket expenses. Generally, standard Medicare covers 80% of health expenses.

Last year two MA plans pulled out of Vermont, leaving only the Humana, Blue Advantage and UnitedHealthcare plans for individuals to choose from. At the time, only 50 people were enrolled in Humana plans.

This week UnitedHealthcare, which is the nation's largest provider of MA plans, announced an end to its MA coverage for 600,000

patients in 109 counties, 14 of which are in Vermont. A representative from the company told Reuters that in total 600,000 patients across the country will no longer be covered in 2026, mostly in rural areas.

All across the country MA providers have been scaling back their coverage, as the plans become less profitable for the companies that run them. Many companies cite a decrease in the amount of money the private insurers receive from the federal government, higher numbers of patients seeking and paying for care, and a shift in federal rules outlining how much insurers can pre-pay providers for care.

"Many plans across the country have been impacted by a fluid regulatory environment, increased competition, and rising health care costs and consumer expectations," Teresa Anderson, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont's director of brand and engagement strategies, wrote in an email. "The unique challenges here in Vermont, specifically with limited competition, resulted in membership growing at an unsustainable rate, resulting in escalating healthcare costs. These factors forced our organization to pull back its MA offerings."

UnitedHealthcare spokesperson Megan Sergel also confirmed the end of the Vermont plans over email. She wrote: "UnitedHealthcare is making strategic adjustments to its MA offerings for 2026 to ensure long-term affordability and stability for the millions of members who rely on us. Some of these changes include plan closures and market exits, and impacted individuals will receive a CMS-required notice in early October, with clear guidance on their options and next steps."

Current plans will remain in effect through the end of the year. Medicare's annual open enrollment period, for patients to choose plans for the coming year, runs October 15 through December 7.

People losing their coverage can expect to receive two different letters, explained Sam Carleton, the director of Vermont's State Health Insurance Program (SHIP), which provides assistance to Medicare beneficiaries in the state. The first letter should come from CMS, outlining that the plan will not be offered in 2026. The second should be the official notice of change from the insurers themselves.

"Anytime there's a massive disruption like this, you worry about people who slip through the cracks or don't understand what the mail they're getting means. It'd be very, very easy for someone to

miss those notifications," Carleton said.

Without access to the MA plans, individuals have the option to opt into standard Medicare for coverage. Those in traditional Medicare plans often need to buy a Medicare Supplement plan, or Medigap plan for short, which offers coverage for the remaining expenses that traditional Medicare does not cover. Many people on traditional Medicare also need to buy prescription drug plans, often referred to as Part D plans.

"This is disruptive, yes, but don't panic. You have time, you have options. There are resources available to help guide you through it," Samsom said.

Individuals who lose their MA coverage are guaranteed eligibility to enroll in any plan in the Vermont Medicare Supplement market, without consideration of pre-existing medical conditions, up to 63 days after the coverage ends, a press release from the Department of Financial Regulation explains. For those whose coverage runs through the end of this year, that leaves until March 4, 2026.

The department advises people to hold on to the notice they receive from their insurer announcing the end of coverage, as proof to secure guaranteed access to the supplemental plans.

Samsom pointed people toward SHIP and the Medicare handbook for navigating coverage. Carlton confirmed that both Medicare.gov and 1-800-Medicare remain up and running despite the government shutdown that began October 1. Both, he said, are good resources for people who may want

assistance before SHIP's small team can get to them.

Another concern is that Vermont's Medigap plans are expensive: "There's a real risk of this change driving more people to be in Medicare with no secondary coverage," said Mike Fisher, the state's health care advocate.

Yet Medicare Advantage plans have also received serious criticisms.

"We regularly hear from people who feel like they have been sold something that doesn't meet their needs," Fisher said. "And we regularly hear from providers across the whole system of care who are really frustrated with underpayment."

"There is a lot of frustration about them, so I think that there will be some people who will see this as a good thing," he added. "But we also know that there's a lot of Vermonters who have been quite satisfied and well served [by the MA plans]."

Carleton echoed this view: "There is a part of me that's like, 'Maybe people will be better off in certain circumstances where they're not on an Advantage plan,'" he said. "Not always, though. I think there are people who it did work for, and I know that the Blue Cross plan did work for folks."

He added that for his office, the biggest concern with these plans' closures is the timing and volume of people affected.

"When it happens all at once, like this, it is really a challenge. There is going to be a giant wave of folks who reach out to us during open enrollment this year."



Melissa LeBlanc (right) of ML Pottery in Morrisville visits with Becky Galloway (center) and Elsie Hurt (left) both from West Glover, about her wheel thrown stoneware at the AWARE Fall Foliage Craft Fair held in the Hazen Union gymnasium, October 4. The show included 55 vendors.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

# Annual Pumpkin Walk, Sunday, October 5



At the Hardwick Trails Pumpkin Walk, October 6, (from left) Deb Robarge stands with her son Ashton Chambers and daughter Myah Chambers, who has found the pumpkin she carved in Beth LeCours' art class the week before. photo by Paul Fixx



Juniper Knapp stands in front of her mother Miranda, holding the pumpkin she carved in art class last week, before a two-day vacation, extending the weekend of the Hardwick Trails Pumpkin Walk Sunday, to four days. photo by Paul Fixx



Lesa Cathcart has donned her traditional witch outfit for the Pumpkin Walk as she read no-so-scary stories to children and adults. Cathcart sat in the middle of the fire pit lit by an electric lantern this year because the drought prevented lit fires and candles. photo by Paul Fixx



Children at the Pumpkin Walk leave the refreshment table to visit with parents, friends and neighbors Sunday at the Hardwick Trails. photo by Paul Fixx



At Hardwick's Pumpkin Walk Sunday, volunteers at the refreshment table are (from left) Wayne Renaud, Norma Spaulding serving apple cider and Lynn Angebrandt prepares donuts made by the Buffalo Mountain Market as Terry Tuthill passes them to waiting visitors. photo by Paul Fixx

photo by Paul Fixx

# Caspian beach clean water project community forum held

by Paul Fixx

GREENSBORO – Light attendance of less than 10 people at a community forum to learn about a clean water project for the Caspian Lake public beach gave those at the Highland Center for the Arts, September 25, a chance to share their concerns and ideas.

Greensboro resident Will Marlier, Lake Watershed Program Specialist with the Orleans County Natural Resource Conservation District (OCNRCD), was joined by Dana Allen, with FluidState Consulting, the company that developed the Lake Watershed Action Plan in 2023.

Marlier said Allen has now been contracted to identify improvements that can be made at the public beach to benefit the lake's water quality and shoreline habitat, leading to preliminary project designs, under the \$10,875 contract.

Their presentation shared concerns about increased spring phosphorous levels that have doubled in the last 20 years and summer levels that have been trending upward, though both have been stabilizing in recent years.

Phosphorus, produced by various human activities, including grass, fecal matter and leaves, can decrease water quality, reduce water clarity and can lower lake-shore property values.

Management plans might include rain gardens, walking paths,

better delineation of the beach, work to reduce stormwater runoff from the parking lot and boat launch and buffer plantings.

The dam is not to be included in the planning process they said.

Because the parking lot is relatively flat, runoff flows both into the lake and into the outlet brook, which can affect downstream water quality, so management of that runoff can be important, they said.

Development of the Lake Watershed Action Plan in 2022 and 2023 involved working with key town stakeholders and assessing 143 sites. 34 were prioritized for projects or other responses that could lead to a 148 pound per year reduction in phosphorus loading.

The current project, to develop preliminary designs, will continue into next year, with additional grant funding needed to develop a final design in 2026. Implementation would then be expected to begin in 2026 and continue into 2027.

Sarah Braese, the Hardwick Electric Department General Manager, spoke as the property owner, though the utility is a department of the Town of Hardwick. She said the board of commissioners has given its full support for the development of the project.

The range of people attending included swimmers and boaters, residents of Greensboro and Hardwick and at least one lakeshore



Will Marlier, Lake Watershed Program Specialist with the Orleans County Natural Resource Conservation District, leads a community forum to learn about a clean water project for the Caspian Lake public beach, at the Highland Center for the Arts, September 25. photo by Paul Fixx

property owner. Their comments and suggestions included parking management to avoid blocked-in cars and better parking for vehicles with trailers, especially on busy weekends. Work on the boat launch, including possible dredging, is a particular concern with this year's low water levels. Marlier noted that paved surfaces can reduce phosphorous runoff.

Those attending seemed to agree that maintaining access for current users of the beach, lake and picnic area with its lawn, was important. Removal of a town trash can was noted as a possible contributor to more trash.

There was a discussion of the

granite blocks dividing the parking area from the lawn above the beach and along the picnic area, with the need to evaluate how the pathways between them may affect erosion noted for study.

Winter access was mentioned as was what is done with winter snow, which Greensboro Select Board Chair MacNeil confirmed is plowed by the town.

The project will continue with additional opportunities to provide input, including some in Hardwick.

Will Marlier can be reached by email at [will.marlier@orleanscountynrcd.org](mailto:will.marlier@orleanscountynrcd.org) or by phone at (802) 624-7023.

## NEWS NOTES

### AG Clark joins lawsuit to protect critical homeland security funding

by Paul Fixx

MONTPELIER – Vermont Attorney General Charity Clark, joined a coalition of 12 attorneys general in filing a lawsuit to stop the Trump Administration from unlawfully reallocating federal homeland security funding away from states based on their compliance with the Administration's political agenda. In addition, the Administration reduced the period during which states have to spend the funds from three years to one year, making it substantially more difficult to use these critical funds.

On Saturday, without any notice or explanation, and four days before the end of the federal fiscal year, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

significantly cut funding to certain states that are unwilling to divert law enforcement resources away from core public safety services to assist in enforcing federal immigration law while reallocating those funds to other states.

The move came days after Attorney General Clark and a group of attorneys general secured a permanent injunction along with an opinion holding that the agencies violated the Constitution and the Administrative Procedure Act by conditioning all federal funds from FEMA and DHS on states' agreement to assist the federal government in enforcing federal immigration law.

"The Trump Administration is trying to unlawfully reallocate federal homeland security funding based on a state's willingness to comply with the

Administration's political agenda," said Attorney General Clark. "But under the Constitution, it is Congress, not the President, who has the power of the purse. This reallocation also includes an unlawful attempt at drastically shortening the timeframe during which funds must be spent, effectively setting states on a race against time to use the funds before one year is up."

FEMA awards recently announced cut funding to the 12 states joining in the lawsuit to just 51%, of the total amount that FEMA had previously stated it would provide to those states.

Vermont received its expected funds, but new rules require that the funds be spent within a year, instead of the three years planned for.

In the lawsuit, Attorney General Clark and the coalition argue

that the reallocation of funds and restructured timeframe are unlawful and violate the federal Administrative Procedure Act. The attorneys general are seeking a temporary restraining order to block these actions.

Attorney General Clark is joined in this lawsuit by the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Washington.

This lawsuit is the twenty-eighth case overall that Attorney General Clark has brought against the Trump Administration since President Trump took office in January. For more information on actions taken by the Attorney General on behalf of Vermonters, visit the website at [ago.vermont.gov/ago-actions](http://ago.vermont.gov/ago-actions).

# NEWS NOTES

## Unemployment benefits available to non-essential and furloughed federal workers

by Vermont Department of Labor staff

MONTPELIER – Federal employees in Vermont who may be deemed “non-essential” and furloughed due to the temporary federal government shutdown were entitled to file for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits beginning the first day of the shutdown, October 1.

“The Department recognizes that a federal shutdown can cause uncertainty and stress for many Vermonters employed by the federal government,” said Kendal Smith, Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Labor. “Our goal is to ensure that those who have been impacted understand their options, know what documentation will be required, and feel prepared to access unemployment benefits if eligible.”

Federal workers impacted by a shutdown have up to two weeks from the start of the shutdown to file an unemployment claim. Individuals can apply for UI by calling the UI Claims Center at 1-877-214-3330 (Monday – Thursday: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm / Friday: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm). Please note that calling later in

the week will not affect eligibility for benefits.

Additional information and guidance are available at labor.vermont.gov.

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Hardwick Elementary 6th graders Kevin Hayden (left) and Colton Daigneault carve pumpkins for the Hardwick Trails pumpkin walk held October 5, which featured almost 400 pumpkins carved by the kindergarten through sixth grade students.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



One of George Sawyer’s whimsical seating creations, a gossip chair, features a bar under which one must duck to sit facing a second seat for another gossip, which he showed to visitors at his Woodbury shop on Sunday of Vermont Open Studio weekend, Oct. 5.

photo by Paul Fixx

# EDITORIAL

## It's time to resist the roundup

In tracking down information to write the story of ICE rounding up nine foreigners in Hardwick on September 26, and this week trying to track them through their Vermont imprisonment, with state, ICE and third-party websites (where I came up mostly empty, by the way), it's clear that it's not intended to be an easy process. More information about the people being traced must be known than an outsider can piece together.

Along the way I learned Florida law enforcement officials have arrested more than 6,000 people suspected of being in the country illegally, according to a U.S. Border Patrol official as reported by the Associated Press.

That seems a far more aggressive approach than we see in Vermont. Given the difference in each state's population, at the same rate, that would mean about 170 people would have been detained in Vermont, but the number is 80 or 90 according to a person who spoke for Migrant Justice.

Elsewhere down the rabbit hole we see federal employees who were DOGED, funding of SNAP benefits at risk, food pantries losing funding and now, area flood mitigation projects on hold because federal workers have been furloughed due to the government shutdown.

I'm almost certain no problem ever gets solved in the life of an individual while they are blaming someone else for it. I'm similarly certain the same is true of a country.

How can a country that seems to pride itself on being exceptional, continue to believe that, when leaders of all three branches of our government can't lead effectively.

As I was becoming more discouraged by the minute, a slickly produced U.S. Government video, overlaid with dramatic music, showing helicopters with searchlights, armed officers in battle fatigues, and handcuffed prisoners being escorted from what is said to be a Chicago apartment appeared on the heels of President Trump's preposterous statements about

his new Department of War going to war against residents in Portland and Chicago.

Until now I'd resisted the possibility that this administration is trying to destroy the entire fabric of our country, but I now no longer resist that.

With Vermont unemployment at 2.5%, it's certain even thousands of foreigners, whether documented or not, aren't taking jobs from those who want them.

It's more likely those with concerns about their livelihood should be looking at the three wealthiest individuals in the U.S., who have more wealth than what's variously reported to be between 28% and 50% of the country's wealth.

Close to home, I'm happy to see those in our community coming together to share meals, to protect those foreigners who might be, or be mistaken for, undocumented foreigners and to fill in the funding gaps.

We'd do well to be reminded of Pastor Martin Niemöller's famous quote:

First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out — because I was not a socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out — because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out — because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me — and there was no one left to speak for me.

According to the holocaust encyclopedia, "There are multiple versions of the quote. Some versions include a different list of victims. This is because Niemöller often presented his lectures impromptu and changed the list of victims from lecture to lecture. At different times and in different combinations, Niemöller listed: communists, socialists, trade unionists, Jews, people with mental and physical disabilities and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Whatever the details, it's up to all of us to recognize when our government is working to divide rather than unite us and resist the roundup.

Let us be a community that unites ourselves.

**Paul Fixx, editor**

## THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

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

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

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# ANOTHER OPINION

## Wolcott in the news, Act 73

by Dr. David Baker

HARDWICK – Recently, we saw a perfect example of what a determined, small community can achieve. Wolcott, one of the smaller towns in our supervisory union, was recently highlighted on Channel 3 WCAX for exceptional community work on bike trails that run through the forest adjacent to the school. While not finished completely, the initial trails are of exceptional quality. Those who have ridden them note their world-class potential.

The Wolcott community could see that they needed something to bring their community together and to attract others to their community. They were forward thinking and they continue to look to the future in community-planning. Their ultimate intent is to make Wolcott a destination town with flourishing businesses, restaurants and other recreational

possibilities. In an effort to attain that goal, they also partnered with several agencies, including the school district, to completely upgrade their waste management system. This was no easy feat. They needed support from their taxpayers, the school district, and other agencies. They got all of that support, and they continue to persevere.

Wolcott is an example of why we need to be so careful as the state goes about redistricting in accordance with Act 73. I have reported on this Act in previous communications, but suffice it to say, the Redistricting Task Force, as of this writing, has met three times. These are full-day meetings. The task force is tasked with making up to three recommendations on redistricting to the state legislature. They will provide the associated maps related to the district changes. The legislation calls for supervisory unions or

districts that have between 4,000 and 8,000 students. OSSU comes nowhere near that. We would need to merge with at least four other supervisory unions to meet that minimum number.

There are two types of organizational structures for schools in Vermont. The first is what is commonly referred to as a district. Examples would be Burlington or Hartford. These have one controlling board and one budget for all the schools in their catchment area.

The second organizational structure is what we have experienced, commonly called a supervisory union (SU). Typically, these have one supervisory union board that oversees all centralized services and distinct local boards that have the ultimate authority over the individual districts, including developing and adopting the final budget. So, you can see that the

commission deliberations could seriously change the way we have done business as an SU. Boards are gathering some public input, and several of us, including me, are trying to attend these task force meetings. They are open to the public and have a virtual option. Agendas can be found on the Vermont Agency of Education website. Upcoming meeting dates as of this writing are: October 10, October 28, November 10 and November 20, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with locations and meeting links added to the website as confirmed, at [aoa.vermont.gov/upcoming-meetings-school-district-redistricting-task-force](http://aoa.vermont.gov/upcoming-meetings-school-district-redistricting-task-force).

No decisions have been made, and the state legislature will have to adopt any changes that are recommended.

*This report has been excerpted from the October Message from OSSU Superintendent Dr. David Baker*

## Our stories shape the stories that matter most

by Paul Fixx, Jeff Cote

HARDWICK – On the occasion of National Newspaper Week, October 5 to 11 this year, it seems appropriate to share this perspective from a fellow editor, modified with a local perspective.

It seems like about every time I am out in public, no matter what the occasion, once someone realizes I work for the local paper, they seem anxious to tell me something.

More often than not, it is how something someone has read impacts their lives.

For example, a select board member once told me they appreciated reading what's happening at select board meetings in other towns because they learn about other approaches to issues they are facing too.

People tell me they like stories about their neighbors in which they learn things about their neighbor's interests, or history, they never knew, even though they've known each other for a long time.

Or the woman in a local restaurant where I take a printed copy of the paper each week, who was excited the last issue contained the story of a big win by her daughter's sports team, with a photo of her daughter. She asked for an extra copy to give to a relative, which I found for her when I picked up an old copy at the next place I dropped off the new issue to. She thanked me for the effort we put into covering local high school sports and I felt even better about the work we do than usual because I felt more connected to someone in the community.

Americans generally trust local news more than national news, and most feel local journalists are in touch with their community, shown by studies by the Pew Research Center show. At the same time, they found the share of Americans following local news closely has dropped significantly since 2016.

The best way to keep The Hardwick Gazette relevant



Jeff Cote

seems to be making more of those connections.

Prior to a recent election cycle, a young man told me if we had not produced our local election guide, he would have no idea who to vote for. He said now he felt good about his vote and vowed to never make a decision in local races again without the information he got about candidates in his community paper.

Advertisers feel life-impacting moments from what we do too. Like the town clerk who told me her town found a perfect, new employee because of an ad they placed in our paper. A comment in response to one of our surveys asked for more ads to help them learn about local businesses.

How many stories like these do we never hear or know about?

There is no question that a community newspaper impacts the lives of people in a community, and in ways we may never know. The stories that come from people because of their local paper are clear evidence that newspapers are more than alive and well. They are busy breathing new life every day in communities across our country.

As an industry, we won't give up on creating the content that can shape the lives of people. Our stories will continue to serve longtime readers or create brand new readers.

In the end, our readers tell us it's the stories about what we are doing for them that matter most.

Paul Fixx, editor, with thanks to Jeff Cote, Publisher/Owner of Derby Weekly Informer, Derby, Kansas.



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THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

# ANOTHER OPINION

## Vermont Agency of Education responds to Boston Globe story on New England schools

by Vermont Agency of Education

MONTPELIER – On Wednesday, the Boston Globe published an article titled “New England schools are failing and nobody seems to care.” At the Agency of Education, we know that Vermonters *do care* about the quality of our schools. However, we need to acknowledge some difficult truths, so we can move forward with honesty, humility, and purpose.

Vermont’s education system is at the center of *Globe* staff writer Christopher Huffaker’s exploration of the “Northern nosedive,” a significant decline in academic outcomes across New England that predates the Covid-19 pandemic and stands in contrast to literacy gains in Mississippi and Louisiana, two of the nation’s poorest states. “No state fell as far in early reading over the last decade as Vermont,” Huffaker writes. “But leadership in New England has shown limited interest in truly confronting the region’s decline.”

“As an education leader, and as a parent of school-aged children, these are difficult words

to read,” said Vermont Secretary of Education **Zoie Saunders**. “However, we need to own the reality that Vermont can do a better job of serving our students and supporting our teachers, particularly in rural and economically disadvantaged areas of the state.”

Comparing the trajectory of New England to other regions of the country, the *Globe* story highlights both the challenges and the urgency of providing an excellent education in economically disadvantaged areas, from Newport City, Vt., to Natchitoches Parish in Louisiana. “Yes, poverty, trauma, and other problems at home make it difficult to learn, but they also make it all the more important,” writes Huffaker.

Although Vermont came in 37th on fourth-grade reading on the Nation’s Report Card in 2024 (also known as NAEP), Vermont’s relative affluence compared to other states appears to be masking the fact that Vermont is falling even further behind in serving economically disadvantaged students. According to an analysis by the Urban Institute of 2024, NAEP scores that adjusts for demo-

graphics like income, Vermont performed lower than nearly every state in the nation in fourth-grade reading.

“As a career educator, I know how important it is that we resist the urge to assign blame and instead recognize that many of our toughest challenges are deeply systemic,” said the agency’s Chief Academic Officer **Dr. Erin Davis**. “This perspective is crucial for me as a proud product of Vermont’s public education system and informs my commitment to collaborative, root-cause solutions that uphold the values of Vermont and honor the hard work and expertise of our educators.”

Over the past 12 months, the agency has taken an honest, and often difficult, look at how the state has failed to support the implementation of key pieces of education policy. In response, the agency has embarked on major efforts that include the following:

Developing a long-overdue strategic plan while addressing the immediate needs of our education system. As part of that effort, the agency has undergone a full reorganization.

Engaging with education

leaders from across the state to develop a vision for Vermont’s education system and define a path forward to enhance academic excellence, expand college and career readiness, ensure safe and healthy schools, and promote personalized learning pathways that inspire every student.

Publishing a Special Education Report, which identified that challenges in special education stem from underlying issues with education quality for all learners.

Working with educators, students and communities across the state to develop statewide graduation requirements. This is a critical step to ensuring that we set high standards of excellence and achievement for every student.

“A commitment to education is woven into the fabric of Vermont,” reflected **Secretary Saunders**. “Over the past year and a half, we have focused on transforming our system, all in pursuit of education quality. Vermont has already taken a clear-eyed look at the challenges we face, and together we are charting a course toward an education system that will lead the nation.”

## First sips from a bitter cup

by David F. Kelley

GREENSBORO – This week the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense (or War?) gathered 800 generals and admirals for a peculiar sort of political rally. The President told stone-faced generals and admirals they would be crucial in his fight against the “enemy from within” and that they could use the homeland as a “training ground” for the military. The Secretary of Defense lectured them on body fat and personal grooming.

If this was a movie it might have been funny. But it was not a movie. These are the people who the entire free world looks to for leadership.

We are less than a year into President Trump’s second term. This is just the beginning.

Already the President is playing with fire, baiting communities where he is especially unpopular (like Portland and Chicago) by threatening an unwanted military presence.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents are now hiding their faces behind masks. They are pulling people off the streets and students out of schools, some for no

better reason than because their skin is brown. Our President wants these people deported to prisons in foreign lands without even the semblance of a hearing.

Journalists who cover the Pentagon must now pledge not to write about even unclassified information without prior authorization from the now Secretary of (Defense) War. God forbid the public should find out the place is run by a guy who emails classified information to reporters for the Atlantic.

The Justice Department is being told to be more aggressive, not in the pursuit of justice, but in the prosecution of the President’s critics. James Comey, John Bolton, Letitia James, Adam Schiff and others are all supposed to be prosecuted, not because there is probable cause, but because we have an attorney general willing to do what she is told and to spread fear.

The President is using every lever of the federal government to compel universities, broadcast media and law firms to serve his own personal political agenda instead of the legitimate purpose of free institutions.

The UAE recently invested two billion dollars in the Trump family’s

new cryptocurrency business, “World Liberty Financial,” and were then given access to advanced microchips forbidden to be sold to China when China is Qatar’s leading trade partner. The deal was brokered by Steve Witkoff, Trump’s Special Envoy to the Middle East, whose family now co-owns World Liberty Financial with Trump’s family. Maybe a new book is in the offing: “The Art of the Steal.” Vladimir Putin must be green with envy. It’s his kind of deal.

A few months ago, I believed that as long as we had comedians like Jimmy Kimmel and Stephen Colbert who could ridicule the President and his minions, then the First Amendment was alive and well and our democracy was, more or less, safe. I was wrong.

Our President has studied Putin’s handbook diligently. In the midst of what most lawyers would agree was a frivolous lawsuit with CBS, Stephen Colbert, with the highest ratings in late night television, had his contract canceled. A few weeks later Disney, the owner of ABC, fired Jimmy Kimmel amidst FCC threats to scuttle the merger of network affiliates.

A small ray of sunlight in this dark landscape was Jimmy Kimmel

being rehired. Apparently when millions of people canceled their Hulu and Disney-plus accounts, Mickey Mouse was listening.

We are not yet one year into this presidency, and it feels as if a virus that infected Russia, Tunisia, Hungary, El Salvador and other countries has begun to infect us. For generations Americans have inspired other peoples’ struggles for freedom and democracy. Perhaps it is time for us to find renewed strength from some of them: the Poles who stood with Solidarity in the Gdansk shipyards or the Ukrainians who stood for democracy and human rights in Maidan Square.

John Kennedy reminded us: “In a democracy, every citizen, regardless of his interest in politics, ‘holds office;’ every one of us is in a position of responsibility; and, in the final analysis, the kind of government we get depends upon how we fulfill those responsibilities. We, the people, are the boss, and we will get the kind of political leadership, be it good or bad, that we demand and deserve.” It is time for all of us to demand better before it gets worse.

*David Kelley is a lawyer and a former member of the Greensboro Select Board.*

# OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

## The Lussier's are leaving a lasting musical legacy

by **Raymonda Parchment**

CRAFTSBURY – For many in the area, Linda and Bernie Lussier were the source of musical enjoyment and festivity for decades. Founding members of the Craftsbury Vibrations, their musical journeys began in the late fifties, the start of a decades long run of genre-spanning performances.

“I started playing music in 1956 in Hardwick on the sidewalk in front of the school. From 7 to 8 p.m., we played four different weekends, then had to stop. The crowd got too big, so we moved it to Woodbury Water Tub,” wrote Bernie Lussier. When the cold weather came, he played at the Hardwick Inn for weddings and parties. Moving to Massachusetts in 1963, Lussier played with Bob Higgins and Ray Holly as the Vermont Country Boys, “I made it big there,” he wrote.

Coming home in 1966, Lussier began performing with Ronald Sanville in The Vipers the following year.

The late Linda Lussier's first gig was with “The Five Beat Nicks” in 1958, playing live with her sisters and cousins on “Chuck Wagon Tales” with Zeb Lightfoot on WCAX television. She began singing and learning piano and guitar at the age of six, also playing trumpet for taps ceremonies. She worked diligently on music, “Without Linda, there would be no Craftsbury Vibrations. She was a musical genius,” her husband writes.

The duo played Christmas parties for the kids at church and school for about 10 years. They performed for the family reunion year after year. The couple played

at the nursing home when they could. “We played everything.”

Linda and Bernie started playing with just the two of them in the Hardwick Legion. They moved to the larger area at the K of C Hall in Hardwick and started Craftsbury Vibrations. The original lineup for The Craftsbury Vibrations consisted of: Bernie Lussier, Linda Lussier, Roger Sanville and Bingham Marcier. Soon outgrowing the space, they went to Puss Royers Barn Dance in 1972 in Orleans with crowds up to 1,100. They moved again to Silver Ridge in Morrisville during the winter and Coles Pond Casino in Walden in the summer.

For 10 or 12 years, the band used these venues steadily before moving onto other venues. The Craftsbury Vibrations played in the Cobweb in Georgia, The Old Lantern in Charlotte, Jake's Barn in Huntington, Barre Canadian Club, Montpelier Elks, Country Cousins, Derby Elks, Paul's Sugar House in Derby, Wells River and Burlington VFW. They played at functions, political rallies like Senator Aiken's retirement party and hundreds of weddings. The band played for the Cattle-men's Association and during the summer they played on Craftsbury Common.

The Craftsbury Vibrations played Christmas parties in the U.S.A and Canada for the border patrols. They played a year in the U.S at the Derby Elks Club.

Linda Lussier took a brief hiatus from performing starting in 1989, suffering from migraines induced by the toll of playing so much. She would throw up from the pain caused by the headache, said Bernie.

David Rowell took over the



*Founding members of the Craftsbury Vibrations, musical duo Bernie and Linda Lussier performed for six decades together prior to her passing in March of 2024.*  
courtesy photo

Craftsbury Vibrations until Linda was unable to perform, Bernie helped give a start to the New Vibrations and the Silver Wing Band, performing with both bands for about four years.

Bernie and Linda retired from Craftsbury Vibrations in 2015, and then played at churches and private parties until 2019. That year, the band reunited for their last shows, one on the common and one at the Highland Center for the Arts. “Linda was struggling with Alzheimer's during the show but insisted on being on the stage,” wrote her husband.

All in all, the band played 761 unique songs with the Lussiers playing almost 100 more between the band, church music, playing at funerals and playing Christmas music.

Undoubtedly well earned, Bernie plans to apply for a Guinness Book of World Records listing in the near future.

Members over the years include Tony Washburn, fiddle; Gary Potter, drummer; Dave Rowell, singer and bass player; Larry Beaudry, lead guitar; Roger Sanville, bass player and singer; Ray Chaloux, lead guitar; Chip Sanville, drummer; Mark Washburn, drummer; Mike Yates, bass player; Sergio Torres, rhythm

man and singer; Royce Miller, singer; Bill Kinzi, drummer; Gary Urie, drummer; Mason Urie, piano player; Ray Holly, drummer; Harry Blake, singer and rhythm man; André Pourtre, drummer; Quannah Dykes, lead singer and guitar player; Sammy Stratton, singer; Dave Allen, drummer; Brian Lamond, bass player and singer; Bingham Mercier, drummer; Tom Mekenna, steel guitar player; Larry Miller, singer and bass player; Dave Milette, lead guitar player.

Special guests included Ron Sanville, promoter; Al Robarge, square dance caller; Lee Tabor, singer; Tracie Grimes, piano player and singer; Kelly Jones, singer and rhythm man; Willey Williams, lead guitar; Alice Kinzi, piano player; Becky Washburn, singer

John Royer, drummer; Debbie Miller, singer and piano player; Tim Bullard, bass player and singer; Natalie Allen, singer and Scott Campbell, fiddle player.

Linda and Bernie Lussier's musical legacy is far reaching, spanning six decades. By the end of their career Bernie and Linda Lussier, along with Craftsbury Vibrations, played seven types of music: polkas; square dances; Paul Jones dances, where partners are frequently exchanged; country; rock and roll; pop and cha-chas.



*Marshfield's Denny Shute (left) and Craftsbury's Bernie Lussier play at Hardwick's Farmers Market Friday, Oct. 3 under the Atkins field pavilion.*

photo by Paul Fixx

# WEEKS GONE BY

## 45 years ago in The Hardwick Gazette, Oct. 7, 1980

### Anair sues Hardwick for Slander.

**HARDWICK** - A claim for slander against Hardwick Selectmen and Town Manager Ernie Laird has added \$1.25 million to Al Anair's lawsuit against the town. Several weeks ago Anair filed a lawsuit

claiming that the Hardwick Selectmen had illegally taken possession of property put up in lieu of a performance bond on the flood prevention project which he and Larry Willey did for the town last year.

The 12 acres and a house on Bunker Hill are owned by Laurence and Deborah Willey, and the deed was taken over by the town in June when it appeared that the town might have to pay money in connection with the river project.

A hearing has been set for Oct. 20 in Superior Court in St. Johnsbury on Anair's request for a preliminary injunction to get the town to return the deed to the Willeys. He is also suing the town for \$341,000, not \$305,00 as reported earlier in The Gazette, in four separate counts that will come up in court at a later date.

Last Tuesday another count was added to the lawsuit by Anair's attorney. Shireen Fisher of East Hardwick. The additional complaint asks for \$250,000 in actual damages, \$1 million in punitive damages, and legal costs as compensation for "The public circulation of...false and slanderous and defamatory information." Anair claims that the false statements were made by Town Manager Laird, and arose

out of Anair's dealings with the town concerning the federally funded river project. The lawsuit claims: That notwithstanding the successful completion of the project, the Town Selectmen have through their agent, Town Manager Ernest Laird, caused to be publicly circulated false and unprivileged language and information of and concerning Alfred Anair, including, but not limited to, reports that Alfred Anair was the subject of lawsuits other than the above-titled action for failure to properly perform on said project, that Alfred Anair had not completed said project in a satisfactory manner, and that Alfred Anair was guilty of the offense of trespass against private property.

The lawsuit continues: ". . . Alfred Anair's ability to procure contracts and carry on his business successfully is largely dependent on the general public's estimate of the quality of



### Hazen girls soccer

The members of this year's varsity squad are, from left to right in the back row, coach Jack Strong, Carolyn Neill, Rose Fadden, Sonya Smith, Rose Withers, Janice Maritineau, Debbie LeCours, Linda Bellavance, Lina Demers and Joanne Fradette. In the middle row are Sharon Hudson, Lisa Mendes, Brenda Chase, Sue Lumsden, Lori Whitney, Terri Bellavance and Carol Mendes. In the front row are Rita Brochu, Maria Messier, Dierdre O'Connor, Patty Neill, Sherri Molleur and Nancy Shepard. For the story about the first four games played by the varsity girls soccer team, and an update on the Hazen boys, turn to Page Nine. (Photo by Vanessa Fornier)

the Hardwick Selectmen are guilty of slander "through their acquiescence to and promotion of public circulation of the above described false and unprivileged language of their agent, Town Manager Ernest Laird.

The selectmen were served with papers on the lawsuit by Police Chief Don Stubbs at their meeting last Thursday. They went into executive session for around 45 minutes to discuss

"Civil action." which presumably meant the Anair lawsuit.

All town officers are covered by a \$1 million bond and Laird said that if the courts require the town to pay anything in this case, the settlement would be covered by the bond.

The selectmen originally decided to take title to the Willey property after an official from the state Water Resources Department said that the flood prevention work done by Anair on the Lamolle River did not meet specifications.

The Water Resources Department report was later dropped when the town got two other opinions from other state and federal officials. But the selectmen decided to keep the property when the town was named in a lawsuit filed against Anair and the Willeys by Robert Bieler of Philadelphia, Pa.

### 100 years ago in The Hardwick Gazette, October 8, 1925

### FIND BIG CACHE OF BEER AT GREENWOOD LAKE

WOODBURY - Stuff Was Stored on Premises of Peter Maberini of Barre

A raid was made at 2:00 o'clock Monday morning by Deputy Sheriff A.J. Stewart of Washington County, assisted by campers at Greenwood Lake on premises belonging to Peter Maberini of Barre, and they seized a large quantity of what was probably beer.

There was no one on the premises at the camp when the raid was made. The place had been under suspicion for some time and Monday morning when the officer and his assistants entered a barn on the premises, they discovered 74 cases, containing over 850 bottles of Burkardt's Boston Ale, stored away. All of the bottles were marked less than one-half of one per cent. State's Attorney Charles B. Adams was called to the scene of the raid and after looking over the liquor he passed on it as being contraband and ordered it taken to the liquor room of the Barre police station.

Maberini was arrested and at appearance in court Tuesday, pleaded not guilty to illegal possession. He claimed the beer belonged to a young man from Barre, and a young man from Hardwick and that they were ready to come forward and claim the stuff found in his barn. Maberini was put under bail.

See The Winners At Barcomb Motors

### HOW THE CANDIDATE STACKS UP

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Other Winning Candidates: On The 1981 Chrysler - Plymouth Ticket!

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the work done by him in his line of business and on his reputation as a competent and law-abiding contractor . . . That by reason of the public circulation of said false and slanderous and defamatory information, Complainant Alfred Anair is injured in his reputation as a man and a citizen, and in his business as a contractor, and that said public circulation mental suffering inflicted on him grievous."

The lawsuit claims that Town Manager Laird circulated statements that Anair "was dishonest in his business dealings. that his work was inferior and of unsatisfactory quality, that he had outstanding several legal claims against him. stemming from his work on the Hardwick river project, and that he was other than a law abiding citizen . . ."

The lawsuit claims that

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## The Hardwick Gazette

**PEOPLE SERVING PEOPLE**

# VOICES OF SPIRIT

## Joy is a resistance

by Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak

BURLINGTON – When was the last time you experienced joy? Take a moment: the birth of a grandchild, a perfect summer day, being in the presence of a dear one, that time you couldn't stop laughing? Has it been a while? Are there days or headlines or experiences that steal your joy?

The American poet, Wendell Berry once said, "Be joyful, though you've considered all the facts." That is a powerful theological and spiritual statement. It is also a statement of joy as resistance. I have come to believe, deeply believe, that joy as resistance is an essential spiritual practice for the living of these days.

In John 15:11, we recognize a part of Jesus' farewell words to his disciples. In this passage, Jesus uses the imagery of a vine and branches to talk about the need for connection and love and community. "I am the vine, you are the branches." Love one another as I have loved you." And, he says, "I have said these things to you that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." Here we have some clues as to the kind of joy that sustains in times of impending loss and sadness; the kind of joy that is strong enough to weather the hard times, the harsh times, the times

when it seems like we will never make it through what feels overwhelmingly difficult and cruel and unjust.

It seems clear Jesus wanted his disciples to remember that no matter what, they were not on their own nor were they simply individuals each with their own lives and struggles. No, his powerful metaphor was a reminder that we're in this together. The United Church of Canada's Statement of Faith ends by saying, "In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God." But, Jesus' words in the Fifteenth Chapter of John go even further. Not only are we not alone because God is with us, we are not alone because we have been given to one another and commanded to love one another as we have been loved.

A woman who had recently lost her young son to cancer confessed to her friends from her church, "I don't know what I believe anymore. I can't even pray." One of them gently replied, "then we will pray for you. Until you are able to do so once more, let our prayers carry you." Isn't this, at our best, what we do for one another? When one of us gets too weary to go on, we carry each other through those dark days. In the struggle for justice and right relationship, we find ways to keep our courage alive, our hope

ignited, together. Isolation is such an effective tool when the powerful are attempting to break someone.

My friend, Giles, was a POW in Korea for nearly three years. He tells stories about how he and his fellow prisoners survived by being present for one another. Even when beaten and tortured and isolated, they found ways to communicate through tapping and sound. When allowed to be together, they took turns teaching classes for each other on what they knew. Giles taught a course on etiquette and folding napkins to set a formal table. In the Korean Veterans War Memorial in D.C. is a pair of Giles' pajamas and his most precious gift from his imprisonment: a needle made by a fellow prisoner out of a small bone, a Christmas gift. Together, they found ways to give each other moments of joy.

Wellesley College historian Kellie Carter Jackson is the author of a book entitled, "We Refuse: A Forceful History Of Black Resistance." In it, she documents stories of enslaved Black women who would sometimes walk into the forest for miles in the middle of the night to throw dance parties. They did this as an act of defiance, to remember their humanity, that their existence was about more than slavery. They did this together, to keep one another going

and say you will never take our humanity, you will never take our joy from us.

I don't know about you, but these days try my soul. I limit my consumption of news. I have to or I can become completely overwhelmed. I don't want to live in the land of despair because that robs me of the ability to act, to believe that change is possible and to do whatever small good I can right here and right now.

I need to remember that the world is a beautiful place and there are good people everywhere. I need to laugh and when I am weary, gratefully let someone else lead for a while.

Most of all, I need to remember I am not alone.

We are, all of us, in this together. I have been and am loved and I can and do love. All of these are ways I try to remember each day to open myself to being surprised by joy.

If this is one of those hard patches for you, if the land of despair is calling your name, I hope you'll dance.

Dare to resist! Be joyful, though you've considered all the facts.

*The Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak is the Conference Minister for the Vermont Conference of United Church of Christ*

## MONTHLY MUSINGS

TRISH PASSMORE ALLEY

### Wrinkled radical

SHELBURNE – I recently read Senator Ron Wyden's memoir, "It Takes Chutzpah." Ron was fresh out of the University of Oregon School of Law in 1974 when Ruth Haefner, a retired social worker in Portland, asked him to help her co-found an Oregon branch of the Grey Panthers. Ruth's friend, Maggie Kuhn, and a handful of other elders founded the Consultation of Older and Younger Adults for Social Change in 1970. Their motto was "Age and Youth in Action." A New York producer referred to them as the "Gray Panthers," and the name stuck. Maggie and Ruth called themselves the "Wrinkled Radicals." Their priorities embraced elder rights, peace, politics, poverty and civil liberties. They had chutzpah.

Turning 75 on October 4, I laugh at the prospect of becoming a Wrinkled Radical, perhaps with a little of the flair of the lady "Leaf People" in Shelburne. Parker Palmer has encouraged me for years

to practice humility and chutzpah, the two habits of the heart that he thinks are essential for a healthy democracy. Note that both must be practiced simultaneously.

Here are some ways I aspire to be radicalized.

May I practice radical acceptance. I am 75 with funky feet: Charcot Foot inherited from my father, to be exact. It's a degenerative disease. May I accept my limitations and those of others. Wobbling on my own, I am inspired by the wise men and women I know on walkers.

May my pain inspire radical empathy for the pain of others, be it physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual. May I especially feel empathy for those who think differently than I do. How many times have I changed my mind?

May I live in radical amazement. I am amazed by the miracle and mystery of life in all its mind-boggling forms. How could I be wise without wondering? I like

the idea of wise wrinkles.

May I practice radical generosity with my attention, time, talents and treasure. May I listen generously and put loving kindness on my daily to-do list.

May my to-do list become my to-love list. May I live radical love. May I love my neighbors, no exceptions. May I love myself and others unconditionally. My dogs have been good teachers.

Radical Grace is the ultimate form of radicalization. It is boundless and unearned. When I am open to radical Grace, I am not afraid to love myself and others into positive new possibilities.

Acceptance, empathy, amazement, generosity and love are

universal human needs. They are all gateways to Grace. May we all choose to see our wrinkles, literally and metaphorically, as invitations to practice radical Grace.

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

### OUR E-MAILS

[news@hardwickgazette.org](mailto:news@hardwickgazette.org)  
[ads@hardwickgazette.org](mailto:ads@hardwickgazette.org)

# THE OUTSIDE STORY

## Black Locust: an invasive with roots?

by Sam Blair

NEW HAVEN, Conn. – The coming of autumn often makes trees harder to identify, but sometimes, it does the opposite. The black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) is a case in point. In summer, its bluish-green, oval-shaped compound leaves could easily be confused with those of the honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), a close cousin. Without foliage, though, many of its distinctive traits become visible. Most noticeable are the clusters of flat, papery seedpods, under four inches long, which reveal the locust's place in the pea family. Developing since midsummer, these pods will now turn brown, dry out, and split open, dispersing their seeds. Mature trees have grayish-brown bark, with deep, shaggy furrows and crisscrossing, flat-topped ridges. Though saplings don't yet have the characteristic bark, they do have sharp, sturdy thorns that grow in pairs at the bulbous leaf nodes of the twig.

Black locusts often form airy, sun-dappled groves along country lanes and beside old farmhouses. But they also grow in grittier climes: around highway off-ramps, mall parking lots, and abandoned factory grounds, to name a few. Forming dense, clonal thickets from their spreading root systems, such locusts are almost impossible to remove and frequently choke out other plants, leading many to declare them invasive.

So what gives? Is the locust an aggressive outsider or a longtime local? The answer is far from clear. In fact, the U.S. Forest Service's species profile says that while black locust historically grew in parts of the Appalachians and the Ozarks, "the extent of its original range is not accurately known."

Part of this enigma may trace back to Native American communities' widespread use of locust. Among the most rot-resistant woods in North America, locust wood is also remarkably strong and stiff, shrinks little when dried, and is unusually light relative to its hardness and energy density. These traits, along with its fast-growing, hardy nature, made it a good tree to take on the road, and locust seeds were likely traded and planted across eastern North America. William Strachey, who wrote a firsthand account of the settlement of Jamestown, Va., in 1610, saw groves of locust, which he described as "a kynd of low tree, which beares a [p]od like to the peas," growing around local Powhatan villages as though planted. English naturalist Mark Catesby, traveling in the 1720s, observed that Native Americans across the present-day Carolinas carved bows from black locust, "it being... a very tough and pliant Wood." While the uses changed, locust's importance didn't diminish with time: in 1814, when American forces won the decisive Battle of Plattsburgh on Lake Champlain, British commentators blamed their defeat, in part, on the black locust, observing that American ships built with locust pegs seemed to fare remarkably well under the shock of cannonball impacts.

This story and others like it gave rise to a boom in locust planting in the early 1800s, with publications like *The New England Farmer*, a widely circulated agricultural periodical, trumpeting that "many acres on most farms . . . could not be so profitably appropriated as they may be if devoted to the cultivation of the locust." Many of New England's farmyard locusts, and Locust Hill Roads (in Vermont alone, I count at least



Black Locust

four), probably date to this period.

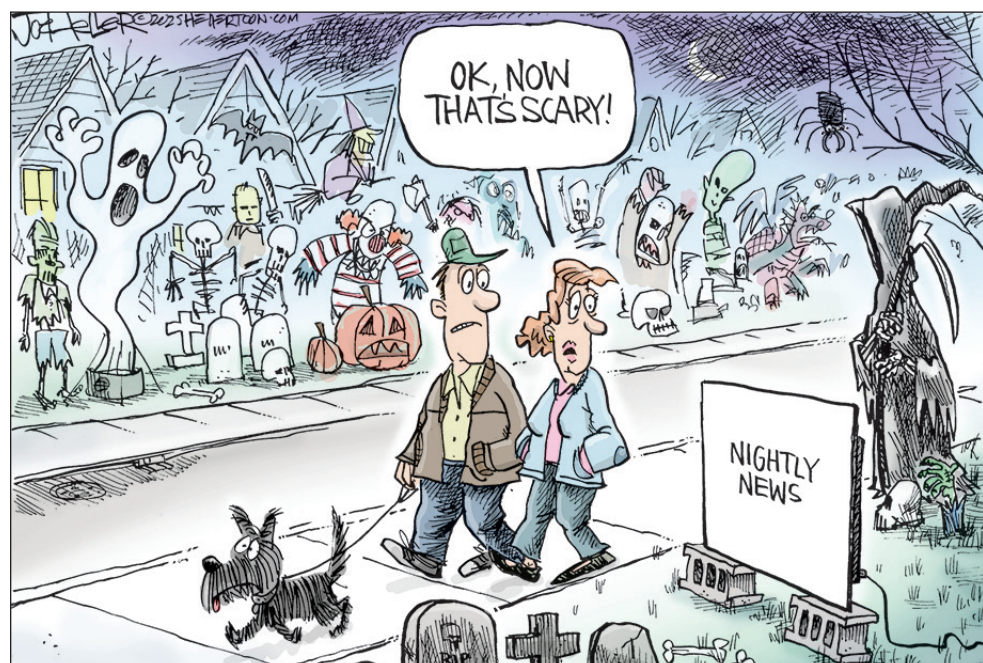
The value of planting black locust, though, went beyond timber. Like many legumes, locust hosts nitrogen-fixing bacteria of the *Rhizobium* genus in specialized root structures; this close association increases soil fertility by fixing atmospheric nitrogen in biologically available forms. This ability was not lost on farmers: another commenter in *The New England Farmer* wrote that "unlike most other trees, [the locust] invites the grass to grow under it: its small and rounded leaves afford shade from the scorching rays of the sun, retain the moisture of showers and dew in summer, and . . . enrich the

ground."

It is interesting to realize that, lying with friends under the dappled shade of locust trees on summer evenings past, I have enjoyed, without realizing it, the particular lushness of grass the locust "invites to grow." Without dismissing the threat that black locust poses to our forests, perhaps we might pause and appreciate the sweet shade this unusual tree casts before its leaves fall.

*Sam Blair is a graduate student at the Yale School of the Environment, where he is pursuing a master's of environmental science. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.*

## Heller's World by Joe Heller



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# THE OUTSIDE STORY

## Not So Bird-Brained: Avian Tool Use

by William von Herff

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On an otherwise unremarkable day in 2023, Jason Love and his colleagues were gathering in a parking lot when they saw something that, as far as we know, no one had ever seen before.

Love, the associate director of the Highlands Biological Station in North Carolina, and his colleagues were at a trailhead in the Great Smoky Mountains in Tennessee when he spotted a male northern cardinal attacking its reflection in a nearby car’s side mirror. Male cardinals are known to engage in this mirror-attacking behavior, thinking their reflection is an aggressive rival that needs to be driven off. As the group watched the cardinal fight its imagined opponent, it did something unusual: it flew down to the ground, grabbed a piece of gravel, flew back up, and slammed it into the mirror.

The one-sided fight continued for several minutes. The bird appeared to be using the rock as a weapon, a behavior never before documented in northern cardinals.

When Love’s team published this observation in *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology*, they added cardinals to the ever-growing canon of birds that are known to use tools.

The idea that a wide variety of birds can use tools is a relatively new one; in Jane Goodall’s 1971 global review of animal tool use, “Tool-Using in Primates and Other Vertebrates,” she only cited a handful of bird species as being capable of tool use. Now, a little more than 50 years later, dozens of bird species are known to use tools.

Perhaps the most adept tool-users among birds are corvids: jays, crows, ravens and their relatives. Blue jays and American crows have both been recorded using pieces of wood to dig insects out of their holes. Common ravens throw pinecones and rocks at humans near their nests, cover their caches with grass to hide them, and even stab owls with sticks.

But bird tool use goes far beyond corvids. For instance, green herons use twigs, feathers, insects or even bread to bait fish. The heron tosses its chosen lure onto the surface of a pond and, as soon as an unsuspecting fish approaches, it plunges its beak into the water and spears its meal.

Double-crested cormorants have also been recorded using tools. In 1972, Andrew Meyerriecks, a professor at University of South Florida, published an article in *The Wilson Bulletin* that described another previously unseen bird behavior. Cormorants preen by craning their



Heron with tool

snake-like heads to extract oil from their preen glands, which are located at the base of the tail, and applying it to their feathers with their beaks. As he watched the cormorants, one picked up a fallen feather and stretched back to dip it in preen oil before brushing it onto its wing feathers – turning the feather into, effectively, a makeup brush.

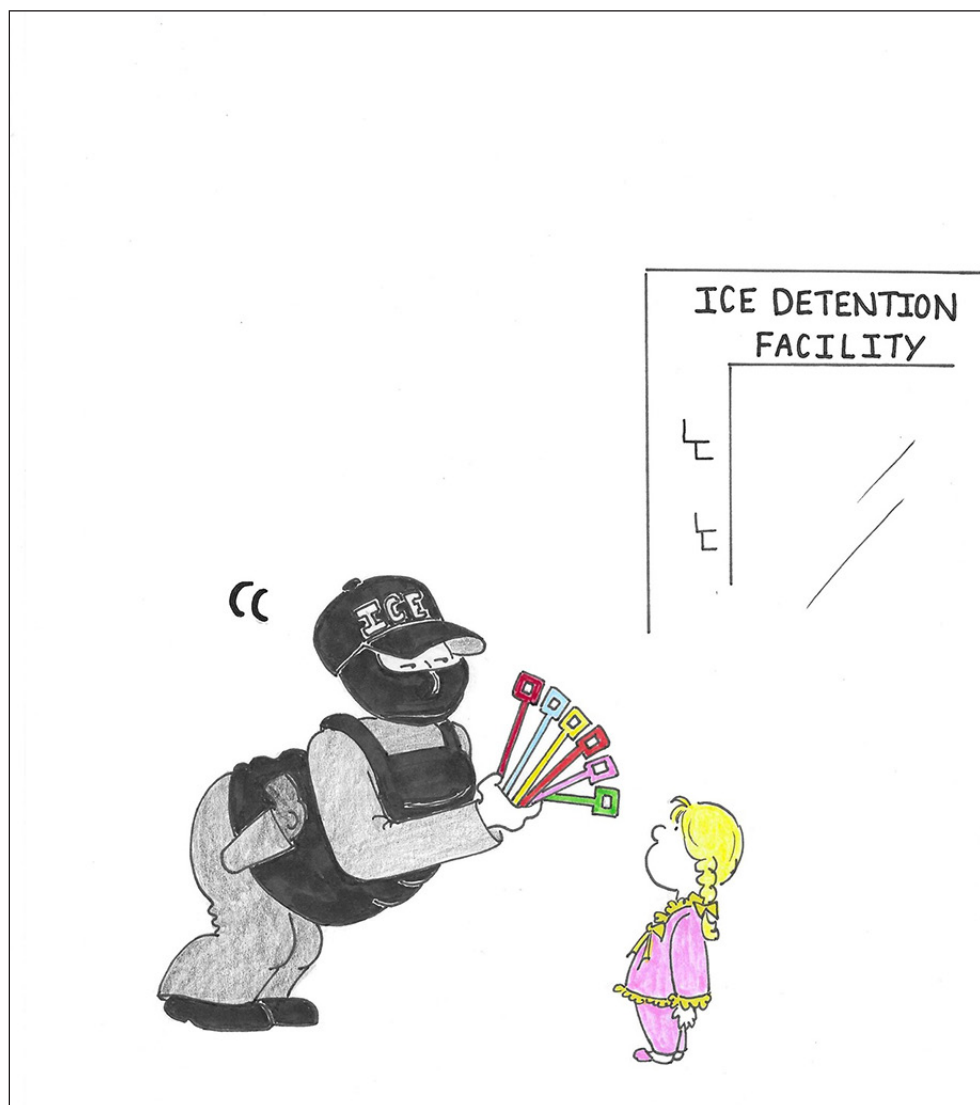
One step below tool use is a behavior where birds use “fixed devices,” or stationary objects, to complete a task. Technically, since the bird does not manipulate the object, it is not considered tool use, but it is similarly a mark of intelligence. Northern shrikes, carnivorous winter visitors to the Northeast, are well-known for this behavior: they impale their prey on thorns and barbed-wire fences. Ring-billed and herring gulls use rocky ground and parking lots as fixed devices by dropping clams and mussels onto them to break them open. Even red-tailed hawks have used boulders to finish off their prey. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists

published a 1993 article in *Journal of Raptor Research* recounting a hawk repeatedly smacking a snake against rocks to kill it.

A lot of these “fixed device” and tool use behaviors are based on fairly recent observations, from the 1970s and on. Despite the lack of published accounts, there’s reason to think that other northeastern birds may be using tools as well. Mountain chickadees, a western relative of the black-capped chickadee, have been observed using splinters of wood to probe for insects in a tree crevice, and brown-headed nuthatches, a southern relative of red- and white-breasted nuthatches, regularly use flakes of bark to pry other bark off branches. Who’s to say that, when we aren’t looking, these birds’ northeastern relatives aren’t using tools too?

*William von Herff is a Washington, D.C.-based science journalist specializing in the environment, conservation, and climate change. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.*

## Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



“WHAT COLOR WOULD YOU LIKE, LITTLE GIRL?”

## MEETING MEMO

### 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.

### Thursday, October 9

Mountain View Union Elementary School Board, second Thursday, 6 to 8 p.m., alternating among the three campuses.

### Monday, October 13

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

### Wednesday, October 15

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

Wolcott Town School Board,

third Wednesday, 6 to 8 p.m., Wolcott Elementary School.

### Thursday, October 16

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

### Town Clerks

Cabot: [cabotvt.us](http://cabotvt.us)

Calais: [calaisvermont.gov](http://calaisvermont.gov)

Craftsbury: [townofcraftsbury.com](http://townofcraftsbury.com)

Greensboro: [greensborovt.gov](http://greensborovt.gov)

Hardwick: [hardwickvt.org](http://hardwickvt.org)

Marshfield: [town.marshfield.vt.us](http://town.marshfield.vt.us)

Plainfield: [plainfieldvt.us](http://plainfieldvt.us)

Stannard: Stannard town clerk: (802) 533-2577, open Wed., 8-noon, [townofstannard@myfairpoint.net](mailto:townofstannard@myfairpoint.net)

Walden: [waldenvt.gov](http://waldenvt.gov)

Wolcott: [wolcottvt.org](http://wolcottvt.org)

Woodbury: [woodburyvt.org](http://woodburyvt.org)

# IN THE GARDEN

## Pumpkin, squash harvest is tricky

by Debra Heleba

BURLINGTON – The recent cold snap with widespread frost and even a freeze in some spots in Vermont, likely marked the end of the season for pumpkins and winter squash. Unless an area escaped the frost or a crop was covered, tender foliage succumbed to the autumn temperatures.

In general, the timing of pumpkin and squash harvest can be tricky as picking them too early, before they are mature, results in poor flavor and color but harvesting too late leads to cold injury and quicker breakdown. Hopefully, crops have made it to maturity with pumpkins having a uniform orange color. Winter squashes, acorn, hubbard, buttercup, butternut and others, should have solid color and hardened, thumbnail-resistant skins.

Use a sharp knife or pruners to cut pumpkins and squash from their vines, keeping a few inches of stem attached. Handle them as little as possible. It is always advised to hold pumpkins like a ball and not by their stems. Wearing gloves during harvest will protect both the squashes.

Remove any soil from the surface of pumpkins and squash. Wash them too but make sure they are thoroughly dried before storage.

Most pumpkins and squash (except acorn) benefit from a

curing stage that may heal any surface wounds and harden their rinds. Curing can also increase their sugar content leading to better tasting fruit. To cure pumpkins and squash, leave them in a well-ventilated spot for five to 10 days after harvest. Keep them out of the sun but aim for temperatures above 60°F, ideally 80 to 85°F during the curing phase.

Store pumpkins and squash off the ground in a well-ventilated location away from sunlight. Ideal storage temperatures should be a consistent 50 to 55°F, making sure to avoid temperature fluctuations. Ideal humidity should be between 50% and 70%. A cool basement can provide these conditions. Keep pumpkins away from apples and ripening tomatoes to avoid the ethylene produced by those fruits that accelerates ripening.

Under these conditions, pumpkins and acorn squash can last up to two to three months, while butternut squash can store well up to three to four months. Hubbard and buttercup squash can last up to four to six months under the right conditions.

*Heleba coordinates UVM Extension's community horticulture programs including the Extension Master Gardener and Vermont Master Composter programs. She lives and gardens in Addison County.*



Wait to harvest pumpkins and squash until solid color develops.

photo by Debra Heleba



Pumpkins are ready for harvest.

photo by Edwin Remsberg and USDA-SARE



Pumpkin Walk visitors from West Woodbury, (from left) Kevin and his daughter Georgia Burke, with her carved pumpkin, are leaving with mom Toni Wellinghausen.

photo by Paul Fixx

# EDUCATION

## Act 73 Special Education Delivery Report released

by Vermont Agency of Education staff

MONTPELIER - The Agency of Education released a Special Education Report, which identifies strengths, challenges and opportunities in the delivery of services to students with disabilities. The report is an important part of the Agency's ongoing strategic planning process and a key step in implementing Act 73, the state's education transformation law.

While student enrollment is declining, the number of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) is increasing. More students are also qualifying for extraordinary cost reimbursement, suggesting that both the complexity and intensity of student needs are growing. This is contributing to rising costs, especially in tuition and transportation, as many schools lack staffing and specialized resources, in part due to issues with scale, to meet these needs in their own districts. Overall statewide academic performance decline, coupled with persistent achievement gaps for students with IEPs, underscores the need for higher quality instruction for all students and greater access to academic supports for struggling learners.

## Thomas receives nurses training scholarship

by M. McKnight, Voiture 646, 40&8

BARRE – The local chapter of The Forty and Eight, a national veterans organization, has awarded scholarships of \$1,000 each to six outstanding students in nursing programs in colleges in Vermont. Lauren Thomas of Hardwick, at VTSU Castleton, is among the recipients.

The recipients of the scholarships are students in locations within Vermont State University. All are enrolled in a degree program ending in Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN), Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN), or Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees.

Other recipients include Aaron Boulerville, Stanton, at VTSU Williston; Carrie Kamont, Barre, at VTSU at Central Vermont Medical Center; Angela Duffy-McCracken, Montpelier,

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), every student is entitled to a free appropriate public education. For some students this means they receive an IEP. The IEP is developed with a student's caregivers and members of the school system to ensure that the students is reaching their goals.

Vermont serves a larger percentage of students with IEPs in inclusive classrooms than the national average. Nearly 82% of students with IEPs spend 80% or more of their day in regular education settings, compared to 67% nationally. At the same time, over 5% of Vermont students with IEPs are placed in separate schools, more than double the national average of 2.4%. These patterns suggest both a commitment to inclusion and a reliance on out-of-district placements that carry high costs and may not always align with best practices.

A second report to come will offer recommendations and considerations for special education funding to help inform legislative discussions as lawmakers make decisions about a new system to fund education.

The report is available at [education.vermont.gov/document/current-state-special-education-delivery](http://education.vermont.gov/document/current-state-special-education-delivery)

at VTSU Randolph; Kayla Carbo, Essex Junction, at VTSU UVM Medical Center; and Tessa Krygier, Winooski, at VTSU St. Albans.

A national program to help alleviate the shortage of skilled nurses in this country has long been a special interest to La Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux, the veterans organization founded in 1920, also known as "The Forty and Eight." Since 2017, Grande du Vermont/Voiture Locale 646 in Barre, has provided \$39,000 to assist 37 students in nursing programs in universities in Vermont.

For more information about The Forty and Eight, please contact Melvin McKnight at [spruce-mt907@gmail.com](mailto:spruce-mt907@gmail.com). For more information about 40&8 Nurses Training Scholarships, please contact Jessica Rivait at 802-989-8328 or [jlrvait82@gmail.com](mailto:jlrvait82@gmail.com).

## Sterling names Brown to ecology faculty

by Sterling College Faculty

CRAFTSBURY COMMON – Sterling College has named Farley Brown ecology faculty. She has an M.S. in Natural Resource Planning, a B.A. in Environmental Studies, and an A.A. in Natural Resource Management

Growing up, Brown says her bond with the land was shaped by her family's business, the Farley Lumber Company, and her childhood adventures exploring the wooded landscapes of New Jersey. These early experiences sparked a lifelong curiosity: "I have always questioned how we make land use decisions and who gets to make those decisions. Most importantly, how can we become the best stewards of the land?"

Her interests have led her into the nonprofit sector, where she served as the executive director of both Vermont Woodlands Association



Farley Brown

and Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife for several decades.

She has taught at Sterling College and several state colleges, starting as an adjunct faculty member in 1989 and becoming a full-time faculty member in 2006. For more information, see [sterlingcollege.edu/farleybrown](http://sterlingcollege.edu/farleybrown)



Veronica Y Pham says making and handmade paper creations serves as a contemplative practice. An entire room of this summer's Art at the Kent show is filled with her hanging paper creations.

photo by Paul Fixx

# OUR COMMUNITIES

## Goddard College alumni reunion, Oct. 10-13

by **Mary Ellen McGuire-Schwartz**

PLAINFIELD – A reunion of Goddard College alumni will be held October 10 to October 13 on the former campus, organized by Save Goddard College. The reunion is the result of a request from Goddard alumni, including Alex Rodriguez and Joe McIntyre. Reunion plans include poetry, music, Wheelz of

Steel, the Goddard archives, a cabaret, round-tables, workshops and seminars, a graduation celebration for recent grads and more to be determined by participants and others to be announced.

For further information contact [savegoddardcollege@gmail.com](mailto:savegoddardcollege@gmail.com).

To register, contact the Creative Campus at [thecreative-campus.org/](http://thecreative-campus.org/).

## Fall open house, Oct. 15

GREENSBORO – Wednesday, October 15, from 4 to 5 p.m., the new Lakeview Early Education Center will host a fall open house. At this first collaborative event of the combined Lakeview and Head-

Start programs, attendees can meet teachers and staff and tour the new classrooms. Complete the scavenger hunt and get a raffle ticket for a gift card prize. Light snacks will be available.



Sue Holden of Williamstown is surrounded by her handcrafted jewelry creations at the AWARE Fall Foliage Craft Fair, held October 4, in the Hazen Union gymnasium. The show featured 55 vendors.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

## Autumn open house, book sale, Oct. 11

GREENSBORO – Saturday, Oct. 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Greensboro Historical Society (GHS) will offer cider and donuts and an opportunity for a final look at the 2024-2025 exhibit, “Rails to Trails,” on the history of the StJ&LC railroad line, from its earliest days through the current Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.

will be for sale at Janet Long’s garage from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Prices are by donation with all proceeds to benefit the GHS. Museum admission is free to all with donations accepted. Regular museum hours will resume next summer with the new exhibit, “On the Home Front: Greensboro During WWII.” The GHS is located at 29 Breezy Avenue in Greensboro village, next to Willey’s Store.

Just a few doors down from the museum, a wide of used books

## Tallow workshop, Oct. 12

EAST HARDWICK – Sunday, Oct. 12, beginning at 4 p.m., Jeanne Segretto Miller will host a hands-on workshop where participants will learn to use tallow, a traditional animal fat, in various ways, including

candle making, skincare and potentially, cooking. This workshop is part of the Second Sunday Agricultural series at the East Hardwick Grange. A potluck will follow the workshop. All are welcome.

## Child Haven dinner, sari fashion show, set for Nov. 1-2

HARDWICK – The annual Child Haven Indian Dinner and Sari Fashion Show will take place on November 1, in the Hazen Union High School Cafeteria in Hardwick. Then on Sunday, Nov. 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the cafeteria will be open again for the purchase of extra Indian food and chai, a chance to peruse the bazaar

table and for information about interning for Child Haven.

To reserve tickets for the dinner or to volunteer for the event, call Deborah Hartt at (802) 472-5284. To participate in the Sari Fashion Show, contact Walker Hartt at (802) 535-4102. To contribute to the silent auction, contact Katharine Arnold at (802) 535-1955.



October is Respect Life Month. Catholic Daughters Court St. Veronica #1273 displayed 200 pink and blue crosses on the St. Norbert’s Church hill on South Main Street in Hardwick for Respect for Life Month, October. Each cross represents almost 525 abortions.

courtesy photo



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# BUSINESS BRIEFS

## Blue Cross VT names next president

and CEO  
by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont staff

BERLIN – The Board of Directors for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (Blue Cross VT) announced that Beth-Ann Roberts, MBA, has been selected as the organization’s next President and CEO, effective January 10, 2026. Ms. Roberts will join Blue Cross VT as CEO-elect on November 10, 2025, ensuring a smooth two-month transition with current President and CEO, Don George, who will retire on January 9, 2026.

Roberts currently serves as president of Beth Israel Lahey Health Performance Network, a clinically integrated network of physicians, clinicians and hospitals dedicated to improving population health and delivering high-quality, cost-effective care.

Previously, Roberts served as president of Commercial Business at Point32Health, where she oversaw a multibillion-dollar line of business serving more than two million members. Earlier in her career, she held progressive leadership roles at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, where she spent more than 20 years shaping the organization’s expansion into new markets and partnerships, leading the organization to become the second-largest health plan in New Hampshire.

Roberts’ decision to join Blue Cross VT reflects her professional expertise and her commitment to affordability, access, and quality

of care. “Vermonters care deeply about their communities and the state’s health care challenges are significant. I want to be part of the solution,” said Ms. Roberts. “Blue Cross VT’s mission to help transform the health system and make health care work better for all Vermonters resonates strongly with me. I’m energized to drive this work in partnership with our team and stakeholders across the state and lead this nonprofit into its next chapter.”

Charlie Smith, Chair of Blue Cross VT’s Board of Directors, emphasized Roberts’ deep industry experience and strong cultural alignment. “I and my fellow Board members are confident that Ms. Roberts has the proven experience we need to lead discussions on medical cost containment and health care reform, plus the cultural fit required to represent Blue Cross VT authentically within and beyond Vermont. Her enthusiasm, curiosity, and approachability make her an exceptional fit for Blue Cross VT and the organization’s role in Vermont’s most critical health care conversations.”

Roberts holds an MBA from Boston University and a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Southern New Hampshire University. She is a Certified Health Insurance Executive by America’s Health Insurance Plans.

Roberts will be relocating with her family to Vermont from their current home in New Hampshire. An avid cyclist, runner, hiker and boater, Roberts enjoys the outdoors

# EDUCATION



New staff at Hardwick Elementary school are (from left) front row: 3rd grade teacher Rileigh Arleth, school health professional, Registered Nurse Kelly Griggs and Special Educator Joshua Gould. In the back are fourth-grade teacher Mackenzie Blaney, Custodian Kevin MacDonough and Kindergarten Teacher Hollie Smith. Missing are 4th grade teacher David Swanson and Instructional Assistant Brittany Camp. photo by Vanessa Fournier

## Wolcott students participated in dance performance

BURLINGTON – Students from Wolcott Elementary School took part in Kickline, a large-scale performance hosted by The Flynn, Friday, Sept. 26, at Burlington’s Waterfront Park. Kickline brought together hundreds of Vermont students (grades 3–6) with local dance instructors. The event closed out The Flynn’s statewide Access to the Arts Month, highlighting the role of arts access in schools across Vermont.




Hardwick Elementary first graders from left include Ainsley LaRose, Jakobi Perry, Rowan Vincent and Igneous Paquin, hold pumpkins they just carved during art class last week with teacher Beth LeCours. Their pumpkins, along with the up to 400 that grades K-6 carved, were placed along Hardwick Trails for their annual pumpkin walk, held October 5. photo by Vanessa Fournier

## BUTTONING UP

## THE GREENSBORO LIBRARY

## OPEN HOUSE

### (An Efficiency Vermont Button Up Event)



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When: October 18th  
Time: 2-4PM  
Where: Greensboro Free Library  
53 Wilson St.  
Greensboro, VT  
Contact: bethanne241@gmail.com

- Tour the weatherization upgrades to the library
- Meet representatives from Efficiency VT, Vermont Division of Historic Preservation, Vermont Building and Grounds Services, NVDA, SolarHarvester and Ryan Kneeland Masonry
- Discuss your project with members of ECAC (Greensboro Energy and Climate Action Committee)
- Learn how to apply some of the weatherization techniques to your own home or Commercial project
- Find out what the new rebates and financing opportunities are to get your project going

Special art project for All Ages  
“Envisioning our Energy Future” Through painting and collage  
Led by Joanne George

Light Refreshments  
Raffle Prizes  
<https://greensborovt.gov/energy-committee/>

# FREE EVENT

# OBITUARIES

## Beverly C. Pape

HARDWICK – Beverly Cox Pape, 94, of Hardwick, died on Sunday, Oct. 5, at the McLure Miller Respite House in Colchester following a brief illness.

She was born on September 3, 1931, in Hardwick, one of two children born to the late Matthew and Maude (Webber) Cox. She attended Hardwick Academy, graduating in the class 1949. Beverly continued her education at Johnson State College graduating in the class of 1953 with a bachelor's degree in education.

On June 26, 1954, she married Frank George Pape in Hardwick where they made their home and raised their two children.

Beverly loved her long career in teaching. She started in a one-room schoolhouse in the Barre-Montpelier area, later she taught junior high for a few years before happily settling into teaching second grade at Hardwick Elementary school until retiring in 1996. She was awarded Most Outstanding Elementary Teacher Of The Year in 1984-85 Orleans Southwest District. After retiring she and Frank enjoyed their winters in Florida surrounded by many friends.

She was a member of Mary Queen of all Saints Parish in Hardwick, Court St. Veronica's Catholic Daughter's and the Saint John Crevecoeur chapter of the DAR. She will be fondly remembered by her many students, friends and all who had the priv-



Beverly C. Pape

ilege of knowing her.

Survivors include two children: John Pape and his companion Linda Berard of Hardwick and Ellen Pape Gilmore of North Port, Fla.

She was predeceased by her husband, Frank Pape on October 10, 2011, her brother John Cox in 2002 and her son-in-law Kevin Gilmore in 2024.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m., on Saturday, Oct. 11, at St. Norbert's Catholic Church in Hardwick. A private burial will be held at a later date for the family.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in her memory may be made to the Jeudevine Memorial Library, P.O. Box 536, Hardwick, Vermont 05843.

Arrangements are in the care of Dian R. Holcomb of Northern Vermont Funeral Service, 60 Elm Street Hardwick. Online condolences are welcomed at: [northernvermontfuneralservice.com](http://northernvermontfuneralservice.com)

## Ruth L. Rathburn

WOODBURY – Ruth L. Rathburn, 89, of Woodbury, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and sister, passed away on September 24. She was born on December 12, 1935, in Woodbury, the daughter of the late Daniel Cookson Sr. and Mary (McGill) Cookson.

She was educated in the Woodbury Public School System and attended Spaulding High School, later obtaining her GED. She was a homemaker raising her children while also being the bookkeeper for her husband's business. She later worked various jobs outside the home, including being a USPS mail carrier.

She married the love of her life, Clifton Rathburn Jr. on October 16, 1953. In 2023, prior to her husband's passing, they celebrated 70 years of marriage.

Ruth was a creative and talented quilter. Over the years she produced beautiful, completely handmade quilts, which she generously gifted to her children, grandchildren, friends and relatives. Her award-winning quilts received many accolades, including one that was displayed at the Vermont State House. She also made special quilted baby blankets for each of her grandchildren. Besides her immense talent for quilt-making, she made handmade dolls and stuffed animals. While her daughters were young, she made beautiful clothes for their dolls. She was a wonderful cook and she liked to garden. Along with her husband, she enjoyed snowmobile riding and racing. She loved her family and was nicknamed "Sister" by her siblings. She loved her cat Mitsy, and their horse Brandy as well as the three German Shepard they had over the years.

She is survived by her three children, Ronald Rathburn of Woodbury, Sherry Rathburn of Ponte Verda Beach, Fla., and Cindy (Rathburn) Wemette and her husband, David, of New Haven; five grandchildren, Cliff Rathburn (Sonya), Brent Rathburn, Adam Mokhtare, Jill Leduc (Lance),



Ruth L. Rathburn

Curt Wemette (Amanda); seven great-grandchildren, Lydia Rathburn, Devin Rathburn, Jackson and Bode Leduc, and Abbey, Jame, and Josh Wemette; and her sister, Martha Foster of Walden.

She was predeceased by her husband, her father, mother, and seven of her siblings, Daniel (Bunchie) Cookson, Helen (Toot) Fletcher, Louise (Sue) Foster, Marguerite Hill, Chester (Chet) Cookson, Lawrence (Broat) Cookson, and John Cookson.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 18, at the Northern Vermont Funeral Home, 60 Elm Street, Hardwick. A gathering of family and friends will immediately follow the service at the American Legion Post No. 7 in Hardwick.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in her memory may be made to Mayo Healthcare, 71 Richardson Street, Northfield, Vt. 05663.

We would like to thank Mayo Healthcare for taking excellent care of her during the last two years of her life. The caring and compassion that was shown to her during her time at Mayo is deeply appreciated.

Arrangements are in the care of Dian R. Holcomb of Northern Vermont Funeral Service, 60 Elm Street, Hardwick. Online condolences are welcomed at: [northernvermontfuneralservice.com](http://northernvermontfuneralservice.com)



Sunday, Sept. 28, (from left) Vermont Conference Minister The Rev. Lynn Bujnak and Orleans Federated Church pastor The Rev. Alyssa May attended the service at the United Church of Hardwick to welcome new members and The Rev. EdD., RN, Avril Cochran as the new pastor. They were joined by The Rev. Dr. Ed Sunday-Winters, pastor at the Greensboro United Church of Christ. photo by Mary Piper

## Northern Vermont Funeral Service

60 Elm St. • Hardwick, VT 05843

802-472-6861

Dian R. Holcomb  
Funeral Director

PRENEED  
PLANNING

## NEK Classical Series season opens with German ensemble

ST. JOHNSBURY – The Aris Quartett, with its “simply sensational music-making,” (Austrian Broadcast Corp.) will open the 36th season of the Northeast Kingdom Classical Series on Sunday, Oct. 19, at 3 p.m., at the Grace United Methodist Church.

Founded in Frankfurt in 2009, the string quartet has gone on to win numerous international competitions. Their St. Johnsbury program will feature works by the siblings Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn, as well a work by the 20th century composer Dmitri Shostakovich.

Tickets are available at the door or online. For more program and ticket information visit



The Aris Quartett, (front to back) Anna Katharina Wildermuth, Noemi Zipperling, Caspar Vinzens and Lukas Sieber. performs Sunday, Oct. 19, 3 p.m. at Grace Methodist Church, St. Johnsbury. *courtesy photo*

nekclassicalseries.org For accessibility, there is an elevator at the rear of the building.

## Bluegrass Gospel Project reunites at Opera House

BARRE – A mainstay of the Vermont Americana music scene will return to the stage after an eight-year hiatus. The Barre Opera House will present The Bluegrass Gospel Project (BGP) on Saturday, Oct. 25, at 7:30 p.m.

Formed in 2000 as a one-time First Night act, the Vermont-based BGP went on to a 16-year run, earning a fan-base throughout New England and beyond. Now, they are reuniting for a Barre Opera House performance with a lineup that includes founding members Patti Casey (guitar, vocals), Paul Miller (guitar, vocals), Taylor Armerding (mandolin, vocals), Steve Light (banjo,

vocals) and Andy Greene (guitar, vocals). They’ll be joined by bassist Kirk Lord, who had an eight-year tenure with the group. Joining for the first time on fiddle with vocals is the multi-talented Colin McCaffrey.

The BGP will play a student matinee for all grades on Friday, Oct. 24, “American Roots Music: A Century of Folk, Country, Gospel and Bluegrass.”

Tickets may be ordered online at barreoperahouse.org or call the Barre Opera House at (802) 476-8188. The Opera House, at 6 North Main St., is handicapped accessible and equipped for the hearing impaired.



Copley nurse Molly Hatfield created a quilted white blood cell, just one of her anatomy themed works on exhibit, August 18 to September 26, in the Copley Community Art Gallery. *photo by Raymonda Parchment*

## Human organ quilt exhibited at Copley Community Art Gallery

by Raymonda Parchment

MORRISVILLE – Patients and employees at Copley Hospital had a unique chance these past few weeks to experience Copley nurse Molly Hatfield’s human organ-themed quilt exhibit in the Copley Community Art Gallery. Hatfield is a nurse on the medical



A quilted adnexum, the uterus and its supporting structures, was just one of the quilted works by nurse Molly Hatfield being shown in the Copley Community Art Gallery from August 18 to September 26. *photo by Raymonda Parchment*



Another version of an anatomically correct quilted heart by nurse Molly Hatfield was available to view from August 18 to September 26 in the Copley Community Art Gallery. *photo by Raymonda Parchment*

surgical unit and has been employed by Copley since 2018.

According to the available gallery description, Hatfield learned how to quilt from her stepmother during the pandemic, when she was sick with cancer. She started with big quilts, last year beginning to make smaller quilted pieces. As a nurse, Hatfield loves anatomy and physiology. Many of the quilts are from histology slides and textbooks.

We welcome VISA and MasterCard for donations and advertising.



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# Coloring book signing and Q&A with Ghostshrimp

by **Raymonda Parchment**

HARDWICK – Dan Bandit, also known as Ghostshrimp, is an illustrator most known for his work on “Adventure Time” for Cartoon Network, “The Midnight Gospel” on Netflix, as well as his Grammy-nominated album artwork for “Gravity Falls.”

Last Wednesday, the Galaxy Bookshop hosted a Q&A to celebrate the publication of his second coloring book, “Hollow Earth.” Bandit signed copies of the book and answered fan questions.

“Hollow Earth” consists of fifty-five individual drawings, for which Bandit detailed parts of his creative process. “I work on them all at once, so I don’t do one at a time. I actually literally get fifty-five drawings going at the same time, and I’m a very ADHD person. . . I love and thrive bouncing between the different pages and letting the excitement of one fill over to another, or if I’m stuck on one page, and I can just jump in another one and just keep the momentum going,” he said.

Bandit says it took him about four months of drawing to make the 55 pieces that comprise the coloring book, while balancing other projects as well. He recently began a project for Fortnite, designing a loading screen and just concluded six months of visual development, world design and designing vehicles for a Microsoft video game.

One fan asked what medium he prefers, tablet or paper, “So I’ve been doing this since 2003, which is 22 years now, which is insane. The first, probably 18 years of my career, I just drew on paper. And I would pencil it on a watercolor paper, and then I would ink over that, and then I would scan that in, and I would color it. So I would do my digital coloring. And then, for the first, like, decade of my career, I had a little MacBook laptop and a mouse, and I would just fill in my illustrations.”

He said, in comparison to his peers, he was very slow to pick up digital drawing in spite of its widespread use. He says his favorite part of the digital process is the ability to draw, color and ink simultaneously.

Reflecting on his profession as a whole, Bandit said, “My favorite thing about being an artist is I get to wake up every day and sit down on my desk and just draw the weirdest, wildest stuff that comes out of my brain. And that’s what I’ve been doing since I was all y’all’s age. So yeah, that’s definitely my favorite part. I’ve never worked on a job that I wasn’t very excited about, that I wasn’t inspired by,

and that I wouldn’t do for free. So I’m very lucky that every single thing I’ve done for the last 20 plus years has been like, really fun for me.”

Bandit says “Adventure Time,” which ran from 2010 to 2018, is likely his best-known work. He shared his reaction to the show’s explosion in popularity, “It was an absolute dream come true. I am from a town actually smaller than this. I grew up in western Massachusetts in a town of about 2,000 people, you know, just growing up in the woods, drawing for fun, having fun. When I got the opportunity to design the world for “Adventure Time,” I really didn’t have any experience doing that, didn’t know what a background

was or anything like that.”

He continued, “But of course, I grew up in the woods, and of course, I grew up loving great cartoons. So I just put that all together and designed my dream world and that became the world for adventure time. And that was, in itself, such a fun thing, but then to have it be so beloved by so many people all over the world. I mean, that is really the thing that I’ve done that I can mention to, you know, anybody around the world and about half the people have heard of it and they love it and they react to it.”

Bandit revealed he actually just designed the logo for a recent “Adventure Time” show, and hopes to continue to work with their creative teams in the near future, “So,

yeah, “Adventure Time” has a very, very special place in my heart and in my life,” he concluded.

Bandit says he was first inspired by the classic Disney shorts, as well as the old fashioned Pink Panther cartoons, Looney Tunes, as well as a number of children’s books and other media. He named surrealist artist Salvatore Dali as a big inspiration, citing his dream centered subjects, “Everything was very personal to him and based on his dreams and his nightmares. That’s really the way I make my work. I make my work all based on the things that I like, love the most or I’m scared of the most or just that I react to the most. I think that’s where all the power is.”

See COLORING, next page

# FALL FUNDRIVE

## SEPTEMBER 26-OCTOBER 12, 2025

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# Stanciu receives grant to fund new novel

by **Raymonda Parchment**

HARDWICK – The Vermont Art Council (VAC) has announced the 26 recipients of its most competitive grant funding program, the “Creation Grant”, which supports Vermont artists in creating new work. Among these recipients is Brett Stanciu of Hardwick, for the creation of the novel “Save Town Hall”. She received \$5,000 in funding.

To some, Stanciu is known as treasurer for the town of Greensboro. The author of three novels, others know her from her previous literary ventures. Stanciu’s essays and fiction have appeared in publications like *The Rumpus*, *Memoir Monday*, *101 Word Story*, *Vermont Almanac*, *Taproot*, *Vermont Literary Review*, *The Long Story* and *The Seraphic Review*.

In discussing her upcoming work, “Save Town Hall”, Stanciu provided some insight on her journey with writing, as well as where and how she takes inspiration for her creative works.

“I actually received a previous creation grant, and I think it was in 2019. I used that to write my second book, “Unstitched”, and I was super grateful for it. I applied and sent it in actually a couple days before my final round of chemo wrap, and I was like I just have to do this,” said Stanciu.

More than 300 applications were received for this highly competitive award, with a total of nearly \$1.5 million requested in funding. The council was able to support 9% of the requested need, totaling \$126,000 in grant funding. Recipients were selected in two rounds by independent panels of 47 practicing Vermont artists and arts professionals with a

broad range of artistic disciplines. A total of 48 proposals advanced to the second round of review, Stanciu among them.

Grants were awarded to Vermont artists or artist groups in amounts up to \$5,000, “It’s a request for time, essentially, to do creative work. For which I’m extremely grateful. I know these are extremely competitive grants, and they’re really meaningful. They do make a big difference to people.”

Stanciu’s writing journey has been lifelong, “I always knew I wanted to write. My dad was a professor, and he was a writer as well too. I studied writing, it’s an undergraduate, and then graduate school.” She attended Marlboro College in Vermont, before earning her graduate degree at Western Washington University in Bellingham. “Then I left the academic world. I was not interested in pursuing that and then I just got busy in life.”

Mother of two, she spent several years as a maple syrup maker, “We sugared for years, had a couple of kids. Along the way, I ended up writing a novel.”

That first novel, “Hidden View”, explores themes of isolation, relationships and the relentless dedication required for rural agriculture.

Stanciu’s second novel is a nonfiction composite of addiction stories with a local focus, “That was a book I didn’t intend to write, but I kind of happened into that scenario and I was really, really driven to write that book. Because I really wanted to know the questions, too, answers about what’s happening in this little community I live in.”

Describing the genre as her initial love, Stanciu has returned

to fiction with her third novel, “Call It Madness.” The book will be available June next year with Regal House Publishing. “Call It Madness” explores family and how hidden secrets can shape our lives.

She provided more insight on her perspective, “So when you look at writing, there’s always certain themes that go through. One of the things that always goes through my writing is this notion of creation versus destruction, and how we use our skills in our own lives, and how we interact with others. And that very much relates to the world we live in, because the world is always engaged in creation and destruction.”

Stanciu begins her creative process in the very early morning, with the goal of writing at least one thousand words a day. With an idea in mind, developing into a story, she works hard to establish the first draft. “As I write, I work very hard with the bones of it, the skeleton of the book, and then rewrite, rewrite, rewrite.”

Her upcoming work, “Save Town Hall,” may sound familiar to Greensboro residents. “All writers pick up ideas from other places, and this one I picked up on the way into work.”

Elaborating, she explained that while the novel is entirely fiction, the idea comes from her very real experience working in the town hall building as treasurer, and moreover the sometimes divisive conversations about property in the state.

“I’ve lived in Vermont since I was eighteen, and it got me thinking about what’s happening in our little towns, and it’s also reflective of what’s happening nationally as well. Fiction is a way to explore these really complicated ideas in

real subtlety and real depth. So what I see happening in the little towns we live in now, is there’s an increasing division among people, which way is Vermont going to go?”

She elaborated further, “There are groups of people who have very different ideas about how that’s going to shake out or play out. It’s very much an argument and a debate about property, and about money and about class. These are all very complicated American notions that work out in individual lives, in ways that are really meaningful.”

Stanciu says the idea behind her book is to take a kernel of a story set in contemporary Vermont, intending to be an examination of where the state is now.

Reflecting on the past couple of months, Stanciu says there’s one part of the creative process she enjoys the most, “The real gem of working creatively is really insight. I feel that if you’re really working hard, there’s a level of devotion to that or level of craft that makes you reflect on your own life. But yet at the same time, also a really profound connection to the world too.

“That’s one of the things that I rely on, writing is really what got me through cancer in many ways, because it’s really the way that I know the world best, but I know the world only through, really through, examination. What does this mean? What does this mean? What does this mean? It’s always questioning. Then by the time you get to the end of writing a book, you have all these questions, but hopefully they’re ordered in some kind of way. They’re brought together in some sort of way that’s beautiful, but also reflects the beauty of the world and sometimes ugliness, too.”

## Coloring

Continued From Previous Page

Bandit said he never really considered he would get into animation specifically. He thought he would do album covers and comics, which he described as his wildest dream at the time, before “the animation stuff kind of came and found me.”

Of all the shows he’s worked on, he deems “Adventure Time” his favorite, “I just really got to put the kind of dream version of growing up in the woods of New England, and share it with the world, which is a very fun and personal thing.”

For aspiring artists, Bandit had some advice. “Draw a lot, draw as much as you can. You know, if you want to be professional, your

goal is to definitely get up to a minimum of 40 hours a week drawing. At that point you’re going to need a minimum of that. So obviously, as a kid that’s a pretty high bar, but just having fun with it, drawing as much as you can, drawing with your friends, getting a sketchbook, and just sitting there, jamming, throwing on some music, and just letting the ideas flow, and just always keep it about the fun.”

He continued, “I think everybody can just have fun with that at that point, before you even think about being a professional, just just doing it for fun. I mean, it didn’t even cross my mind till I was in high school that this could be something that I did for a job. I just did it all the time for fun. So I think that’s a really key component, just really having fun. I

would just draw with my friends growing up. In high school, I would just hang out after school and draw with my friends. So that’s the great basis, just the love of it, and then as you start to seek professional jobs, don’t forget that it’s just about fun skills. It doesn’t change. Right? You don’t change because you’re earning money, you don’t change because you’re working for people. You’re always working for yourself. You’re always working for what I think of as the art gods, who inspire all the art in the world. I think everything in the world is art.”

Dan Bandit, best known as Ghostshrimp, offers professional classes called the Ghostshrimp Classic Workshop. A ten week program, people sign up for

weekly illustration assignments, meeting as a group to share their work before Bandit offers feedback. The classes are for adults, however.

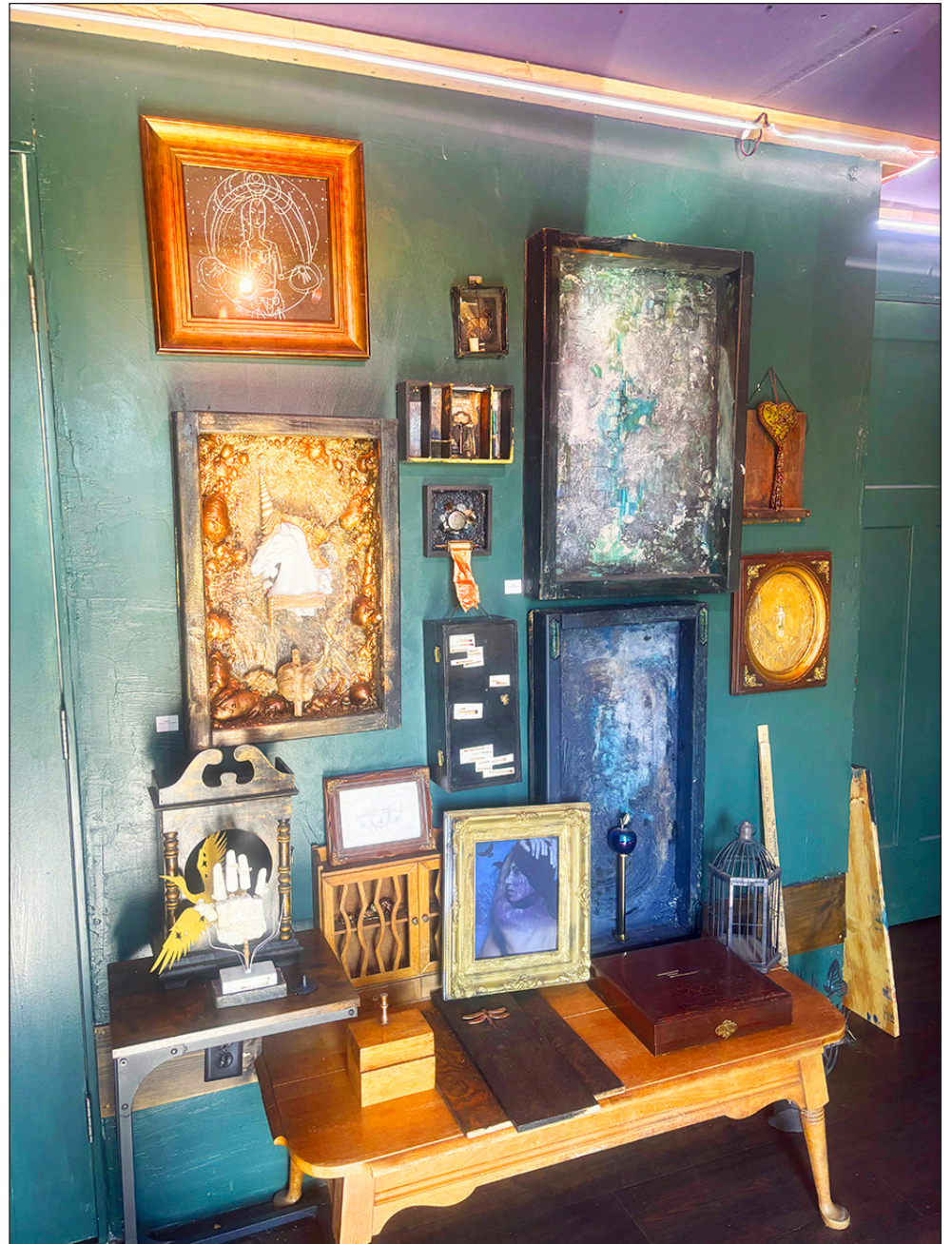
Bandit says he hopes he can free up some time to host classes at the Civic in the future or art jams, when he is less busy with ongoing projects, “I’m suffering from being too busy. Hopefully we’ll fall on some bad luck and some hard times and we’ll just have to go there,” he joked.

For more information about the Galaxy Bookshop, call (802) 472-5533 or visit galaxybookshop.com for a full schedule of events and online shopping. The Galaxy Bookshop, at 41 South Main St., is a locally owned and independent bookstore celebrating its 37th year in business.

Open Studio Weekend, October 4 and 5



Steven Bronstein displays some of the ironwork he's crafted at his forge at 3821 U.S. Rte. 2 in Marshfield during open studio weekend. He offers classes and can be contacted at (802) 426-3369 and [steve@blackthorneforge.com](mailto:steve@blackthorneforge.com). photo by Paul Fixx



Owner of Prism Art Sanctuary, artist Ashes Monroe had several selections of multi-media artworks on display for Vermont Open Studio weekend, Oct. 4 and 5.

photo by Raymonda Parchment



George Sawyer paints a newly finished Windsor chair in his Woodbury shop on Vermont Craft Council Open Studio weekend Sunday.. Learn more at [sawymade.com](http://sawymade.com).

photo by Paul Fixx



A wide array of Ruby Charuby Weavings in combination with an assortment of painted works were on display at the home of Kent and Ruby Leslie for Vermont Open Studio weekend, October 4 and 5.

photo by Raymonda Parchment



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# Art at The Kent, "Holding, Mementos Kept, Memories Kindled," through Oct. 12



Susan Wilson's "Becoming I," a three-dimensional piece fashioned from terra cotta and stoneware clays and mixed media seems alive when first encountered.



"Specimen #46," 2005, Box Construction, by Jennifer Koch, is on display during the Art at the Kent fall show in Calais.

photos  
by  
Paul Fixx



Stephen Procter's "Chrysalis," 2024, created with Stoneware and textured concrete, is displayed outside during Art at the Kent's "Holding" show this summer.



Kate Gridley's "Witness Marks Anatomy of a Memory" paintings displayed on a deconstructed wall during this summer's Art at the Kent exhibition, shows how the art often competes with the building for attention.

# EVENTS

## 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.

## Friday, Oct. 10

**LAMOILLE COUNTY PLAYERS** presents "The 39 Steps," 7 p.m., Hyde Park Opera House, 85 Main St. Tickets at LCPlayers.com.

**CABOT COMMUNITY CONTRA DANCE**, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Willey Building, 3084 Main St. Everyone welcome. All dances taught.

**GARMENT SWAP**, hosted by Hardwick HUGS, 2 to 7 p.m., Hazen Union School gymnasium. Information: deborah.hartt@gmail.com

## Saturday, Oct. 11

**LAMOILLE COUNTY PLAYERS** presents "The 39 Steps," 7 p.m., Hyde Park Opera House, 85 Main St. Tickets at LCPlayers.com.

**GARMENT SWAP**, hosted by Hardwick HUGS, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Hazen Union School gymnasium. Information: deborah.hartt@gmail.com

**CRAFT FAIR, FLEA MARKET**, Twin Valley Senior Center, 4583 U.S. Rte. 2, E. Montpelier, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Information: (802) 223-3322 or director@twinvalleyseniors.org.

## Sunday, Oct. 12

**LAMOILLE COUNTY PLAYERS** presents "The 39 Steps," 2 p.m., Hyde Park Opera House, 85 Main St. Tickets at LCPlayers.com.

## Tuesday, Oct. 14

**DANA ROBINSON** performs, 7 p.m., Back Stairs at Harry's Hardware, 3087 Main St., Cabot. Tickets and information: robinsongs.com.

## Wednesday, Oct. 15

**FALL OPEN HOUSE**, Lakeview Early Education Center, 4 to 5 p.m. Meet teachers and staff and tour the classrooms. Scavenger hunt, raffle, light snacks available.

## Thursday, Oct. 16

**PLAINFIELD FORWARD** planning meeting, 5 to 7:30 p.m., Haybarn Theater, Creative Campus, Goddard College. Everyone welcome. Information: bit.ly/PlainfieldForward.

**ADVANCED DIRECTIVE WORKSHOP**, 10 to 11 a.m., St. Norbert Church, Hardwick, with Fr. Gregory Caldwell. Sponsored by Catholic Financial Life Chapter N443 St. Jean.

**NO KINGS II-SIGN-MAKING PARTY**, sponsored by Indivisible Hardwick, at G.R.A.C.E. Arts, 59 Mill St., Hardwick. IndivisibleHardwick@pm.me.

## 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 Craftsby Road, Craftsby. Information: (802) 586-9692, jwsimpsonmemorial.org.

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

**OLD-TIME JAM SESSION**, 6 to 8 p.m., J.W. Simpson Library, 1972 East Craftsby Road, East Craftsby. 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, Craftsby Public Library, for children ages 8-13. Reserve a spot to play by contacting director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org.

**EARLY LITERACY STORY-TIME**, Craftsby 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 young people get together at The Civic Standard, 42 S. Main St., Hardwick, to play Magic: the Gathering, hosted by Dean Burns. Games begin at 5 p.m. and new players are always welcome.

**PARENTING GROUP**, on Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., Jaquith Public Library. Caregivers can

See **EVENTS**, Next Page

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# EVENTS

relax and connect with each other while their babies play. Geared for babies 0-18 months. Siblings invited. 122 School St., Marshfield. Information: [jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com](mailto:jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com), call (802) 426-3581 or visit [jaquithpubliclibrary.org](http://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](mailto:jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com), call (802) 426-3581 or visit [jaquithpubliclibrary.org](http://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](mailto:jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com), call (802) 426-3581, or [jaquithpubliclibrary.org](http://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](mailto:Vvelzis@ossu.org).

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**, Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. - 5. Cabot Pub-

lic 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, Judevine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main St. Information: [jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov](mailto:jeudevinyouthlibrarian@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](mailto:jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com), call (802) 426-3581 or visit [jaquithpubliclibrary.org](http://jaquithpubliclibrary.org).

**ADAPTIVE BIKING MONDAYS** on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, 2 to 3 p.m. and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., beginning at the trailhead parking lot on Creamery Rd. in Hardwick. Sponsored by Adaptive Sports Partners. Reservations or information: [kerry@adaptivesportspartners.org](mailto:kerry@adaptivesportspartners.org) or call (802) 427-4116.

## Exhibits

**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.

**ART AT THE KENT 2025**, Holding, Mementos Kept, Memories Kindled, through October 12, Calais. Information: [kentscorner.org](http://kentscorner.org).

**ANN YOUNG: PEOPLE AND TRAINS.** Oil paintings of people on and off trains. Parker Pie Art Gallery, 161 County Road, West Glover, through November 25.

**To have your event listed free in our weekly events calendar, please e-mail:** [news@hardwickgazette.com](mailto:news@hardwickgazette.com).



Dressed as a wizard, Hardwick Trails Committee member Helen Beattie stands at the entrance to the pumpkin walk, Sunday welcoming visitors next to Hazen Union Middle and High School Art Teacher James Lockhart's now traditional, intricately carved pumpkin. Because of the drought electric lights illuminated all the pumpkins.

photo by Paul Fixx

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# Struggles continue for Cal United girls



Chloe North (center) of Caledonia United beats Richford defender Jazzy Cunningham (right) to the ball as Carleigh Gervais of the Rockets (left) follows the play in Danville October 3. Richford won 3-2.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

by Ken Brown

VERGENNES – The Caledonia United girls soccer team were left searching for answers after losses to Vergennes and Richford last week, falling to 3-6-1 on the season.

Sophia Jones, Ashtin Stearns, and Ayla Kittredge notched a goal and an assist apiece to lead a balanced attack as Vergennes rolled to a 6-0 home win over Cal United last Monday. Ava Francis continued to pace the Lady Commodore offense, finding the back of the net eight minutes in off a feed from Jones to make it 1-0. Kittredge buried a pass from Stearns with seven minutes left in the first half to give the home team a 2-0 lead at the break. Jones, Stearns, and Faith McAllister each scored unassisted in the first seven minutes of the second half to put the match away.

Lauren Husk added a goal late for Vergennes and Addie Smith made three stops to preserve the fourth shutout of the season for the Lady Commodore defense. Vergennes improved to 9-0 and remained atop of the Division III standings, outscoring their opponents 42-7 on the season. Junior goalkeeper Eliska Siebenbrunner continued to be a bright for Cal United, turning away 22 shots in the loss.

Adi Chagnon tallied a goal, and an assist and Madelyn King scored the game winner to lead Richford to a surprise 3-2 road win over Cal United on Friday. Chagnon finished a pass from Katelyn Doe five minutes into the match to make it 1-0 Richford before Cora Abetti fed Chloe North two minutes later for the equalizer. North returned the favor to Abetti in the thirteenth minute to give Cal United a 2-1 advantage, but Rose Witherspoon evened the



Peyton Winn (no. 20) of Caledonia United shields the ball from Richford's Carleigh Gervais (right) during play in Danville Friday. The Rockets edged by Caledonia United 3-2.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

match once again at 2-2 with 12 minutes left in the first half. King buried a feed from Mia St. Pierre four minutes into the second half for the eventual game-winner. The defending Division IV state champions are rebuilding with youth this season and snapped an eight-match winless streak with just their second win. Mollie Smith made 10 stops for Richford and Siebenbrunner made 14 saves for Cal United in the loss as their winless streak extended to seven straight matches. Head coach Spencer Morse is also rebuilding

with youth this fall in Danville, Twinfield, and Cabot, admitting there is still a learning curve to go through with his young team after a hot start to the season.

"I wouldn't say our young players are hitting a wall per se, but we are still learning some concepts that we need to commit to throughout an entire match. We are starting to see glimpses of what we can accomplish," said Morse.

Morse and his club looked to get back on track on Tuesday with a trip to Oxbow before welcoming Paine Mountain to town on Friday.

## Cal United boys pass toughest test for tenth straight win

by Ken Brown

DANVILLE – The Caledonia United boys soccer team improved to 10-0 last week with a trio of shutout victories, including a signature win of the season over Division III powerhouse Vergennes.

Sam McLane headed home the game-winner off a pinpoint cross from Jola Otten to give Cal United a gutsy 1-0 home win over Vergennes last Tuesday. The Commodores came into the match on a three-game heater, outscoring their opponents 18-2 along the way. Josh Petersen (10 saves) and his Cal United back line shut it down for their fourth shutout of the season. Colton Reed turned away six shots for Vergennes. The Commodores fell to 6-3 with their only other two losses on the season coming to a 9-1-1 Division II Mount Abraham team.

"Vergennes is a talented,

disciplined, skilled and well coached squad. Both teams generated quality chances, and our backline did a great job holding their speedy forwards from breaking through. Josh was a force in net for us again and did a fantastic job coming off his line. The chemistry and the way Eli Russell, Kaiden Rogers and Jola move the ball is fun to watch and their play in the midfield was critical. It was a gritty team win and I'm so proud of our boys for how they composed themselves today," said head coach Peter Stratman.

Eli Russell scored twice and assisted on two other scores to lead Cal United to a 6-0 home win over Sharon Academy last Thursday. McLane added a goal and three assists as the hosts built a four-goal cushion in the first half and never looked back. River Thibault, Connor Winn and Hunter Eastman

each found the back of the net and Petersen made seven stops to preserve the shutout. Collin Keep made 11 saves for the Phoenix as they fell to 6-4-1.

"Sharon is an excellent young team and they're going to be a force over the next few seasons. The boys came out firing today and I'm thrilled that so many different players contributed to the scoresheet, it shows the depth and balance of our team," said Stratman.

No rest, no problem for Stratman's veteran squad the following day as Russell and McLane combined for four more goals and five assists in a 5-0 road rout of Paine Mountain. Connor Winn added another score to his impressive week, and Otten chipped in with an assist in the win. Petersen made three stops to record his fourth consecutive shutout. Owen Sweet made 13 saves in the loss as Paine

Mountain fell to 4-4.

"It was a busy week and despite some tired legs, our boys were able to manufacture 18 shots and put quite a few past them. Sweet is a skilled keeper and he did a good job of keeping his team in the match. Josh and the defense were solid again and the boys have earned a well-deserved rest!" said Stratman.

Stratman's program has now recorded double digit win seasons four out of his seven seasons since coming over from Cabot, where he racked up nearly 100 career wins and back-to-back Division IV Final Four appearances. Cal United, Twin Valley and Grace Christian continue to sit atop of the divisional standings without a loss.

Cal United welcomed Oxbow to the hedges in Danville on Tuesday before facing another stiff road test against Mountain League rival Enosburg on Thursday.

# Gouin becomes “All-Timer” as Lady Cats roll

by Ken Brown

NORTHFIELD – Senior Vermont All-State selection Isabelle Gouin scored four more goals last week to break the all-time school scoring record as her Hazen Union girls soccer team ripped off their fifth straight win to improve to 9-2 on the season.

Gouin recorded her fourth hat-trick of the season last Tuesday while powering the Lady Cats to a 4-0 road win over Paine Mountain. Craftsbury Academy’s Adelina Augsberger fed Gouin on a throw-in sixteen minutes into the match to give Hazen an early 1-0 advantage. Gouin finished off a through ball from Kelsie Rivard to make it 2-0 heading into the break. Kennidee Gouin fed Mya Lumsden just under fifteen minutes into the second half for a three-goal cushion. History was made just 10 minutes later when Gouin finished off a beautiful pass from Lumsden for her fifty-fifth career goal, making her the all-time leading scorer for the Lady Cat program. Ella Renaud made four stops, including a pair from point blank range to preserve the shutout. Hazel Knox recorded nine saves in the loss for Paine Mountain.

It was more Gouin and the Hazen defense on Thursday as they gutted out a tough road win against Oxbow 1-0. Lumsden fed Gouin once again just ten minutes into the match for the eventual game-winner. Rivard matched Renaud’s

efforts two days earlier with eight tough saves to nail down the fourth straight shutout for the Lady Cat defense. Hazen snapped Oxbow’s three match winning streak, dropping them to 6-3-1.

Kaitlyn Forant held the school scoring record at Hazen for 17 years, scoring 54 times in three seasons before tragically breaking her leg in a scrimmage before the start of her senior season in 2008. Forant went on to set more scoring records for her Southern Vermont College women’s soccer team. Following their first trip to the Division IV state title match in over three decades, Gouin joined head coach Harry Besett’s Lady Cat program rebuild as just an eighth grader. She has been Hazen’s leading scorer since her freshman campaign, culminating in a 20-goal season last fall that earned her a Vermont All-State selection. The speedy striker has already found the back of the net 21 times in eleven matches this season and credits her team for a lot of her personal success on the pitch.

“It really hasn’t set in yet. It’s so exciting, but sort of surreal at the same time. I’m thankful, fortunate, and attribute a lot of my success on the soccer field to our team. I knew I was getting close to the milestone for some time now, but it sort of came along quicker than I anticipated. Our team has been so supportive all the way through. I’m sure when I look back



Hazen Union senior Isabelle Gouin (No. 1) rips a shot past Alexandria De-Forge (No. 3) of Blue Mountain during action in Hardwick on Hudson Field, September 17. Gouin scored three goals. photo by Vanessa Fournier

on this someday, the fact that I broke the record in my senior year with my younger sister (Kennidee) up on varsity playing alongside of me, will make the memory extra special! She’s been working very hard and hopefully will be on pace to lead the future Lady Cats as a

captain and high scorer too,” said Gouin.

Hazen remains in the mix atop of a highly competitive Division III leaderboard in head coach Megan Mercier’s first season. Her team will get a full week of practice before traveling to Enosburg on Friday.

# Streak snapped in tough week for Wildcats

by Ken Brown

HARDWICK – The Hazen Union boys soccer team had their three-match win streak snapped with a couple of tough shutout losses to Thetford Academy and Harwood last week.

Henry Trage scored the only goal of the match to help Thetford escape with a 1-0 road win over the Wildcats last Tuesday. Trage collected a through ball from Eben Zoerheide midway through the second half and got behind the Wildcat defense, capitalizing on a rare mistake from Hazen goalkeeper Grayson McNaughten. The senior has undoubtedly been one of the best keepers in the Capital League this season, coming into this matchup with three straight shutouts, but experienced a goalkeeper’s worst nightmare on the game-winner credited to Trage. McNaughten

came out of his box and was caught in no man’s land as Trage bore down on him, over-running the ball and missing on a last-ditch effort to clear the ball away as Trage finished in front of an empty Wildcat net. Cody McKinstry and Asa Williams combined to make nine saves to preserve the shutout as the Panthers improved to 6-3. McNaughten and Chayse Newell combined to turn away 10 shots in the loss.

“We were just a half step off from each other in the first half. Too many unforced turnovers early on set up a high tension second half. We matched up very evenly with them and not taking advantage of this match creates an uphill battle for us the rest of the season. We need to regroup, rethink and improve our preparation to make sure we aren’t needlessly giving the ball away in the midfield,” said head coach Harry Besett.

Felix Kretz scored a pair of first half goals to power Harwood to a 3-0 home win over Hazen on Friday. Cole Shullenberger added an insurance goal in the second half and Sebastian Binkerd added an assist as the Highlanders reeled off their sixth straight win. Shelden Frank recorded two saves to preserve the fifth shutout of the season for the Harwood defense. The two-time defending Division II champs look poised to be a contender once again later this month, improving to 7-2-1 on the season. McNaughten made nine stops in the loss for Hazen.

The loss dropped the Wildcats to third in the current Division III standings at 6-3-1. A challenging schedule against some of the top teams in the Capital will test Besett’s upstart squad down the stretch in their quest to secure a home playoff match.

The Wildcats travel to Montpelier on Wednesday to



Second year Hazen Union varsity boys head coach Harry Besett.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

take on the top team in Division II before wrapping up the week with an 11 a.m., Saturday match-up with U-32 at Hudson Fields. Hazen welcomes Peoples Academy to town next Tuesday on Senior Night. All home games can be streamed live on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

# Ken Brown's SPORT NUGGETS

## Freshman lead the way for Craftsbury cross-country



Hazen Union boys running in the 2025 Craftsbury Academy Invitational High School 5K on October 1 at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center are (from left) Garrett Sisk, Daniel Pougner and Kiah Cloutier. Five schools participated from grades 5 to 12 in the middle and high school races.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

CRAFTSBURY – The Craftsbury Academy (CA) cross-country team held their own last week against runners from Peoples Academy (PA), Lake Region, Hazen Union, and Danville in their first meet of the season at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

Charger freshman Aemilia Terrone posted an impressive runner-up finish in the girls 5,000m last Wednesday, crossing the finish line with a time of 22:52.7. Freshman teammate Nora Van Gulden finished fifth with a personal best time of 25:40.2. Budding multi-sport star Daisy Berg bested the field for PA with a time of 21:13.3. Berg broke onto the high school hoops scene as an eighth-grader last winter, leading the Lady Wolves to a Division III Final Four appearance at the Barre Auditorium.

***Kaiab Cloutier posted another solid meet for the Wildcats, finishing 6th (20:57.2) with his best time of the season.***

In the boys 5,000m, the freshmen duo of Oakley Crawford and James Reynolds continued their strong seasons, leading the Chargers to a runner-up overall team finish behind Peoples Academy. Crawford finished 4th with a time of 19:36.9 and Reynolds 10th with a personal best time of 21:16.2. Hazen Union sophomore Kaiab Cloutier posted another solid meet for the Wildcats, finishing 6th (20:57.2) with his best time of



The Craftsbury High School Cross Country Team are (from left) front row: Aemilia Terrone, James Reynolds, Nora Van Gulden, and Anson Magoon. Back row: Theo Alexander, Owen McKibben, Oakley Crawford and Coach Maxfield English. Missing from the photo are Soren Stelma-Leonard and Eliza Bunten.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

the season. Danville's Landon Garrand is putting the wraps on an impressive freshman campaign as he was runner-up (18:38.5) to PA senior Magnus Hayden (18:18.8).

The Chargers will stay put this week as they are scheduled to host the NVAC Mountain Cross-Country Run Championships on Saturday at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

## Young Hazen golf wraps season, looks to future

GREENSBORO – Head coach Andy Hunt and his young Hazen Union golf team wrapped up their season two weeks ago hosting their third meet of the season at Mountain View Country Club.

Although Hazen will not have any sectional or state qualifiers this season, Hunt has made great strides in recruiting enthusiastic young talent that bodes well for the future of the Wildcat program. Junior Braydon Stratton captained the team this fall and was the only returning player this season with varsity experience. Wildcat freshmen Kolten Lumsden and Roni Quinn, along with fellow Craftsbury Academy freshman Max Royan, consistently improved posting scores in the 50s for Hunt this fall. Eighth graders Hollis

Allen and Jonah Wohlberg from CA as well as Hazen seventh graders Harvest Barsalow, Remy Hodgdon, James Stratton, and Ryan Holbrook, rounded out a talented middle school team for Hazen that should set a solid foundation for the program for years to come. Hunt also added freshman Christopher Tongolei midway through the season, giving him nearly 10 underclassmen to surround Stratton returning to the team next fall. Former Wildcat alum Aaron Molleur and Mark Royan were instrumental throughout the season for Hunt as assistant coaches.

“What a year! The freshmen class made great strides this season despite having little or no experience in varsity competition. We feel like a developmental season like this has

built the foundation for increased success for the foreseeable future of the program. To help speed things along, we are now fundraising to build an indoor practice facility at the school This should really help the current team and keep the interest in the program up for years to come,” said Hunt.

Division II hopefuls from all around the state competed in sectionals last week at Champlain Country Club. Lyndon Institute's Josh Gaskin took home individual medalist honors with an even par round of 70. Bubba Chamberlain was runner-up with a 72. Stowe's Rowan Turner led his Raider team to a qualifying spot with a 78. The Division II state championships were held at Dorset Field Club on Tuesday.



Craftsbury's Aemilia Terrone placed 2nd in the, finishing at 22:52.7 in the 5K high school girls race out of the 12 who competed at the CA Invitational Cross-Country meet at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center, October 1.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



The old war horse, Jason Woodard, paced the thirty-car strong Flying Tiger division in time trials and kept the No. 1 spot by taking the Segment No. 1 win. photo by Alan Ward



Marcel J. Gravel (right) and Jason Corliss (left) led Sunday's Vermont Milk Bowl by earning the front row in time trial action on Saturday afternoon. photo by Alan Ward

## Gravel claims pole with 0.001-second lead on qualifying day

BARRE – It's the one and only chance all year long for a race at Thunder Road to be set by time trials and two teams that call the Nation's Site of Excitement home every Thursday made the most of it. Marcel Gravel took a fast time of 12.193 seconds to claim the pole early but Jason Corliss made him sweat as he watched from the infield. Corliss, the reigning and four-time King of the Road track champion dug deep to run a 12.194-second lap that just wasn't enough to knock Gravel off the top spot. The two set the front row for Sunday's 63rd Vermont Milk Bowl, with everyone else tightening the belts for the remainder of qualifying action.

Last year's track champion, Kaiden Fisher, went on to win the first of the Twin 50 qualifier events while current American-Canadian Tour point leader Raphael Lessard would win the second 50 lapper, both pocketing a cool \$1,000 for their Saturday victories. After it was all said and done, 12 cars were on Sunday's line-up sheet for the Last Chance Qualifier, all looking to be one of the final four additions to Sunday's marquee event.

Fast times leading to the pole position was the story for Segment No. 1 in both the Flying Tiger and Street Stock Mini Milk Bowls. Jason Woodard launched himself to the top of the thirty-strong Flying Tiger field in group qualifying and then maintained that position through the end of the first 40 lap segment. It was the same for youngster Hayden Morris, leading the time charts and surviving a strong fight with 2025 top rookie Hayden Bushey to win the first of two 25-lap segments. The real

story is whether or not Woodard, Morris or Bushey will make their way through their respective fields in Sunday's final sprint to seal the overall and cap 2025 with a bang.

Epping, N.H.'s Dan Bowes left last year's Vermont Milk Bowl weekend with a totaled race car after smashing his rear end hard into the turn two concrete and ending his day in practice just one year ago. Saturday was a much different outcome. Bowes took the lead from early leader John Leonard and paced the field to the very end to take the 50-lap win over Mike Mayberry and point leader Jeffrey Battle.

The NELCAR Legends made their debut at Thunder Road sixteen strong, the first to tackle the highbanks. It was all Ryan Vanasse Jr. from the drop of the green flag in their caution-free 25-lap main event with Jace Mougin able to keep pace for second and Frank Sweeney taking third.

### UNOFFICIAL RESULTS (local competitors)

#### American-Canadian Tour / Late Models –

1. 75VT, Marcel J. Gravel, Wolcott
15. 45NH, Stephen Martin, Craftsbury Common

#### Milk Bowl Last Chance B-Feature Starting Line-Up

4. 92VT, Jaden Perry, Hardwick
5. 36VT, Joel Hodgdon, Craftsbury Common

#### Flying Tigers – Segment No. 1 Finish – (40 Laps)

3. 15NH, Brendan Moodie, Wolcott
23. 22VT, Travis Patnoe, Wolcott

#### Street Stocks – Segment No. 1 Finish – (25 Laps)

19. 18x, Walker Fitch, Marshfield
20. 32. Kylee Potter, Marshfield



Two youngsters, Hayden Morris (13VT) and Hayden Bushey (15VT) battled for most of the first Street Stock Segment. photo by Alan Ward



Milk Bowl front runners Marcel Gravel (75) and Jason Corliss (66) narrowly avoided the intense Segment No. 2 pile-up in turn one that claimed several top teams. photo by Alan Ward



Gravel stands with Northfield Savings Bank President and CEO Joseph Bater in victory lane. photo by Alan Ward

# Gravel takes inspired ride to Milk Bowl win

BARRE – A beautiful, summer-like day greeted the fans and teams of Thunder Road Speedbowl to set the scene for a history-making Vermont Milk Bowl. Three segments of racing awaited the Milton CAT American-Canadian Tour and Late Models Sunday morning with Marcel Gravel pacing the pack early in Segment No. 1.

It started with a bang on lap one, in turn one as Brandon Gray, Bryan Wall Jr. and Erick Sands saw their days end early in a crashing of steel and concrete. Gravel set the pace but fell under attack from current Touring point leader Raphael Lessard at lap 10. Gravel regained the high ground on lap 19 and kept the hammer down for the Segment No. 1 win.

The start of Segment No. 2 mirrored that of the first round as an incredible seven car pile-up stacked Jimmy Hebert and Scott Dragon three-high against the turn one wall but after lengthy clean up the Milk Bowl continued. Rookie Trevor Jaques paced the field in battle with sophomore touring driver Cole Littlewood until again Gravel made his way to the front and took the Segment No. 2 win.

Going into Segment No. 3 with a perfect score meant Gravel was the man to beat and in the early stages of the final segment it looked like Jason Corliss was giving it his all to topple the Wolcott driver. Aside from the earlier stages, Segment #3 was a calm affair with just one caution on lap 12 for Derek Gluchacki and Lessard in turn one slowing the pace. Gravel again worked his magic to get as high as third in the final segment to take an overall total of just five points, earning him the additional \$5,000 score bonus for winning with under six points.

Gravel was crowned the 2025 Vermont Milk Bowl champion as the first back-to-back victory since Jason Corliss in 2018 while his \$21,900 victory is unofficially the biggest winner's payout in Milk Bowl history. Not to mention, Gravel's score of just five points is the lowest winning score since Brian Hoar's four-point win back in 1998.

After winning Saturday's opening segment in the Flying Tigers Mini Milk Bowl, Jason Woodard started Sunday's



Marcel Gravel goes back-to-back in the 63rd Vermont Milk Bowl, sealed with the traditional kiss from the Milk Bowl queen.

photo by Alan Ward

40-lapper dead last alongside fellow Milk Bowl hopeful Luke Peters. The two methodically made their way up through the pack, with the aid of a couple cautions no doubt, but Woodard finally broke away and stole the lead with 10 laps remaining. Woodard would go on to take the win and the perfect Mini Milk Bowl score of 2 to take the emotional win and return to victory lane.

The Street Stocks returned to also finish out their Mini Milk Bowl action on Sunday. While Derek Farnham dominated the final segment out front, all eyes were on Nick Pilotte and Jacob Roy after the two broke away from Saturday's hot-shoes Hayden Morris and Hayden Bushey. The two fought neck and neck through the final stages with Pilotte unable to gain the last crucial spot to secure the tie as White Mountain Motorsports Park regular Jacob Roy nailed down the Mini Milk Bowl honors.

The Metals Road Warriors put on a rough and rowdy affair for the end of season honors at Thunder Road. Cayden Green's on-track win in Segment #2 was enough to take the overall until an illegal tire was discovered in post-race technical inspection. Taylor Sayers was handed the win afterwards with a first and third, respectively.

The Kids Division also made the trip over to Vermont Milk Bowl weekend for a pair of 12-lap segments on Sunday. Hometown boy Evan Folsom put on a clinic to win the opening round before coming home second in a door-to-door finish with Owen Dupuis to

take the overall in his first career Kids Division win.

## UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

(local competitors)

### Milton CAT American-Canadian Tour - Late Models –

(Finish Pos., Starting Pos., Car #, Driver, Hometown, Seg #1 Fin., Seg #2 Fin., Seg #3 Fin., (Overall Score))

- 1. 1, 75VT, Marcel J. Gravel, Wolcott, 1, 1, 3 (5)
- 9. 15, 45NH, Stephen Martin,

Craftsbury Common, 13, 18, 1 (32)

### Flying Tigers – Mini Milk Bowl (Twin 40s)

(Finishing Pos., Car #, Driver, Hometown, (Seg #1 Finish, Seg #2 Finish - Total))

- 15. 15NH, Brendan Moodie, Wolcott, 3, 13 (16)
- 21. 22VT, Travis Patnoe, Wolcott, 23, 20 (43)

### Street Stocks – Mini Milk Bowl – (Twin 25s)

(Finishing Pos., Car #, Driver, Hometown, (Seg #1 Finish, Seg #2 Finish - Total))

- 12. 32, Kylee Potter, Marshfield, 20, 3 (23)
- 13. 18x, Walker Fitch, Marshfield, 19, 7 (26)

### Road Warriors – Mini Milk Bowl (Twin 20s)

(Finishing Pos., Car #, Driver, Hometown, (Seg #1 Finish, Seg #2 Finish - Total))

- 10. 18, Cayden Green, Marshfield, 3, 17 (20)

### Kids Division – Mini Milk Bowl (Twin 12s)

(Finishing Pos., Car #, Driver, Hometown, (Seg #1 Finish, Seg #2 Finish - Total))

- 4. 23, Madison Potter, Marshfield, 7, 4 (11)



Kiah Cloutier of Hazen Union placed 6th with a time of 20:57.2 in the boys 5K held at the Craftsbury Invitational Cross-Country Meet October 1 at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

photo by Vanessa Fournier