



Superior Court orders bail hearing for murder suspect

by **Raymonda Parchment**

HARDWICK – Caledonia Superior Court has ordered a lower, trial court to hold a bail hearing and establish conditions for the release a Morrisville held without bail since his August arrest.

In August, Michael A. Williams was arrested and charged with the murder of Hardwick resident Tina Daigle. Williams was taken into police custody, pleading not guilty in Caledonia County Superior Court in St. Johnsbury to charges of aggravated domestic assault and second degree murder in the killing of Tina Daigle, age 38, who authorities say was strangled to death.

Daigle was killed in Caledonia

County on June 19, according to state police. Her body was discovered on the side of Vt. Route 14 in Woodbury.

Claire Burns, interim Caledonia County state's attorney, argued during the August 27 court hearing for Williams to be held without bail.

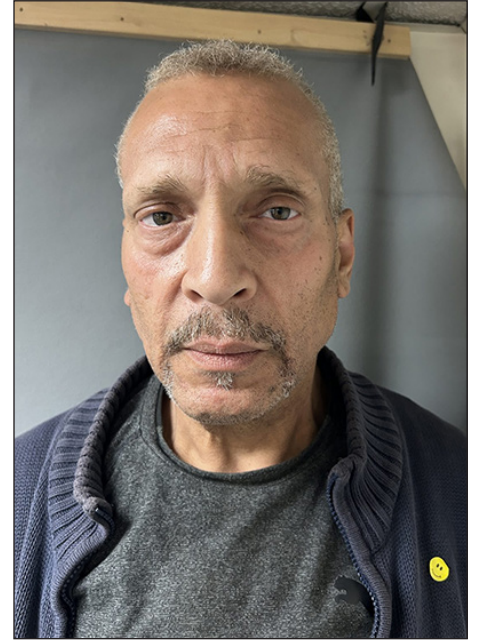
"The weight of the evidence, the state contends, is great," Burns told Judge Michael Kainen. "In this instance, we have a 17-page affidavit detailing roughly two months of thorough, consistent investigation undertaken by the Vermont State Police."

Williams has a previous conviction for aggravated domestic assault involving a different woman

that resulted in a 10-year prison sentence, Burns said. "He was found guilty of having choked a girlfriend, an eerily similar factual pattern to this instance," Burns said.

Attorney Brandon Sheffert, representing Williams, opposed the prosecutor's request to hold his client in custody without bail. Sheffert said Williams had lengthy ties to Vermont and was not a risk of flight.

Williams has been held without option for bail since his arrest August 19. However, on December 16, Caledonia Superior Court ordered the lower court to allow the release of Williams subject to a bail review hearing.



Michael A. Williams, 60, of Morrisville, is seen in this Vermont State Police on Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025.

Elementary school closure vote set for Calais, Worcester, Feb 10

by **Paul Fixx**

MONTPELIER – The Washington Central Unified Union School Board to recommend closing Calais Elementary School and Worcester's Doty Memorial School (WCUUSB) voted last Wednesday, Dec. 17.

The proposed budget, which the board has yet to accept a final revision of, shows a savings

See **CLOSURE, 4**



The current Gulf Road Bridge to be replaced over the Wild Branch in Wolcott. courtesy Lamoille County Planning Commission

Gulf Road Bridge replacement project moves ahead

by **Lamoille County Planning Commission**

WOLCOTT – In November of 2023, the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC), in partnership with the Town of Wolcott, received a \$46,499.81 grant award from the Lamoille Basin Clean Water Service Provider for preliminary design of the Gulf Road Bridge Replacement and Floodplain Restoration Project in Wolcott.

The Gulf Road Bridge is in North Wolcott over the Wild Branch (a tributary to the Lamoille River) southeast of the Gulf Road intersection with North Wolcott Road.

See **BRIDGE, 3**

Jeudevine Memorial Library receives planning grant

by **Paul Fixx**

HARDWICK – A grant from the Vermont Community Foundation will allow the Jeudevine Memorial Library to revisit its mission and vision statements while it crafts a strategic plan.

The \$5,000 Capacity Building Grant will allow the library to work with Kate McGowan, a paid facilitator with many years of experience working with nonprofits doing this kind of work, and the new director of the library in Lincoln.

Jeudevine Library Director Diane Grenkow said "I look forward to working with trustees, [the] Friends [of the Library organization], and community members for this next step now that the addition is complete and thriving!"

She said, "We anticipate starting this work in January 2026 and completing it by April."

The library opened its new addition in 2025 after more than a decade of planning that began with a need for handicap accessibility for the original building, dedicated at a special Town Meeting at the Hardwick Academy on December 15, 1897. It cost \$29,000 to build, including the site.

"The past several years have been dedicated to the design, fundraising and construction of the new addition during and after the upheaval of Covid," said Grenkow.

"Library staff, trustees, Friends, the Town

See **GRANT, 4**



Candles illuminate the night through the window of the home of George and Regina Baily in Hardwick. courtesy photo

Your support powers every story we tell.

DONATE NOW

NewsMatch

Local news provides the facts you need to make decisions about your community.

DONATE NOW TO MATCH \$40,000 TO HELP US BRING YOU FACT-BASED COMMUNITY INFORMATION.

THE Hardwick Gazette INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Police Department Rollover Crash

HARDWICK – On November 29 at approximately 5:34 p.m., the Hardwick Police responded to the area of Renaud Rd., for a report of a vehicle rollover with multiple occupants. Upon arrival, the occupants were out of the vehicle. Alberto

Gomes of Hardwick was traveling East on Renaud Rd., when he lost control of his 2009 Ford Explorer going off the roadway and rolled the vehicle onto its passenger side due to icy conditions. Hardwick Fire and Rescue also assisted at the scene.

Vermont State Police Rear-end collision

ALBANY – On December 16 at approximately 7:32 a.m., the Vermont State Police responded to a two-vehicle crash on Vt. Route 14 in the town of Albany. Upon troopers arrival, the operators were identified as Jericho Thatcher of Barton, and Shannon Smith of Marshfield. Investi-

gation revealed that Smith was traveling north on Vt. Route 14 and was stopped for a school bus when Thatcher, also traveling north crested a knoll behind them and could not stop in time, subsequently rear-ending the back of Smith's vehicle. All involved parties reported no injuries.

Hardwick Police Report Media Log

HARDWICK – December 7: Assist - Motorist.

December 8: Suspicious Event, Spruce Drive; Citizen Dispute, S. Main St.; Accident - LSA, Mill St.; Accident - TCNR, Vt. Route 15 W.; Traffic Hazard, Vt. Route 15; Suspicious Event, Riverside Terrace.

December 9: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.

December 10: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Suspicious Event, Maple St.; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Medical, Hazen Union Drive; Accident - LSA, Slapp Hill; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Woodbury St.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.; Assist - Agency, Highland Ave.

December 11: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Accident - Property Damage Only, Center Road; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Drive; Sex Offender Registry Check, High St.; Accident - TCNR,

Dutton Road; False Information to the Police, Slapp Hill.

December 12: VIN verification, Craftsbury Road; Citizen Dispute, Lower Cherry St.; Assist - Motorist, Center Road; Fingerprints, High St.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Citizen Dispute, Cherry St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, N. Main St.; Welfare Check; Mill St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.

December 13: Odor Investigation, S. Main St.; Wanted Person, High St.; Suspicious Event, Maple St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 14; Theft, Mill St.; Property Damage, Ward Hill Rd.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Hardwick St.

December 14: Property Damage, Mill St.; Assist - Motorist, Vt. Route 15 E.



December 24- December 30

Merry Christmas from The Willey's Store

20% Off all Holiday Items through Dec. 31

<p>Ocean Spray Cranberry Drinks \$2.99 64 oz.</p>	<p>Folgers Ground Coffee \$10.99 22.6-25.9 oz.</p>	<p>Swiss Miss Cocoa Mix 2/\$5 5.84-11 oz.</p>
<p>General Mills Chex Cereal \$2.99 12-14 oz.</p>	<p>Pearl Milling Pancake Mix \$3.99 32 oz.</p>	<p>Newman's Pasta Sauce 2/\$6 24 oz.</p>
<p>Stove Top Stuffing 2/\$4 6 oz.</p>	<p>Annie's Mac & Cheese Dinners 2/\$4 6 oz.</p>	<p>Green Giant Canned Vegetables 4/\$5 14.5-15.25 oz.</p>
<p>Frenches Fried Onions \$3.99 6 oz.</p>	<p>Hellmann's Mayonnaise \$4.99 15-30 oz.</p>	<p>Nabisco Oreo Cookies \$4.99 18.12-18.71 oz.</p>
<p>Nabisco Snack Crackers 2/\$5 7.5-13.7 oz.</p>	<p>Blue Diamond Nut Thins \$3.29 4.25 oz.</p>	<p>Carr's Crackers 2/\$6 4.25 oz.</p>
<p>Planters Dry Roasted Peanuts 2/\$5 16 oz.</p>	<p>Brawny 4 DR Paper Towels \$9.99 137-180.25 s.f.</p>	<p>Cabot Bar or Shredded Cheese 2/\$5 6-8 oz.</p>
<p>Hood 1/2 & 1/2 Creamer \$2.79 32 oz.</p>	<p>Breyers Ice Cream \$4.49 48 oz.</p>	<p>Hood Ice Cream \$3.49 48 oz.</p>

The Willey's Store Since 1900 Greensboro

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sat. & Sun. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
802-533-2621 • toll-free 855-533-2621

True Value

- Full-service Grocery & Hardware • Clothing
- Footwear • Housewares • Hunting & Fishing
- Coffee Bar • Beer & Wine • Toys • Gifts

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

Contents

Police Report.....	2 - 3
Weather Watch	3
Cabot Holiday Workshop (photos).....	5
State to send Vermonters unclaimed property checks.....	6
News Notes	6
Editorial: Looking back, looking ahead	7
Letters from readers: Riege.....	7
Yankee Notebook: Chasing away the darkness	8
Another Opinion: Nudell.....	10
In My Nature (cartoon)	10
Heller's World (cartoon)	10, 13
Rural Ramblings (Homeyer)	11
Voices of Spirit: Sunday-Winters	12
I Heard it Through the Jeudevine: Lew-Smith	12
In the Garden: Oh, Christmas trees	13
The Outside Story: Cocoon spotting, bird brains	14
Business Briefs	15, 16, 17
Our Communities	17, 23
Obituaries: Dervavich	17
A Story of the Season: Northern Star (1970).....	18
Vermont Cello Duet in Concert, Jan. 11	23
Events	24-25
No speed-bumps for Wildcats in season opener.....	26
CVU extends divisional dominance	27
Lady Trojans show fight in road loss	27

WEATHER WATCH



The sky in Cabot is starting to clear up on the very cold afternoon of December 14. photo by Aaron Facciolini

Messy mix possible again

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK -- Moderating temperatures closed out the work week last week, with lows struggling to drop below freezing Thursday night under the influence of a southerly flow. Some snowpack was lost in the process, despite all of the early-season accumulation.

Some additional warmth may reach the northeast just in time to wrap up Christmas, as a wave of low pressure develops over the Great Lakes and moves east. Preceding it will be an area of high pressure bringing cooler temperatures into the overnight tonight, followed by increasing clouds tomorrow. Precipitation will likely be a mix of precipitation types

heading into Friday. Seasonable temperatures will return for the last weekend of the year. Here are those forecast details:

Wednesday: A slight chance of snow showers in the morning, otherwise becoming mostly sunny. High: 27. Low: 8. Northwest wind 5-10 mph, becoming light.

Thursday: Partly cloudy. A chance of rain or snow showers in the afternoon. High: 32. Low: 22. Southwest wind 5-10 mph.

Friday: Mostly cloudy. Rain or snow likely. High: 34. Low: 18. Southwest wind 5-10 mph, becoming northwest.

Weekend Outlook: Trending drier with temperatures in the 20s for highs and single digits for lows.

POLICE REPORT

Vermont State Police Three-car crash, retail theft

MARSHFIELD – On December 8, at approximately 12:11 p.m., a three car crash occurred on the Cabot Road in the town of Marshfield. Operator No. 2 was driving vehicle No.2 with a snowplow on the front of the vehicle and turning around at the Marshfield-Cabot town line. Operator No.2 had a snowplow into the roadway and was waiting for an oncoming vehicle to pass before turning into the road. The snowplow was stopped when Operator No.1 in vehicle No.1 traveling towards Marshfield from Cabot collided with the end of the plow and then collided with Operator No. 3 in vehicle No. 3. All operators were screened by EMS and only Operators No. 1 and 2 were transported to CVMC for further treatment. The roadway was cleared of any hazards and vehicles No.1 and No. 3 were towed by Action Towing and Caledonia Wrecker Service respectively.

PLAINFIELD – On December 13, at 7:39 p.m., troopers of the Berlin Barracks received a report of an impaired driver in Plainfield. The operator was identified as Michael Grant. While speaking with troopers, Grant displayed signs of impairment. Grant was taken into



Vermont State Police are seeking the identity of this suspect for the theft from Maplefields in Plainfield.

photo by Vermont State Police

custody for suspicion of DUI. Grant was issued a citation to appear in Washington County Superior Court to answer the above charge.

PLAINFIELD – On December 1,3 at approximately 3:53 p.m., the Vermont State Police received a report of a theft at the Maplefields in Plainfield. The suspect reportedly stole a carton of cigarettes before exiting the store. Anyone with information on the identity of the suspect is asked to contact Trooper Lambert at the Berlin Barracks at (802) 229 - 9191.

Bridge

Continued From Page One

The grant funded 30% of the design for replacing and widening the span of the Gulf Road Bridge, as well as looking at alternatives for upstream floodplain restoration that included a floodplain bench, to restore natural flow of the Wild Branch.

The bridge is now significantly undersized, causing erosion and scouring.

That location has experienced flooding that includes flood waters over-topping the road and bridge during the 2019 Halloween Storm and the July 2023 flood.

The Wild Branch has limited floodplain connectivity in that area now. It would benefit from up-sizing the bridge and floodplain restoration to reduce erosion, scour and phosphorus loading.

The project is a continuation of a priority project identified in the North Wolcott Road Flood Mitigation Evaluation.

In June of 2024, SLR Consulting was contracted with the LCPC to develop a preliminary design and benefit cost analysis.

Public meetings and

presentations were held with the Wolcott Select Board and adjacent landowners, along with site visits to gather input during the preliminary design phase. A design review meeting was held with state permitting partners including Vermont Agency of Transportation and Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Additional design review meetings were held with Vermont River Conservancy who stewards a river corridor easement on the northeast side of the Gulf Road Bridge.

The current bridge built in 1967 has a span of 45 ft. The design plans propose a 70 ft. bridge span to allow passage of 500-year flood flows and all flows of a lesser magnitude without damage.

The bridge experiences heavy truck traffic from the nearby gravel pit. In June 2023, the

Lamoille County Planning Commission conducted a traffic count on just south of the Gulf Road Bridge, counting a daily average of 290 vehicles.

The town anticipates an increase in traffic on the road as the town addresses the risk of a slope failure along North Wolcott Road,



An overview of the placement of the Gulf Road Bridge in Wolcott.

photo by Lamoille County Planning Commission

downstream of the bridge. This poses structural risk to North Wolcott Road and may force the town to temporarily close that section of North Wolcott Road, leaving Gulf Road as the only connecting route for traffic traveling from Route 15 to North Wolcott Road.

Replacing the bridge represents an opportunity for

improving public safety and flood resiliency. The

town is currently seeking funding opportunities to fund the Final Design Phase of this bridge replacement project.

For more information on the project, contact LCPC Regional & Natural Resources Planner, Meghan Rodier, at (802) 888-4548 ext. 103 or meghan@lcpvt.org.

Closure

Continued From Page One

of 0.66% and a reduction of 0.89% in the amount needing to be raised by property taxes. WCUUSD Superintendent Steven Dellinger-Pate said in his presentation the proposed budget meets the district's financial goals and most of the programmatic goals set by the board.

January 20, 2026, was set as the date for a special election, where voters in both towns will be asked to weigh in on closing their school during a marathon meeting at U-32 Middle and High School in Montpelier that lasted just under six hours. It ended after midnight,

One-hundred-ten pages of material was distributed before the meeting, significantly more than the 16 pages in a packet prepared for the regular meeting a week earlier that was cancelled due to weather. The full board packet with the superintendent's presentation is at tinyurl.com/WCUUSD-12-27-2025-Board-Packet

The vote to adopt a configuration model with three multi-town elementary schools, one middle school and one high school passed by a narrow 7-6 margin.

An amendment offered by board member Chris McVeigh asking the board to honor the vote of any town voting no to close their school failed. In discussion about the motion, McVeigh referred to the articles of agreement, concerned that the board had not heard anything about the impact on towns should their schools close.

Motions made and approved immediately after the configuration vote called first for closing Doty Elementary School, then Calais Elementary School. A memo to school board members from Superintendent Dellinger-Pate indicated the budget must be submitted on January 23 for a vote on Town Meeting Day, Tuesday, March 3.

Board Chair Flor Diaz Smith

welcomed public comments prior to a budget presentation prior to the votes. Community members expressed concerns about school closures, teacher reductions and the decision-making process.

A fifth-grade student spoke to urge against closing schools, while parents voiced concerns about teacher reductions and the emotional impact of decisions made without what they see as adequate process. Community members presented arguments for and against school consolidation, highlighting the need for careful consideration and transparency in decision-making.

A presentation of budget options by the superintendent gave members and visitors a look at two budgets, one reflecting the current school configuration and another proposing the three-elementary school model. While the financial goals established by the board were met in the proposal covering the current school configuration, programmatic goals were not, given the reductions in staff required to meet the financial goals. Too few staff would be spread across too many campuses.

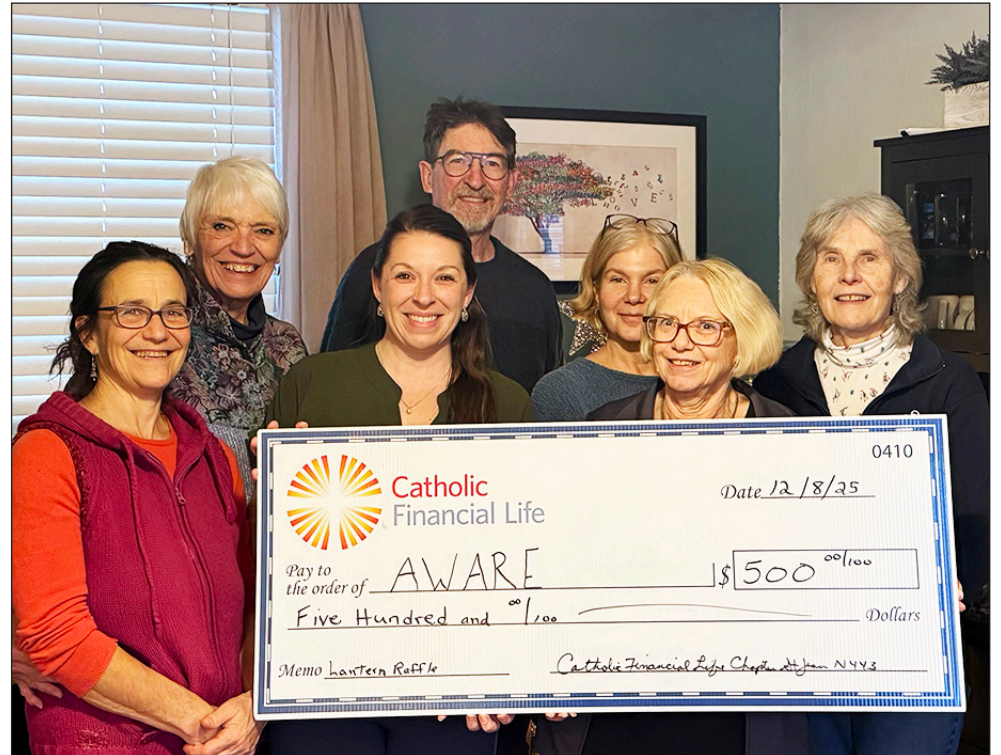
In Calais, for example, a nurse would be available just one day a week, requiring other staff to provide the services normally provided by the school's nurse.

Following the presentation, board members sought guidance on which direction to pursue, acknowledging uncertainties in legislative outcomes affecting tax data.

The board discussed the implications of declining enrollment and the need for restructuring, which led to the motion for adopting the model with just three multi-town elementary schools, one middle and one high school.

Board members expressed mixed feelings about the new model while emphasizing the importance of community input and honoring town votes before they voted for it.

Meeting minutes are at bit.ly/WCUUSD_Minutes_12-17-2025



Jeannine Young, president of Catholic Financial Life Chapter St. Jean N443 of the Greater Hardwick Area presents a \$500 match fund check to Mirinda Elkins, executive director of AWARE, joined by Sharon Fialco, Paulette Brochu-Colburn, Jerry Schneider, Jenn MacLean and Anne McPherson.

photo by AWARE

Grant

Continued From Page One

of Hardwick and community members have worked together to bring the addition to completion, and now it is the right time to look ahead to what's next."

Funded by federal grants and local philanthropic contributions, the new facility creates a more inclusive community hub with dedicated areas for different age groups.

The renovation and expansion project created a modern, accessible space, with a handicap-accessible entrance, meeting rooms, a kitchen, a three-stop elevator and spaces for children of all ages.

The addition connects to the

original 1896 building that now serves as a quiet space, where historic elements like pocket doors and the original wood floors were restored.

"I want to identify our next goals and make a plan to accomplish them," said Grenkow.

"The library and the consultant we are hiring will do this by gathering information through surveys, individual interviews and, if appropriate, focus groups comprising members of the board, library staff, Friends and community members."

"We are all excited and grateful to be looking to the future, post-construction." concluded Grenkow.



Santa (Ed Larson) waves from the back of the Hardwick Emergency Rescue Squad ambulance at the start of his tour through Hardwick Village before the Lighting of the Memorial Tree Sunday, Dec. 7. photo by Vanessa Fournier

Calderwood

INSURANCE AGENCY

Offering you **outstanding** service and protection since 1979

132 South Main St.
Hardwick, VT
802-472-5517
www.calderwoodins.com

Mike Gauthier, CIC
mikeg@calderwoodins.com

Cabot Holiday Workshop Saturday, December 13



Twenty-five vendors participated in the Cabot Holiday Festival and Outdoor Market, held at and around Harry's Hardware and The Den, December 13, along Main Street. The event featured crafts, maple goods and music.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



Christina Ducharme of Cabot (from left), Lorraine Banbury of Marshfield and Luke Robbins of Cabot, make wreaths during a holiday workshop held at the Cabot Library, Saturday, Dec. 13.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



Zara O'Brien, the daughter of Gwen and Seth O'Brien of Walden, decorates a cookie during the Cabot Library Holiday Workshop, December 13.
photo by Vanessa Fournier



Cabot's Main Street was very busy during the Holiday Festival and Outdoor Market, Saturday Dec. 13.
photo by Vanessa Fournier




The Village Restaurant
Home Cooking at its Best
74 South Main St., Hardwick
(802) 472-5701
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
Daily 6 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Nikki THE BARBER
Since 2008
Inside the Clip Joint & Co.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS
9 South Main St.
Hardwick
(802) 473-0064
Walk-ins: Tues.-Fri.
9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturdays by appointment
Nikkibvt@gmail.com

State to send Vermonters unclaimed property checks

MONTPELIER – The state will mail Vermonters a check for their unclaimed property as announced by Governor Scott and Treasurer Pieciak.

The program is an annual effort between the treasurer’s office and the administration to return unclaimed property to Vermonters whose identity and address can be verified by shareable tax department data.

This year, the program will return over \$150,000 to over 1,000 Vermonters with claims ranging from \$100 to \$250. The average amount returned is about \$150.

Vermonters included in the program will receive a letter from the state alerting them of the amount they will receive. Within a

few days of receiving the letter, recipients will receive a check in the mail for their unclaimed property.

Unclaimed property includes lost checks, forgotten security deposits, investments and other financial property. Entities annually report these assets and turn them over to the state. Unclaimed property can belong to individuals, businesses, nonprofits, government entities and more.

Vermonters are encouraged to visit missingmoney.com to check for unclaimed property. For inquiries regarding a claim or assistance with the claims process, contact the Treasurer’s Office Unclaimed Property Division at (802) 828-2407 or unclaimed.property@vermont.gov.



Annie Houston of Walden as Charlie Brown, and her nephew William Houston of Craftsbury as Linus, ride on their Christmas Tree Lot float themed from a Charlie Brown Christmas, in the Craftsbury Community Light Parade around the Common, December 13. The event was sponsored by the recreation committee. photo by Vanessa Fournier

NEWS NOTES

Low home prices, outdoor recreation benefits for retirement

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – One of the 12 best places to retire in Vermont is Hardwick, “a beautiful, serene, outdoorsy, artsy town with an active community,” according to a story by James Quintanilla.

Not only are these 12 towns a bargain, but they also offer a slower pace of life, affordable living, plenty of nature, and a wide range of activities,” said the December 15 story on the website worldatlas.com.

“These smaller towns all share a few commonalities: they have lower populations and median housing values below the state’s median of \$387,000” Quintanilla writes.

The median home value of \$240,000 is more than a third lower than the state average, making it an affordable choice for retirees.

“If you are looking for outdoor adventures and hiking trails . . . , Hardwick might be a good fit, writes the author.

“The story points to easy

access for hiking on Hardwick Trails and the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT),” as being among the town’s benefits.

Though the story doesn’t mention it, both offer biking and skiing in the winter. The LVRT opens for winter snowmobiling after the hunting season ends..

“Hardwick also benefits from close access to community health-care through the Hardwick Area Health Center, which offers primary care, wellness visits, and ongoing support for aging residents,” notes the story.

“The outdoor Hardwick Farmers Market feels like you are transported back in time,” and is identified as a place where “The scenery is perfect, the fruit is fresh, and the vendors are friendly.”

Vendors of ready-to-eat foods and picnic tables make the market a community gathering place on Friday afternoons from spring into early fall.

“Whatever your taste is, Vermont has something for everyone,” concludes Quintanilla



Festive light decorations displayed throughout Hardwick’s downtown this holiday season were put up by the Hardwick Downtown Partnership. photo by Vanessa Fournier

Thanks

for saying
you saw it in the
Hardwick Gazette

hardwickgazette.org



❄️ ♦️ ❄️

Happy Holidays

from Hardwick Trails!



Thank you to everyone
for an awesome 2025.

🌲 🌲 🌲

hardwicktrails.com

EDITORIAL

Looking back, looking ahead

Preparing this special holiday issue of The Gazette made us realize what an incredible year it's been. Our communities might seem small and sleepy from afar, but there's a lot going on around here. Thanks to your loyalty and support, The Gazette has been here to keep you informed.

And now The Gazette is asking for your support so you can stay fully informed in the new year. The NewsMatch fundraising drive ends at midnight on December 31. It's been a great success so far, but every donation will make The Gazette even better prepared to meet the challenges of the new year. What's most helpful is making a commitment to monthly giving, which really helps build a sustainable operation.

If you make a commitment to monthly giving, which helps to build a sustainable operation, your gift will be doubled for the next 12 months.

Your donation is an investment in our communities, and in your awareness of what's happening close to home. Just think about these stories and more, that might have gone unreported if not for The Gazette.

The detention of nine immigrants by federal agents in downtown Hardwick. (Also, a follow-up article on what you should do if you see such an incident.)

The sudden management change at the Hardwick Electric Department, exclusively covered by The Gazette.

Community concerns over the presence of a registered sex offender on the grounds of Hazen Union High School.

A challenging year for Circus Smirkus, including the injury of a performer. The ensuing cancellation of performances contributed to a major financial shortfall.

Greensboro voters' rejection of a plan to convert its Town Hall into apartments.

The fire that destroyed an iconic red barn in Wolcott.

Continuing coverage of efforts to recover from the flood of July 2023.

Local conversations about Act 73, the school reorganization bill that threatens the closure of some area schools.

The completion of a major addition to the Jeudevine Memorial Library.

The Gazette also brings you perspectives from local residents, like Virginia Lapierre's essay "What Does The Bible Say About DEI?" and Willem Lange's popular columns.

The Gazette can also be counted on to bring you inspiring stories about our neighbors, including Raymonda Parchment's articles about the memories of local residents who served in the Peace Corps and Smith's Grocery, "a small store with a big heart."

All this and much more is only possible thanks to reader support. The Gazette has made major strides in 2025 and has bigger plans for the new year. It can only happen if you and your fellow community members make a commitment to the newsroom you depend on.

John Walters, board member

LETTERS FROM READERS

Glyphosate linked to cancer

To the editor:

I'm glad to see the interest triggered by your recent article on glyphosate (the active ingredient on Monsanto's herbicide Roundup) for removing knotweed in our area.

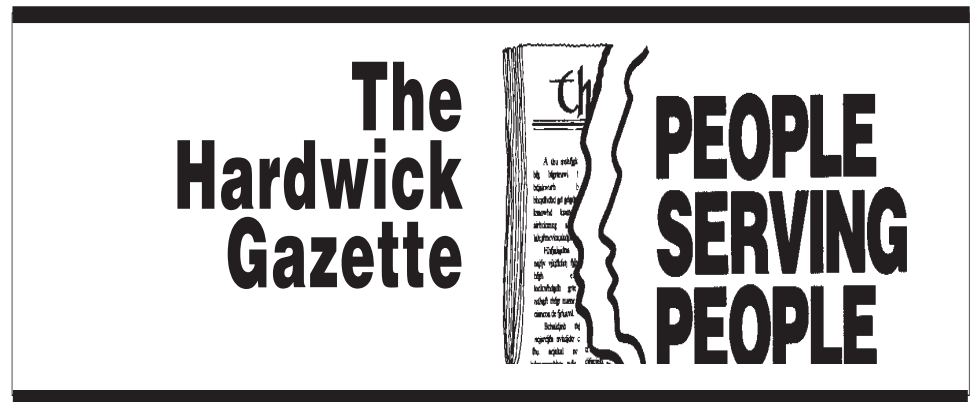
Along with many others, I have great concerns about the use of this chemical. Specifically, I question the claim from Will Marlier that there is "overwhelming evidence" that glyphosate does not cause cancer. There are, in fact, many studies and lawsuits claiming otherwise. For example, this June 2025 article out of George Mason University's College of Public Health states: "A comprehensive carcinogenicity study on the world's most used herbicide, glyphosate, involving scientists from Europe and the U.S., has found that low doses of the controversial weed killer cause multiple types of cancer in rats." (And such studies historically indicate a relatively high probability of similar results in humans.) In addition, that International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), which is part of the World Health Organization (WHO) of the UN, declared in 2015 that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic to humans" based on limited evidence of cancer in humans and sufficient evidence in experimental

animals, (linking it, in particular, to non-Hodgkin lymphoma.)

This is personal for me. My mom died at age 66 of a non-Hodgkins lymphoma. I hate to admit it, but my mom, like many others in the 1960s and 1970s, used Roundup often. There is a lot here that we don't yet know for sure. But it seems to me that much more research is needed before any potential use of glyphosate is practiced in these local pilot projects, especially since they are very close to water sources, though I would add any substance that would go straight into the earth that has not yet been proven to be safe, should be avoided.

Finally, the link below, aligns closely with my way of seeing the unknowable or unseen realms of our world, one that leaves space for the Great Mystery and for wonder, especially if we slow down enough to listen. This link also contains some valuable insights about the possible use of knotweed to treat Lyme disease, and other healing gifts from our Mother Earth. Perhaps it's time to look at where the real, more serious invasiveness comes from. <https://sacredgardener.ca/japanese-knotweed/>

**Nancy S. Riege
Greensboro**



THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

The Hardwick Gazette is published every Wednesday except the first week in January by Northeast Kingdom Public Journalism, Inc., 82 Craftsbury Road, Greensboro, VT 05841
Tel. (802) 472-6521. E-mail: News@HardwickGazette.org. Web: HardwickGazette.org
The Hardwick Gazette, P.O. Box 9, Hardwick, VT 05843

EDITOR - Paul Fixx

REPORTER - Raymonda Parchment

PRODUCTION - Sandy Atkins,
Dawn Gustafson, David Mitchell

SPORTS - Ken Brown, Eric Hanson

PHOTOGRAPHER - Vanessa Fournier

CARTOONIST - Julie Atwood

WEATHER - Tyler Mollere

CIRCULATION - Dawn Gustafson

ADVERTISING

Sandy Atkins, Paul Fixx, Raymonda Parchment
ads@hardwickgazette.org, sales@hardwickgazette.org

CONTRIBUTORS

Trish Alley, Brendan Buckley
Ken Brown, Elizabeth Dow, Hal Gray,
Abrah Griggs, Henry Homeyer, Willem Lange,
Cheryl Luther Michaels, David Rodgers,
Kay Spaulding, Liz Steel, John Walters;
Will Helms, intern.

BOARD MEMBERS

Paul Fixx, John Walters, Stefanie Cravedi,
Anita Engel, Betty Jones

OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Tuesday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Wednesday 9 a.m. to noon; Thursday, closed; Friday 8 a.m. to noon. Phones are usually answered during office hours and other times when possible. Please leave a message if there is no answer, or email the appropriate address.

The Hardwick Gazette assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors or omissions in advertisements but will reprint that part of the advertisement in which the error appeared. Advertisers must notify the Gazette within five days of any error that occurred. Copyright 2025 by Northeast Kingdom Public Journalism, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission from Northeast Kingdom Public Journalism, Inc.

Letters to the Editor, Opinions and Editorials: We believe a newspaper should be a community forum for people to discuss and debate issues of the day and welcome letters from all political points of view as the free expression of reader's opinions. Letters with claims of fact that are false or potentially damaging may be rejected.

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

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

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

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

E-mail addresses to send us messages: ads@hardwickgazette.org for advertising inquiries including display ads and business directory submissions; editor@hardwickgazette.org for corrections, letters to the editor, story ideas, website or newsletter questions and comments; news@hardwickgazette.org for all submissions of calendar of events, news stories, obituaries, births, press releases and everything else.

YANKEE NOTEBOOK

Chasing away the darkness

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – As I write, it’s only a quarter past four in the afternoon, but I wouldn’t want to be walking in the woods right now without a light. Down at the foot of the driveway, the headlights of homebound traffic zoom past, and a soft snow sifts down over the whole scene. Snug in our house, Kiki and I sit quietly in the office, I at the desk and she just behind me in the easy chair. Now and then she jumps up into my lap between me and the desk to help me type. In three quarters of an hour it’ll be time for our preprandial snack of chips, dip, and (in my case) orange juice and seltzer. There are only two lights on, my desk lamp and Sunshine, the night light out in the hall.

It’s the darkest week of the year, but it’s hardly noticed by folks who spend the majority of their time indoors, in offices, in closed cars or at home. We notice the darkness much less than we might because of the magic of electricity and the emergency backup power of generators. We also have the luxuries of central heat in the cold months and air conditioning (a bridge too far for me at this point) in the summer. These all help us forget what our ancestors, recent ones at that, were more sensitive to.

In an opening paragraph of Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol,” we read that “the city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark outside already.” London is about as far north as Calgary, Alberta; its winter nights are much longer and darker than ours. I can never read about darkness in Dickens’ time without reflecting upon where the little illumination the citizens of his time enjoyed came from. Bob Cratchit’s work, mostly copying letters, was carried on by the light of one candle. In homes that could afford it, whale oil fueled their lamps. Outside, in cities like London, natural gas lit the streets. Lamplighters circulated each evening with long-handled tools to ignite them and at dawn to snuff them out. Concert halls, palaces, surgical theaters, and large classrooms were also gas-lit, and fire was a constant threat.

I have a facsimile reproduction of a handwritten script of Dickens’. It’s an incredible tangle of scribbling, balloons and arrows, crossouts, and blobs where his quill pen blooped onto the page. How a compositor, working by candlelight, managed to arrange it all into orderly type for printing beggars imagination.

Abraham Lincoln, it is said, learned to write upon a wooden shovel with charcoal and light from the fireplace. I tried that once many years ago; it was impossible. Our grandparents learned to feed a stove or furnace around the clock, clean and fill the lamps when

they needed it, and find their way around the barn and yard in the dark by lamplight, if they could. One of Robert Frost’s most evocative winter poems is “Brown’s Descent” or “The Willy-Nilly Slide.” If you don’t know it, look it up.

Going to bed with the chickens, as the saying goes, is pretty much a thing of the past. It was a pain in the wintertime because it meant you had to get up more often than you do now to feed the stove. This usually involved shuffling down perilously steep stairs in slippers in the dark and opening the stove door to get a little light. Then you had to hope your partner, if you had one, had slid over to keep your side warm while you were gone.

In antiquity, darkness caused more than inconvenience; it signified the discontent of the gods and portended doom and disaster. In the gospels, the crucifixion of Christ is accompanied by three hours of darkness and an earthquake. Thankfully, most of us have shed those fears and can now attribute darkness to astronomical phenomena, volcanic eruptions, or distant fires. But consider for a moment the popular reaction to a strangely shaped object currently approaching us from space. There seems no doubt in many minds that it’s from another civilization, and threatening. In many ways we’re still rolling rocks around and living in caves.

There’s a good reason our midwinter celebrations are centered on fire and light. First of all, fire is warm (Yule log) when the air is frigid; second, even a tiny light is visible in otherwise utter darkness (there’s a reason no one was allowed to smoke on deck at night in wartime convoys). Hanukkah has a historical origin, though it’s clothed in mysticism. The date of Christmas does not; it was moved by the Church to occlude the popular Roman feast of Saturnalia, and is celebrated as the aforementioned triumph of a tiny light over the darkness of a troubled world. Ever optimistic, I look forward to the lengthening days to come as portents of the fortunes of our nation.

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



“SORRY SANTA, BUT ALL THE ELVES WERE DEPORTED!”

The Hardwick Gazette



PEOPLE SERVING PEOPLE

MEETING MEMO

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Tuesday, January 6
Cabot Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.
Craftsbury Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.
Marshfield Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 5:30 p.m.
OSSU Board, first Tuesday of the month, 6 to 8 p.m., OSSU Central Office, Hardwick.
Plainfield Select Board, first Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.</p> | <p>Wednesday of month, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, January 15
Hardwick Select Board, third Thursday of month, 6 p.m.
Tuesday, January 20
Cabot Select Board, third Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.
Craftsbury Select Board, third Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.
Hardwick Electric Department Board of Commissioners, third Tuesday of month, 6 p.m. unless otherwise warned.
Marshfield Select Board, third Tuesday of month, 5:30 p.m.
Plainfield Select Board, third Tuesday of month, 7 p.m.</p> |
| <p>Wednesday, January 7
Stannard Town School Board, first Wednesday, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., Stannard Town Hall.
Wolcott Select Board, first Wednesday of month, 6 p.m.</p> | <p>Town Clerks
Cabot: cabotvt.us
Calais: calaisvermont.gov
Craftsbury: townofcraftsbury.com
Greensboro: greensborovt.gov
Hardwick: hardwickvt.org
Marshfield: town.marshfield.vt.us
Plainfield: plainfieldvt.us
Stannard: Stannard town clerk: (802) 533-2577, open Wed., 8-noon, townofstannard@myfairpoint.net
Walden: waldenvt.gov
Wolcott: wolcottvt.org
Woodbury: woodburyvt.org</p> |
| <p>Thursday, January 8
Mountain View Union Elementary School Board, second Thursday, 6 to 8 p.m., alternating among the three campuses.</p> | |
| <p>Monday, January 12
Calais Select Board, second Monday of month, 7 p.m.</p> | |
| <p>Wednesday, January 14
Craftsbury Town School Board, second Wednesday, 6 to 8 p.m., Commons Room, Craftsbury Academy.
Greensboro Select Board, second</p> | |

WEEKS GONE BY

The Hardwick Gazette, Dec. 18, 1925

SUIT OF LONG STANDING FINALLY SETTLED Caledonia County Grammar School Case in Which Towns of Hardwick and Concord and the University of Vermont Were Involved

After being in the courts for a dozen or more years, the Caledonia County Grammar School case has been settled, and the towns of Hardwick and Concord and the University of Vermont paid \$7,609.74, divided as follows: One-half by Hardwick, one-fourth by Concord and the other fourth by the University of Vermont. This was in the final settlement. Previously, Hardwick paid \$2,000 in costs and altogether the expense to the town of Hardwick was reduced the fund left for the support of the library about one-half.

This case of first H.H. Powers and H.S. Peck, executors of the estate of Alden Jeudevine and others, against the trustees of the Caledonia County grammar school for bill and injunction. The case was first entered into court in November, 1912, and has been there ever since, until its record from term to term had come to cover two pages of fine type in the printed docket. This last November, almost 13 years to the day after its original entry, a decretal order for the defendants was entered and the case was left with Judge Julius A. Wilcox of Burlington as chancellor to issue the final order.

This order was received by County Clerk Albro F. Nichols, with a check with which to make the final distribution and Mr. Nichols is proceeding immediately to act the part of a veritable Santa Claus in sending out the amounts of the award to rightful owners.

The original suit was for \$2,500 and the final award was for this amount in full, with simple interest from January 1, 1898, to December 1, 1925, together with attorney fees and costs, amounting in all to \$7,609.74.

In this award, Peacham Academy gets \$2,000, the heirs of the late Elisha May of St. Johnsbury and Mrs. Ida C. Bullard of Hardwick, as administrator and administratrix of the estate of the late B. E. Bullard of Hardwick, for attorney fees and costs, get \$1,300.50. Judge Harland B. Howe of Burlington gets \$455.66 for attorney fees and costs. This makes the total expense of the case in all its transactions in court amount to \$5,609.74. This leaves a net award to the Peacham school of \$2,000.

The case is now entered by

Chancellor Wilcox' order in Caledonia county court as settled and discontinued, and the chancellor's order also stops any further suits by any of the parties in the suits over the matters now settled in this case. The case grew out of the alleged trespass of the late Alden Jeudevine in Hardwick, and later of Hardwick which had been set aside by various other people on lands used for school purposes, the avails from which were for the benefit of Peacham Academy. Suits were originally brought to recover the value of lumber alleged to have been taken from these school lands on West Hill in the town of Hardwick. Before the first suits were settled, Mr. Jeudevine died, and the late Judge H. Henry Powers of Morrisville, and H.S. Peck of Burlington as executors of the estate, entered the prosecution.

Back in 1913, the case was left with Charles D. Watson of St. Albans as a special master to find the facts and report. In the presentation of the case before this special master, Judge Powers of Morrisville, Alexander Dunnett of Hardwick appeared as attorneys for the orators, while Elisha May and Harland B. Howe, then of St. Johnsbury, and B. E. Bullard of Hardwick, were attorneys for the school. The late Z. S. Stanton of Roxbury was the chancellor at that time.

Long hearings were held at Hardwick, Peacham and elsewhere and the finding of the special master were announced June 29, 1914, and the first decretal order was made by Judge Fred M. Butler of Rutland at the next term of Caledonia county court, in June 1914. Later on the decree was reversed and the case remanded at the February term of the Supreme court in 1919, and has been footballing back and forth since that time, until its final adjustment which has just now been affected.

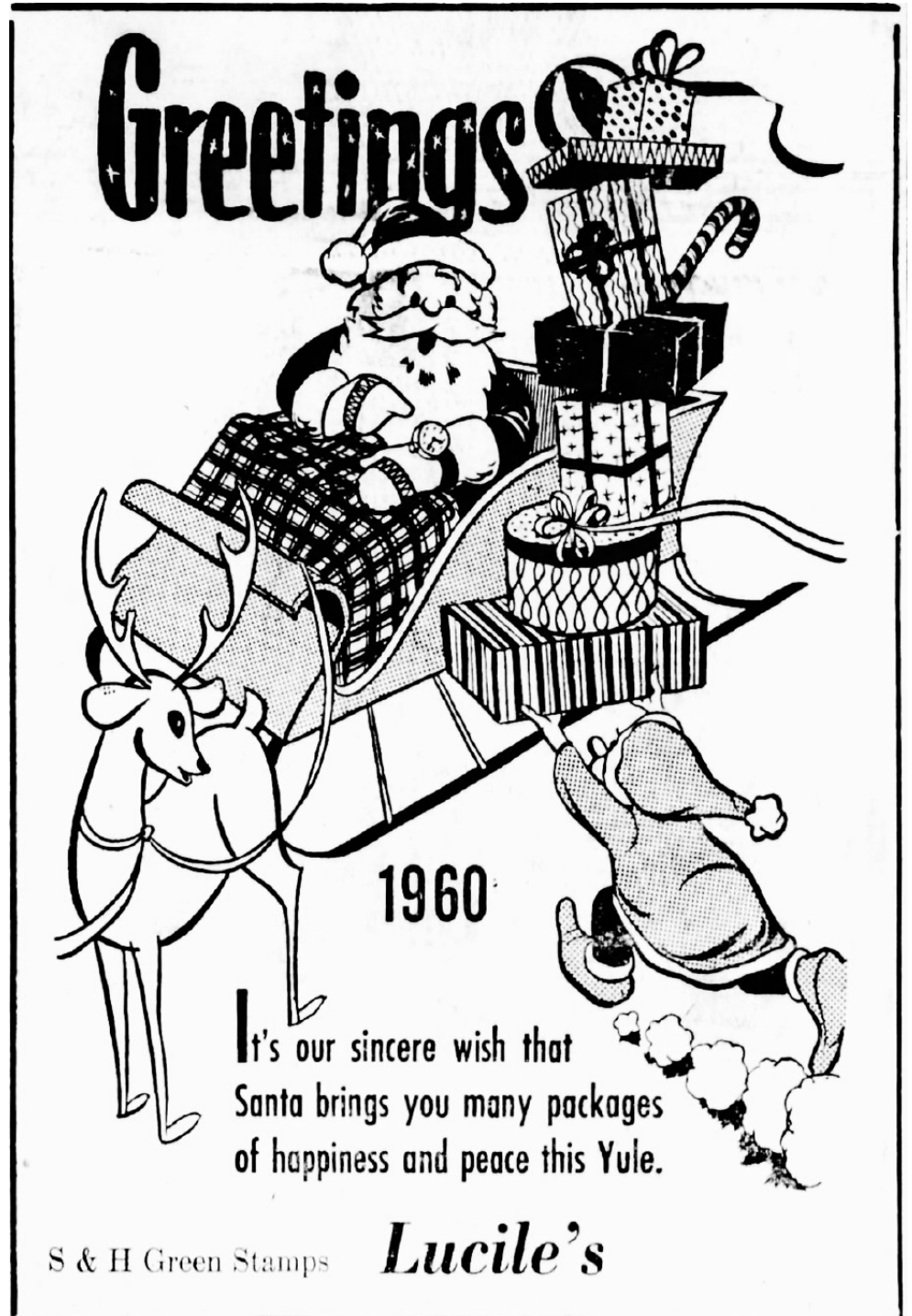
Since the case was first entered in court in 1912, at least a dozen prominent people connected with it, either as principals or as attorneys, have died, and the necessary complications of having heirs and others drawn into the controversy, has, of course, led to considerable and probably unavoidable delays.

The Hardwick Gazette, 65 Years ago

EAST HARDWICK

— Village Nursing Home

Mrs. Alice Carpenter, age 76, and patient at the Village Nursing



Home since February 1960, died on Dec. 19. Mrs. Carpenter had been critically ill for the past week, during which she was visited several times by her daughter, Mrs. Edwin Smith of Hardwick; also by two granddaughters, Judy Hayford of Williamstown and Mary Dumas of Hardwick.

A touch of Christmas spirit is to be heard daily from the Nursing home this week. Mr. Robbins, the proprietor, has arranged a stereo automatic record player with one speaker outside the house, and the villagers are treated to Christmas Carols each evening.

OPEN HOUSE ON GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday, December 31, an Open House will be held for Mr. and Mrs. Will Graham at their home in East Craftsbury in honor of their Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary. Friends are invited to come between 2 and 4 in the afternoon and 7 and 9 in the evening.

Will Graham and Mable Tatro were married fifty years ago and have lived in the town of Craftsbury ever since 1918. They are the parents of one daughter, Mrs. Earl

MacDonald of Greensboro, who is planning the open house.

K. OF C. CHRISTMAS PARTY

Thursday, Dec. 15, downstairs in St. Norberts Church was the scene of a beautifully decorated Christmas tree and a very delightful visit from Santa Claus, as a large gathering of members of Knights of Columbus exchanged exciting gifts.

At a meeting held before the party considerable business was attended to, a sum of money was voted for two charities, the Child Welfare, and Father Logue Charity program at Waterbury State Hospital. Ground work was also laid for the series of meetings to start Jan. 10th with a hot meal. The January meeting will be put on by the "Noisy Four", Joe, Fido, Art and Phil. It is expected it will be some kind of game feed, at any rate it will be delicious. These feeds are free and all Knights are urged to attend.

Prayer closed the meeting offered by Rev. Leo Gingras, Council Chaplain. The Grand Knight wishes all members a joyous and happy Christmas and prosperous new year.

ANOTHER OPINION

Imagining a new community forest

by Joe Nudell

HARDWICK – Hardwick has a unique opportunity to turn over 300 acres on Buffalo Mountain into a community forest. We should take it.

This summer, 329 acres on Buffalo Mountain were listed for sale. This includes the summit and the northeast side of the mountain; practically everything you see from downtown.

Over the past few months, Northern Rivers Land Trust and the Trust for Public Land have been exploring an option to purchase this property for the town of Hardwick to expand our town forest. The purchase will be funded primarily by grants, so the town could acquire the land for pennies on the dollar.

The expansion would build upon Hardwick's existing outdoor public spaces, fill in key missing pieces and open new opportunities for recreation, stewardship and economic development.

Wolcott recently went through a similar process to establish a community forest, which has become a popular asset to their town.

Through town ownership, we could preserve existing land uses many of us value. VAST and VASA users could preserve vital trail segments that pass through the property. Those who grew up hunting on the land could ensure it is kept open for future generations of hunters.

These decisions would be made in the open as a community, and not subject to the preferences of a private landowner.

The mountain also offers exciting new possibilities for use. Its steep terrain would complement our existing Hardwick Trails with challenging hiking, biking and skiing routes. We could build primitive campsites along the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, filling a need for affordable places to stay for rail trail travelers and encouraging them to stay in town longer and spend money at local businesses. The forest can even generate revenue. For example, by allowing the responsible harvest of forest products.

The scenic views on the mountain will bring the area's hiking options to a new level.

Imagine sitting on top of the cliffs you can see from Main Street, and gazing over our village, nestled in the rolling hills. It's a stunning view that few of us have seen. The hike to those cliffs is similar in length to Nichols Ledge, which people travel from around the world to see. Unlike Nichols Ledge, which many have bottomed out their car trying to find, this hike starts conveniently at Atkins Field.

At a time when our taxes are rising and the grand list is under pressure, there are understandable concerns about this proposal. The property tax revenue at stake in this proposal is relatively small; just a few thousand dollars a year.

The rugged terrain of the mountain severely limits development potential, making it unlikely that tax revenue would grow significantly in private hands. Managed properly, a town forest could easily bring more money to the town than is lost from taxes.

My dog and I walk down to Atkins Field almost every day. When we cross Cooper Brook and enter the Buffalo Mountain property, it feels almost like entering a new world.

In the spring and summer it's a lush, ferny forest dotted with chanterelles. Streams cascade down the steep banks and thrushes chime nearby.

In the winter it's a blanket of white notched with animal tracks,

and the woods open up incredible ledges and panoramas in unexpected places.

Fall, of course, is still the most beautiful time there.

In the coming weeks we will find out if the project can move forward, and if the town supports it. I hope the town shares my enthusiasm and excitement for this opportunity.

You can read the full proposal and submit feedback on it to the Hardwick Conservation Commission at tinyurl.com/buffalo-feedback

Joe Nudell serves on the Hardwick Conservation Commission, but isn't writing on behalf of the HCC, this opinion is his own.

For the Record

Last week's story "Seats to be available on select board," about the December 4 Hardwick Select Board meeting should have indicated a total of three select board seats are available to be filled at town meeting, Tuesday, March 3, 2026. Two seats with a one-year term, and one with a three-year term will need to be filled then. Information about those, and other town positions to be filled at March town meeting, can be found on the town website at hardwickvt.gov/2026-town-meeting-open-office/

The photo accompanying the Greensboro Fire Department story on page four of the December 10 edition was submitted by the department on social media and should have been credited as such. Firefighters were watering down the embers at the site of the fire and the siding on the garage was melted, but Vanessa Fournier did not take the photo.

Heller's World by Joe Heller



In My Nature by Abrah Griggs



Your Voice, Your Community News
 Becoming a supporter of the Hardwick Gazette will help us continue delivering local news and information. Our success depend on you, as readers, as donors and as advertisers with your businesses and civic organizations.



Donate online • hardwickgazette.org

RURAL RAMBLINGS



The entry gate to Leipzig market. *courtesy photo*



Christmas decorations are for sale everywhere. *courtesy photo*



Food is for sale everywhere. *courtesy photo*

Spirits are high in German Christmas markets

by Henry Homeyer

CORNISH FLAT, N.H. – An impulsive decision in late November by my wife Cindy and I to explore German Christmas markets found us in Berlin visiting with an old friend.

We also spent a few days traveling by rental car to Dresden, Leipzig and Naumburg, a walled medieval town that has a UNESCO World Heritage Site cathedral.

The dark days of December and holiday blues are nowhere to be found in the festive German Christmas markets. Family and friends gather together to eat rich food, drink hot spiced wine and search for the special Christmas present for loved ones and perfect decoration for house and tree.

The spirit of each market is unique, but all have the basics; food, drink and crafts. Artisans demonstrate their skilled blacksmithing, blowing glass ornaments or carving wood. Most items were made in Germany with a few from other European countries. Nothing I saw came from China.

The outdoor market experience is set up in parks and town squares, so we dressed in layers of wool. Booths shelter the sellers and their wares from rain which is common in December, and from the occasional snowfall. We were lucky and even had a couple of sunny days with temperatures in the 40s.

The Charlottenburg Castle Market is one of the largest in Berlin and runs from 1 p.m. to 9 or 10 p.m., as most do. Admission is free and there are over 100 vendors. This market features a Ferris wheel and two merry-go-rounds for children that sit in front of a castle which is illuminated at night, spreading the joy of the season near and far.

Arriving hungry, we were met with many delicious options to appease our pangs. High top tables dot the market aisles, welcoming diners who prefer to stand while others may choose to dine seated in an enclosed tent. A



Crowds throng to all the night markets. *courtesy photo*

courtesy photo

seemingly endless array of choices included grilled sausages of many sorts (usually served on a fresh bakery-made bun) and delectable desserts and sweets like marzipan, apfelkuchen (an apple strudel) fruchtebrot (bread with dried fruit baked in), all of which tempted our palate. Of course we wrestled with the option to satiate ourselves with the taste of roasted whole pig sold by the slice or a freshly grilled fish fillet cooked on an open fire. Decisions. Decisions.

As we perused our choices, the aroma of a delicious meat and mushroom stew drew us to a 3-foot wide metal wok. Voila! Served in a proper ceramic bowl accompanied by a steel spoon we dined with eyes rolling. Yum! A deposit of five euros for the bowl and a steel spoon was refunded following consumption. No Styrofoam here!

“Gendarmenmarkt” was the second Berlin market we visited that day. Entry was two euros (about \$2.50) and well worth it. The evening unfolded as we wandered around the vendor stalls, surrounded by the warmth of holiday lights on the buildings around it. Musical groups sang carols on a stage.

Crafts makers filled a huge tent with many interesting and unusual items. One fellow decorated the handles of handmade French pocket knives with carved tusks from mammoths. My budget did not allow for the \$600 cost. Another craftsman who made the barrels of pens from rare wood caught my eye but again they were expensive; and I lose pens all the time. Another vendor drilled tiny holes in old silver coins, inserted a tiny jig saw blade in the hole and cut out much of the interior. The end result was the filigreed silhouette of the raised portions of each coin attached to a silver chain for wearing it.

We also discovered beautiful handmade leather gloves, wooden bowls, chopping boards and lace. A favorite find for me was the uncommon brush maker who made every sort of brush imaginable. I bought a very small one for cleaning out tiny antique bottles that we use as vases. A find for under \$5. Perfect.

Leaving Berlin, we headed to Dresden to visit the Striezelmarkt, Germany’s oldest Christmas market, dating back to 1434. A common thread began to weave as we found more delicious food. I enjoyed a delicious bowl of Moroccan stew for dinner with lamb, apricots, almonds and olives served over couscous that filled me up for \$14.

We noticed the happiness of children who never once cried and were always pleasant to be around. Evidently, hissy fits are verboten. We especially loved watching the kids on the merry-go-rounds, particularly one antique carousel.

The Leipzig market the next day was fabulous. Just outside the market, a band of two tuba and two trumpet players, dressed in medieval garb, played traditional carols from a balcony. Juxtaposed from the levity in the air we noticed policemen lined up at a booth. Of course. They were lined up for food. Joining the line, we obtained a new delicacy. A Handbrot or hand bread which wasn’t really a sandwich, but a warm soft roll filled with melted cheese and bits of ham. The top of the bun was lathered with sour cream and chives. Delicious.

Leipzig offered many of the same wares as in other markets: handmade soaps, cutting boards, ceramic plates, hand-carved figures, Christmas ornaments of all sorts, warm hats, brightly colored felt slippers, dry sausages and cheese. Above all, crowds of people, shoulder to shoulder, continued the tradition of market-going by eating and drinking and laughing with their friends.

Naumburg, our final destination, offered a much smaller market. An outdoor ice rink, with good ice despite temperatures well above freezing, was the biggest draw. Lovers holding hands and parents with kids lined up to rent skates. Everyone had the opportunity to ride on the ice. Little children could ride on plastic animals and be pushed by adults on skates. An impressive tilt-a-Wheel ride that attracted teenagers in throngs was part of the fun.

Naumburg Christmas market had little in the way of fine crafts or presents, but there was plenty of Glühwein, a drink sold hot in every market. It is a spiced wine and fruit juice mixture. Cindy persuaded one vendor to share his secret recipe. It makes five gallons. It is not a strong drink, it is a merry one when consumed with friends outdoors at a Christmas market. It seems to work, warding off those gray raw days of December and instead welcoming high spirits that feed the body and souls of happy family and friends.

If you go, bring raincoats, layers of wool, warm shoes or boots, a camera, cash (most food vendors do not accept cards, most other booths do) and a cloth bag to carry away all the goodies you buy.

Ingredients for German Glühwein: equal amounts of pineapple juice and cheap white wine. Simmer juice with slices of orange and a few slices of lime. Add spices, in order of amounts: anise, hot pepper powder, cinnamon and a few cloves. Turn off heat and let sit overnight. Decant the liquid and mix with an equal volume of cheap white wine. Keep and serve hot. There are many types of Glühwein, so feel free to create your own.

Homeyer writes a monthly gardening column from his home in Cornish Flat, N.H.

VOICES OF SPIRIT

God don't make no junk

by Reverend Ed Sunday-Winters

I don't remember how old I was when I was first introduced to the phrase, "God don't make no Junk," but it was early in my life. Maybe it was on a poster in a Sunday School class, or lesson theme at vacation Bible school, I do not remember. I know that I heard it again at college Bible study led by one of my professors.

It is not a new idea nor is it a radical idea.

The idea that God created humankind and called it very good is a core tenet of the orthodox Christian theology (Genesis 1:31). The Bible says that God created humankind in the image of God (Genesis 1: 27). I understand that to mean that I cannot look at another human being without seeing something of the reflection of the divine in that person.

There are people in prominent positions of power referring to a whole group of humans as garbage. To call another human garbage is tantamount to calling God a liar.

It denies the goodness of God's creative act if not the very existence of God,

The idea that a human being created by God would be called

garbage is abhorrent and distressing. The very idea contradicts everything the Bible teaches about human beings and God's creation of them.

It denies the goodness of God's creative act, if not the very existence of God, and contradicts not only the best ideas of the major world religions, but also the basic notion of human decency.

Thomas Merton said, "The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another."

All of us bear the image of God, we are made of the same stuff, we live on the same planet.

Anything that happens to one of us, impacts all of us.

If Christmas means anything, it means not only that God loves us enough to come to us, and God desires for us to love one another as God loves each of us.

Love is the central ethic of the teachings of Jesus. It is not a feeling or a thought; it is an action.

When we love others as God loves us, we work for justice for all, show mercy to all, share compassion with all and offer grace that borders on amazing because that is the way of Christ.

The Christmas season is an opportunity for us to be reminded that life can be different.

The celebration of the birth of Jesus is a remembering that God wants us to share life together. We are not bound to systems that leave some of us with too little to make it through the day while others of us have more than we can use in a thousand lifetimes.

Life can be different.

We are not bound to live only for ourselves. We can choose the common good rather than that which is good for only a few.

Life can be different.

We can stop thinking that there is nothing we can do to make a difference and begin recognizing that our small acts of kindness, compassion and solidarity can have an impact far beyond the time and place in which we offer them.

Yes, life can be different.

While collectively and as individuals we have missed that mark time and again throughout history and in our own lives, Christmas can be a time of beginning again, a time of renewing hope. Christ is born. Therefore, there is hope.

I love what MaryAnn McKibben Dana says about hope. "Hope is wrapped up in what we make real.

Hope isn't what we think. Hope isn't what we feel. Hope isn't even what we imagine is possible. Hope is what we do in the face of suffering, pain, and injustice."

When there is no prospect for success,

When there is seemingly no way to do anything helpful or meaningful,

When the noonday is as dark as the darkest night, we have a choice to make.

In those moments, we are called to do the thing we know to do, not because we can see the positive outcome, but because hope needs flesh and bones, hope needs hands and feet, hope needs hearts and minds, hope needs us as much as we need hope. When we choose hope, when we choose to be hope, we make life different for ourselves and for our neighbors.

For Christmas this year, we could give each other a gift of hope. We could give it with the idea that we are going to try to be the hope that our struggling neighbor needs.

Imagine people running around trying to speak and act in ways that cause others to have hope. What a merry Christmas that would be.

The Rev. Ed Sunday-Winters is the pastor of the Greensboro United Church of Christ.

I HEARD IT THROUGH THE JEDEVINE

Lew-Smith talks about second book

by Brendan Buckley

HARDWICK – Last Tuesday evening, the Jeudevine, in partnership with the Galaxy Bookshop, hosted local author Jodi Lew-Smith for the launch of her second novel, "Asa James." The event was held in the Parker Ladd Community Room. About forty people attended.

Lew-Smith opened her presentation with a reading of the book's prologue, set in 1851, which describes the discovery of a foundling in an abandoned sugar shack, on a "black and vicious night" in November. The child, nestled against her deceased mother's body, has survived, and is carried away, held tightly against the breast of Sister Ruth Reed.

Lew-Smith was reluctant to reveal any more of the plot, so as not to spoil her readers' experience. She chose, instead, to speak about her journey from aspiring writer to novelist.

Her genre is historical fiction. She finds herself drawn to the nineteenth century, "to a time that helped shape our country today." Of all places across the United States, she mused that perhaps Vermont is closest to that time, noting with a

chuckle that her family still heats with wood.

Eleven years have passed since the publication of her first novel, "The Clever Mill Horse," which won both the Feathered Quill Book Award and James River Writers Indie Novel Contest. In the interim Lew-Smith has read countless books on fiction-writing, attended writers' workshops and created a number of story manuscripts. Each of those manuscripts was sparked by an idea that seemed worthy of exploration. "Asa James" is the first of those to reach completion and publication.

Lew-Smith described the onerous process of beginning to write a novel. She noted that she has discarded hundreds of pages of writing through the years. Arriving at a workable first draft, which she described as likely to be "crappy," might take six or more months. Once she has that first draft, subsequent steps are shorter. She finds the greatest enjoyment in the fine tuning of scenes, of dialogue and of the writing when she is confident that the structure of the story and characters is in place. "I could do that forever."

In pursuing her self-education

as a novelist, she surprised herself with the discovery of books about screenwriting. That skill set is much more focused on characters and plot, not on language and literary flourish. Lew-Smith came away from that reading with the understanding that characters drive plot development and vice-versa. She compared plot and characters to "two sides of the same coin," emphasizing that it becomes paramount to fully develop and understand one's characters so they lead the way to their stories. Additionally, she recognized the importance of keeping her plot relatively simple so as to allow more complex characters to emerge.

Lew-Smith noted that she literally must have "pen in hand" to write. Thus she has dozens of spiral-bound notebooks on her shelves filled with handwritten notes from her historical research, plot and character sketches, and early drafts.

As the storytelling unfolds from draft to draft, she utilizes Scrivener software to aid in chapter, setting and character development. She described that product as enormously helpful in tracking settings, dates and events as she writes.

She allows herself a cup of tea each morning before she moves on to "butt in chair," the sacred time she devotes each day to her writing. Recognizing the importance of that daily schedule was another key revelation to her in helping her work progress. That time might only result in the crafting of a sentence, or in the development of something much larger. She tries to end each of those sessions with a few written words to prompt or guide her when she returns to her writing the next day.

She finds the input of trusted readers invaluable, anticipating that they will honestly share what works, or does not work, in her story. Lew-Smith noted that the input of both agents and publishers can be very helpful, even rejections serve a purpose. She sees their goals as similar, but opted to work on her own to find a publisher for this book. She landed on a small publishing house, Köehler Books of Virginia Beach.

Lew-Smith closed with the news that she is currently working through a re-writing of "The Clever Mill Horse." She implied that less than eleven years should elapse before the launch of her next novel.

IN THE GARDEN

Oh, Christmas trees

by Deborah J. Benoit

The Christmas tree is a well-known symbol of the holiday, but it wasn't always so. Decorating with evergreen boughs dates back thousands of years to celebrations during the winter solstice, a reminder that life continued even in the coldest months.

Decorating a tree at Christmastime originated in Germany. In the 1700s, Martin Luther brought an evergreen tree indoors and decorated it with lighted candles. Immigrants to America brought the tradition with them. In the mid-1800s, England's Queen Victoria made Christmas trees fashionable and their popularity grew.

Early trees were decorated with strings of popcorn, fruit, nuts and cookies. By the end of the 19th century, glass ornaments imported from Germany began to decorate American Christmas trees. In the early 1900s, electric lights added a glow that was safer than candles. As demand for trees increased, conservationists grew concerned about depletion of evergreen forests, leading to the establishment of Christmas tree farms.

Today, there are many options when choosing a Christmas tree. These include a harvested, natural tree to be disposed of at the season's end, an artificial tree that can be reused year after year or a living tree to plant outside after the holidays when weather permits.

Around 30 million natural Christmas trees are purchased annually across the United States. Most are sold by commercial growers.

It takes six to 10 years to grow a tree ready for market. Balsam

fir (*Abies balsamea*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Fraser fir (*Abies fraseri*) and blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) are among the most popular choices.

When choosing a tree, you should look at it from all sides, checking for broken branches or unsightly spaces. No matter how seemingly perfect a tree may be, be wary if its needles break or fall easily. The tree you purchase at a roadside stand was likely harvested weeks earlier and has traveled many miles. A fresh cut made at the base of a pre-cut tree's trunk about an inch from the bottom will remove dried sap and allow the tree to take in water. If you choose to visit a cut-your-own Christmas tree farm, you'll be assured your tree is fresh.

Before the time comes to go Christmas tree shopping, it's a good idea to measure the space your tree will occupy. Keep in mind that the tree will look smaller outdoors than it will indoors. Once home, place it away from heat sources. Be sure it has a constant supply of water to help prevent it from drying out and dropping needles.

A cut tree requires daily attention and has a voracious thirst. It may consume more than a gallon of water each day.

Selecting a potted tree will allow you to enjoy it during the holidays this year and for many years to come. Be warned, the root ball and container will add significantly to the weight of the tree, so smaller may be better. If you do opt for a living tree, be sure to follow the care instructions, including post-holiday needs and planting outdoors.

When the holiday is over and decorations have been stored away, what do you do



The tradition of hanging glass ornaments on Christmas tree originated in Germany.

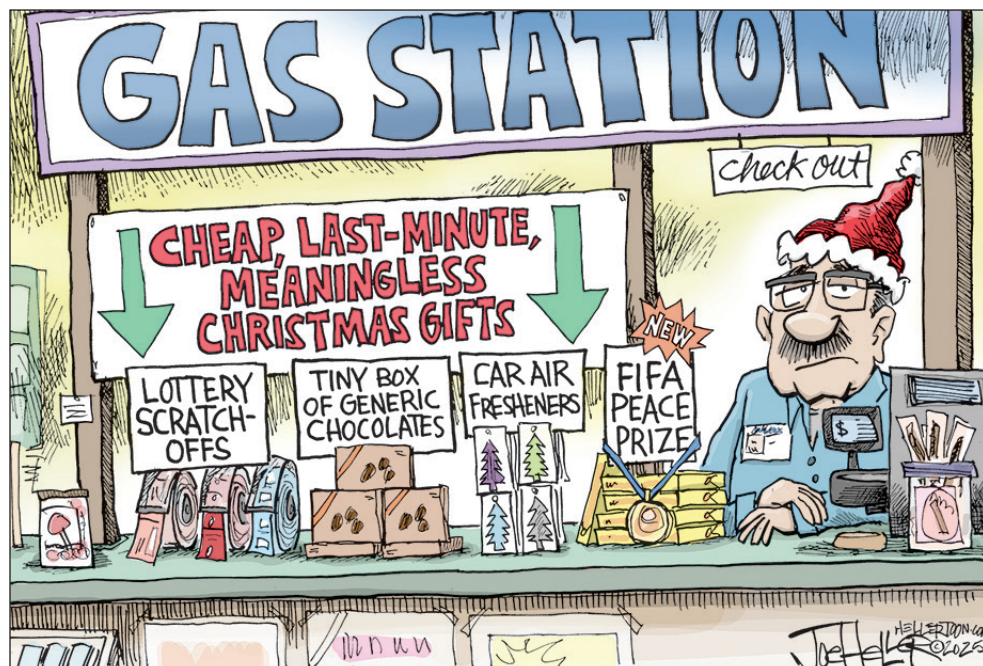
photo by Debra Heleba

with a natural Christmas tree? Please don't burn it in a fireplace as sap can create a rapid burning fire and a buildup of creosote, leading to a chimney fire. Instead, remove all lights, tinsel and anything that isn't part of the tree. Compost the tree at home or check with your town regarding scheduled tree pickups. You might check with local farmers about donating your

tree as a treat for their goats or sheep. For more information and creative ways to recycle your tree, see uvm.edu/extension/news/recycle-your-christmas-tree.

Deborah Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Mass., who volunteers as a garden columnist and participates in Bennington County Extension Master Gardener Chapter activities.

Heller's World by Joe Heller



A freshly cut tree from a local Christmas tree farm makes for a fun outing and long-lasting natural tree.

photo by Debra Heleba

THE OUTSIDE STORY

Cocoon spotting: giant silk moths in winter

by Bill Rhodes

NEW ENGLAND – Late fall and early winter are the best times of year to spot giant silk moth cocoons in New England. Perhaps you've seen these creatures in the summer, fluttering by a porch light in the evening or resting on a garage wall in the early morning after spending the night at its light. These large, showy moths in the family Saturniidae live only briefly as winged adults, are strikingly colored, and as moths go, are huge. Caterpillars hatch from eggs in the late spring and summer and eat voraciously before spinning silken, papery cocoons. (Species in Saturniidae are unrelated to the domestic silk moth, which is bred for silk.) They may spend as many as 10 months pupating, emerging to mate and lay eggs before dying, as they do not have mouthparts equipped for eating.

Four species of giant silk moths are common in the Northeast. A fifth species, the Columbia silk moth (*Hyalophora columbia*) is uncommon but can be found in northern Vermont and New Hampshire.

The largest is the cecropia moth (*Hyalophora cecropia*) with a wingspan that can reach seven inches, making it the largest moth in North America. Its abdomen and thorax appear furry and are bright red with contrasting white bands. Each of its four wings has a reddish crescent with a white center, rimmed with red, white, and

pinkish bands.

Cecropia cocoons are unassuming. They are drab, papery brown, and are meant to blend in with the tree branch or trunk they are firmly adhered to. Caterpillars feed on maples, cherries, and birches, so cocoons can often be found on these trees. It is best to look up into the tree at just above eye level, framed against the sky, and search for a brownish, papery bag clinging to a branch. Inside is a large pupa, slowly turning the fat green caterpillar into a winged adult. The nondescript appearance is purposeful – rodents, particularly squirrels, will eat the pupa in the cocoon, so blending in raises the chances of survival.

Another large silk moth, about six inches across, is the Polyphemus moth (*Antheraea polyphemus*). It is tan colored with blue shading, and its hindwings sport prominent blue eyespots, used to trick and deter predators.

Polyphemus caterpillars feed on oak, birch, and elm, among a number of hardwoods, and wrap their cocoons in a leaf or two while they spin for extra camouflage. Unlike the papery brown sack of the cecropia, their cocoons are whitish or cream colored, with the silken threads clearly visible. They may drop to the ground when the leaves fall, so it is good to look among the fallen leaves below the trees, but I have always found their cocoons a short distance away, clinging to leaves still attached to shrubs or taller grasses.



Cecropia cocoon

Perhaps the most striking giant silk moth in our area is the luna moth (*Actias luna*). Though it is smaller, at about four and a half inches across, its pale green color and gracefulness make it stand out. Luna moth cocoons are wrapped in tree leaves, so when they fall to the ground, they become hidden among the leaf litter. It's best to look beneath sweet gum trees, a favorite food tree, and use a stick to move the leaves about, looking for a brown, thin-walled, oval-shaped cocoon wrapped in a brown leaf.

Finally, there is the smaller promethea moth (*Callosamia promethea*) which generally measures about four inches in width. These moths are dimorphic as adults: males are dark brown on their upper side, and females look similar to the multicolored cecropia moth, with prominent eyespots

on their forewings. Caterpillars feed on tulip and sassafras trees, as well as spicebush, and spin their cocoons at the tips of branches, reinforcing a leaf's petiole with silk, allowing them to hang down throughout the winter, wrapped in that leaf. One winter I came upon a spicebush festooned with promethea cocoons waiting to emerge in late spring.

To add novelty to your winter walks, try cocoon spotting. Be prepared to search for a bit to find their hidden, silken lairs wrapped in fallen leaves, attached to branches or hanging from bushes and know that come spring and summer, they will produce majestic giant silk moths.

Bill Rhodes is a writer and retired life sciences executive. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.

Bird brain isn't so bad

by Kent McFarland and Emily Anderson

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION – Once meant as an insult, being called "bird brain" should really be considered a compliment, especially if the bird in question is a Black-capped Chickadee. Scientists have amassed decades of research demonstrating the cognitive powers of these small, feisty birds.

As year-round northeastern residents, chickadees prepare for winter by hiding food in multiple locations, a practice also known as scatter hoarding. This tactic requires a keen memory, and chickadees can remember thousands of storage sites. But how do they do it?

Each autumn, Black-capped Chickadees grow new neurons in their hippocampus, a region of the brain critical for memory. These new cells provide extra room for memory storage and cause the

hippocampus to expand by roughly 30%. As food stores decline leading up to spring and the need for massive memory space dwindles, the cells containing old information die off.

Most recently, scientists at Columbia University uncovered a new secret to Black-capped Chickadees' astonishingly sharp memory: barcodes. The researchers found that a chickadee's hippocampus will briefly light up with the same unique pattern when hiding a food item and when retrieving it later, similar to scanning an item at the grocery store. They also noticed neurons firing in a specific, repeated pattern based on whether the storage site had a seed.

So, as you go about your early-winter wanderings, take a second to watch the chickadees flitting among the trees and marvel at the amazing brains helping them thrive all winter long.



Black-capped Chickadee (Poecile atricapillus)

courtesy photo

BUSINESS BRIEFS

by Alana Dutcher-Hirsch

HARDWICK – Best friends and store owners for 11 years, Andrea Jones and Sandy Scott, “work wives,” as they affectionately call each other, run Hardwick’s Galaxy Bookshop with pride. They carry forward a 36-year legacy of community, resilience and friendship.

On a snowy Thursday afternoon, the two women bustled around the store, taking business calls, ringing out customers and fulfilling book orders.

“Thursdays are my favorite day of the week because we’re both here and we have fun,” Jones said, her gaze shifting to Scott who had just finished a sale at the counter.

Together, Jones and Scott now anchor one of Hardwick’s most enduring small businesses. Their partnership, forged quickly, and almost by chance, has carried the Galaxy Bookshop through an ownership change, community crises and the daily work of keeping an independent bookstore alive in a rural town.

Though the Galaxy Bookshop is now co-owned by Jones and Scott, the story begins long before they arrived. The store was founded in 1988 by Linda Ramsdell, then a recent graduate of Brown University. With little more than the sense that Hardwick needed a bookstore, she developed the concept behind Galaxy.

“I thought I’d give bookselling a try for five years,” Ramsdell said.

Those five years stretched into several decades during which Ramsdell shaped the Galaxy Bookshop into the community fixture it is today.

Scott, who is from Hardwick, worked at the bookstore on her summers off from school. In 2003, after graduating from Champlain College, Scott came back to work as the bookstore’s event coordinator and bookseller.

After more than 25 years of owning the store, Ramsdell was ready to move on in 2014 and offered the store to Scott. But the recent college graduate couldn’t afford to purchase the store on her own.

Enter Jones, an avid customer. Originally from Maine, she came to Vermont for college and worked as an English teacher at Hazen Union School after graduating.

Galaxy Bookshop shines on

While shopping at the store she heard about the switch in management and Scott’s interest in purchasing the store.

“I went home and I said to my family, as a joke, ‘I’m gonna buy a Galaxy bookshop,’ and they went: ‘Oh my God, you should totally do that,’” Jones said.

Within just a few months, Jones and Scott agreed to purchase the Galaxy Bookstore together.

“We went from barely knowing each other to being business partners in three months,” Scott said.

Ramsdell, meanwhile, was thrilled with the new partnership.

“The feeling of selling the store to Scott and Jones felt like keeping it in the family.”

Although the women come from very different backgrounds, Scott has experience in bookkeeping, while Jones built her career in teaching, they each bring something essential to the Galaxy Bookshop.

“I had nothing to bring to the table other than loving to read. Sandy’s all the institutional knowledge and the practical day to day stuff,” Jones said.

As an avid reader, nothing makes Scott happier than helping someone find a book.

“When they’re excited about a book and I’m excited about it. . . the conversations that we have here are really wonderful”

When they work together, the two women can lean on each other for support. That’s when everything comes together: on Thursdays.

The bookshop has faced significant challenges in recent years. In 2022, a fire in an apartment above the store triggered the building’s sprinkler system, causing the store to flood.

Scott and Jones launched a \$20,000 GoFundMe campaign to help with recovery expenses from significant water damage to the store and its inventory.

For six months, the Galaxy operated out of customers’ living rooms and borrowed spaces around town; staying open in whatever way it could.

Hardwick’s recent floods took a toll on the business. During the major flooding events of 2023 and 2024, access to the downtown was limited for weeks, and sales dropped as residents focused on recovery.

“We’ve gotten through Covid-19, and we’ve gotten through a flood,” said Jones.

“People always step up and show us how much they love this store and how much they want it to be here.”

Above the front register, a large-scale painting captures the store’s relationship with its community. In it, familiar Hardwick faces move books through town, framed by swirling stars in a sky of loose, whimsical brushstrokes that give the shop its enchanted feel.

“Sandy and Andrea are creative and stay involved in the community of professional booksellers,” Ramsdell said.

“They’re innovative and involved with Hardwick, and they’re both great readers.”

Even with the hardships, the store has



Sandy Scott (left) and Andrea Jones, in the children’s book section of the Galaxy Bookshop on December 4. They’ve owned the store together for 11 years.
photo by Alana Dutcher-Hirsch

always bounced back.

Jones said she knows they won’t run the Galaxy forever.

When the time comes, she and Scott will choose its next stewards carefully.

“The Galaxy is bigger than us,” she said.

“Andrea and I sometimes talk about how we’re kind of stewards of the bookstore,” Jones added.

“This bookstore exists in town because of all of the support of the community and we’re stewarding it until it ends up being handed off to the next people who will take it on.”

A bookstore, or a library, is an essential part of a town, in Jones’ opinion “I wanted to make sure that there was a bookstore in my community.

“Because, you know, I used to come here all the time. I still do. More. But now I own it.”

A video created for the Galaxy Bookshop’s 30th anniversary celebration is at bit.ly/3MtgmSV.

The video, created by Jones’ daughter, details all of the history within the 30 years of the store on their anniversary. Customers share their love for the shop, the two women offer a personalized touch and Ramsdell shares her beginnings at the store as well.

Alana Dutcher-Hirsch writes for the Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship, for the Hardwick Gazette.



The front section of the Galaxy Bookshop features a painted mural of Hardwick’s downtown by Tara Goreau that dominates one wall in the store, December 4.
photo by Alana Dutcher-Hirsch



The Galaxy Bookshop at 41 S. Main St. in Hardwick on a snowy Thursday, December 4.

photo by Alana Dutcher-Hirsch

EDUCATION

OSSU launches search for next superintendent

by Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union

HARDWICK – The Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) School Board is beginning the search for its next superintendent. A superintendent search webpage (ossu.org/superintendent-search) will provide information for prospective candidates, opportunities for community participation and ongoing updates.

The board is now accepting applications from individuals interested in serving on the superintendent search screening committee. The committee will include a diverse group of stakeholders, including staff, families

and community members, who will participate in the early stages of the search process. The application is open now and will close on December 22, at 6 p.m.

OSSU community members may complete a superintendent search community survey. The OSSU Board seeks input about the community’s hopes for the next superintendent. Survey responses will be incorporated into the selection process and shared with both the OSSU Board and the new superintendent to help support a smooth transition and future growth. The survey is open now and will close on December 22, at 6 p.m. Access the survey is at the OSSU website.

The public may attend all OSSU Board meetings to stay informed and engaged as the process moves forward to help

ensure an open and transparent search. OSSU Board information can be found at ossu.org/en-US/ossu-board-ad431690.

BUSINESS BRIEFS



Bethany Dunbar, walking from the Atkins Field Granite Shed toward the Pavilion parking lot, is retiring this month. photo by Reeve Basom

Dunbar to retire from Center for an Agricultural Economy

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – “With the change of seasons,” wrote Programs Manager Bethany Dunbar in the Atkins Field Winter Bulletin, “also come changes at the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE). And with that, she announced her retirement this month.

“I’m so excited for all the future developments and potential that is possible at Atkins Field, and I am deeply grateful to my Community Connections team and everyone at CAE for the 11 years I spent working with basically everyone who receives this

Bulletin,” said Dunbar. Dunbar was on the staff of the Hardwick Gazette, before becoming editor at the Barton Chronicle. More recently she created the Atkins Field Bulletin for the many Atkins field users. That bulletin will retire with her, but the Farmer’s Market Newsletter will live on. “I’m also excited to have supported the launching of a new newsletter specific to the Hardwick Farmers Market,” said Dunbar.

Subscribe to news and information from the Hardwick Farmers Market at hardwickfarmersmarket.org/news.



Willey’s Store’s General Manager Christine Hernandez (left) and Clothing Manager Sarah Chamberlin stand next to a display of Skida hats designed by Hernandez in collaboration with Skida. Hernandez, the first female in senior management at the store since Phyllis Hurst, worked with Skida to develop the pattern modeled after a sweater Phyllis wears in an iconic photo of her and her husband Ernie Hurst. Clothing with the pattern went on sale December 13, during the store’s Winter Wonderland event.

photo by Paul Fixx



Greensboro’s Kyle Gray accepts a sample of Little Sip IPA from Lawson’s Finest representative Bessa Eldridge, of Waitsfield, during the Willey’s Winter Wonderland Sale Event, Saturday, Dec. 13. The weekend event was the last of the Greensboro store’s 125th anniversary year.

photo by Paul Fixx



During Willey’s Winter Wonderland Sale Event, Saturday, Dec. 13, (from left) Phil Pike visits with Boar’s Head representative Tad Davis as Willey’s deli employee Tammy Molleur looks on. Davis, who grew up in Cabot, works with Davis Family Deli Provisions out of Rutland and represents Per’s Smoked of Vermont in Wolcott and the Cellars at Jasper Hill in Greensboro, among others.

photo by Paul Fixx

OUR COMMUNITIES

GUCC Christmas Eve service

GREENSBORO – Christmas Eve Service at the Greensboro United Church of Christ will take place Wednesday, December 24 at 5 p.m.. All are welcome.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Lamoille FiberNet high-speed internet plan completed

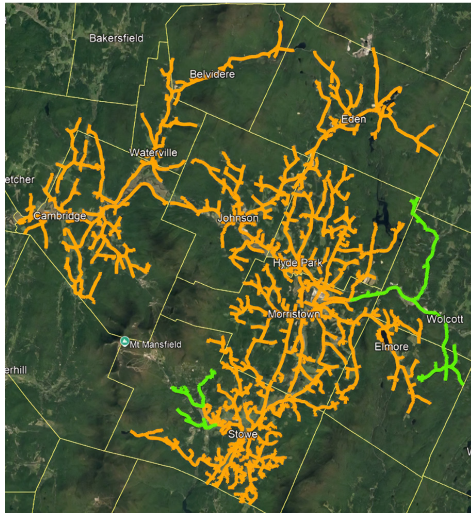
by Lamoille FiberNet

LAMOILLE COUNTY – Lamoille FiberNet Communications Union District has successfully completed its Universal Service Plan, ensuring that every on-grid address within its 10-town footprint now has access to at least one high-speed broadband provider.

This milestone marks the culmination of a five-year effort, including a two-year construction effort in partnership with Fidium Fiber. Between Phase 1 construction in 2024 and Phase 2 completed this summer, more than 550 miles of fiber were built, bringing multi-gigabit-capable service to nearly 5,000 previously unserved or underserved addresses across Lamoille County. “This achievement represents years of collaboration, persistence, and smart partnership,” said Andrew Ross, chair of Lamoille FiberNet. “Our shared goal was simple but ambitious: to make sure every home and business in our territory could connect to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet. Thanks to the hard work of our board, staff, and partners at Fidium Fiber, we’ve made that a reality.”

With the Lamoille FiberNet grants and capital investment from Fidium Fiber, coupled with efficient construction methods that allowed the company to overlash new fiber to existing phone lines, the project was completed under budget. As a result, Lamoille FiberNet was able to return a portion of its grant funds to the Vermont Community Broadband Board, to help expand broadband elsewhere in the state.

Another major contributor to cost savings was Fidium’s decision to expand its covered drop policy



The Lamoille FiberNet Communication Union District recently announced completion of its fiber network working with and serviced by Fidium Fiber. Its 11-town service area extends from parts of Fletcher in the west to Eden and parts of Wolcott in the east and from Stowe in the south to Belvidere in the north.

map from LamoilleFiber.net

to 2,000 feet from the home or business the nearest network pole or pedestal, well beyond the industry-standard 250 feet, eliminating hundreds of thousands of dollars in potential installation costs for both homeowners and Lamoille FiberNet.

With its Universal Service Plan complete and Fidium handling internet service and network maintenance, Lamoille FiberNet will continue its oversight role ensuring that all performance standards, reporting, and other requirements are met, and continue to collaborate with the state’s other CUDs.

The Lamoille Fibernet is a Vermont Communications Union District (CUD) with a mission “to prioritize access of unserved and underserved addresses to symmetrical, high-speed and affordable internet service. For more information, visit lamoillefiber.net.

OBITUARIES

Dorothy Ray Dervavich

NAPLES, Fla. – Dorothy Ray Dervavich, 91, passed away peacefully on Friday, November 14, in Naples. Known by family and friends as Dotty Ray (Mimi by her grandchildren), she was born in Ocala, Fla., on January 3, 1934, and was the daughter of W. Raymond and Dorothy (Boyce) Daniel.

She grew up in Barre, Vermont, and attended Spaulding High School, where she met the love of her life, John A. Dervavich. From there she moved on to Northfield Mount Hermon, and eventually finished her education at Wheelock College. She married John in 1953, and they celebrated 72 years of marriage this past September.

They were devoted to each other and shared many cherished memories throughout their years together, raising two children, while running a business in Wilbraham, Mass. They also spent time at their summer home in Greensboro, Vt., which was special to Dotty Ray, as well as their winter home in Waitsfield, Vt., where they eventually lived full time. Friends and family were always welcome in their homes, and Dotty Ray always worked very hard at making all visits special occasions. During these years, she and John enjoyed playing tennis, golfing, skiing and traveling.

Eventually, Dotty Ray and John ended up moving full time to Naples. There they developed many new close friendships in their golf community, as well as friends made while spending time listening to local jazz artists and spending time at their much-loved Philharmonic. Dotty Ray gained respect and affection from all who had the privilege of knowing her. Her family and friends will remember her warmth, resilience, and unwavering spirit, and for those who knew her best, just how quietly sharp and witty she could be. And people always commented on her beautiful blue eyes.



Dorothy Ray Dervavich

Dotty Ray is survived by her husband, John A. Dervavich; her children, John D. Dervavich (Diane Stiles) and Kimberly Dervavich Nierenhausen (Luke); her four grandchildren, Tylea (Dervavich) Gebbie, Andrew Dervavich, Luke Nierenhausen, and Adam Nierenhausen, as well as seven great grandchildren, all who loved her dearly.

She will be laid to rest in the family mausoleum in Elmwood Cemetery in Barre, Vt. A graveside service to honor and celebrate her life will be held at a time to be announced in the spring.

As we remember Dorothy, we invite all who knew her to celebrate her life and the profound impact she had on those around her. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be made in her memory to a charity of your choice.

Rest in peace, Dorothy R. Dervavich (Dotty Ray, Mom, Gram, Mimi). We will miss you so much, but your love will live on in the hearts of all of those you touched.

Arrangements are by Hooker Whitcomb Funeral Home, 7 Academy Street, Barre. For a memorial guestbook, please visit www.hookerwhitcomb.com

OUR E-MAILS

news@hardwickgazette.org
ads@hardwickgazette.org

Your support powers every story we tell.

DONATE NOW

NewsMatch

Local news provides the facts you need to make decisions about your community.

DONATE NOW TO MATCH \$40,000 TO HELP US BRING YOU FACT-BASED COMMUNITY INFORMATION.

THE Hardwick Gazette INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

A STORY OF THE SEASON

Northern Star (1970)

by Jerry Schneider

Dad said he wanted to talk to me after we were done with our paper route.

Now I had one more thing to worry about that afternoon, on top of how bitterly cold it was while I helped Frankie deliver papers, and always with the question of whether or not I'd run into Mrs. Hadley with her drifting eye,

A biting cold front had moved in and the snow was too deep for our bikes, so we'd been walking the route the past week. Six main streets and four side streets, eighty-six customers in all. Half way through, my toes and fingers started going numb and the last thing I needed was to be held up. "Don't roof any papers!" my brain yelled as I went along, house to house. "And don't get caught by Mrs. Hadley!"

Even in summertime, you never wanted Mrs. Hadley to catch you. If she did, then she'd rant and rave. She'd go on for almost half an hour about the government and the war and taxes. She lived alone in a trailer off one of the side streets and Frankie and I would trade, every other day, delivering her newspaper.

It happened to be my day.

The object was to get there, get rid of the paper and get away. I'd go maybe twenty feet from the porch, fling the paper and pray it didn't hit the siding. When it did, Mrs. Hadley was at the door in seconds and there I was, caught. She talked my ear off, and while she was doing that, the one eye drifted while the other, the good eye, went straight at me, boring into me like a dentist's drill.

Most afternoons she didn't catch me and I'd be home in time for "Hogan's Heroes." Being almost Christmas, I wanted to race right home, out of the cold, the tree lights and music and sometimes there'd be the smells of fresh baked cookies.

Frankie had a big advantage over me, being the pitcher for the Little League team. He had a good arm and when it was his turn to deliver Mrs. Hadley's paper, he'd sling it from thirty, forty feet and most of the time he landed it on the little porch. He never got caught.

~~~

So there I was, angling toward the trailer, down the long drive, past a pair of oak trees, then another fifty feet or so to the trailer.

I hadn't seen Mrs. Hadley in a week or so. She disappeared some-

times, especially in November and December. Her husband, Walter, had passed away a year ago and maybe it was that, or maybe it was just the way November and December were, grey and all. I know it made Frankie depressed sometimes when he didn't get enough sun and Mom would have to bring out the therapy light.

I thought of my brother as I wound up and threw, but it wasn't even close. It clunked against the vinyl siding and landed in the snow.

I hurried to retrieve the paper, drop it on the porch and run.

Too late. The door opened.

"What the hell was that!" Mrs. Hadley was wearing a green bath robe and a yellow scarf around her neck and a pair of old pink slippers.

"Your paper," I said. "Sorry. It missed the porch." I handed her the paper, trying my best to relay a sense that I was freezing and needed to get going, which she ignored.

"Sorry?" she said. "I'll tell you what's sorry, young man." She held the newspaper up. "More dead soldiers! That's what's sorry!" She slapped the paper against her hand, knocking off the snow. "And this war will do about as much good as all the others."

There was the drifting eye, off somewhere over my left shoulder, and the sharper eye drilling me.

"People in Washington," she said, "are the ones who should be shot." It was her favorite line. I must have heard it a dozen times.

She went on about money going overseas and how her social security check couldn't keep up with food prices and the waste and the greed, and there I was, my hands and feet going numb from the cold.

"Look at that senator from Florida," she said, slapping the paper against the door. "Four homes. Now you tell me why on earth anybody needs four homes! Selfish is what I call it. All of 'em out for themselves!"

My ten-year-old brain could take only so much. It drifted, to Christmas cookies and milk and Hogan and Klink and Schultz. I glanced to see if Frankie was on the other side of the street. He was probably finished and wasn't going to wait. We'd agreed a long time ago that if one of us got caught by Mrs. Hadley, the other would just go home. Why have us both suffer?

But I wanted him to suffer with me.

The sun was halfway through



The former Donovan and David Houston Barn on Coits Pond Road in Cabot, now being lovingly maintained by Martha and Lynne Rockwell.

photo by Amanda Sessel Legare

the trees west of the trailer when Mrs. Hadley slapped the paper one last time. "It's cold," she said. "Look at you, that thin coat! Go on. You should be at home eating your dinner!" She turned and went back inside.

I couldn't feel my toes. The wind had picked up and I still had six newspapers left in my bag. I trudged through the trees, back to the street, where I saw Frankie, arms crossed, waiting for me on the corner.

"Let's go, Daniel," he said. Both of us shivered. We finished the route together and went home.

~~~

Teeth chattering, I came through the door, wondering if Dad would take pity on me, or maybe he'd forget.

Mom had the therapy light set up on the table away from the Christmas tree, Dad was in the reading chair with the newspaper, and all through the house was the smell of roasted chicken mixed with cookies and the blinking lights on the tree.

"Was that enough to distract Dad from whatever he had in mind," I asked myself.

Dad cleared his throat. I held my breath.

"You boys are a little late," he said, folding the newspaper and setting it down.

"Danial was talking with Mrs. Hadley," Frankie explained.

"Real long," I said. "I about froze to death."

"Sorry to hear that, Daniel. I know how Mrs. Hadley can talk,"

"Sure can," I said, suddenly feeling that maybe nothing would be said about me at all. I was in the clear.

"Well," he said, "It looks like you boys have been pretty busy, with school, your paper route and all."

"We'll be even busier this weekend," Frankie said. "With Christmas. . . collecting on Saturday."

Collecting. It gave me a warm feeling just thinking about going door to door the last Saturday before Christmas. I'd be right there beside Frankie, holding the large green tip bag.

Sometimes customers gave us boxes of peanut brittle and chocolate covered cherries along with

See STAR, Next Page

Star

Continued From Previous Page

big holiday tips.

It was Frankie's route, but I helped almost every day of the week, so we'd agreed on a 60-40 cut.

Forty percent was a lot. Enough money I could get myself a sled or maybe a new baseball glove."

"That's sort of what I want to talk about," he said.

He looked at me, then at Frankie. "I know you're excited about those tips. You have a good sized route and do very well.

"He put his hands together under his chin, the way he did when he was thinking about something important. "We're all doing quite well," he said. "I have a good job and your mother's working nearly full time at the credit union. We have a lot to be thankful for. We've stayed healthy. All in all we've had it pretty good. On a scale of one to ten, I'd say we're up there close to eight or nine at least."

More like a ten, especially with the Christmas tips. The year before, my first year as Frankie's helper, I'd ended up with twenty dollars! This year it might be more.

"So," Dad said. "I was wondering if you boys have ever thought about doing something extra for somebody. Maybe there's a person on your paper route who might need a little something. Heaven knows there are always people who could use some help."

"Like shoveling their walk," I said.

The last time we had a big snowfall, people hired Frankie and me to shovel. Mr. Oliver had us shovel his walk and his whole driveway and paid us five dollars.

"Well, Daniel, I was thinking more about a person who could use a little something extra. A little Christmas cheer. A gift or two."

Frankie looked at me, then at Dad. "You mean, with our tips?"

Dad nodded. "Maybe you can think about it," he said.

Suddenly the warm feelings turned into something like my frozen feet when I was at Mrs. Hadley's. I kept an eye on Frankie, wondering what he'd say. It was his route.

"How about if Daniel and I talk about it?" he said.

He got up, waving me to follow. We went up the stairs, to his room, which all of a sudden became a conference room. Frankie was on the bed, hand to his chin, looking at me.

"We need to figure it out," he said. "Somebody on the route who needs something."

"Dad said we should 'think'



The Reeks house in Woodbury, lit for the holidays on Sunday, Dec. 7, at 4:51 p.m. *courtesy photo*

about it," I said. "First we have to decide if we even 'want' to."

"Dad was being nice. He doesn't want us to just think about it. He wants us to do something." Frankie paused. "Can you think of anybody?"

I closed my eyes, waiting. Nothing came. A total blank.

"What about the Smiths?" he said. "They got that old truck with the loud muffler. Maybe we could give them some money toward a new one. Ten, fifteen dollars."

"Ten or fifteen dollars!"

Frankie shrugged. "Or how about Mr. Crowe?"

Mr. Crowe was old and lived by himself in a run down house with four tall, thick pine trees. There was a long walkway up to a big old porch completely shaded by the trees. It felt creepy there.

In the two years I'd helped with the route, I'd only seen Mr. Crowe twice. He had so many cats you could smell them a mile away. I'd get to the creaky old porch, hold my nose, and pitch the paper. The cats would arch their backs, ears pinned back. As soon as the paper hit the door, they'd all scatter.

"Maybe get him a couple bags of cat food," I said, thinking it'd be no more than five dollars.

"Or cigarettes." There was a bucket on the front porch next to the rickety door that was always full of cigarette butts.

"We're not buying cigarettes," Frankie said.

I pretended to hold a cigarette to my lips, puffing wildly. Frankie rolled his eyes.

I didn't say anything. I needed a break and maybe Frankie did, too. It was too much. It felt like there was a cloud in my brain.

"We gotta decide something," Frankie said. "Name somebody."

"I can't. My brain's a massive fog. It's not working."

"Mrs. Hadley then," said Frankie. "She needs it the most."

I protested. "She needs too many things! She'll break the bank!"

"Daniel, we're not getting her everything. Just a few things."

"She needs a new coffee pot," I said.

"Good. Let's get her that. And she's always wearing that old bath robe. And those worn out slippers. We could buy her a new robe and some slippers."

"Amen," I answered, meaning that I agreed, and also that we needed to stop right there because Mrs. Hadley needed a new carpet and the outside porch was rickety and there were rust stains on the siding and the kitchen window had a good sized crack, not to mention things we didn't even know about!

"I'll tell Dad," Frankie said. "We can go to Penney's on Monday."

~~~

Downstairs, the luscious smells didn't smell so luscious. "Joy to the World" was playing but I couldn't feel any joy. All I was thinking about was the dent we were about to put in our Christmas tip money.

Frankie told Dad and Mom the plan.

Dad nodded.

"What do you think, Daniel?" Mom said.

"She definitely needs things," I said.

"It's very thoughtful of you boys," Dad said. "I know it's hard. You've worked hard for those tips."

"And I want a sled, and a new glove!" I blurted out.

"We'll get the clothes at Penney's," Frankie said, "and the coffee pot at the second hand store."

"Think she might want a tree?" Mom asked.

"She has one," I said, before anyone had a chance to agree.

"Not really," Frankie said. "She's got that little fake tree. Three feet tall. The old frosted stuff on it's peeling."

"She might appreciate a real tree," Mom said. "And we have some extra ornaments."

"A lot of people have fake trees," I argued, thinking about the robe, the slippers, and on top of that, a tree. "Maybe she likes fake trees."

"A fresh tree doesn't necessarily have to cost anything," Dad said. "You could go up by the power line. Cut a small one. We have a hatchet in the garage."

He looked at me. "Maybe you could help cut the tree, Daniel."

Okay. Maybe. If it didn't cost anything. I thought about it, out in the woods with a hatchet, hacking away, bringing down a tree. I'd have it cut down in a minute.

~~~

The Saturday before Christmas I woke up early, not so wide-eyed and bushy-tailed. By nine o'clock, we'd had breakfast and Frankie had run his belt through the four-barrel money changer. It was grey and dreary as we set off.

Frankie did all the knocking and door bell ringing, telling customers what they owed, making sure to say, "Merry Christmas!"

Some customers came to the door with their Christmas envelopes, or their boxes of candy. Others had to be reminded. Frankie would sing out "Merry Christmas!" and a look would come over them. They'd disappear someplace and come back to the door, usually without a Christmassy envelope. Usually with just a dollar or two folded up.

Not Dr. Wingarten. He was our dentist and was very tall. Maybe seven-foot tall and hardly an extra pound. He wore wire rimmed glasses and was bald. When he came to the door, he loomed over us like he loomed over me in the dentist chair.

"What do I owe you?" he asked.

"Fifty-five cents for the week," Frankie said.

Dr. Wingarten reached a long hand into his pocket, pulled out the change and handed it to Frankie.

Then he reached behind and drew a bright red envelope from his back pocket, holding that out to Frankie too. "You boys stay warm now," he said. "Merry Christmas!"

I hurried to open the envelope first, before sticking it into the bag. There was the face of Alexander Hamilton peeking out through the hole of the insert. I imagined getting a couple more Hamiltons. They'd cover Mrs. Hadley's presents!

Halfway down Wilson Street was Mr. Harvey's house. He came to the door with a lit cigar. There was always the smell of cigar smoke inside Mr. Harvey's.

He handed the cigar to

See STAR, Next Page

Star

Continued From Previous Page

Frankie and searched his pockets for change. The smoke rose into Frankie's face. He tried blowing it away. He coughed. On top of that, the room was getting warmer and warmer with our heavy coats while Mr. Harvey took his sweet time.

"How's the little helper today?" he said, grinning at me while picking through a pile of coins. Ashes dropped from the cigar onto the tile floor.

Finally I coughed as loud as I could. That got Mr. Harvey's attention.

"Is the smoke bothering you?" he asked, and took the cigar, tapping a ring of ash onto the floor, then rubbing it with his foot. He finally handed Frankie the money.

"And we can't forget it's Christmas," he said, handing Frankie a quarter and a couple of nickels, then me just an old dime. "Don't spend it all in one place," he said.

We closed the door behind us and followed the steps to the next house.

"Don't spend it all in one place," Frankie said, grinning.

Sometimes it happened. There were the Dr. Wingartens and the Mr. Harveys.

~~~

Up and down the streets, the green tip bag got heavier and heavier. I'd check the envelopes before dropping them into the bag. Washingtons, Lincolns and a Hamilton.

We reached Mrs. Hadley's trailer and Frankie made sure I kept the green bag behind my back, knowing she probably couldn't afford much of a tip.

When she answered the door, Frankie never mentioned Christmas.

We went into the kitchen, onto the linoleum just inside the door. Dishes were piled by the sink but Mrs. Hadley didn't seem to care a lick about it. Some people might apologize for a mess like that, but she didn't. There was the old stained coffee pot and the cord, taped in two places. On a shelf were a couple old coffee cups. There was a small shelf by the window where she kept her pills.

She got her purse and put on her reading glasses.

"What do I owe ya?"

"Fifty-five cents for the week," Frankie answered.

On the table, Mrs. Hadley doled out a quarter and the rest dimes. She scraped them into her hand, then took Frankie's hand and slid them into it.

"There," she said, mumbling something about how people in



*A lit snowman looks out at the night at the George and Regina Bailey home in Hardwick.* courtesy photo

this country should be getting a little more help, instead of giving all their money to some guy overseas with a name she couldn't pronounce.

No Christmas envelope.

Afterward, we crossed the street and finished up the route. The snow sparkled and the sun had come out and glared off the icy street. My feet were freezing again, and I added to my wish list a good pair of wool socks I'd seen at Sweeney's Store downtown.

We sat on the rug by the fire and I opened the bulging green bag, laying out ones, the two dollar bills, a few fives and only the one ten dollar bill that Dr. Wingarten gave us. There were boxes of peanut brittle and chocolate covered cherries too.

Our final tally was about what we'd done the year before. Minus Mrs. Hadley's take.

~~~

That same afternoon we went to the second-hand store to get a few things for Mrs. Hadley. We found a used coffee pot pretty quickly. It had a strip of masking tape that read, "TESTED." Just two dollars!

I wanted to look around and mosied over to the coffee mugs. Just twenty-five cents each! There were decorated candles for a quarter and little knick-knacks. A piece of wood with a painting of trees

and squirrels and blue birds. One dollar. I picked it up. Three pairs of socks for two dollars. I figured Mrs. Hadley and I had about the same size feet, so I'd give her two and I'd take one.

"Daniel, what are you doing?" Frankie reached for the ceramic mug I held. It had a beautiful elk and a sunset. Black letters at the bottom read, "Montana Paradise."

"We're in Vermont," Frankie said. "Elk don't even live here."

"She needs a coffee cup," I said. "Actually, two." I picked up another cup with a blue bird perched on a little house overlooking a golden field. "Just fifty cents," I said.

"Okay if you want to burn through all your tip money."

I shrugged.

On the way to the register, we passed the kitchen area and there was an almost brand new frying pan for three dollars. I was about to pick it up.

"Daniel!" Frankie almost shouted. "She's got a frying pan!"

"How do you know!" I shouted back.

"Put it back. She doesn't need it."

I put it back and followed Frankie to the register. We unloaded everything and the man behind the counter tallied it up.

"Call it five even, Christmas discount."

One deal on top of the other

got me going. On the way home, I convinced Frankie to stop by Sweeney's Grocery. Some coffee would be nice to go with the coffee pot and the mugs.

"Sweeney's won't be close to a discount," Frankie said.

"I don't care," I said.

Frankie rolled his eyes at the check out.

~~~

It was two nights before Christmas, but I wanted to deliver the gifts to Mrs. Hadley right away.

"It's not even Christmas Eve!" Frankie said.

"I don't care!" I blurted out.

"Let's talk to Mom and Dad."

So we did. Dad said showing up on Mrs. Hadley's door unannounced might not be such a good idea.

"Don't you like surprises?" I said.

"Maybe tomorrow night," Mom said. "Christmas Eve would be nice."

That night I dreamed of a load of presents on Santa's sleigh, through the snowy trees.

The next night was clear and cold. We took the sled under the stars, pushing through a foot of snow, Frankie pulling the tree and the boxes all wrapped and decorated while I followed behind.

Half way there, Frankie came up with a second surprise, a double whammy. What if the next morning we took the vacuum and cleaned her trailer?

"Icing on the cake," I said, by then resigned to do everything we could for Mrs. Hadley.

~~~

When we got to Mrs. Hadley's trailer, there was a single light over the porch and barely any other light coming from inside, which is why I started second guessing our plan.

I'd pictured lights and music, the way it was at our house, but the trailer was almost completely dark. Mrs. Hadley was old. She was probably in bed. Maybe not asleep yet. Maybe like me when I stayed awake listening to Red Sox games on the radio before drifting off.

Frankie seemed a little nervous, too. He stopped the sled and looked at the single light.

"What do you think?" he asked.

"Maybe we should just come back tomorrow," I said. The wind was blowing. I could hear it whipping through the trees.

"But we're here now," Frankie said. "I don't really want to come back. Let's go."

I followed him up to the little porch, climbing the steps, where Frankie stood on his tiptoes and looked through a small square window near the top of the door.

"There's a light on," he said.

See STAR, Next Page

Star

Continued From Previous Page

"She's in the chair, reading."

He knocked on the door, once, then again. He peered through the window, then he turned and whispered, "here she comes!"

The light went on. Mrs. Hadley's face appeared in the little square window, then she opened the door.

"Who is it!" Her voice cackled sharply through the jarred door. She was in her old robe and didn't have her glasses. The one eye drifted out into the cold night while the other, I'm sure, was pointed right at Frankie. I inched into the shadows behind him.

"What do you want!" she demanded.

I wanted to tell Frankie, "see?" We should have turned around and went home. Mrs. Hadley was mad.

Then Frankie sang out, "Merry Christmas!"

Mrs. Hadley opened the door a crack and peered out. "Who is it?"

"Me," Frankie answered. "Me and Daniel. We have some presents!"

That sort of froze her, like a Bill Lee eephus pitch. She disappeared for a moment, then came back wearing her glasses.

"What on earth!" she muttered. A gust of wind almost took the door from her and she swept us inside. "Sit down," she said, pointing toward the small kitchen table. It was cluttered with balls of yarn and knitting needles, scissors and little picture frames and a half jar of Planters roasted peanuts. She moved a few things to the far side of the table and pulled out two chairs.

"We can't stay very long," Frankie said. "We just wanted to give you something. We left a tree outside by the door. We'll stop by tomorrow morning and bring it in. We'll bring a stand and some ornaments."

"I have a tree stand," Mrs. Hadley said. "I have ornaments."

I couldn't tell if she was angry or just plain ornery.

"We have another surprise," Frankie said.

Mrs. Hadley looked at him over the top of her glasses.

"And what is that!"

"Can't tell you," Frankie said, grinning. "Then it wouldn't be a surprise."

The good eye went straight at Frankie, like it wanted the truth. Frankie didn't budge.

"You'll find out tomorrow," he said, and waved and backed up toward the door.

"Don't come before ten o'clock." The truth eye was on me now, the other eye drifting toward



A large star dominates the home of Dean and Lori Stratton in Hardwick.

courtesy photo

the window. "Not before."

Frankie dragged the empty sled home, under the stars, through the cold night.

I looked up and saw the bright shining Northern Star, but I wasn't feeling the spirit. We'd intruded. We'd barged in with our plans and who could tell what Mrs. Hadley was thinking?

Frankie didn't say a word all the way home. When Dad and Mom asked us how it went, he said, "Fine. I think she liked it."

But it wasn't fine. I knew that. And the double whammy surprise that Frankie wanted the next morning, I just thought it was going way overboard.

That night I dreamed of Santa, but it wasn't the kind of Santa dream I had before. I was on the sleigh with Santa's reindeer going down the road on the darkest night when all of us, the sleigh, Santa, all those toys, went skidding out of control. I tried pumping the brakes, but it didn't stop us from going over a cliff.

The next morning, I told Mrs. Hadley maybe we should just help Mrs. Hadley with the tree and forget the vacuum.

"No," he said. "She'll like it. She will! I'm sure!"

I was never so unsure in all my life.

~~~

The neighbors must have wondered what we were doing, hauling a vacuum cleaner on a sled across the snow, across five streets to Mrs. Hadley's trailer. I felt like one of those convicts in front of the cameras, covering his face with his hands

Cars whizzed by and I turned away.

I knew Mrs. Hadley wouldn't like us barging in, cleaning her carpet. It was dirty. There were dusty gray spots everywhere. It was like the dishes, I thought, Mrs. Hadley probably didn't care how

her carpet looked either.

~~~

The snow was deeper. We shuffled up the drive and parked the sled on the side of the porch. Frankie grabbed the tree we'd leaned against the trailer and pounded on the door.

I heard music inside.

"She can't hear you," I told him. I thought we should leave. I would leave. Leave Frankie there, since it was his stupid idea.

He pounded again, louder, five, six, seven knocks. When Mrs. Hadley finally appeared at the window, she had a bow in her hair.

The door opened and Frankie and I went inside. I stopped in my tracks. For a moment, I almost wondered if we were at the right trailer.

There was the smell of coffee and baked cookies as we hauled in the tree and placed it to the right of the door, then hauled in the vacuum, though there was no need for it anymore. The carpet was clean as a whistle.

We shook off the snow. Mrs. Hadley told us to take our boots off. Then she stopped and looked at the vacuum cleaner.

"What's in God's name are you doing with that!" she demanded.

We were speechless.

She looked at us and I felt like saying maybe we could vacuum out some cobwebs in Frankie's head.

Then Frankie started to explain, but Mrs. Hadley cut him off. "Put that thing outside," she said.

In the kitchen she had a plate with a pile of cookies; stars and trees and boots and Santas. The radio was tuned to the local radio station playing holiday songs. Mrs. Hadley wore a black and red buttoned up dress and black shoes. She had powdered her cheeks and started swaying when the radio played "The Holly and the Ivy."

"Let's take a look at that tree,"

she said. She pointed toward the corner where she'd had the TV, put on some old work gloves and handed me a pair. We held the tree while Frankie got under it and cranked the screws that held it in the stand. After a minute, the tree stood solid.

"Nothing like a real tree," Mrs. Hadley said. "Take a whiff! Makes you feel like you're out in the forest!"

She brought out a box with lights and tinsel and ornaments. There were shiny bulbs and some of the ornaments had little framed faces of kids. One had Mrs. Hadley and an older man. There was a little wooden Flexible Flyer sled, and I told Mrs. Hadley that I might be getting a real one for Christmas.

She directed me and Frankie to drape the lights a certain way, and the tinsel. She knew what she was doing.

"Walter and I did this for fifty-two years," she said.

"After Theo was in high school and even after he left. He works for the electric company, down in Boston. Still, every year we'd go out and get a tree and decorate it, up until Walter got sick."

I thought about Mrs. Hadley and her husband. I thought about some whole other life when she was younger.

She asked me to put up the star and Frankie brought over the chair. I stood on it and placed the star on top while she stood, hands on hips, evaluating.

"Leaning to the left," she said. I straightened it. "There," she said. "Good enough."

We went to the kitchen and she got out a quart of Lawsons. Frankie and I ate cookies and drank milk while Mrs. Hadley had coffee from her new pot. She talked about Walter and about her family instead of the war and the government and taxes. Then she took a sip of coffee and looked at me.

"Where'd you get this?"

"Sweeney's," I told her. I didn't tell her we paid extra for the fancier stuff that was on the specialty shelf with the fancy cheeses and the Godiva and the Ghirardelli chocolates. "It's from Ethiopia," I said.

"Ethiopia!" She took another sip and licked her lower lip and smiled. "It's good stuff." She raised the cup. It was the Montana elk cup, after Frankie had given me such a hard time.

When we got up to leave, Mrs. Hadley told us to stop by again sometime. Then she did something that scared me a little. Scared me because it wasn't the Mrs. Hadley I knew. Something had gotten into her. She reached out and took my

See STAR, Next Page

Star

Continued From Previous Page

hand and brought it close to her and put both her hands around it. She looked at me and then at Frankie.

“Thank you, boys,” she said. “Thank you.”

Afterwards, we took the sled and the vacuum cleaner back through the snow. I don’t know about Frankie, but I didn’t care a



The home of Jane Johns in Greensboro Bend features a decorated ramp. *courtesy photo*

lick about cars passing by, seeing us with the vacuum.

When we got home, we told

Dad and Mom about how we helped decorate Mrs. Hadley’s tree and she’d baked cookies for us.

I didn’t think I could ever explain it. There weren’t words for it, the way Mrs. Hadley took my hand, and how warm her hands were and how radiant she was, like the Northern Star, and how not once the whole time did I notice the wandering eye or the other one.

So I didn’t mention it. Jerry Schneider is a Hardwick resident who wrote this story in 1982 while he was living in Montana. The story was based on his childhood as a paperboy in Ohio.



Kara Demers (left), her father Nathan Demers (center) and his fiancée Wendy Watson (right) of Cabot picked out their Christmas tree at Brochu’s Tree Farm on Center Road in Hardwick, Dec. 6.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



The S.D. Ireland Holiday Lights concrete mixer driven by Kyle Bradley was part of the Craftsbury Community Light Parade sponsored by the recreation committee, December 13.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Thanks

for saying
you saw it in the
Hardwick Gazette

hardwickgazette.org

Prices shown valid 12/26 - 01/01
Member-owner deals valid 12/01-12/31 While supplies last

BUFFALO MOUNTAIN MARKET

COOPERATIVELY OWNED SINCE 1975

Weekly Highlights

Just a taste of the deals this week. Stop in for hundreds of local items, cafe food, and more!

 \$3.99 Cream Cheese, Lactose free <small>Green Valley Creamery, 8 oz</small>	 \$6.49 Potstickers <small>Feel Good Foods, varieties, 10 oz</small>	 \$4.99 Irish Butter <small>Kerrygold, 8 oz</small>	 \$3.29 Potato Chip Varieties <small>Kettle Brand, varieties, 5 oz</small>
 4/\$5 Greek Yogurt <small>Fage, varieties, 4.4 oz</small>	 \$1.79 Cottage Cheese <small>Food Club, 16 oz</small>	 2/\$3 Sour Cream <small>Food Club, 16 oz</small>	 \$2.99 Cheesy Snack Crackers <small>Cheez-It, 7 oz</small>
 \$3.99 Gluten Free Pasta <small>Bionature, varieties, 12 oz</small>	 \$3.79 Almond Nut-Thins <small>Blue Diamond, varieties, 4.25 oz</small>	 \$5.69 Fruit Preserves <small>Bonne Maman, varieties, 13 oz</small>	 2/\$6 Organic Frozen Veggies <small>Cascadian Farms, varieties, 16 oz</small>
 \$8.99 Organic Ice Cream <small>Alden's, varieties, 15 qt</small>	 \$4.29 Toilet Cleaner <small>ECOS, 24 oz</small>	 \$3.49 Crushed Red Pepper <small>Frontier, 12 oz</small>	 \$4.99 Tonic Water 4 pack <small>Fever Tree, 16.9 oz</small>

Some of our Member-owner Deals This Week ...

 \$1.49 Taco Seasoning <small>Riega, 9 oz</small>	 2/\$5 Breath Mint Varieties <small>Vermints, varieties, 1.41 oz</small>	 10% off Moist Cat Food <small>Fussie Cat, varieties, 2.82 oz</small>	 25% off Ramen Base Varieties <small>Tsuji, varieties, 16.9 oz</small>
-------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

75 Mill Street Hardwick, VT 05843 • 802.472.6020 • www.buffalomountainmarket.com

Your support powers every story we tell.

DONATE NOW

NewsMatch

Local news provides the facts you need to make decisions about your community.

DONATE NOW TO MATCH \$40,000 TO HELP US BRING YOU FACT-BASED COMMUNITY INFORMATION.

THE Hardwick Gazette

INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889



The two members of Vermont Cello Duet are Sarah Hiner and Ines Horozovic, the Vermont Cello Duet, perform Sunday, Jan. 11 at the Plainfield Opera House. Photo courtesy of Sarah Hiner.

Vermont Cello Duet in concert, Jan. 11

PLAINFIELD – The Vermont Cello Duet will perform Sunday, Jan. 11, at the historic Plainfield Opera House. The performance begins at 4 p.m., with doors opening at 3:30 p.m.

The Vermont Cello Duet, Sierra Hiner and Ines Horozovic, formed in 2022 after meeting in a University of Vermont chamber music class taught by cellist Emily Taubl. Their musical connection grew as they explored everything from Bach and Vivaldi to their favorite Taylor Swift medleys, reflecting both their classical training and their shared love of contemporary music.

Hiner, originally from Long Island, N.Y., studied with Matthew Schneider and Maureen Hynes and has performed at the Carnegie Hall and Jazz at Lincoln Center. She remains active in the Burlington music community, balancing performance, teaching and graduate studies.

Horozovic, who was born and raised in Winooski, began cello at age ten and spent five years performing with the Vermont Youth Orchestra. Throughout high school she frequently volunteered her musical talents at community events, a commitment she maintains today alongside her career as a 9th-grade English teacher at Missisquoi Valley Union High School.

The Plainfield Town Hall Opera House is wheelchair accessible and assisted listening devices are available upon request. Admission is by donation, with tickets available online at plainfieldartsvt.org and at the door.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Town clerk's office to adjust hours

HARDWICK – Town Clerk Tonia Chase announced via the website and social media, “Due to a staffing vacancy, the Hardwick Town Clerk’s Office will be closed from Monday, January 19, 2026 through Wednesday, January 28, 2026. The office will reopen on Thursday, January 29, 2026 at 7:30 a.m.”

“During this period, the Town Manager’s Office will be available on a limited basis to perform select Town Clerk functions, including accepting Open Office Petitions

for the 2026 Town Meeting; Receiving payments for those unable to wait until the office reopens; a secure, locked drop box is also available to the right of the Church Street entrance; land records, assessor cards, and redacted tax bills remain accessible online at hardwickvt.gov.

Certified copies of birth and death certificates will not be available during this closure. If these documents are required prior to the office reopening, contact a nearby town’s town clerk for assistance.”

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

WGDR 91.1 FM
WGDH 91.7 FM
CENTRAL VERMONT COMMUNITY RADIO

Current 2025 Schedule

as of Nov 2025

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT		
12 AM	Moist Fluids	Deep Threes	Dancehall/Reggae	Julian Taylor's Jukebox	Full Moon Hacksaw	Metal Radio <i>DJ Eben Flow</i>	And You Don't Stop	12 AM	
1 AM		BantuNauts RAYdio		Latin Explosion	Baroque and Beyond	The Kinetic Playground	Timeless Oldies Radio Hour	1 AM	
2 AM	Cafe Chill		Oldies Time Machine			The Sonic Cafe		2 AM	
3 AM	WGDR New Music Mix <i>Music Directors</i>							3 AM	
4 AM	Thom Hartmann Program							4 AM	
5 AM	Softpower/Fulstories Prison Pipeline	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters					Oldies Time Machine	5 AM	
6 AM	Counterspin Green St. News	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Project Censored	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Woodsongs Radio Hour	6 AM	
7 AM	Curse of the Golden Turnip <i>Alan LePage & Steven Farnham</i>	Maggie in the Morning <i>Delia Gillen</i>	Eastern Dawn <i>Luke Lampugnale</i>	Portal <i>Levi</i>	Writer's Voice	Bike Talk	The Secret Sisters	7 AM	
8 AM	Democracy Now!							The Country Jamboree	8 AM
9 AM	Trance-Formational Listening <i>Dennis Darrah</i>	Eggs on Toast <i>Kelly</i>	Alternative Radio	The Quilting Hour <i>Maura Quinn or Sasha Thayer</i>	Relocalizing Vermont <i>Carl Etnier</i>	The Magical Mystery Tour <i>Tonio Epstein</i>	ROTATING SLOT #8 <i>(see below)</i>	9 AM	
10 AM	ROTATING SLOT #1 <i>(see below)</i>	Peace Talk Radio Sprouts	New Dimensions	Wings	This Way Out	TUC Radio	ROTATING SLOT #9 <i>(see below)</i>	10 AM	
11 AM		ROTATING SLOT #4 <i>(see below)</i>	Rising Up w/ Sonali	Spawning Stones <i>Ben Bashore</i>	What's the Frequency, Kenneth?	Shortwave Report & Food Sleuth		11 AM	
12 PM	Thought Pasture <i>Maura Quinn</i>	Personal and Political <i>Stephanie Fraser</i>	That Driving Beat	The Rubber Room <i>Dan Towner</i>	Unshelved <i>J Kramer</i>	Modern Jet Set	The Metal Edge <i>Willis Pratt</i>	12 PM	
1 PM						Now Playing <i>DJ Liu</i>		1 PM	
2 PM	Swivel Radio <i>DJ Effery</i>	David Rogers Music Mix Hour	Straight Up Soul	Adiago	UpFront Soul	Hittin' the Note <i>Bill Hahn</i>	Boxful of Blues <i>John Foster</i>	2 PM	
3 PM			Listen Up! <i>Bill Nowlan</i>	Country & Western Sounds in Modern Music <i>Barry Matthews</i>	Law and Disorder			3 PM	
4 PM	ROTATING SLOT #2 <i>(see below)</i>	Trailing Edge <i>David Ferland</i>	Economic Update Rumble Strip	Techtonic	Big Picture Science	The Friday Drive at 5 <i>Corey Flynn</i>	Acoustic Harmony <i>Mark Michaelis</i>	4 PM	
5 PM	Bon Mot <i>Rick Agran</i>	Project Censored		Stranger Deinger	ROTATING SLOT #7 <i>(see below)</i>			5 PM	
6 PM	The Good Ways Reggae <i>Kind</i>	Democracy Now! (rerun)						6 PM	
7 PM	The Revel Level <i>DJ EhMmAhH</i>	ROTATING SLOT #5 <i>(see below)</i>	ROTATING SLOT #6 <i>(see below)</i>	Woodwarbler's JazzGrass <i>Brian Aust</i>	Xav Wax <i>Xav Jimenez</i>	Spiral Galaxy <i>Tom McMurdo</i>	Jagler Katz Worm Hole <i>Jason Hagler</i>	7 PM	
8 PM								8 PM	
9 PM	ROTATING SLOT #3 <i>(see below)</i>	Deep Blues <i>Les Mawson</i>	Kozie Korner	Music as Art <i>Uku Meri</i>	DJ Eben Flow Eclectic <i>DJ Eben Flow</i>	The Meltdown <i>KingTone</i>	First Wave	9 PM	
10 PM		Blues Edge <i>Les Mawson</i>			Metal Radio <i>DJ Eben Flow</i>		The Beatdown <i>Z-Point</i>	10 PM	
11 PM	Deep Threes	Train to Skaville	Julian Taylor's Jukebox	Full Moon Hacksaw		And You Don't Stop		11 PM	

Rotating Slots

#1: Sun 10 am-12 pm
1st & 3rd Sun: Indigenous Music
2nd & 4th Sun: The Immanent Grove
Conni Mags

#2: Sun 4-5 pm
1st & 3rd Sun: Afrosonic Taxi
2nd & 4th Sun: Discoverances with Savannah

#3: Sun 9-11 pm
1st & 3rd Sun: Walkin' Will: The Show of Life
2nd & 4th Sun: All Mixed Up

#4: Mon 11 am-12 pm
1st Mon: Biluminations
Stefanie Lingenfelter
2nd & 4th Mon: Cuneiform Radio
Kyle Schlesinger
3rd Mon: Biketalk

#5: Mon 7-9 pm
1st Mon: Future Reflections
DJ Syd
2nd Mon: In Common Sounds
Brother B
3rd Mon: Gilded Splinters
Kevin Titterton
4th Mon: Borderlands
DJ Tenderman

#6: Tue 7-9 pm
Biweekly rotation:
Still Life with Club Soda
Serena Matt
Still Life with Orange Peel
Ada Bowman

#7: Thu 6-7 pm
1st Thu: The Broken Bois Collective Presents...
Khonsu X and Titan
2nd Thu: The Hyper Local Dispatch
Natascha and DJ Syd
3rd Thu: Democracy Now
4th Thu: Into the Issues
Steve Pappas

#8: Sat 9-10 am
1st Sat: Gathering Peace
Joseph Gainza
2nd Sat: Projected Censored
3rd Sat: Pollinator Report
Emily Lanxner
4th Sat: Kitchen Permaculture
Rebecca Beidler

#9: Sat 10-11 am
1st Sat: Sex Fly
Benge
2nd Sat: Pitter Patter Radio
Pat Kantner
3rd Sat: Under the Covers
DJ Rhizosphere
4th Sat: Full Moon Hacksaw

Support, stream live or listen to archives at WGDR.org

@WGDRWGDHVT

EVENTS

Wednesday, Dec. 24

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE, 6 p.m., Touch of Grace Church, 104 Vt. Rte. 16, East Hardwick.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE, with communion, 1 p.m., St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, 39 West Church St., Hardwick. Information: (802) 472-5979 or stjohnthebaptistvt.org.

Monday, Dec. 29

COZY BOOKS AND COCOA, 4 p.m., recommended for ages 2-8, Jeudevine Memorial Library, Hardwick. Information: jeudevineyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Ongoing Events

ARTHRITIS RELIEF EXERCISE CLASS, Thursdays, 10 a.m., Community Center, Hardwick. Sponsored by the NEK Council on Aging. Information: Sara at Shbeharsing@gmail.com.

PICKLEBALL, Sundays, Hardwick Elementary School gym. Beginners group starts at 11 a.m. Intermediate and above, noon to 2 p.m. Information: Sara at Shbeharsing@gmail.com.

CHESS CLUB MEETS, on select Mondays, 2:45 to 4 p.m., Craftsbury School, Minden Art Room. Join advisor Andras Hadik-Barkoczy in preparing for the Vermont State Chess Tournament on March 28.

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

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

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

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

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE practice group, every Thursday, 2 p.m., John Woodruff Simpson Memorial Library, 1972 East Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury. Information: (802) 586-9692, jwsimpson-memorial.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 Craftsbury Road, East Craftsbury. All ages and abilities encouraged to attend. Jam sessions held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

COMMUNITY DINNER, noon, United Church of Hardwick, S. Main St., Third and Fourth Thursdays of the month. Call Denise Carr at (802) 472-3134 to reserve a meal. Take-Out or Eat-In. Donations appreciated.

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS for Young Adventurers, first and third Mondays, Craftsbury Public Library, for children ages 8-13. Reserve a spot to play by contacting director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org.

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

TAI CHI CLASSES, Tuesdays, Jeudevine Memorial Library Parker Ladd Community Room, Hardwick, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. Advanced Tai Chi, taught by Norma Spaulding, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Tai Chi for Fall Prevention, taught by Norma Spaulding.

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

MAGIC ON TUESDAY. A group of youngpeoplegettogetheratTheCivicStandard, S. Main St., Hardwick, to play Magic: the Gathering, hosted by Dean Burns, Information: Norma Spaulding, (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com.

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

MAGIC ON TUESDAY. A group of youngpeoplegettogetheratTheCivicStandard, S. Main St., Hardwick, to play Magic: the Gathering, hosted by Dean Burns, Information: Norma Spaulding, (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com.

Games begin at 5 p.m. and new players are always welcome.

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

COMMUNITY SUPPER, Wednesdays, 5:30p.m., TheCivicStandard, S. Main St., Hardwick.

STORYTIME, PLAYGROUP ON FRIDAYS, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, 122 School St.,

See EVENTS, Next Page

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Flooring



Country Floors
est. 1979
Plainfield, VT

Mon. - Fri., 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sat., 9 a.m. - noon
"Quality You Can Stand On"
454-7301, Hollister Hill,
Plainfield

Laundry



Hardwick VILLAGE LAUNDROMAT

Self-serve • Open daily 6 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Drop-off service available, call Derek, (802) 793-7388


Moving



PENSKE Truck Rental

RELOCATING?
• household • commercial
CALL KASEY
(802) 223-5434
LOCAL PENSKE AGENT
55 YEARS MOVING EXPERIENCE

Plumbing



LICENSED & INSURED
HOLMES PLUMBING
Glenside St., RFD 1, Hardwick, VT
05843
Josh Holmes • 472-6228

Restaurants



The Village Restaurant
Home Cooking at Its Best
74 South Main St., Hardwick
(802) 472-5701
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
Daily, 6 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Services



MANOSH By Gosh

Septic Tank Pumping • Line Jetting & Thawing
Camera Inspection • Hydro-Vac Services
Catch Basin Cleaning • Lift Station Maintenance
24/7 Emergency Service

120 NORTHGATE PLAZA, SUITE 2 MORRISVILLE
802.888.5722 | MANOSH.COM

Services



DR PROPERTY MAINTENANCE & LAWN CARE
802.793.7388
HARDWICK • VERMONT

- Dumpster rental
- Excavation
- Landscaping
- Stump Grinding

dwrichardson1999@gmail.com

Services



MANOSH By Gosh

Septic Tank Pumping • Line Jetting & Thawing
Water Treatment • Pump Sales & Service
Aggregate- Gravel & Stone Products
Pond Aeration
24/7 Emergency Service

120 NORTHGATE PLAZA, SUITE 2 MORRISVILLE
802.888.5722 | MANOSH.COM

Solar



STERLING MOUNTAIN SOLAR

Let the Sunshine Power You
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • ELECTRICAL
FEDERAL TAX CREDITS AVAILABLE
(802) 793-2211
jeff@sterlingmountainsolar.com
Jeff Holmes, Master Electrician
2089 Laporte Road, Morrisville,

EVENTS

St., Marshfield. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, call (802) 426-3581 or visit jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

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

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

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

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

SPANISH CLUB, meets the second Saturday of each month, 11:30 a.m., Woodbury Community Library.

FIBER ARTS, meets the third Saturday of the month, 10 to 11 a.m., Woodbury Community Library.

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.

CABOT COMMUNITY CONTRA DANCE, second Fridays, through June, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Cabot Town Hall, 3084 Main St. All dances taught, no partner needed. All welcome. Information: cabotdance@aroundvt.org.

HARDWICK AREA QUILTERS, the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, 1 to 4 p.m., Jeudevine Memorial Library, Hardwick. All levels are welcome. Not a library sponsored event.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CRAFTSBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, open Wednesday and Saturday, 10 a.m. - noon.

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

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

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

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

STORY TIME, Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. Books, songs, art activities and more for ages 5 and under, Jeudevine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main St. Information: 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, call (802) 426-3581 or visit jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

ADAPTIVE BIKING MONDAYS on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, 2 to 3 p.m. and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., beginning at the trailhead parking lot on Creamery Rd. in Hardwick. Spon-

sored by Adaptive Sports Partners. Reservations or information: kerry@adaptivesportspartners.org or call (802) 427-4116.

Exhibits

BRENT MCCOY, solo exhibit, "Tricks of the Light", Highland Center for the Arts, Greensboro. Saturday, through

January 11.

VICTORIA MATIESEN: Always Looking. New landscape paintings, through January 20, Parker Pie Gallery, 161 County Road, West Glover.

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

We welcome VISA and MasterCard for donations and advertising.



THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

(802) 472-6521

news@hardwickgazette.org



Delivering On A Promise
Dead River Company

**Propane • Heating Oil • Diesel
Heating Equipment Installations**

189 Railroad St., St. Johnsbury, VT
(802) 748-8934 or (800) 222-9276

THE Hardwick Gazette

WE ARE
HIRING

ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVE

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

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

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

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

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

Some sales experience preferred. Must have own vehicle.

Send letter of interest to ads@hardwickgazette.org

Your support powers every story we tell.

DONATE NOW

NewsMatch

Local news provides the facts you need to make decisions about your community.

DONATE NOW TO MATCH \$40,000 TO HELP US BRING YOU FACT-BASED COMMUNITY INFORMATION.

THE Hardwick Gazette
INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

No speed-bumps for Wildcats in season opener

by Ken Brown

STOWE – The Hazen Union boys basketball team looked locked in last week, dominating Stowe on the road in both team’s season opener.

Senior Morgan Michaud poured in a career-high 25 points to power the Wildcats to a 79-36 road win over Stowe last Monday. Michaud added five rebounds and four steals to his impressive stat-line as Hazen opened the game on a 26-3 run and never looked back. Head coach Aaron Hill and his veteran squad couldn’t wait to open the season against Stowe after the Raiders ended their 12-game losing streak to the Wildcats last February in a shocking upset.

“It was great to start out the season by avenging one of the toughest losses we suffered last year. Morgan was terrific on both ends and earned family bragging rights with his brothers (Gabe and Lincoln) by scoring a family-high 25 points,” said Hill.

Junior Jameson Lamarre picked right up where he left off last season, torching the Raiders with 21 points, six assists while hauling down 11 rebounds. Sully Laflam rounded out a balanced Wildcat attack with 13 points and six boards. Hazen limited Stowe’s top threat Chase Brown to just eight points on the night. Brown canned seven threes against the Wildcats on his way

to a 24 point night last winter.

“Our defensive intensity and unselfish play was really good. Jameson’s passing and scoring were outstanding. It was a nice team win to start the season,” said Hill

Hill’s program hosted their tenth addition of the Dave Morse Classic (DMC) late last week at the Cat Den. It’s hard to believe that it has been a full decade since we lost the Vermont legend, a mentor to many and a community friend. Once again, the statewide renowned holiday tournament will feature some of the best basketball outside of Division I in the state of Vermont. Lamoille’s program is ascending after a handful of down years, winning 14 games last season. Williamstown moved to Division IV last season and tallied 16 wins, including a trip to the Final Four. These two programs opened the DMC in the early game, followed by Hazen and Peoples Academy in a classic arch-rival match-up in the nightcap.

Hazen continued to tackle their early season schedule by hosting Enosburg on Tuesday and will travel to Vergennes on December 29. The Wildcat junior varsity program will compete in the Williamstown JV Tourney on December 30. Hill’s squad will travel to the Barre Auditorium on January 3 to take on Peoples Academy in the Winter Solstice.



Jameson Lamarre (right) of Hazen Union advances the ball up the court past a Peoples Academy player as Hazen teammate Morgan Michaud (left) follows the play Wednesday at the Dave Morse Classic held in Hardwick. Hazen edged by Peoples Academy 58-55.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Hazen Union junior Jeter Demers (No. 2) looks to pass as he’s followed by Jack Lafayette (No. 14) of Peoples Academy during the Dave Morse Classic, December 17. Hazen Union won 58-55.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Wildcat Lincoln Hill (left) brings the ball up the court during action against Peoples Academy at the Dave Morse Classic December 17. At right is Peoples’ Dylan Knight. Hill was Hazen’s high scorer for the game with 20 points. The Wildcats inched by the Wolves 58-55.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

CVU exerts divisional dominance in clash with Lady Cats

by Ken Brown

HINESBURG – The Champlain Valley Union (CVU) girls basketball team defended their home court with ferocity last week in a rare Division I vs. Division III match-up with the Lady Cats of Hazen Union.

Zoey McNabb showed why she is one of the best senior point guards in the state, scoring a team-high 12 points to lead the Lady Redhawks to a 48-35 home win over Hazen last Tuesday. The multiple VBCA Outstanding Underclassmen selection repeatedly broke down Hazen’s pressure defense to extend a four-point lead after one quarter,

to 33-15 at the break. McNabb scored the majority of her points in the final eight minutes of the first half, including a pair of threes that led to a 17-3 run for CVU to close out the half. Fellow two-time Outstanding Underclassmen selection Kelsie Rivard, did all she could to keep the Lady Cats in the game with 16 points, but struggled to get the ball in her spot against a stingy CVU defense. Deirdre Higgins (12 points) took over for the Lady Redhawks in the second half as they took a 41-23 lead with eight minutes to play.

A Rivard finish with three minutes to play cut the lead to fourteen and an Autumn Dailey

(six points) finish at the rim cut the lead to ten late. The Lady Redhawk half-court defense harassed Hazen point guard Mya Lumsden all night long, holding her to just four points before fouling out in the fourth. McNabb and company also thwarted any chances of a late comeback bid by the Lady Cats, holding them scoreless from long range.

It truly was a match-up of dominant teams in their respective divisions. CVU has reached the Division I Final Four the last four seasons, cutting down the nets twice at the Patrick Gymnasium. They have posted a 72-14 combined record over the last three years. Head coach Randy Lumsden has led the Lady Cats to three straight Division III Final Fours, including the program’s first

state championship in over three decades in 2024. In Vermont high school girls basketball, you rarely see dominant programs from different divisions go at it during the regular season, so credit to Lumsden for testing his talented squad so early in the season against the very best. His strategy should bear fruit in March, when his team tackles a top heavy division III in the state tournament.

Hazen hosted Thetford Academy on Monday and will stay at home for a match-up against Randolph on Saturday. They travel to Enosburg on December 30 before clashing with arch-rival Peoples Academy on January 3 in the Winter Solstice at the Barre Auditorium. All home games can be streamed live on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

Lady Trojans show fight in road loss

by Ken Brown

WINOOSKI – The Twinfield-Cabot girls went wire to wire with Winooski on the road last week before running out of gas late to fall to 0-2 on the season.

Djoyce Mampuya scored a team-high 14 points to lead Winooski to a 44-34 home win over Twinfield-Cabot last Tuesday. Junior Chloe North kept the Lady Trojans in striking distance for three-and-a-half quarters with a career-high 24 points. Alice Buhendwa complimented with 12 points to help the Lady Spartans pull away late. Winooski has been on a steady incline as a program since winning just 2 games in 2022. They’ve combined for 18 wins the past two seasons, including their first winning season (11-9) last winter in four years.

“It felt great to be competitive against a good team in a tough place to play! We did beat ourselves at times and need to continue to work on the little things you need to do as a team to be successful. Taking care of the ball and being in the right spots on defense are things we’ll keep trying to improve on,” said Whalen.

North emerged as a steady role player on a senior laden team last season for Whalen as just a sophomore. She is averaging 20 points per game early on this season and if another scoring threat develops for the Lady Trojans, Whalen’s youthful rebuild could be accelerated.

“We know what we need to do to turn our mistakes around

to change the outcomes of these games. We’ll see them again next week, hopefully fix those things and try to get a win. I’m very proud of how Chloe has stepped up and become a leader for this young team,” said Whalen.

The Lady Trojans hosted Mid-Vermont Christian in their home opener last Thursday and completed their home and home series with Winooski on Tuesday. They travel to BFA-Fairfax on December 30 before squaring off against rival Williamstown on January 2 in the Winter Solstice at the Barre Auditorium.

SPORT CALENDAR

Saturday, Dec. 27

11 a.m., Hazen Union JV Girls basketball, vs. Randolph, at Hazen Union.

12:30 p.m., Hazen Union Varsity Girls basketball, vs. Randolph, at Hazen Union.

Monday, Dec. 29

5:30 p.m., Hazen Union JV Boys basketball, at Vergennes.

7 p.m., Hazen Union Varsity Boys basketball, at Vergennes.

Tuesday, Dec. 30

5:30 p.m., Hazen Union JV Boys basketball, Williamstown JV Tournament, vs. Peoples.

5:30 p.m., Hazen Union JV Girls basketball at Enosburg.

7 p.m., Twinfield Girls Varsity basketball, at BFA Fairfax.

7 p.m., Hazen Union Varsity Girls basketball at Enosburg.



Hazen Union teammates (from left) Kobe Smith, Jeter Demers, Dawson Michaud, Chayse Newell, Lucian Jurkiewicz and Noah Foster cheer at the end of the Dave Morse Classic Wednesday after their 58-55 win against Peoples Academy. Hazen will move on to play Lamoille Friday, December 19 at 7 p.m. for the championship.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

swish.
WE'VE GOT YOUR TEAMS COVERED.

THE HARDWICK GAZETTE
INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

hardwickgazette.org

The
Hardwick Gazette

is

Free
online

MAKING
IT ISN'T

Support us at
hardwickgazette.org/donate