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Wednesday, January 14, 2026

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Volume 137 Number 1

Ice Out for Good rallies demand accountability

by Paul Fixx

VERMONT – More than 7,000 Vermonters came out between Thursday, Jan. 8, and Sunday, Jan. 11, as part of ICE Out for Good rallies across Vermont. Within 24 hours of the announcement, there were already 1,000 events anticipated nationwide.

A rally in Hardwick began Saturday at noon, where speakers demanded accountability for the killing of Renee Nicole Good last week in Minneapolis, and an end to the months-long pattern of unchecked violence and abuse by ICE agents in marginalized communities across America.

Walden's Bob Hawk joined the Hardwick rally, counting 70 activists on hand at 12:30 p.m., with more still arriving. He reported lots of cars honking in solidarity. Others reported

some, but only a few negative comments for those in passing vehicles.

Organizers with Indivisible Hardwick later reported more than 80 people had joined the rally.

Greensboro's Anne Stevens said, "We need to stand up. We can't let this go on."

The Hardwick rally was attended by more young adults than most recent public rallies and protests there. Amabel Siorghlas from Marshfield was joined by Hardwick's Dana and Rae Michaud, where Dana said he was there to "fight for the rights to a safe education."

He hoped by joining others along the street, "more people will see us exercising our constitutional rights."

Manuel O'Neill said it was enough for him to be there if his presence was "giving one more

See RALLIES, 7



Saturday's "ICE Out for Good" rally in Hardwick was attended by more young adults than most recent public rallies and protests there. Amabel Siorghlas from Marshfield was joined by Hardwick's Dana and Rae Michaud, where Dana said he was there to "fight for the rights to a safe education."

photo by Paul Fixx

HED merger with Morrisville Water & Light explored

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Electric Department (HED) has eliminated its general manager and begun to explore a possible merger with Morrisville Water & Light (MW&L) suggests the wording of a separation agreement with former General Manager Sarah Braese and a new Management Services Agreement with MW&L.

There's been no indication of any plan to explore a merger during public meetings of HED Commissioners, or in press releases.

"MW&L and Hardwick Electric Department (HED) seek to explore the potential of various merger models to strengthen each utility so that customers may enjoy reliable, superior, affordable electric service into the future," says

the first sentence of the agreement to share the management services of Scott Johnstone with MW&L that was signed by Commissioner Mike Ambrosino on October 28 for HED.

On December 12, Ambrosino signed an agreement bringing Braese's services for HED to an end, which said HED "has decided to begin the process of reorganization for greater effectiveness and efficiency, to a management structure that eliminates the general manager position at Hardwick Electric Department and replaces it with a new general manager position shared across multiple municipal electric departments.

That agreement makes it clear Braese's "performance has been at all times satisfactory throughout her employment," and the

See MERGER, 8

Gov. Scott bullish on education reform plans

by Shaun Robinson, VTDigger

MONTPELIER – In his annual address to Vermont legislators recently, Gov. Phil Scott urged members of the House and Senate to move forward with the next stages of the sweeping education reform project they started last year, at his administration's urging.

But as the 2026 legislative session got underway this week, it has seemed far from certain that the process of creating new school districts and developing a new funding model with the goals of improving educational quality and making the system less expensive overall, will advance at the pace, or in the form, that the

See BULLISH, 3



Gov. Phil Scott enters the House of Representatives chamber to deliver his State of the State address at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Wednesday, January 7. photo by Glenn Russell, VTDigger



After a wagon ride through Hardwick, December 17, Hardwick Elementary fourth-grader Jayce Gann shares a nuzzle with the Belgian Draft horse, part of a two-horse team handled by Jeff Simpson of Kingdom's Horse Drawn Wagon and Sleigh Rides, who pulled him, along with his Hardwick Elementary School classmates. photo by Lisa Stinson

The Hardwick Gazette at Front Seat, Fridays, 10 a.m.

by The Hardwick Gazette

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Gazette staff will be at Front Seat Coffee every Friday, from 10 to 11 a.m., beginning January 16. The editor and reporter will be on hand to hear news tips, story ideas, comments and answer any questions about the local newspaper.

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POLICE REPORT

Orleans County Sheriff's Office Unlawful trespass, retail theft

DERBY – On December 6, Deputy Cota investigated several retail thefts and incidents of unlawful trespass that occurred between August and November 2025 at the Walmart in Derby. Investigation revealed that Travis Daigle, of Greensboro, stole several times from Walmart in this period both before and after he was formally trespassed from the store. Daigle was located on December 26, 2025 and was charged with three counts of Retail Theft and two counts of Unlawful Trespass. He was referred to Vermont Superior Court, Orleans Criminal Division for February 3 at 8:30 a.m. to answer the above charges.

On December 6, Deputy Cota investigated several retail thefts and incidents of unlawful trespass that occurred between October and December of 2025 at the Walmart in Derby. Investigation revealed Alex Maldonado, of Wolcott, entered the store after being formally trespassed and stole several times within this period. With the help of Morristown Police Department, Maldonado was located on January 5 and charged with three counts of Unlawful Trespass and Retail Theft.

Vermont State Police Stolen baby Jesus, plow crash

MARSHFIELD – On December 8 at 12:11 p.m., a three car crash occurred on the Cabot Road in the Town of Marshfield. Operator No.

2, Harry Dailey of Woodbury, was driving a 2023 Western Star 4700 with a snowplow on the front of the vehicle and turning around at the Marshfield town line. Dailey 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, Douglas Gill of Northfield in a 2017 Ford F150 traveling towards Marshfield from Cabot, collided with the end of the plow and then collided with Operator No. 3, Carol Baker of Marshfield in her 2014 Honda CRV. All operators were screened by EMS and only Dailey and Gill 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.

The Vermont State Police-Berlin Barracks is seeking the public's assistance regarding the theft of a baby Jesus and lamb statue from a nativity scene in the town of Marshfield. The theft is believed to have occurred between January 2 and January 3. Troopers are asking anyone who may have observed suspicious activity in

the area of Cabot Road during this time frame, or who may have information related to this left, to contact the Vermont State Police - Berlin Barracks at (802) 229 - 9191.

Anonymous tips may also be submitted online at Submit a Tip via Vermont State Police website or by texting keyword VTIPS to 274637 (CRIMES).

AWARE Report

HARDWICK – Seven people used AWARE services between January 4 and January 11. The AWARE 24-hour hotline is (802) 472-6463. A non-profit established in 1984, AWARE serves Hardwick and the greater Hardwick area in preventing and healing the trauma of domestic and sexual violence. AWARE provides help during immediate crises, as well as advocating for on-going emotional and legal support for people of all ages and gender. For more information about AWARE, including educational resources, programming and how to get involved as a volunteer visit awarevt.org.



January 14- January 20

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<p>Kellogg's Assorted Cereals \$2.99 8.9-12 oz.</p>	<p>Ragu Pasta Sauce 2/\$4 16-24 oz.</p>	<p>Barilla G.F. Pasta 2/\$4 10-12 oz.</p>
<p>Ben's Ready Rice 2/\$5 8.5 oz.</p>	<p>Rice-A-Roni Side Dishes 2/\$3 6.5-7.25 oz.</p>	<p>Hamburger Helper 3/\$5 5.9-6.9 oz.</p>
<p>Dole 4 pks. Fruit \$2.99 16 oz.</p>	<p>Starkist Solid White Tuna \$1.79 15.8 oz.</p>	<p>Teddie Old Fashion Peanut Butter \$3.79 16 oz.</p>
<p>Crav'n Flavor Fudge Cookies 2/\$4 8.5-12.5 oz.</p>	<p>Nature Valley Granola Bars 2/\$5 7.4-8.9 oz.</p>	<p>7th Generation Paper Towels \$2.99 64.3 s.f.</p>
<p>7th Generation 4 Roll Bathroom Tissue \$3.99 133.3 s.f.</p>	<p>Cabot Shredded or Bar Cheese 2/\$6 6-8 oz.</p>	<p>Pictsweet Frozen Vegetables 2/\$4 9-10 oz.</p>
<p>Wyman's Frozen Berries \$3.79 12-15 oz.</p>	<p>Mrs. T. Perogies 2/\$6 16 oz.</p>	<p>Talenti Gelato \$3.79 16 oz.</p>

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WEATHER WATCH



A spectacular sunrise started the day on January 9 on Montgomery Road in East Hardwick. photo by Dawn Gustafson

Light accumulating snow to start; sun appears by Friday

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – Not having a thaw during the winter last year felt like an anomaly. It turns out that was true. Over the past couple of weeks, we've seen several rounds of brief warm-ups causing precipitation to turn to rain. One episode of that came just before 2026, when we experienced some freezing rain that caused scattered power outages and slippery roads. Ice accumulations varied from half an inch in Walden to an eighth of an inch in Hardwick Village and East Craftsbury. Cabot reported three-eighths of an inch before temperatures rose above freezing. A second warm-up around January 8-10 brought another quarter inch of rain as temperatures neared 40.

None of the warm-ups created huge changes in the snowpack. Some melting did occur, but several episodes of light accumulating snow in between, minimized the overall impact. Many observation stations continue to report snow depths of at least eight inches, with upwards of one to two feet in the intermediate hills.

An upper-level trough and approaching surface cold front sets up over the Great Lakes on Wednesday, bringing a chance of some light snow showers, although a few drops of rain may mix in during the afternoon as temperatures warm above freezing. The trough deepens and closes off as it approaches the northeast on Wednesday night and Thursday, causing a surface

low to form somewhere near the upper-Hudson region, bringing some light snow as temperatures cool and winds gust from the northwest. The rapid drop in temperatures overnight on Wednesday could make for some very slippery travel Thursday morning. That low exits Thursday evening, but a few lingering snow showers and some frigid wind chills remain.

Friday will feature weak ridging and brief influence from milder air again by Saturday, although another upper-level disturbance brings in more clouds and some light snow as the weekend progresses. No big snowfall events to mention, but enough snow falls to refresh what is already on the ground. Here are the forecast details:

Wednesday: Mostly cloudy. Scattered rain or snow showers. High: 38. Low: 17. South wind around 5 mph.

Thursday: Light snow likely. Snow accumulation of 2 to 4 inches. High: 27. Low: -3. West wind 10-15 mph with gusts to 20 mph, decreasing to 5-10 mph by evening. Wind chill values as low as -16.

Friday: Mostly sunny. High: 18. Low: 10. West wind around 5 mph.

Saturday: Partly sunny, with increasing clouds by afternoon. Isolated snow showers in the afternoon. High: 30. Low: 14. South wind 5-10 mph.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy. Light snow likely. High: 25. Low: 4. West wind around 5 mph in the afternoon.

Bullish

Continued From Page One

governor and his Republican allies want.

That's in part because the school redistricting task force set up in last year's education reform law, Act 73, did not recommend new proposed district maps in November ahead of the session, essentially flouting one of the law's key directives. Any new maps would likely include far fewer school districts, with larger student populations in each, than what exists today.

Speaking to a joint assembly of legislators and other officials for his State of the State address in the House chamber, Scott called education reform "our most critical challenge."

He pointed to how Vermonters could see a nearly 12% average property tax hike this year, about half of which is due to anticipated increases in school district spending in the 2026-2027 school year, according to estimates late last year from the Vermont Tax Department.

"These are the real costs of maintaining a system designed for a Vermont that no longer exists," the governor said. "If there's one thing you take away from this speech today, it's this: education transformation is not optional. It's essential."

In fact, there was not much else legislators could take away from the speech, as Scott's 35-minute address focused almost entirely on that topic. Scott also took the notable step of using his speech to issue an ultimatum: If lawmakers did not make the changes to the state's education system that he wants to see, he would not sign other key pieces of legislation they pass, such as the annual state budget or the bill that sets property tax rates, known as the yield bill.

"From my perspective, the recent failure to produce maps was a political strategy to preserve the old system," the governor said. "Following through is about keeping our word to students, teachers and taxpayers who all deserve better."

Scott's ultimatum drew criticism from the Democratic leaders of the House and Senate in remarks to reporters shortly after. House Speaker Jill Krowinski, D-Burlington, said she did not think the veto threat was productive and, in fact, could make it harder to persuade her colleagues in the chamber to move forward with the plan the governor has laid out.

"It's disappointing to hear," she said. "I am 100% at the table to figure this out with the House, with the Senate and with the governor and I think we all are coming to a place of having to reset and figure out what we do to keep education

transformation going. And, what does that look like in a map?"

She added, "I think there's concern and fear about what might happen" among House members, "but I truly believe that every member in my chamber wants to do something. It's just how we get there and that's going to be the tough work ahead of us this session."

Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Baruth, D/P-Chittenden Central, said he "would have probably preferred no threat, but a private communication of how serious (Scott) is." Baruth called Scott's speech "the most narrowly focused State of the State I've ever seen" in his 15 years in the Senate, though he understood why the governor would make that decision.

Asked about his own appetite for advancing the stipulations of Act 73, Baruth bristled slightly at a reporter's suggestion he was "bullish" on the law.

"I would say I'm committed to it," he said.

In a statement issued shortly after the address, the minority leaders of the House and Senate, for their part, praised the governor's speech. Scott "correctly identified education reform as our most urgent challenge," said Rep. Pattie McCoy, R-Poultney, and Sen. Scott Beck, R-Caledonia.

House and Senate leaders have already said they expect some existing programs will need to be cut as support from the federal government wavers, especially for key human services programs such as nutritional benefits, Medicaid and assistance for home heating costs.

"This year's spending package has required difficult decisions," Scott said of his administration's budget proposal, which he will present in another address later this month. From there, the House and Senate will develop a budget bill, which they'll ultimately send back to Scott for his sign-off.

The governor said Wednesday that in national politics, "conflict is chosen over cooperation, division over decency and outrage over outcomes. People lose trust."

He said he sees advancing the education reform plan he supports, and that legislators started last year in Act 73, as a way to set an example of how people's "government still works for them." Democratic leaders' willingness to evolve the public education system in 2025 along the lines Scott proposed was, in part, a political response to voters' outrage in 2024 over property tax increases. That spike led Democrats to lose a historic number of state House and Senate seats.

"We don't need to be asked to do the right thing," Scott said. "We just need to do it."

POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Police Department Media Log

HARDWICK – December 21: DUI, Vt. Route 15; Directed Patrol, Vt. Route 15.

December 22: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; VIN verification, Craftsbury Rd.; Assist - Other, Wolcott St.; Assist - Other, Wolcott St.; Suspicious Event, W. Church St.; Accident - LSA, Vt. Route 15.

December 23: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Medical, S. Main St.; Alarm, S. Main St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Welfare Check, Houston Hill Rd.

December 24: Property Damage, Marshall St.; Accident - TCNR, Vt. Route 15 W.; Traffic Hazard, Vt. Route 15 E.; Property Watch, Vt. Route 16; Traffic Stop, Mill St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Animal Problem, S. Main St.

December 25: Accident - TCNR, Vt. Route 15 E.; Assist - Agency, Elm St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; 911 Hangup, Marshall St.; Abandoned Vehicle, Vt. Route 15.

December 26: Assist - Agency, Vt. Route 15 W.; Suspicious Event, Spring St.; Medical, Hillside Ave.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.

December 27: Accident - Property Damage Only, Center Rd.; Information, Church St.; Fire Hazard, Highland Ave.

December 28: Suspicious Event, Vt. Route 14 S.; Animal Problem, S. Main St.; Snowmobile, Hardwick; Accident - Injury to Person(s), Vt. Route 16; Assist - Agency, West Hill Rd; Suspicious Event, Vt. Route 14 S.; Animal Problem, S.

Main St.; Snowmobile, Hardwick; Accident - Injury to Person(s), Vt. Route 16; Assist - Agency, W. Hill Rd.

December 29: Suspicious Event, Vt. Route 16; Accident - Property Damage Only, Center Rd.; Citizen Dispute, Mill St.

December 30: Accident - TCNR, Vt. Route 15; Theft, Renaud Rd; Accident - Property Damage Only, Vt. Route 15; Assist - Public, Maple St.; Assist - Motorist, Vt. Route 15; Medical, Marsh Rd.

December 31: Alarm, Blizzard Way; Lost Property, Salls Rd.; Abandoned Vehicle, School Cir.; Citizen Dispute, Church St.; Assist - Motorist, Vt. Route 16; 911 Hangup, Town Farm Rd.; Trespassing, Vt. Route 15 W.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.

January 1: Assist - Motorist, Vt. Route 15 E.; Missing Person, Vt. Route 16; Suspicious Event, Elm St.; Intoxication, Mill St.

January 2: Welfare Check, The Lane; Parking Problem, Mackville Rd.; Assist - Agency, Vt. Route 14 S.; Assist - Public, Cabot Rd.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.; Trespassing, Spring St.; Assist - Agency, Spring St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.

January 3: Parking Problem, Marshall St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Welfare Check, Mackville Rd.; Welfare Check, Bridgman Hill Rd.

January 4: Custodial Dispute, Elm St.; Assist - Motorist, Wolcott St.; Medical, E. Church St.

Vermont State Police

DUI, Home improvement fraud

MARSHFIELD - On December 30, at 10:30 a.m., troopers of the Berlin Barracks were meeting with Kevin Hudson, of Peacham, outside the Marshfield Town Clerk's Office for a matter unrelated to this case. While speaking with Hudson, troopers observed signs of impairment and established that he had driven to that location shortly prior. Hudson was subsequently arrested for suspicion of DUI. He was later released with a citation to appear in the Washington County Superior Court, Criminal Division, January 15, at 8:30 a.m.

PLAINFIELD – On November 30, at 2:57 p.m., troopers received a report of a possible home improvement fraud in Plainfield. Subsequent investigation indicated Melina Vieux paid Jesse Reeder approximately \$9,000 for a home renovation project. The



Kevin Hudson

project was started, but Reeder failed to finish the project or refund Melinda's money.

On January 3, Reeder was issued a citation to appear in the Washington County Superior Court; Criminal Division for the above charge.



Cabot firefighters responded on January 1 to a single motor vehicle accident on Vt. Rte. 215 just after 7:30 a.m. There were no injuries. Mutual aid partners Marshfield and Walden were canceled en route. The road was temporarily reduced to one lane of traffic and was reopened by 8:30 a.m.

photo from social media



The Greensboro Fire Department responded with mutual aid to Halsey Lane in Glover on December 29, at 10:04 a.m., for a structure fire. Freezing rain created difficult road conditions for responding units from Orleans Fire Department, Glover Volunteer Fire Department, Albany Volunteer Fire Department and Irasburg Fire Department.

photo by Orleans Fire Department

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Changes to inspection stickers effective 2026

MONTPELIER – The state continues the modernization of its Automated Vehicle Inspection Program (AVIP) so efficiency can be increased, as well as protecting the safety of Vermont’s roads and the cleanliness of the air. The Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has had input from the law enforcement community and has taken steps to respond to other feedback about the inspection stickers issued for all light and heavy-duty vehicles. DMV redesigned the inspection stickers

based on this feedback.

Changes include enlarged numeric expiration dates to enhance visibility and removal of the QC Code to increase the numeric size.

For any questions or concerns, contact an area DMV inspector or the Enforcement & Safety Office at (802) 828-2067 during normal business hours. A map of regions served by DMV inspectors along with contact information can be found at dmv.vermont.gov/document/dmv-inspector-map.

Potential priority projects proposed, board budgets

by **Raymonda Parchment**

WOODBURY – The select board capped off the year with a number of updates, at its December 22, regular meeting, beginning with Dan Koenemann of the Winoski Natural Resources Conservation District sharing a spreadsheet that highlighted priority projects for potential improvement of water quality in Sabin Pond (Woodbury Lake).

Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD) president Retta Dunlap was present to request the board consider a crosswalk, as well as traffic warning lights in the village, to allow WVFD members and town residents to cross Vt. Route 14 safely when arriving at the fire station. The discussion continued for some time, with board members agreeing to discuss funding sources with the VTrans District 6 Manager.

Town Clerk Robin Durkee reported it has been quiet in the town offices, as she works on the town report. She said the new furnace at the town office has been fixed. The problem with it was due to a build-up of condensation.

Road Commissioner Alfred Larabee said the crew has been focused on snow plowing. Interviews continue with applicants for the third full-time road crew position.

In other business, John

Gordon was present to share the status of FEMA buyouts in the village.

Durkee reported the water to the town hall has been shut off, and will be turned back on for the monthly potluck suppers.

At its first 2026 meeting, January 5, to continue budget talks that began in early December, Town Treasurer Lilly Baron provided updated copies of the latest 2027 budget.

The board then examined every expense line by line, declining a proposal to eliminate most of the stipends and small payment amounts for the list of elected and appointed officials.

A unanimous board vote to increase by 3% all wages paid to employees and elected officials. The culvert budget was increased from \$15,000 to \$30,000, based on the realization that the town may not be able to utilize more of the “excess” FEMA funds. The Outside Services budget in the Highway Fund was increased by \$10,000 to pay for engineering for two large culvert replacements. \$75,000 has been budgeted as a match for the Valley Lake Road culvert project. This will be a VTrans grant project but the grant amount is limited to \$200,000. The estimated cost of the project was \$275,000. The engineering was already completed and paid for by a grant in a prior year.

POLICE REPORT



The Hardwick Fire Department responded on December 28 at 4:13 p.m. to a single motor vehicle accident on Vt. Rte. 16 in East Hardwick. Engine 1 and nine members responded. All personnel and equipment were clear and returning in approximately one hour. photo from social media

DUI, car crashes

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Police Department responded to Vt. Route 16 for a report of a single vehicle crash on December 28, at 4:11 p.m. The operator, Jesse Wisner of Greensboro, was traveling north in his 2020 Jeep Grand Cherokee when he lost control of his motor vehicle. Wisner went off the roadway causing damage to his vehicle. Wisner sustained minor injuries. Hardwick Fire and Rescue also responded to the scene.

On December 30, Paul Renaud of Hardwick reported a theft from his barn on Renaud Road. Renaud recently noticed his ice fishing gear, that was stored in a black Jet Sled, missing from his barn. Some of the gear had his initials on it. Anyone with any information is asked to contact the Hardwick Police Department.

On January 5 at approximately 3:46 p.m., the Hardwick Police Department received a report of a single vehicle crash on Route 15 East. The call came from On-Star. The investigation revealed Bradley Biron of Cabot was operating a 2013 Toyota 4-Runner east on Route 15. As the vehicle finished rounding the right curve in the roadway, the rear of the vehicle broke traction to the left. The vehicle slid sideways across the westbound lane and off the roadway where it rolled 360 degrees. Biron was uninjured in the crash. Biron was processed for DUI at the Hardwick Police Department. He was released on citation to appear in Caledonia Superior Court: Criminal Division on January 23 for the charge of DUI.

On Monday, Dec. 29, at 11:52 a.m., Hardwick Police responded to a single vehicle rollover crash on Center Road in Hardwick. Harvey Xia of Massachusetts was traveling west on Center Road in his 2015 Subaru Forester. Xia lost

control of his vehicle on the slippery road surface. Xia’s vehicle slid sideways across the eastbound lane and off the roadway. The vehicle barrel rolled and landed on its driver’s side. Xia and his passenger were wearing their seat belts and all of the airbags deployed in the vehicle. Xia and his passenger were uninjured in the crash; however, the vehicle was totaled.

On December 30, at 12:17 p.m., Hardwick Police responded to a multiple vehicle crash on Route 15 W in Hardwick. The investigation revealed that Gaylon McArthur of Hyde Park was traveling east on Route 15 in his 2022 Ford Escape. Alissa Harvey of Walden was following McArthur in her Ford F-150 and Cody Smith of Waterbury was following Harvey in his 2001 Toyota Tacoma truck. McArthur activated his left turn signal and slowed to make a left turn into the residential driveway of 944. As McArthur made the left turn, Harvey stopped and noticed Smith’s vehicle coming up behind her too fast to stop. Harvey steered to the right and Smith passed her vehicle on the left striking McArthur’s vehicle. This spun McArthur’s vehicle off the roadway. Michael McGlynn of Woodbury was traveling west on Route 15 in his Ford F250. Smith’s vehicle struck the rear of McGlynn’s vehicle. Harvey’s vehicle was not struck by any of the other vehicles. There were no injuries in this crash and damage to the vehicles was minor.

On January 5, at approximately 2:39 p.m., Hardwick Police were advised of a person at the Quick Stop known to have a warrant. Casandra Rich was located at this location and taken into custody without incident. She was lodged at Northeast Regional Correctional Facility.



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Rallies

Continued From Page One
person the courage to come out.”

Ed Sunday-Winters, pastor at the Greensboro United Church of Christ, was introduced as a speaker by organizer Jan Mueller, who said, “He’s a heck of a guy and a lover of peace.”

Sunday-Winters said, “I don’t know what to say and I’ve felt this way for the better part of the past year.”

“I have just one word today: Together,” he said.

“And us together: The power of us together and not letting others convince us we didn’t see what we know we saw.”

“We must believe we can be better than we are.

“And insist on it,” he said in conclusion.

An ICE agent shot and killed the U.S. citizen and legal observer Renee Nicole Good in Minneapolis last week as she attempted to turn her car around to leave the scene after reassuring masked agents that she meant no trouble. In hundreds of events last weekend, people around the country responded in the face of the act of violence, raising their signs and voices in protest against the federal government’s aggression. From Burlington to Bennington, Vermonters participated in more than 29 individual actions, including vigils, marches and honk and waves, to demand accountability for Renee Nicole Good and an end to ICE.

Arlene Averill said, “It’s going to have to get a lot more intense.”

In between chants of “ICE out for good” at the Hardwick rally, Melissa Jordan reported more than 60 people had been at a Morristown rally that morning.

She said she’s been very



Rallygoers at an “ICE Out for Good” rally in Hardwick line the west side of South Main Street from the driveway in front of Mike’s Service Center to the pedestrian bridge, Saturday, January 10, as they demand accountability for the killing of Renee Nicole Good last week in Minneapolis. photo by Paul Fixx

depressed the last few months, but this event and others before it help to break the isolation she and others have been feeling.

In Montpelier, the 5 p.m. Saturday vigil originally planned for 50 to 100 participants at City Hall was moved to the Vermont Statehouse lawn when sign-ups and word of mouth led organizers to expect 500 or more to join. Ross Connelly, who joined the event from Hardwick, estimated between 500 and 1,000 people were on hand for that evening’s vigil.

50501 Vermont, which serves as an umbrella organization for Vermont activism, collected information for 33 Vermont events across the state.

ICE Out for Good was a nationwide mass mobilization organized by a broad national coalition, including Indivisible, MoveOn Civic Action, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Voto Latino, United We Dream, 50501, the Disappeared in America Campaign of the Not Above the Law coalition, and partner organizations. across the country, is calling for

a coordinated ICE Out For Good Weekend of Action on Saturday, January 10, and Sunday, January 11.’

Indivisible groups in Hardwick, Woodbury and an Onion River group in Plainfield are listed at the indivisible.org website.



Hardwick’s Ross Connelly, attending the Ice Out for Good vigil Saturday at 5 p.m. with Walden Louie Pulver said they estimated between 500 and 1,000 had attended the event billed by organizers as a “peaceful vigil to Honor Renee Good and to get ICE out of Vermont,”

photo by Ross Connelly



At the regular Thursday afternoon Hardwick Peace Vigil, January 8, (from left) Woodbury’s Teresa Lay-Sleeper joins Hardwick’s Mary Gagnon and Kathleen Sampson, calling attention to peaceful ways to address national and international conflicts.. photo by Paul Fixx



Organizer Jan Mueller (front left) watches traffic on South Main Street in Hardwick, while Rachel Cole (front right) speaks to the crowd at the “ICE Out for Good” rally across the street. From left Greensboro’s Judy Carpenter, Woodbury’s Ellie Hayes and Greensboro Pastor Ed Sunday-Winter look on. Cole shared plans for legislation to regulate ICE activities in Vermont.

photo by Paul Fixx

Town plan adopted, fire department active

YEAR IN REVIEW

by Paul Fixx

WALDEN - in 2025 Walden's story was about voters adopting a long-awaited town plan, volunteers answering fire calls, students graduating and neighbors gathering for events and meetings.

With snow on the ground in January, Town Clerk and Treasurer Debbie Messier prepared election materials and financial reports, while the Walden Select Board planned its early-year agenda. Community listings in The Hardwick Gazette reflected the season's slower pace, with library hours and church gatherings planned.

At its February 10 meeting, the select board reviewed road conditions, committee appointments

and inter-town school matters, including continued involvement with the Rural Community Schools Alliance.

At the March 6 Town Meeting Day, Walden voters approved both the general and highway budgets and adopted the town's first official town plan.

The plan's passage was years in the making, offering Walden a formal framework for land use, housing and infrastructure. Voters re-elected Debbie Messier as town clerk and treasurer and returned Heather Thompson to the select board. Town meeting reflected what one observer described as "a clear commitment to local control and long-term planning."

In April, road maintenance dominated select board discussion, alongside appointments and emergency planning. The board approved updates to Walden's

Local Emergency Management Plan, aligning the town with state standards and regional response networks.

May blended governance with public safety. The select board approved roadside mowing contracts and maintenance work for town buildings, while continuing discussions around broadband infrastructure and grant funding.

A Vermont State Police report of a two-vehicle crash on Route 15 drew a response from the Walden Volunteer Fire Department.

June brought both fiscal scrutiny and celebration. At its June 2 meeting, the select board reviewed budget pressures, FEMA reimbursements tied to past storm damage and a Better Roads grant for guardrail and infrastructure improvements.

Walden's eighth-grade graduation ceremony marked the transition to middle school.

Summer governance continued with a late-July select board meeting focused on roads, tax bills and seasonal maintenance. The town's calendar filled with regional events, recreation and informal gatherings, noted in The Gazette's calendar listings.

The Walden Fire Department remained active, responding to

motor vehicle incidents.

Fire department responses continued in August, including mutual aid calls with neighboring towns.

A Walden United Methodist Church benefit dinner brought an end to summer

An Army National Guard veteran received a free Kubota tractor through the company's Geared to Give program.

October was Walden's most visible month in Vermont news, with the Walden Town Report winning a Vermont League of Cities and Towns award for communities under 1,000 residents.

A report on the possible closure of Danville High School examined how proposed changes in regional school governance could affect Walden students' secondary school choices.

The history of the Walden Community Library, highlighted its 130 years of service to the community in a story by Sandy Scotts.

November passed uneventfully, with winter weather setting in early.

December brought holiday events and emergency responses, with the Walden Fire Department participating in regional mutual-aid calls.

Merger

Continued From Page One

separation was voluntary. She was to be on paid leave through the end of 2025.

The total severance package awarded to Braese amounts to \$111,152.66.

That amount covers final paychecks of \$3,082.53 and \$14,865.02 to cover the remainder of 2025 and compensation for 169.19 hours of accrued time off at an hourly rate of \$76.92 based on her annual salary of \$160,000.

Additional severance pay of \$73,333.33 is to be paid through the normal payroll cycle from December 15, 2025, through May 31, 2026.

HED agreed to pay the insurance company \$18,371.78 for her continuing COBRA medical benefits and pay her \$1,500 to cover the cost of her dental and vision insurance through June 30, 2026.

A non-disparagement clause in the agreement restricts the Town of Hardwick, HED staff and Braese herself, from making any negative statements about the other party to the agreement which might harm its reputation.

The agreement with MW&L notes, "When representing HED Scott will identify as the HED General Manager so that customers and staff in HED service territory will understand they are speaking to HED representation."

Details of the compensation being paid to MW&L for Scott's management services is not shown in the agreement. It simply indicates Scott's salary, plus benefits, has been increased by 20% as he takes on the additional oversight of HED. Scott's total compensation is to be split equally between HED and MW&L, with HED to be invoiced regularly by MW&L.

The HED vehicle previously used by Braese will be available to Johnstone, with HED covering all costs associated with its use.

The agreement with MW&L indicates little about what a process of exploring an HED merger might look like, indicating only that it might take six months.

A sentence does however, suggest the merger is not the only possible result of Johnstone's coming on board at HED. "Should merger be removed as an option, then Scott will continue to assist HED while it determines future leadership of the organization."

At its December 16 meeting, commissioners agreed to work closely with Greensboro and the Town of Hardwick to explore options for the Caspian Lake dam. They decided to ask the Hardwick Select Board to approve an increase in the HED credit line from \$300,000 to \$575,000 to meet increased needs of the department. An additional loan of \$325,000 for a new bucket truck was approved with a plan to submit that too to the Hardwick Select Board for approval.

Prices shown valid 01/16 - 01/22
Member-owner deals valid 01/01-01/31 While supplies last



BUFFALO MOUNTAIN MARKET

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Weekly Highlights

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

 2/\$3 Bunnie Mac and Cheese <small>Annie's, 6 oz</small>	 2/\$7 Classic Round Crackers <small>Back to Nature, 6.5 oz</small>	 \$3.99 Kitchen Waste Bags <small>Biobag, compostable, 13 gallon</small>	 \$3.49 Instant Oatmeal <small>Quaker, varieties, 9.3 oz</small>
 2/\$5 Cheese Slices & Cuts <small>Cabot, varieties, 7.5 oz</small>	 \$7.99 Ground Coffee Varieties <small>Green Mountain Coffee, 10 - 12 oz</small>	 \$7.29 Gluten Free Rolled Oats <small>Bob's Red Mill, 32 oz</small>	 \$5.49 Chicken Curry <small>Deep Indian Kitchen, 9 oz</small>
 \$11.99 Ground Coffee <small>Equal Exchange, varieties, 12 oz</small>	 2/\$7 Organic Tea Bags <small>Equal Exchange, varieties, 105 oz</small>	 \$3.99 Salsa <small>Green Mtn Gringo, 16 oz</small>	 \$7.99 Celebration Roast <small>Field Roast, 16 oz</small>
 \$1.00 Organic Seaweed Snack <small>Gimme, 14 oz</small>	 2/\$5 Energy Bars <small>GoMacro, varieties, 24 oz</small>	 2/\$7 Tortilla Strips Varieties <small>Green Mountain Gringo, 8 oz</small>	 \$3.99 Hummus <small>Ithaca, varieties, 10 oz</small>

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

 \$7.99 Marinara Sensitive Pasta Sauce <small>Fody, varieties, 19.4 oz</small>	 \$4.99 Chicken Soup Varieties <small>Zoup, varieties, 16 oz</small>	 10% off Cat Food Varieties <small>Fancy Feast, varieties, 3 oz</small>	 10% off Granola <small>Twin Pine, varieties, 16 oz</small>
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World Cow mural in tribute to Lauris Chamberlain

by Rachel Amster

BRISTOL – What started off as stencils sketched by D.J. Barry turned into murals of cows popping up in over 50 countries, the largest being 66 feet wide and 44 feet tall in Washington.

One of these murals, a 16 feet by 10.5 feet black and white cow, is plastered on the side of the newly-renovated Cubbers Restaurant in Bristol.

Bristol resident D.J. Barry started his non-profit organization, Cows for a Cause, back in 2015.

Barry was driving by cows in Craftsbury one afternoon and decided to take some photos.

He turned the digital pictures into stencils of one particular cow and started traveling around Vermont.

Often dressed in a cow costume, he would sell his art at various fundraising events. Half of his art sales were donated to local charities, like ANEW Place in Burlington and Central Vermont's Relay For Life.

Barry said an "ah-ha moment" for his organization was when one of his family members came up with the phrase, "We're all spots on the same cow." In 2016, he painted his first 20-foot World Cow mural in Middlesex near Rumney Elementary School, where he had attended more than 20 years before.

"The world is something that is a public domain," Barry said. "We're trying to unite everyone . . . People getting behind World Cow are getting behind the idea that we can all come together."

Social media played a large role in growing the herd internationally. Barry sent a set of stencils to an artist in Greece. German artist JPS painted one with the hashtag, #worldcow. He later

challenged an artist in Russia to paint one.

Barry said when the Cows for a Cause "campaign eventually turned into World Cow at the end of 2015, (they) started fundraising and making contributions to charities in other countries."

On September 1, a new World Cow mural was unveiled back where it all started for D.J. Barry: Vermont.

The mural is on Cubbers Restaurant in Bristol, where D.J. Barry's wife, Jen, is from, and where the two of them currently live.

Cubbers Restaurant is family-owned and has been a local landmark since 1975, with the current owners being Ben Chamberlain and Andrew Smith.

This past July, Cubbers Restaurant was renovated, or "got a facelift" as Barry said.

The inside of the restaurant was renovated during the pandemic when people weren't eating in the dining room.

"We took out a bunch of the booths and the soda fountain and added in all these really nice, handmade wooden tables and chairs," Juniper Smith, Andrew Smith's daughter, said. "And then we kind of wanted the outside to match that a little bit."

The outdoor renovations started last spring and ended recently.

"It was structural. There was rotten wood that needed to be replaced," Juniper Smith said.

The changes to Cubbers took place while they were still open.

"I think ultimately, it just needed a little bit of love, and it's looked the same way for forever," Juniper Smith said. "It was nice to be able to give it a little remodel too and make it look bright and shiny."

The original World Cow



The field of flowers in which Hardwick's World Cow on the side of a tool shed at Atkins Field is standing, was painted August 11, 2023 by a different child from the Hardwick community, while Rural Arts Collaborative showed everyone who stopped by the art of stenciling. photo by Paul Fixx

mural on their restaurant was taken down in the process.

"It was our favorite mural, still is actually," Barry said.

The mural was put up in honor of Lauris Chamberlain, Ben Chamberlain's late wife, who passed away in March 2023.

"It is a wonderful tribute to Lauris," Chamberlain said. "She deserves all the memories she can get. She did a lot for the community and is very much missed."

"For the community, it is a great thing," he said later. "When the mural was taken down, people would constantly ask when it was going to be put back up."

"Some people kind of came together to raise money for it," Juniper Smith said. "She loved

cows and peace and harmony."

Now that the mural is back up, it "does attract people," Juniper Smith said. "I see people standing there and taking photos with it, too."

Barry said painting has become his outlet of relaxation, and he never imagined the World Cow reaching the scale it did.

"It feels really good," he said. "But I also stay focused on continued growth. I want it to grow more so that the message grows further."

"Imagine a million little world cows," he added.

Rachel Amster reports for the Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship.



Prince Moyo in Maun, Botswana.

photo courtesy D.J. Barry



Michelle and Aaron Simmons posing with the World Cow in Bristol.

photo courtesy Lila Simmons

**The
Hardwick
Gazette**

**PEOPLE
SERVING
PEOPLE**

Cabot Village 12th Night Celebration



April Hill of Woodbury helps her grandson Winter Hadaya, 3, decorate a lantern during a workshop held in the United Church hall during Cabot's 12th Night Celebration.



One of 12 different events featured during the Cabot 12th Night Celebration was Native American storyteller HearsCrow who lives in the Narragansett tradition in Castleton. Her stories bring the longhouse traditions alive.



Jana Zeller, second-generation puppeteer of Sandglass Theater in Putney performs a 50 minute Punschi show January 3 in the Willey Building auditorium during the Cabot 12th Night Celebration. Twelve different events were featured in four different venues throughout the village including storytelling, theatre, dance and concerts. The festival is supported in part by the Vermont Arts Council and the Cabot Community.



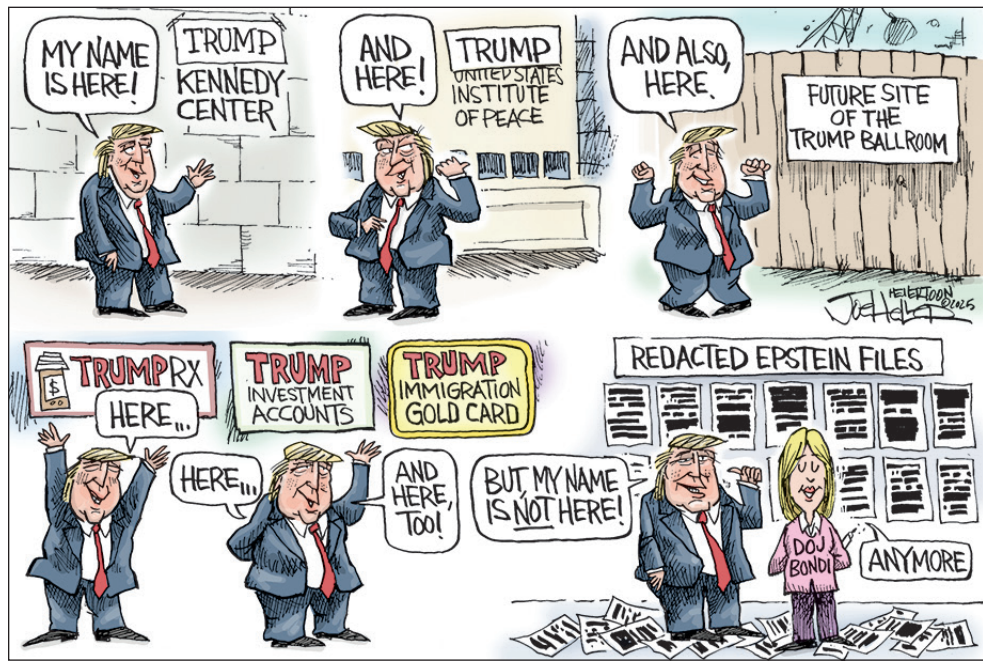
Becky Tracy and Keith Murphy of Brattleboro play traditional French and Celtic music in the Cabot Church sanctuary during the 7th annual Cabot 12th Night Celebration, January 3.



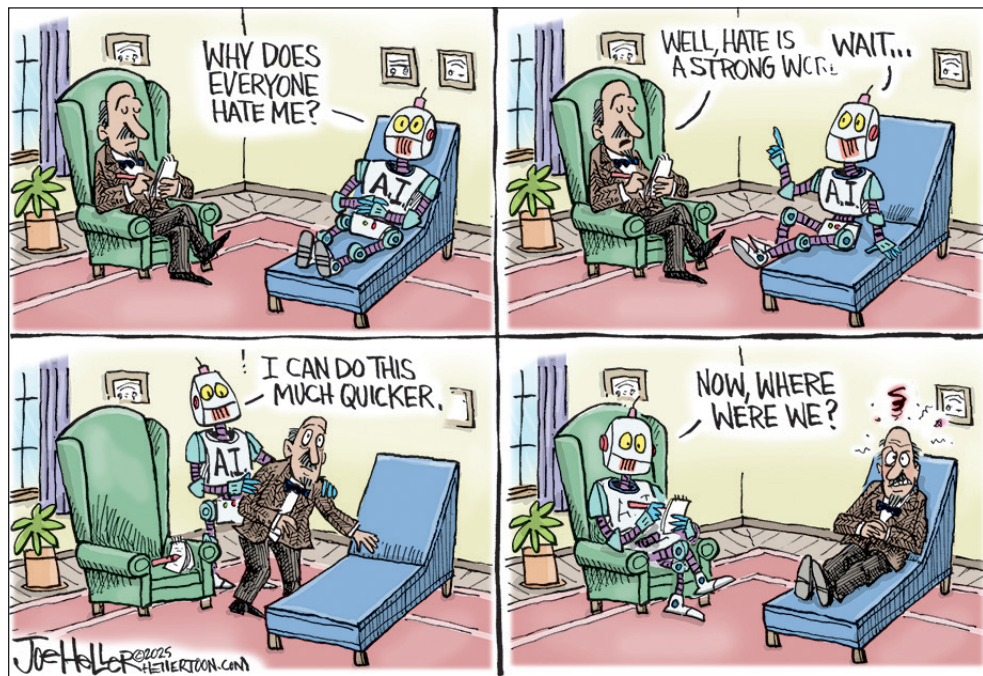
Melissa Pratt of Cabot works on decorating her paper lantern for the sunset lantern parade held around the village common in celebration of Cabot's 12th Night.

**Photos
by
Vanessa
Fournier**

Heller's World by Joe Heller



Heller's World by Joe Heller



LETTERS FROM READERS

The best

To the editor:
 Jerry Schneider's story ("Fiction: Northern Star," The Hardwick Gazette, December 24, 2025, hardwick-gazette.org/2025/12/23/northern-star-1970/) was the best! Great paper through and through.
Olive Ylin Hardwick

Thoughts on equity in government

To the editor:
 Last Thursday, in a discussion of this year's proposed \$4.7 million town budget that lasted over an hour, the select board spent 30 minutes debating whether to eliminate a \$1,500 allocation to the Equity Committee.

The claim that our government "shouldn't be legislating equity" was repeated several times, and ultimately the board reached a compromise to cut the committee's funding to \$500. Equity is not optional in government, it's an obligation. The Fourteenth Amendment compels local government to guarantee for every person the "equal protection of the laws." While the Constitution does not require us to have or fund an Equity Committee, I was concerned by the ideological argument that was made to defund and potentially dissolve it. The town budget is set to rise by over 7% this year, with or without the Equity Committee appropriation. This line item represents just 0.03% of the total budget and did not increase at all year over

year.
 At one point a board member described the Equity Committee's work as "performative." If the goals of the committee are unclear or misaligned, that should certainly be addressed, as it would be with any committee. But spending half the budget review on one of the smallest line items is clearly disproportionate, performative, even.

That time could have been better spent finding meaningful ways to bring costs down for taxpayers.
 The highlight of this discussion was when all select board members seemed to agree about concrete equity issues in our town that need addressing. These included ADA accessibility in pedestrian infrastructure and more equitable billing for utilities.

I hope that we can keep perspective, focus our time and energy wisely, and continue to prioritize equity for every person in Hardwick.

**Joe Nudell
 Hardwick**

OUR E-MAILS

news@hardwickgazette.org
 ads@hardwickgazette.org

For the record:

The first paragraph of the December 24 story, "Superior Court orders bail hearing for murder suspect," should have read "The Vermont Supreme Court has ordered a lower, trial court to hold a bail hearing and establish conditions for the release of a Morrisville man held without bail since his August arrest."

THE Hardwick Gazette

Since 1889

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

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

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

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

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YANKEE NOTEBOOK

Miles were already adding up

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – Normally, when I thread the stop-and-go traffic of Lynn, break out at last into seven breakneck miles of I-95, and then merge into the rocket-propelled caravan of I-93, headed for New Hampshire and Vermont, it's with a feeling of regret. I'm leaving a lovely weekend behind, and heading back to a lonely existence (albeit one enlivened by the constant presence of Kiki, around my feet, in my lap, or watching me from her chair) and the normal obligations of an elderly homeowner.

This past Sunday, though, I found myself driving without looking over my shoulder

regretfully. Yes, it would be a couple of weeks before I'd see Bea again, discuss the day's news with the Times spread out on the kitchen table, or chat quietly after supper, she with her mug of tea and I with my demitasse of espresso. But this time my home in Vermont seemed less a dark, empty house and more like a hobbit hole.

Truth is, I was kind of worn down by the holidays. They started on December 20 with my fiftieth and last reading of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" in Hanover. That was followed by a night at the Inn and breakfast at Lou's (an ancient pleasure) with my son and one granddaughter, who'd flown all the way from Arkansas for the swansong. The very next day, leaving Kiki with the house-sitter, I was off to Nahant for the night, before a morning flight out of Logan for Arkansas. I was delighted to be driving Batty, a small hybrid, but the miles were already adding up.

Arkansas was a crowded round of present-openings, big family dinners, old movies on Netflix, and an epic journey to Missouri to look at an old car I was interested in. I wrote about that last week. I didn't buy the car, which caused some regret, but saved a world of complications.

We got back to Boston from Arkansas late in the evening of December 27, and the next morning I was off to Vermont for a day, to do laundry, get a haircut, and write a newspaper column. On December 31, we left Vermont (Kiki was with me this time, to her apparent delight) early enough to drive to Concord, Mass., that afternoon for New Year's Eve with friends of Bea's of long standing. Great conversation, and we all stayed awake long enough to make a champagne toast at midnight.

We started the new year with a leisurely breakfast and more conversation. Then it was off again to Nahant through relatively light traffic. It's always amazed me that people can drive in that traffic every day as a matter of course. Hundreds of us – even thousands – all stream side by side, headed at relatively high speeds for individual destinations, and

everyone seems to want to get there first. Bea does our driving in the city, but I do my bit with my right foot on an imaginary brake pedal.

We were at it again next morning, with a trip to the Museum of Fine Arts for a Winslow Homer show. He's probably my favorite artist; three prints of his Adirondack paintings hang here in my office, and a guide boat, painted to match one of his most famous, "The Blue Boat," sits in my barn. So that was a trip down Memory Lane, which I took in a wheelchair, courtesy of Bea, who tried hard in the crowded, darkened rooms (watercolors are delicate) not to whack other art lovers in the shins with the foot rests.

Afterward, lunch in a cafeteria (I think there were three, all full) and back into Boston traffic for the run to the foot of the causeway out to the island of Nahant. We'd left Kiki for about six hours. In the manner of dogs, who don't seem to get upset about anything past, she acted delighted to see us. There followed a nap (an increasingly popular habit of mine), a quiet supper nearby (they served me a bulky roll which will last me here at home till Wednesday), and tea and espresso.

Saturday was a day of rest. We drove our cars one at a time to the car wash, run by a guy who was probably a retired Boston cop, and got them sudsed clean. Home again. A bit of Canadian Mist saw me through to supper with a couple of good friends at the local seafood restaurant, where we can look out the windows at the reflections of the shore lights on the tide flats.

Sunday morning was the usual sweet sorrow. Kiki snuggled quickly into her bed in the back seat. I followed the route that's now becoming second nature. They say nothing happens in Vermont. As I pointed Batty toward home, I fervently hoped so.

MEETING MEMO

Tuesday, January 13

Hardwick Energy Committee, 6 p.m., Hardwick Memorial Building, 20 Church St., 1st Floor. Information: Bill at (802) 249-6004, Energy.CoordinatorHardwickVT.org.

Wednesday, January 14

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

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

Thursday, January 15

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

Tuesday, January 20

Hazen Union Board Meeting, 6 - 8 p.m.

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

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

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

otherwise warned.

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

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

Wednesday, January 21

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

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

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

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



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LETTERS FROM READERS

Knotweed challenges

To the editor:

Elinor Osborn's article on behalf of Craftsbury Conservation Commission is an excellent description of the challenges we face in tackling invasive Knotweed and the importance of doing so to protect native environments and pollinators.

The Greensboro Conservation Commission (GCC) has discussed and collaborated with a number of neighbouring towns (Craftsbury among them) as we work to tackle the knotweed challenge. We all agree that manual methods DO work provided you can access the right amount of labor over the right amount of time (often a decade). Elinor notes almost 1000 hours of volunteer time on just that one patch of knotweed in Craftsbury in 2024 and 2025 alone. That level of volunteer work is hugely challenging to organize and sustain across multiple patches of Knotweed over multiple years and prohibitively expensive to employ anyone to address.

Glyphosate does not cause cancer in humans

To the editor:

I have sympathy for anyone with cancer and realize many people are looking for a reason as to what caused it, but Roundup (glyphosate) is certainly not the reason.

Nancy Riege suggests in her letter to the Hardwick Gazette that her mother's non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) could have been caused by her use of Roundup in the 1960s and 1970s. However, most of this time-frame predates the introduction of Roundup, first marketed in 1974, with dramatic increase in use only after 1995.

There are many contradictory conclusions as to whether Roundup causes cancer. The most frequently cited source is IARC, an agency within the World Health Organization (WHO), which concluded that glyphosate is a probable cause of cancer. IARC's conclusion was based on an assessment of hazard: could glyphosate cause cancer at some dose and schedule, but according to IARC, almost everything causes cancer. They did not consider risk which also assesses likely exposure. For example, IARC (and the referenced Panzacchi et al paper from 2025) fed rats glyphosate daily for up to two years. This is a life-time exposure for rats and is far beyond that for a person using glyphosate for a few days around the garden or to kill Japanese knotweed, and hopefully consuming none. Furthermore,

Craftsbury's experience with herbicide in 2018 is certainly one we have taken into account. That said, it is one data point. When Elinor and I visited with the Mad River group (Waitsfield-Warren-Fayston) I was also impressed by the ongoing multi-year manual effort and the impact it was having. Some volunteers were spending multiple days a week throughout the summer on the task. That said, in response to my specific questions on the use of herbicide the group we were with were clear that, notwithstanding the success they were having with manual methods after many years of work, they saw herbicide as part of the long-term solution to the challenge in combination with other techniques.

That is also the experience of other neighbouring towns, including Hyde Park that Elinor mentions. It's not necessarily one solution versus another that works. For example herbicide can be used in year 1 to weaken the root structure and then make

IARC classified glyphosate as a Class 2A carcinogen along with red meat, hot beverages and many common medicines, and less hazardous than bacon, salted fish, oral contraceptives and wine, among many examples.

The critical question is whether glyphosate has caused cancer in humans. The American Cancer Society provides excellent statistics. NHL is a common cancer, with a lifetime risk of 1/50. There are more than 80,000 cases in the USA each year. This incidence has not changed since the introduction of Roundup (apart from a slight increase before 1990 attributed to HIV). There has been no further increase and even a decline since 2010.

If glyphosate caused NHL, its incidence would have increased following exposure, plus some lag time. For comparison, there is well-recognized 20-year lag between smoking tobacco and the incidence of lung cancer. No such increase in NHL has occurred.

IARC's conclusion contradicts three other WHO agencies as well as the EPA and regulatory agencies in the many other countries who did independent evaluation of the available data. To believe that glyphosate causes cancer, one would have to believe in a coordinated world-wide conspiracy involving all these agencies.

**Alan Eastman
Groton**

subsequent years of manual management fewer to get to the desired outcome of a native habitat where a knotweed monoculture existed before.

The GCC are not in any way advocating the widespread use of glyphosate in agriculture nor for residential use or sale. We voted last year solely to conduct two small stem-injection projects in Greensboro in the Fall of 2026 as an integral part of our ongoing manual efforts to help our community combat the knotweed threat so it does not become overwhelming as it has done so visibly in Morrisville and Stowe for example.

Meanwhile, at our meeting just passed on Saturday 10th

Dependable service every day

To the editor:

As we turn the page on the holidays, I appreciate customers in Wolcott for the patience, kindness and support they showed the local postal service team during the busiest mailing and shipping season of the year.

Carriers, clerks and plant teams worked hard to keep mail and packages moving for families, small businesses and neighbors who rely on us. Behind every delivery is a local employee who lives here, shops here and cares about getting it right.

I cannot support the Mountainview budget

To the editor:

I'm really feeling like the Mountainview Elementary Union School Board is throwing money away. They have already paid \$15,000 for an analysis of the Woodbury Elementary School fire escape. If they go forward, the cost of an architect could be around \$50,000, with the rebuilding of the fire escape costing around \$400,000.

We have been told that the budget they adopted does not include monies for any of the fire escape repairs. So they have spent \$15,000 not having a clue where funds will come from for the rest of the costs to actually get the project done.

How is this being fiscally responsible? Stop wasting taxpayers money.

How can the school even operate if the fire escape is not up to code and there, as far as taxpayers are being told, is no money budgeted for the repair? Is that not a safety issue?

Then let's talk about the water issue that has been going on for years. How much money

January we discussed the recent withdrawal of the 2000 glyphosate study published in Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology and agreed to remain alert to any change in guidance re herbicide and invasive plant management from the EPA and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation that may result and also agreed to invite additional expert speakers to our next public meeting in March. We are also looking at potential solutions to help us build a larger more engaged community volunteer group to help us with our manual efforts.

**Chris Steel, chair
Greensboro
Conservation Commission**

Now that the holiday rush is behind us, our focus is simple: steady, dependable service every day along with continued improvements that help us handle today's mix of letters and packages more efficiently.

If you had a great experience with your local Post Office this season, I hope you'll share it with our team. And if we missed the mark, please let us know so we can keep improving at usps.com.

**Sherry Cowles
Postmaster
Wolcott Post Office**

has been spent to purchase water? Again, a safety issue and throwing money away.

The elevator repair cost is around \$100,000, with no money budgeted for the repair.

We have an elementary school in the district where all students can get an education. That school also needs repairs. Maybe, just maybe, if the board would focus on one school to keep up to code then we would have one school that would be safe for all students to attend and less financial burden on taxpayers.

I will be voting no to the MVU budget because I cannot support sending students to a school that is not safe.

I cannot support a budget that would rather keep sinking money into a building we don't need.

I cannot support a budget that cuts direct instruction positions needed in one school to keep another building open that is in horrible shape with no funds to fix it.

Enough is enough.
**Doreen Cota
Hardwick**

ANOTHER OPINION

Buffalo Mountain Town Forest presentation, discussion, Jan. 24

by Rachel Kane

HARDWICK – A presentation and discussion of the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest proposal will be held Saturday, Jan. 24, from 2 to 4 p.m., in the Parker Ladd Room at the Jeudevine Library. Refreshments will be served.

Right now the Town of Hardwick has an exciting opportunity to convert 329 acres on Buffalo Mountain, in the heart of Hardwick, to a community forest owned by the town. This proposal is not an outright purchase by the town, but one in which grants, facilitated by the Trust for Public Land and the Northern Rivers Land Trust, will cover over 95% of the costs.

Once the land is under town ownership, activity and uses on the land would be directed and managed by the town itself, through a stewardship

committee, and the select board. The January 24 presentation will be a review of the project, with full information, and updates of where it is now.

What could happen in a town forest on Buffalo Mountain? While conserved from outright development (for which it is largely unsuitable due to the terrain) there would be many possibilities. These lands also contain some significant ecosystems and species worthy of protection. Existing uses, such as snowmobile and ATV trails, will continue, as will hunting, if the town so wishes.

Some ideas are for mountain biking, back country ski trails and educational nature trails for children.

Could we have a picnic spot overlooking the village, rock climbing, an accessible-trail so that everyone could enjoy some refreshing moments in a forest?

Could there be overnight camping sites, to allow through-riders on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail to spend a night and have dinner in town?

Some areas could be logged, or sugared, to create income.

The residents of Hardwick will be the ones to decide.

In addition to the recreational enjoyment, the conservation of the land will enhance flood resiliency and protect an important wildlife corridor and habitat.

The proposal is underway now, but is not yet finalized. At this time, as the proposal moves ahead, we want to hear from residents, to share ideas and any concerns about the project. There will be a vote on Town Meeting Day about supporting this extraordinary opportunity. Residents who have an interest in serving on the future stewardship committee are invited to attend the meeting.

Surely, the most effective and well-rounded committee will be made up of different voices and priorities, so folks from all interests are invited to get involved.

As Vermont faces increasing development pressure and forest lands are being splintered and broken up, preserving our own Buffalo Mountain for the public will be a permanent and priceless gift to the residents of Hardwick; something that future generations will be thankful for.

Complete information about the proposal can be seen at the Town of Hardwick website, on the page for the Hardwick Conservation Commission, hardwickvt.gov/government/committees-commissions/conservation-commission/

For further information, contact Rachel Kane, co-chair of the Hardwick Conservation Commission at (802) 472-5512.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Weighty issues in the first week

by Sen. Scott Beck

MONTPELIER – Vermonters are justifiably concerned with due process infractions that have persisted for many months, some in Vermont, with many more outside our borders. Continued action by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials has raised important questions about constitutional due process. The Fifth Amendment is clear: “no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.” Senate Republicans believe that any discussion on this issue must begin with a commitment to due process for all individuals, including non-citizens. Regardless of immigration status, every person deserves fair treatment under the law. We applaud those who are passionate about this subject and remind them that all includes law enforcement and government officials. This principle is foundational to our democracy and justice system, and should guide Vermont’s expectations and response to federal actions. If you aren’t for due process for all, you aren’t for due process.

At the same time, Senate Republicans recognize the need for a clear and effective legal immigration process. Current federal policies often subject individuals and communities to uncertainty, creating challenges for employers, families, local and state govern-

ments, and law enforcement. Vermont benefits from a diverse population and workforce, but without a predictable and transparent immigration process, we risk undermining both economic stability and public trust. We support efforts to normalize immigration procedures, so that the many who seek to live and work in Vermont can do so through an efficient legal process that respects human dignity and the rule of law. Our agriculture and tourist industries are particularly sensitive to this issue.

Vermonters need more than due process to be secure; they also need affordability. Our state faces an affordability crisis that is damaging families, seniors and businesses. Rising costs in housing, energy and everyday necessities are compounded by the forecast 12% average increase in education property taxes. This is on top of the five-year 41% increase in education property tax rates that Vermonters have experienced. It represents an unacceptable burden for homeowners, renters and businesses across Vermont. Increasing property taxes are forcing many to consider whether they will be able to remain in Vermont. All Vermont government spending has increased by \$2B since COVID-19, far exceeding inflation and surpassing Vermont’s tax base.

Education is a cornerstone of Vermont’s future and we all

want strong schools. However, we must balance that goal with the reality that taxpayers cannot bear unlimited increases. Another area of concern is the continued allocation of General Fund dollars to provide property tax relief. While this may provide short-term relief, it raises serious questions about long-term fiscal responsibility. The General Fund supports a wide range of programs that directly benefit Vermonters, including public safety and critical services for vulnerable populations. \$75M makes unacceptable property tax increases slightly less unacceptable while jeopardizing our most vulnerable.

It would be far wiser to slow the growth in district education spending, forecast to increase by 6% this year, with an average increase of 5.1% for the last 10 years. Senate Republicans unanimously proposed restricting FY27 spending in May, but were opposed by every Senate Democrat. Now we are in the middle of school board budgeting, which makes restricting spending more difficult, but no less necessary.

We believe Vermonters deserve a government that plans for stability rather than relying

on temporary fixes. Fiscal discipline is not about cutting essential services; it is about ensuring that every dollar is used effectively and that we do not compromise future budgets for short-term solutions. Vermont’s strength lies in its communities and our policies should reflect a commitment to affordability, fairness and sustainability.

These issues are interconnected. Immigration policy affects workforce availability and community stability. Education funding impacts property taxes and affordability. General Fund allocations influence the breadth of services Vermont can provide. As policymakers, our responsibility is to consider these connections and make decisions that strengthen Vermont for the long term.

We invite Vermonters to join us in constructive dialogue on these challenges. By working together across party lines and with respect for differing perspectives, we can craft solutions that uphold our values and meet the needs of all Vermonters.

Senator Scott Beck (R) of St. Johnsbury represents the Caledonia District and is the Senate Republican Leader.

ANOTHER OPINION

First week of legislature busy and consequential

by Rep Leanne Harple

MONTPELIER – I hope you all enjoyed some restful holidays and are off to a rejuvenating new year, filled with renewed energy for making positive change. It's a joy and an honor to be back in the State House. We've officially completed the first week of the new legislative session, and it's clear that this spring will be both busy and extremely consequential.

The House Education Committee has already begun taking testimony on the future of

Act 73. Over the past several days, we've heard from the Vermont Principals' Association, the Vermont School Boards Association, the House-appointed Commission on the Future of Education, Vermont NEA, the Redistricting Task Force, the Secretary of Education, and of course, Governor Phil Scott, during last week's State of the State address. As you might expect, there are strong and differing opinions about the best path forward following the Redistricting Task Force's findings last fall.

As a brief refresher, the Task

Force concluded that forced district consolidation would not achieve the cost savings envisioned when Act 73 passed. Instead, it recommended creating large Cooperative Education Service Areas (CESAs) to share costs in transportation, administration, special education, human services and other collaborative functions. Despite this, the governor, his administration, and some legislators remain focused on completing Act 73 as originally envisioned, including adopting larger district maps. In fact, the governor has stated that he will not sign a budget that does not include a plan for redrawing school districts.

This is the first of many hard conversations of the session, and I, along with my colleagues, remain committed to listening carefully, weighing all options and working with the Senate and the administration to find a responsible path forward. Vermont students deserve the best education we can provide, taxpayers deserve a system that is affordable and makes sense and our rural communities deserve policies that protect our long-term sustainability.

Beyond education, I continue to prioritize legislation that advances housing affordability and overall cost-of-living relief, as well as strong environmental protections, including safeguards for our local lakes and ponds. Additionally, I will be co-sponsoring legislation related to equity, public safety, and due process protections for some of our most vulnerable community members.

I hope that you will reach out to voice your questions, concerns and positions on the bills that come before the House. As always, hearing directly from constituents helps guide this work. You're welcome to reach out by email or join me at my monthly coffee hour on the last Saturday of each month at the Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro.

There are also several upcoming opportunities to connect

with legislators. NEK Legislative Breakfasts sponsored by the North Country Chamber of Commerce will be held monthly. While the full NEK delegation planned to attend the first breakfast, January 12, future sessions will feature one senator and a few legislators to allow for deeper discussion. I'll be presenting on March 16.

NEK at the State House Day takes place Thursday, January 22, hosted by the NEK Collaborative. The day begins at 8 a.m. with coffee in the governor's ceremonial office, followed by committee testimony, time with legislators, advocacy training and an afternoon press conference where I'll be speaking about the importance of rural community schools. This is one of my favorite days at the State House, and I hope you'll consider attending.

In closing, I appreciate everyone who continues to guide this work by sharing their concerns, offering ideas and using their voices to help build a better Vermont. In these unsettling times, talking about politics and speaking up for social justice can feel frightening, sometimes even unsafe, and yet it is more necessary than ever. The death of Renee Nicole Good in Minneapolis this week weighs heavily on my heart, and it is deeply troubling to see how quickly situations can escalate into senseless violence and tragedy. My hope is that those fighting for a better tomorrow stay safe and continue to feel empowered to lead with courage. One of the most meaningful takeaways from this past year, as my network has grown, has been seeing just how much is being done by so many right here in our community, and I am so grateful every day for all of you. Keep using your voices. I am always listening.

Peace in 2026.

Representative Leanne Harple (D) serves Orleans-4 (Albany, Craftsbury, Glover and Greensboro) in the Vermont Legislature.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Emergency management director search begins

To the editor:

I've served as the Plainfield Emergency Management Director for quite a few years, including a break, working with six select boards starting back in 2015 under Rob Bridges.

I told the select board a few months ago that I will resign on May 1, before my 80th birthday in June. I'll be turning my attention back to music, hazard mitigation, media arts and Buddhist activism, which were the core of my life until a decade ago.

I am beginning to look for candidates to take my place.

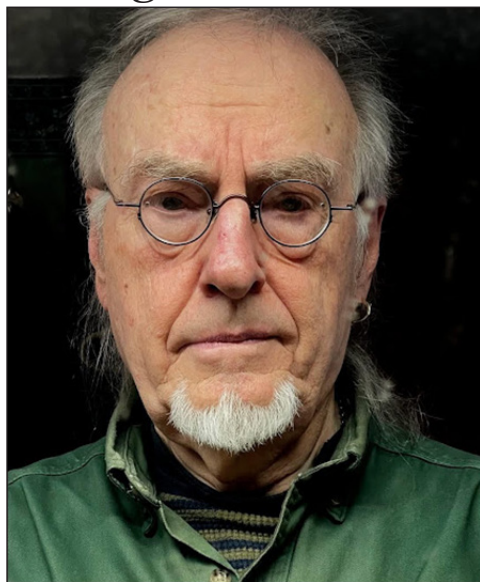
Emergency management is a big job, thankfully shared with others and supported by our select board.

The job is defined by federal and state regulations as part of the FIOPS (Federal Interagency Operational Plans for U.S. disaster preparedness and response).

I will train and mentor any successor with a good heart who can embrace the work and research. State mandated training is included.

The position requires an abiding curiosity, including understanding Plainfield's history of disaster events and the future in flux and deep compassion and empathy for people already harmed by disaster, for those ahead who are in harm's way and a willingness to look for trouble and avert it.

The job also requires the pragmatism to look at tough realities, even those we wish weren't true, and to solve the puzzle of reducing possible harms and good communications and organizing skills, including being able to let the town know what is really going on, finding and encouraging volunteers, making arrangements



Michael Billingsley

for the shelter and other support services (and state resources) that are needed for disaster harm reduction, including immediate collaboration with state emergency management and other agencies.

We will use the next five months to finish up a check list of strategies and resources so Plainfield can better prepare for the next disaster, and improve our resilience and pool of resources (especially for our vulnerable people and schoolchildren).

We have a working office, a staff of two others and an Emergency Operations Center at Town Hall, and a public shelter nearing completion.

The job includes an honorarium and paid expenses.

The EMD does not need to be a resident of Plainfield but must be within immediate driving distance.

Please join us If you have these qualities and are a person with a desire to serve your community.

Contact me with your offer to help by email at plainfieldvt@gmail.com, or call (802) 380-6408.

**Michael Billingsley
Plainfield**




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ANOTHER OPINION

Trump's private standing army

by Robert Hawk

After the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by Trump supporters, the president told them to “Stand down, and stand by”. Those rioters, including the Proud Boys, Oath Keepers and Three Percenters were all later tried and convicted of criminal actions in courts of law by their peers, as required by our Constitution, and many sent to jail or fined.

One of Trump's first executive orders in 2025 was to pardon every one of those insurrectionists, overriding 250 years of judicial law. He unilaterally threw out the separation of powers that has been the hallmark of our democratic Republic.

Now, his administration is actively recruiting those same convicted felons to join the ranks of ICE, offering up to \$50,000 as

recruitment bonuses, \$60,000 student loan repayments and 25% premium pay (websites of ICE and Dept. of Homeland Security, Washington Post, 12/31/2025, “ICE plans \$100 million ‘wartime recruitment’ effort targeting gun shows, military fans for hires”). That is \$100 million of our taxpayer's dollars to be spent in one year to boost the ranks of ICE's employees of 20,000 by an additional 10,000 recruits. More than 220,000 applications in five months have already been received.

Kristi Noem, secretary of Homeland Security, is using online influencers, conservative talk shows like Rumble, and geo-targeting people who have attended UFC fights, listened to patriotic podcasts or shown an interest in guns and tactical gear. The ads call for recruits who are willing to perform their “sacred duty” to “protect the homeland” from

“foreign invaders.”

Although ICE agents are required to take an oath to support the Constitution, the warrants they use are administrative warrants, issued by “administrative judges” part of the Department of Homeland Security, not regular judicially issued warrants by judicial branch judges (“Are ICE agents violating their oath?” by Richard Johnson, a former Warrant Issuing Magistrate, Medium.com, May 13, 2025). As an employee of Homeland Security their job is to fulfill the one-million deportation quotas, not worry about trampling on Fourth Amendment rights, “*The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation,*

and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.”

As the Trump administration tramples on the rights of “the people,” including those immigrants legally in the U.S., those granted asylum or temporary protected status, what is to prevent it from later using the ICE goon squad from rounding up and deporting those he deems having undesirable ideologies: “anti-capitalism,” “anti-Christianism” and “anti-Americanism” as he stated in his speech of September, 2024?

We are already seeing a rise of Hitler-like brown shirt tactics of intimidation, online threats, and actual targeted killings of politicians and those Trump deem as standing in his way to fascist authoritarianism, while rewarding the kleptocratic billionaires who are dividing up the financial pie among themselves.

OSSU budgeting, redistricting, class sizes, superintendent search occupy school boards

by Dr. David Baker

HARDWICK – Our family is looking forward to a better 2026. I appreciate all the support that I have gotten during a very trying summer. These are great communities, and I am proud to serve all of you.

January will bring with it final board meetings to finalize the budgets at Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) and for each school. I would be lying if I said this was an easy task this year, it is not.

With very conservative expenditure budgets, tax rates are still predicted to go up. Many variables create the increase: state yield, Common Level of Appraisal, and the Long-Term Weighted Average Daily Membership, to name a few. The school boards do not control these variables.

As I write this, we are in the middle of making significant cuts to each and every budget.

The school boards are always cognizant of the needs of each and every student. They try to avoid cutting positions that are directly related to instruction and academic intervention. This year, they may not be able to avoid some of that cutting. It is too early to tell, but once budgets are in place, we will make every effort to share the information.

Some community members have asked why the communities can't be more involved in the actual reductions. If that were to happen, boards would have to start the process much earlier and would not have any state information listed above that would indicate what

reductions might be necessary. It is a real conundrum.

This legislative season will be critical. The legislators are going to deal with school district organization and school district funding. We will stay right on top of those deliberations, as these decisions will be critical to our small rural schools.

The legislature will be addressing the redistricting report filed by the commission established last legislative session. The report recommended an incremental approach after finding no evidence that larger districts save money or improve education.

Three key recommendations are to create five regional BOCES (Boards of Centralized Educational Services) for shared services like special education and transportation; to support voluntary, data-driven district mergers rather than arbitrary size requirements; and to establish regional high schools offering advanced coursework, languages, technical education, mental health services and extracurriculars.

In essence, the commission did not feel they had enough time to formally recommend any of these options and, instead, offered a longer timeline to gather more data related to cost savings associated with each.

Some legislators and the governor were disappointed in the commission's report. They felt the commission had been delegated with one task; to draw maps that would embrace the idea of district and/or supervisory union (SU) mergers. It should be an inter-

esting legislative session. You can read the full report at bit.ly/VT_Redistricting

It is important to note that Act 73 did include a section on minimum class sizes. The first year of implementation will be next year. The recommended class sizes will be difficult for many of our small schools. Next year is intended to be a state data-gathering year. Each school will have to report their class sizes by grade level and teacher.

There is an allowance to combine two grades, but no more than two. Then the state is supposed to identify who is in compliance and who is not. A school will have the following year to come into compliance. Many of the decisions regarding the budget, both this year and next, will have to consider this minimum class size legal requirement. Again, it's not an easy task. We will stay on top of this.

The search process for a new superintendent is underway. It is being facilitated by the Vermont School Board Association in consultation with the SU board. The community survey has closed, as well as the application window for serving on the search screening committee. We had a healthy number of applicants; the OSSU board will affirm the search screening committee and review the community feedback at their January meeting. We will keep everyone updated on the next steps. The current timeline aims to fill the position by the end of February, if possible.

As the position is now posted, the board invites board members, staff and members of the public

to assist in sharing the opportunity broadly to help attract a strong and diverse pool of qualified candidates. More information can be found at ossu.org/en-US/superintendent-search.

Some January school meeting schedules are: Craftsbury Board Meeting, January 14, 6-8 p.m., Craftsbury Common Room; Hazen Board Meeting, January 20, 6-8 p.m., Hazen Union Library; and Wolcott Board Meeting, January 21, 6-8 p.m., Wolcott Elementary School.

Community participation is welcome and encouraged at all school budget informational meetings and annual school district meetings scheduled:

Wolcott Town School District, February 18, 6 p.m.: Budget Informational meeting on the FY27 Budget, March 3, 15 minutes after town meeting, annual school district meeting.

Mountain View Union Elementary School District, February 24, 6 p.m.: annual school district meeting, February 24, 6:30 p.m., public informational hearing on the FY27 Budget.

Hazen Union School District, February 25, 7 p.m.: public informational hearing on the FY27 Budget, February 25, 7:30 p.m.: annual school district meeting.

Craftsbury Town School District: March 3, 9 a.m., annual school district meeting, followed by the annual town meeting.

Stannard Town School District: March 3, 9 a.m., annual school district meeting.

Dr. David Baker is the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union Superintendent.

ANOTHER OPINION

Japanese Knotweed control project continues

by Elinor Osborn

CRAFTSBURY – The Craftsbury Conservation Commission (CCC) began a Japanese Knotweed (JK) demonstration project in 2017 to show landowners ways to eradicate or at least control the non-native invasive plant.

The project site, across from the Little Hosmer fishing access in Mill Village, is owned by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation under the administration of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. It was chosen because of its roadside visibility at a well-traveled intersection.

In 2018, a licensed herbicide applicator demonstrated injecting large stems of JK with glyphosate. That method was costly, time-consuming and didn't control as completely as expected.

There are always apprehensions on using herbicide, so we abandoned that method.

Other methods demonstrated at the site have been pulling, cutting, mowing and smothering. We demonstrated how to dry stalks with and without roots.

In 2024 the Craftsbury Conservation Commission received a Watershed Grant from Vermont Fish & Wildlife to start a new experiment using erosion fabric, plantings and fascines (bundles of fast growing willow) to stop erosion flowing from the gravel road into the Little Hosmer Pond outlet stream.

It was expected that Japanese Knotweed would prevent erosion, but it doesn't. It doesn't have a tangle of fine roots as many native plants do, so soil moves easily between the widely spaced JK roots.

JK roots are brittle and break off into the moving soil to be



Native plants grow in slits in the fabric cover at the Craftsbury Conservation Commission demonstration site along Town Highway 19.

photo by Elinor Osborn

carried into the stream, floating downstream and taking root in a new spot. You have probably seen streams and rivers in Vermont edged thickly with JK for long stretches.

The conservation commission, with more than 999 hours of volunteer help from Craftsbury residents, Sterling College students and Craftsbury Outdoor Center athletes, dug up a large eroding area of JK adjacent to Town Highway (TH19) in 2024 and 2025.

The steep slope, which had eroded in the previous summer's flooding, was then covered with erosion control fabric to smother the JK roots.

More than 200 Vermont native, bare-root shrubs were planted in May 2025 through slits in the fabric along TH19. The plants were chosen for their ability to thrive under dry, sunny conditions; to grow a thick root cover from their rhizomes to hold soil in place, outcompeting knotweed; and to attract pollinators, birds and other wildlife.

The native shrubs are Arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*), Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*), Gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*), Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*) and Purple-flowering Raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*).

Nearly all of the shrubs were doing well late in the growing season.

It remains to be seen whether the fabric and the plants will control erosion from the road, smother the JK and help crowd it out.

When JK covers large areas and crowds out native plants,

wildlife is lost, including pollinators. Birds don't nest in it and it doesn't produce berries for wildlife food. Bees use it only when it's in bloom. But they need an assortment of flowering, nectar-bearing plants all spring and summer, not just one spread of all the same blossoms only in late summer.

In the fall of 2025, native grass seed with asters was planted to control erosion at the road shoulder.

Both Hyde Park and Waitsfield-Warren-Fayston (WWF) are proving that mechanical control of JK is working. I visited WWF last summer and was amazed at how much they have accomplished in clearing large areas of JK. Hyde Park says "repeat cutting [of JK] absolutely works to deplete the plant's energy. You have to be realistic about the work required: It takes time and persistence over many years."

The CCC experience shows that is so true. Our job in 2026 will be to keep pulling up JK as we know it doesn't give up easily. But each pull weakens it and eventually it will give up.



Sterling College student Abigail Weinstein stakes one of many rapidly growing willow bundle called fascines into the bank along the Little Hosmer Pond outlet stream for erosion control. She worked with other Sterling College students and their instructor at the Craftsbury Conservation Commission Japanese knotweed control project site along Town Highway 19.

photo by Elinor Osborn

Elinor Osborn is a member of the Craftsbury Conservation Commission.

LETTERS FROM READERS

We need more wild forests and more ecological forestry

To the editor:

We applaud Mr. Riley's excellent opinion piece on ecological forestry ["Embracing ecological forestry, a new approach to forest management," *VTDigger*, November 11, 2025]. We share his love of forests.

Forest loss and fragmentation diminish both the vast biological and ecological functions of forests and all the benefits we humans derive from forests. Permanent conservation is needed to keep forests as forests.

Ecological forestry, which we fully endorse, is an approach to both maintain forests and to produce the products we need locally.

We also need more wild forests: forests that are allowed to mature with free will, under natural processes and evolving over time.

As forests mature, they become more complex biologically and structurally, store vast amounts of carbon and are scientific benchmarks for bettering our understanding of forest ecology and management. Moreover, wild forests and all their inhabitants simply have inherent value. We have a responsibility to protect them.

Wild forests are rare in the region.

The 2023 report, "Wildlands in New England: Past, Present, and Future," identified only 3.3% of the region as protected wildlands. Both this report and Vermont Conservation Design call for at least nine to ten percent of the landscape to be protected as wildland or old forest.

The 2024 analysis and report, "Beyond the Illusion of Preservation" identifies three steps for our forests' future: Protect forests (at least 10 percent of the land as wildlands, 70 percent as managed woodlands), reduce consumption by 25 percent and expand ecological forestry.

We need more wild forests and more ecological forestry, and we have plenty of room for both.

Eric Sorenson, Calais
Brett Engstrom, Marshfield

Liz Thompson, Williston

This commentary first appeared in *VTDigger*, December 16, 2025. Eric Sorenson, Brett Engstrom and Liz Thompson are ecologists with professional experience in Vermont and the Northeast and all board members of Northeast Wilderness Trust.



Erosion hidden by Japanese knotweed now shows after it was cut along Town Highway 19 in Craftsbury. A 2024 Watershed Grant from Vermont Fish & Wildlife allowed the Craftsbury Conservation Commission to start an experiment using erosion fabric, plantings and fascines to stop erosion into the Little Hosmer Pond outlet stream.

photo by Elinor Osborn

ANOTHER OPINION

Alarm at student-facing roles on chopping block

by The Orleans Southwest Educators' Association Executive Team

HARDWICK—As the new year begins, our communities' volunteer school boards are hard at work revising budgets for the coming 2026-2027 school year. We appreciate their tireless efforts towards this difficult task. As daily costs are rising, we recognize the real strain that property taxes place on households. We also appreciate that the expense of education is an investment in these very communities, their current well-being and their futures. Our school board members face a difficult balancing act, working to preserve these essential institutions without placing too great a financial burden on those who benefit from it.

At its most recent meeting (December 15, 2025), the Hazen Union School Board, at the recommendation of Principal Jason Di Giulio, tentatively approved Reductions in Force (RIFs) that would eliminate seven teaching positions. While we understand that the Hazen Union budget needs to be under a certain dollar amount to avoid tax penalties, we are alarmed to see these student-facing roles on the chopping block, while administrative roles were untouched in the proposed budget.

At this juncture, we urge the Hazen board to reconsider, and construct a budget that will mitigate direct impact on our students by managing costs in ways other than cutting the school staff they interact with on a daily basis.

The proposed cuts of a math teacher, an English teacher, a global citizenship teacher, a science teacher, our only French teacher, our only technology integrationist and our work-based learning driver, would dramatically harm Hazen's culture and learning environment.

Losing this significant portion of our staff would counteract years of effort to ensure our students can access learning experiences that are rich, engaging, and equitable with those of students across the state.

These staffing changes would not only destabilize student learning opportunities, they would have a massive impact on the culture in which our students thrive.

In recent years, Hazen Union has prioritized expanding robust elective offerings at the high school level in order to ensure our students can access learning experiences that are equitable with

those of students across the state. In spite of these efforts, the reality is that our core subject instructors (math, science, English and global citizenship) are already operating beyond sustainable capacity. The loss of a teacher in each of these departments will result in the elimination or significant consolidation of remaining electives, or in some cases potentially even cutting graduation-requirement courses.

There is a great deal of nuance in the complexities of building a viable master schedule for middle and high school that offers all students sufficient learning pathways to meet their diverse academic needs.

This challenge will only be compounded by the loss of a teacher from each core department. Three of the four core positions impacted by the proposed cuts are middle school teachers.

In addition to slashing options for course offerings at the high school, these reductions would mean the loss of the middle school's current teams-based teaching model. Our seventh and eighth grade teams foster culture-building and social-emotional learning; support rising seventh graders in the transition from elementary school to Hazen; and are rooted in best practices as defined by current education research. They have been a model of excellence within our school, and uplift our students through some of the toughest years of growing up.

The other positions at risk of being cut all bring just as much value to Hazen's students, in a host of delightfully specific ways: Our French program connects a significant portion of our students with their family heritage and has opened the doors to international experiential education, allowing students of all socioeconomic backgrounds to learn in Montreal and Paris. Building language and intercultural opportunities are critical ways in which our school seeks to meet its mission to empower students "to achieve their full potential and become successful, responsible, and contributing members of society, locally and globally." World Language learning improves cognitive function and skills, supports literacy in a learner's first language, and fosters intercultural skills that improve interactions with all neighbors of diverse backgrounds and perspectives. The French program has been critical, as half of the World Language department, in making Hazen a school where every student pursues biliteracy.

All Hazen middle schoolers learn a language other than English. Through third, fourth and fifth-year study, students prepare for and have achieved the Vermont Seal of Biliteracy, an endorsement added to their Vermont High School Diploma that is portable to academic and professional contexts.

The technology integrationist has filled a crucial gap at Hazen in the last two years, not only supporting every teacher in their ability to interface with learning management software and classroom technology, but teaching middle school tech classes that have given Hazen students the real-world tech skills they need to thrive in school and beyond.

The computers class has supported learning across all subjects, empowering students to effectively navigate the technology embedded in all of their classes, while media expo introduces students to practical applications of modern technology including 3D design and covers important topics such as the impacts of AI in school and at large. Separating this work from the equally essential role of the librarian has been a proactive shift at a time when literacy scaffolding is so greatly needed, maximizing direct literacy support for the students who need it most.

Hazen's work-based learning program is a centerpiece of our flexible pathways program, and offering reliable transportation as a piece of that program has enabled more equitable access to it, allowing students to take on professional opportunities without weighing their ability to drive themselves there as a factor.

The most direct impact of these staffing cuts would be a loss

of diverse offerings at Hazen; from there, we can expect the growth of existing inequity to accelerate, with better-resourced families choosing to send their children to better-resourced schools and Hazen's student body continuing to dwindle. The reality is that every adult who works directly with students at Hazen plays a unique and important role in the education of our community's young people – acting as mentors, broadening horizons, and ensuring our students gain access to the learning opportunities they deserve.

As budget drafts are finalized across our Supervisory Union, we urge boards to look closely at expenses other than the adults who spend their days directly interfacing with students.

While there is a possibility that Hazen will need to meet class-size minimums in the years ahead, those policies have not yet been finalized and are years from enforcement, and we do not yet know what flexibility may be available to a school of our size and in our rural location, especially as long as we remain a school whose students are thriving.

The intent behind Act 73 is rooted in the consideration of administrative costs, and we encourage our school board to look closely at the proportions between administration and student-facing staff.

In the face of Act 73, the proposed cuts to instructional staff would shake Hazen's foundation, making our community more vulnerable to losing its school entirely in the years ahead. We need to fortify our schools against pending legislation by preserving robust, diverse and academically rigorous learning experiences for our students, scaffolded by lean, efficient administrative support.

Heller's World by Joe Heller



OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

The day the FBI came to Grandma's house

by Amy Rosenthal

HARDWICK – In the early morning of August 24, 2022, FBI agents raided my house. Unbeknownst to me, for the previous three weeks I had been renting one of my Airbnb spaces to Brian Preller, a participant in the events of January 6, 2021, at the U.S. Capitol. The FBI had a warrant for his arrest which they executed without incident and left my home intact a few hours later.

I won't easily forget that day. It was alarming at first to see armed men surrounding my house, upsetting the quiet and calm of my usual Vermont existence. As I stood outside in my pajamas waiting for the agents to arrest Brian and take him away, my alarm turned to curiosity as I chatted with the FBI agents about the charges against Brian, about how long they had been surrounding my house (since 2 a.m.) and whether or not I could offer them coffee and muffins. They initially refused my hospitality but commented that they knew about my muffins and scones from my Airbnb reviews. They also knew about my older dog, Lewis

from the reviews as well but were unfamiliar with the new puppy, who hadn't been mentioned in any Airbnb reviews yet because she had just come to live with us.

It was at that point that I realized Brian, and my house had been under surveillance for about a week. As the hours dragged on, forensic officers searched the airbnb and secured the scene, and the other agents stood around catching up and eventually accepting my offer of muffins.

For weeks afterwards the dogs would check the many spots in the woods around the house where agents had hidden themselves in advance of the raid. It was a daily reminder of the events that had taken place weeks before.

I gained important lessons and gifts from the experience. I learned a lot about myself. I learned I had the capacity to stay calm and gracious in the face of such an unusual event.

Once all the excitement was over and the arrest was made, I served muffins and coffee to the agents who had been surrounding my house since 2 a.m. and were wet and hungry. They were grateful



FBI agents in an assault vehicle, a van and other vehicles, visit a Hardwick residence and Airbnb rental in the early morning hours of August 24, 2022 to arrest Brian Preller, suspected of being involved in the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol.
photo by Amy Rosenthal

and remarked about how it was the most beautiful place they had ever raided.

Chalk up one more positive point for Vermont!

The second, and I think the most important lesson, was not about me, but about how others reacted to the raid, the arrest and its aftermath as I told and retold the story of that morning to a variety of people over the years.

Others reacted quickly to the details of the events and made judgments about the experience based mostly on their personal and political perspective. They would offer their opinions freely about what I should have done differently: How I should never have allowed the FBI or the January 6th conspirator onto my property; how I must be more careful about who I rent my Airbnb space to, especially those with guns; and why in the world would I have let him come back for another week to finish out his reservation once he made bail.

I learned that, while many talk a good game about the need to heal the rift between factions in the country and create a climate of mutual respect for different perspectives when given the chance, few choose to do so.

No one ever asked if I was all right or what I thought about those events.

The third and probably most improbable outcome of the experience that caused me to become weirdly adjacent to the events of January 6, was that Brian and I developed a unique and yet important relationship.

While Brian was away in Rutland being arraigned I had to make the decision whether or not

to let him come back to complete the last week of his reservation. After consulting my own conscience and a friend whose opinion about complex issues I value greatly, I realized there was no good reason to not honor the remainder of his reservation.

I hadn't felt unsafe with him during our numerous coffee conversations before I knew he had been involved with the January 6 uprising, so there was no reason to suspect I would feel unsafe after his arrest.

Having worked for years with victims of crime through the Vermont Department of Corrections, and having spent lots of time talking with those who had been convicted of crimes, I knew how easy it is to judge someone by the last worst thing they had done as opposed to the next good thing they might do.

Before his arrest, Brian had shared many details about his life, none about his involvement with the Guardians of Freedom, but a lot about his life as a teen father; he had married the mother of his child while staying in school and supporting them financially.

He shared how he had done two tours in the Middle East with the Florida National Guard; how upon his return home he had difficulty finding work; and how he eventually found a job as a security guard in a housing project.

He talked about how important it was for him to interact with residents there with respect and positive regard.

He later shared that he joined the Guardians of Freedom originally because they made him feel

See FBI, Next Page

VOICES OF SPIRIT

Seven haiku for a new year

by Anthony Acheson

O, how our minds need
to grasp: what is held in thought
is what waits in store.

Thinking, watching from
a perfect sanctuary.
Nothing understood.

Here, now, yet again,
a chance to experience
experiencing.

Ocean-walk at dawn.
Sun, surf, breeze, seagulls singing.
Godhead 1.0.

Silence says, "Come in."
Learn here-dwelling, story-free.
Then — unchained — you'll see.

Time is less a fact
of physics — or things changing.
More: our mode of mind.

How easy it is
to confess the wrongdoings
of people long-dead.

Rev. Acheson is the retired Pastor of the Greensboro United Church of Christ, and author of the book of essays, "Beyond Denial." He can be reached at acheson.anthony@gmail.com. Samples of his writing are at anthonyacheson.com.

FBI

Continued From Previous Page

like he belonged and that his organizational and management skills had value that he had put to good use. He had since left the group and was no longer affiliated with them.

My conversations with Brian after his release were the most interesting conversations I had ever had with someone whose political views couldn't have been more diametrically opposed to mine.

I got to share my thoughts about January 6th with him and he got to share his story with me.

I shared what it was like to see the assault of the institution that I held in high regard and I was honest with him about my feelings of disgust, horror and fear as I watched the events of that day unfold.

I told him what it was like for me, a Jewish woman, to watch white supremacists use racist and anti-semitic chants to whip the mob into a frenzy.

He denied being either racist or anti-semitic. He proclaimed himself an anarchist and said in his defense that his group had trained both black and Jewish anarchist groups from all over the world to shoot guns and strategize ways to topple and resist governments.

I countered that you can't march side by side with individuals who are advocating white supremacy and wearing camp Auschwitz sweatshirts while claiming you aren't one of them or don't somehow support them. You can't pick and choose.

I watched as he began to think about that. And, how eventually his thoughts about that day became a bit more complicated for him, as did mine.

He told me about the Guardians of Freedom, and it's their relationship to the Trump Administration, and I learned a lot about how deeply involved that administration was with anarchist and anti-government groups.

Brian was very clear that he hadn't shown up at the Capital because he was a Trump supporter. Quite the opposite; he said he and his group had no respect for Trump at all.

He said he was there because, as an anarchist, he appreciated Trump as a disruptor, someone whose behaviors and approach to governing were going to put an end to government as we know it and give the power to govern, or not, back to the people.

Overturning the results of the election to please Trump was just one step in the right direction as far as they were concerned.

Trump was a pawn for them, albeit a powerful and dangerous one: one whose only value was to



FBI agents at Amy Rosenthal's Hardwick residence and Airbnb rental in the early morning hours of August 24, 2022 discuss the arrest of Brian Preller, suspected of being involved in the January 6, 2021 events at the U.S. Capitol. She fed them muffins before they left with Preller after several hours.

photo by Amy Rosenthal

cause the government to become so weak and chaotic that it would eventually fail.

While his anarchist rhetoric was fundamentally horrifying to me, he pointed out that anarchists and those on the left agree on several points: that governments should not tell us who we can and cannot marry, and that they should keep their hands off decisions about medical interventions, especially as they apply to women.

These were points I hadn't ever thought about, having considered anarchists as nothing but violent disrespectful disruptors whose only goal was to advocate for chaos and create a culture where every person was out for themselves, something January 6 only confirmed for me.

We agreed to disagree over the government's responsibility to help the needy, the necessity of taxing citizens, police oversight and the role of woke government to attain and maintain civil and human rights.

I came away from those conversations realizing I would never be an anarchist, but also understanding that things were more complicated than I had originally thought and many in this country did not share my respect or faith in the government.

I came away grateful to have been able to talk with Brian about things that I could only have speculated about before.

I believe he came away grateful that someone was willing to listen and argue with him respectfully.

Before he left he told me he would check in with me on the anniversary of the arrest to let me know how he was doing.

I wondered to myself if I actually wanted to be reminded yearly about the events of that day in August.

He didn't call the next August. He did one better: he called me

the next Mother's Day to thank me for my kindness towards him at the time and to let me know he was still awaiting trial.

He contacted me again the next Mother's Day to let me know he was about to complete his sentence that included eight months of house arrest.

Last Mother's day I didn't hear from him.

By then he had been pardoned and I was busy trying to make sense of what has been happening in the world since January 2025 and making it through each day.

Then came the fifth anniversary of what is now referred to as J6.

I have been giving my relationship to it and to Brian a lot of thought.

I have written and re-written this essay a few times over the last few weeks trying to capture my thoughts and feelings.

None of my drafts seem to say what I have wanted to say.

They have been filled with all kinds of advice about how to make it through these challenging times.

This January 6, as I was trying to refine my latest draft, I texted Brian to see how he was doing. Within a minute of getting my text, he called me.

We talked for an hour, picking up where we had left off during our last conversation.

He is living back in Florida now, having spent his house arrest time working hard for Amazon delivering packages; work being the only thing someone on house arrest is allowed to do.

His relationship with his girlfriend, who he had come to Vermont with, was over. He felt isolated and vulnerable in New England, believing that, if others found out about his relationship to January 6th, he would have been given a hard time.

He is no longer a member of any group. He has become politically agnostic, believing both sides are corrupt and not worth supporting. He has come to understand his affiliation with an anarchist group had more to do with his personal demons than his political commitments and it was about needing to belong and to matter; something I think most of us can relate to.

He now sits in the middle, not taking sides.

While he still has some conspiracy theory notions about government corruption and presidential politics, he is no longer a Trump supporter.

He worries about the echo chambers on both the right and the left that have failed to move us towards any kind of solid leadership and way forward.

He is disgusted with what is happening in America and would like to leave.

He filled me in on his family and I finally had the courage to ask him about the pardon. He was frank with me, saying it really helped him. He acknowledged that not having to put on an application that he was convicted of a felony for his involvement in January 6th has helped him get back on his feet and not be judged harshly by others.

He didn't think that the pardons should have gone to everyone. He believed those who were not violent like him, deserved them and those individuals who caused physical harm should never have been pardoned.

I asked if he thought those who prosecuted him should be prosecuted in return. He said he thought they should only be prosecuted if there was evidence they had done something illegal, but not because of Trump's spite and need for revenge.

When I challenged him about giving in to hyperbole and generalizations in his accusations, he said he appreciated how respectfully I disagreed with him.

I joked that we should take our conversations on the road.

He said he would do it with me any time. He said we could model how to have these kinds of conversations in a civil manner. He said he would go with me because he knew I would never "punch him in the face". And I know he would never punch me in mine.

There is a lot of talk about the need and importance of working across the political aisle and not finger pointing or pre-judging who others are just because they disagree with us politically.

It's easier said than done, but it must be done.

What has come out of the FBI raid for me, and by extension January 6, is a unique relationship with someone I would never have had a relationship with before.

I highly recommend it.

It has given me the opportunity to put theory into practice and have conversations in a respectful way about difficult topics on which there is only minimal agreement.

It made me be J6 adjacent, and gave me access to other perspectives and points of view that took me out of my own echo chamber; something that needed to be done.

In the end though it gave me a great story to tell that will become part of my family's lore as they tell and retell the story about the day the FBI came to grandma's house.

Amy Rosenthal has lived in Hardwick since 2005, is a Justice of the Peace, a former Hazen School Board member and a member of the Hardwick Equity Committee. She has five grandchildren who are still too young to understand what happened at their grandmother's house, but eventually they will.

I HEARD IT THROUGH THE JEDEVINE

Change to definition of library, librarian

by **Brendan Buckley**

HARDWICK—At the beginning of a new year it is not unusual to reflect on what around us has changed in the past twelve months. How much taller are our children or grandchildren? How much has that apple tree grown? How many more miles are on the odometer? How many more grey hairs are there? Perhaps those reflections harken back further: to a new year some decades ago, against which we measure more than inches or miles.

In the years that I served as a Jeudevine trustee, and now fill a role as an occasional columnist and weekly volunteer, I have marveled at the remarkable change, across my lifetime, to the definition of both library and librarian.

As a child in the 1950s and 1960s, a weekly trip to the library was part of our family routine. A parent would leave me in the children's section and head to the adult room. It was a silent world, so silent that any stray sound, such as a cough, or a book falling to the floor, resulted in a lifting of heads by all

within earshot. Conversations at the circulation desk were carried out in whispers. There were no other conversations. Upon returning to the outside world it seemed momentarily strange to speak in one's normal voice.

Libraries were all about books. There were no books on tape, e-books, DVDs or arts and crafts workshops. One went to the library to borrow books, and occasionally to sit and read there, if parents were running errands.

Were a person to time-travel from a mid-twentieth century library to our Jeudevine today, they would recognize the stacks of books and the comfortable chairs, but they would be shocked at the ongoing conversations held in normal speaking voices, and astounded at the even louder volume of conversation that fills our children's spaces. Borrow a movie: unheard of! Borrow a moisture meter, a Strider-bike, a museum pass. Wow!

Similarly, a librarian from that earlier time would be overwhelmed at the job description. Beyond helping us find books (and

DVD's), Diane, Kevin and Rachel oversee a variety of events, ranging from author presentations, to film-screenings, to fabrics-art classes, to cooking instruction, to storytime sessions. They help patrons navigate the internet to fill out applications for food assistance or other state services. They answer the phone for Neighbor-to-Neighbor to help others with transportation, or clearing an icy walkway.

What's up in the coming weeks? Last month I reported on Jodi Lew Smith's new novel, "Asa James." Next month she will hold a discussion group about the book on the evening of Thursday February 5, at 6:30 p.m.. The library has two copies of the book available to borrow. (If you have read it and can lend the Jeudevine your copy, please do.) All are welcome. There is no requirement to have read the book in advance.

The Vermont Humanities Council has recently sent about two dozen copies of "The Light Pirate" to the Jeudevine. It is the current choice for the Vermont Reads program, now in its twenty-third year. The story it tells is about Wanda, who lives in

a coastal Florida town confronting dramatic weather changes that are resulting in rising sea levels. Wanda must adapt to the cataclysmic atmospheric patterns.

The Jeudevine will hold two events connected to the statewide reading collaboration. On February 12, at 6 p.m., it will present "Facing a Flooded World." Shawna Trader of "Barre Up" will share information about several community building projects under way in her town, which has also experienced catastrophic flooding in recent years. Through such programs the town has begun to develop a resilience to the devastating storms.

In March, the Jeudevine will host a book discussion group on "The Light Pirate" with the date and time to be announced later.

On the youth front, There is a new baking program that will meet on the third Wednesday of each month, beginning January 21 at 3 p.m. This month's project is soda cupcakes.

The current ukulele class is full. If you missed out, stay tuned as there may be future sessions.

THE OUTSIDE STORY

The incredible shrinking shrew

by **Loren Merrill**

MILLBROOK, N.Y. — Last autumn, I was canoeing in a quiet saltwater cove on the Maine coast when I realized I had a tiny stowaway onboard. A masked shrew (*Sorex cinereus*, also called the cinereus or common shrew) was huddled in the boat's bow, trying to disappear into the nose of the canoe. I was out on a solo photography trip (or so I thought) hoping to capture images of mink, seals and birds.

I knew about the shrew's infamous metabolism: they have an average heart rate of 780 beats per minute and need to eat almost continuously throughout the day or they die of starvation, so I figured I would make a truncated trip. After 10 minutes or so, the shrew became active and started exploring the canoe's interior. After 20 minutes, it began trying to scale the steep sides of the canoe, and I realized I would have to head back to shore or risk having the shrew expire on the trip.

Once on shore, I ushered the shrew out of the boat, and it vanished into the leaf litter, presumably to find its next meal. Masked shrews have a generalist diet and will eat just about anything they can find and subdue: worms, insects, arachnids, snails,



Masked shrew

amphibians, other small mammals, small bird eggs and nestlings, as well as seeds, nuts and fungi. In addition to their wide-ranging diet, masked shrews are the most widely distributed shrew in North America, inhabiting most of the northern half of the continent.

Masked shrews are one of our smallest mammals, tipping the scales at between 3 and 6 grams (one to two pennies), with a 2.5-inch-long body, and a 1.5-inch tail. They have a long, pointed snout full of sharp teeth, and a powerful nose surrounded by extremely sensitive whiskers. Their small size belies an outsized appetite; their infamous metabolism, mentioned above, requires an impressive number of calories to fuel it. Masked shrews

can consume three times their body weight in a day, or the equivalent of a 150-pound person eating 1,800 quarter-pound burgers. During periods of rest, masked shrews can enter a state of torpor, dropping their body temperature, heart and breathing rates, and subsequently reducing their energy requirements. But torpor is a short-term energy fix, and these diminutive eating machines remain active throughout the winter. Winter presents a one-two punch of challenges for these mammals: their primary food source (invertebrates) becomes scarce, and the colder air temperature forces them to burn more energy to maintain their body temperature.

To help offset these cold-weather challenges, masked shrews have evolved an unusual ability: they shrink in the winter. And this is not just a reduction in body mass; their skeletons, including their skulls, also get smaller. This is known as Dehnel's phenomenon, and it has been documented in a handful of small mammals and weasels. It represents a form of phenotypic plasticity, in which an organism can express a different phenotype (the observable or expressed traits) in response to changing ecological conditions. Scientists do not yet have a clear picture of how the shrews are

able to reduce their skeletal dimensions, nor how they regrow them in the spring, but the size reduction results in a decrease in their overall energy requirements.

Despite the energy savings they get from shrinking, masked shrews still need to forage almost constantly during the winter. Their small size and elongated body shape are well-suited for their semi-fossorial (partly underground) lifestyles, but their extremely high surface area to volume ratio results in a high rate of heat loss. Snow provides an important insulating layer under which they can limit the amount of heat loss, but the masked shrew's internal combustion engine runs on overdrive for most of the winter. It is perhaps not surprising that very few masked shrews even approach the age of two years before their fires are extinguished. They have come to epitomize the live-fast, die-young" lifestyle.

My encounter in the canoe underscored how close masked shrews exist to the edge of their physiological limits. Shrinking their bodies in winter helps keep them from falling off that edge.

Loren Merrill is a science writer and photographer with a PhD in ecology living in Millbrook, N.Y. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.

IN THE GARDEN

Looking back on 2025 and forward to 2026

by Henry Homeyer

CORNISH FLAT, N.H. – Overall, my gardens did well last summer despite the lack of rain, largely because of all that sunshine. Most of us had a wet spring and early summer, then a very dry summer and fall.

For people planting new trees, shrubs and perennials it meant lots of watering. Until plants have done some root growth, they really need to have soil that does not completely dry out. Vegetables, of course do best with lightly moist soil.

Each year I plant a few more trees and shrubs, even though my list includes over 100 different kinds that I have planted since I bought my house in 1970. Last spring I planted a spring-blooming witch hazel, one called “Arnold’s Promise.” I’ve had the native witch hazel for decades – they bloom late in the fall with lovely yellow blossoms. This new one is a Zone 5 tree, only hardy to minus 20 F. I’ve been in a Zone 4 area for decades, but have been trying Zone 5 trees for the last few years, and they have all survived our winters. Hopefully, “Arnold” will, too.

Last fall I planted a Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*). This is not the California redwood, but a descendent of a trees only found in fossil records until the 1940s. Then an alert forester found a grove of them in a remote part of China. He contacted the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard, and an expedition was mounted after WWII. Seeds were collected and sent all over the world, and this fast-growing deciduous conifer has succeeded well in many locations. It likes wet soil and prefers full sun, but will tolerate some shade. I have seen several in New Hampshire and Vermont. I can’t wait to see how it performs for us.

Looking ahead, I will soon be studying the catalogs and websites of my favorite seed companies. It’s good to order seeds now, as some popular seeds will sell out, especially small packets of tomato seeds of things like “Sun Gold,” my favorite cherry tomato.

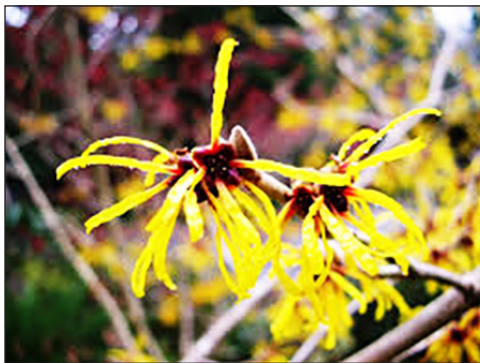
If you have been thinking

about starting your own seedlings, now is a good time to build a simple A-frame stand that will support lights and the flats you will use to start your plants indoors. I’ve written how to make one, so just email me if you want directions on how to do it. Your local lumber store should be willing to cut all the pieces of wood to size for you. It’s quite easy to build, even for non-carpenters.

I don’t believe in writing New Year’s resolutions, but do like to reflect each year at this time about what improvements I want to make in how I garden, and what I shall plant. So here are a few of my ideas, and a few from friends willing to share theirs.

Although we have large populations of native plants that support pollinators and birds, in 2026 I hope to locate and plant a wider diversity of plants. I am on the list to get the Massachusetts Master Gardener on-line newsletter called “The Dirt.” In the January issue it lists native plants that are important to support our pollinators that are at risk and declining in numbers.

Using that list I will see which I can add to our environment. Dr. Gegear, who researched and



Arnold’s Promise has yellow blossoms with a splash of orange in early spring.
courtesy photo

prepared the list, includes bloom time, whether it is important for pollen or nectar, and what pollinators it is important for. A good source for native plants is the Native Plant Trust garden shop in Framingham, Mass., and their production facility, Nasami Farm in Whately, Mass. Both are open seasonally, opening in mid-April.

My friend, Hank, emails this: “Over a cup of tea and the last of the holiday cookies I sift through the dog-eared pages of color and hope (the seed catalogs). I take the time to add to the lists, create my to do’s, and purposely circle plant varieties that I am interested in trying. I take the time to consider where I’ll be building a new shed and then wander into the barn to spend more time organizing, looking for the tools that need to be cleaned and sharpened.”

And Jenny from Vermont emailed saying that she will “try to keep the goutweed in check so the



Young dawn redwood at New England Botanic Garden in Boylston, Mass.
courtesy photo

new Mayapple can dominate, and I’ll try to rein in the white cohosh that has gone wild. Last year I tried to add a toad lily and it failed. I may try again.” My thought? Yes, try toad lily again, it’s a great plant (but not a true lily) that blooms in the fall. I always give plants two more tries in different spots if I wasn’t successful with them on the first try.

Last year, my friend Mark planted five little pawpaw trees that he got from another friend. Pawpaws send up lots of root sprouts, but they will not produce fruit if they are genetic clones (all from a single mother tree, as his probably are). I have some from another source, so he’ll trade me one of his for one of mine. Most small trees move easily.

Pawpaws are a native tree common in Appalachia, but hardy here. Their fruit tastes tropical.

Sara told me that she is looking forward to warmer weather. She wants to re-wild areas on her property to include more native species that will support pollinators and wildlife.

And my friend Rika e-mailed saying, in part, “My intention every year is to become more relaxed - not casual, and intuitive in the garden.” I like it.

I wish you all a successful year in your gardens.

Homeyer’s column appears once a month. Reach him at henry.homeyer@comcast.net or P.O. Box 364, Cornish Flat, NH 03746.



Sungold cherry tomatoes.

courtesy photo



Pawpaw fruit has a tropical flavor but a texture that is mushy.

courtesy photo

THE OUTSIDE STORY

Quiet persistence of clubmosses

by Susan Shea

BROOKFIELD – Walking in our woods in winter, I notice dense patches of clubmoss that lend a welcome splash of green to the forest floor. Some of these evergreen plants resemble miniature Christmas trees; others have fuzzy runners that creep across the ground.

Despite their name, clubmosses are not true mosses. They are the oldest group of vascular plants, which have specialized tissue called xylem that transports water and nutrients. Clubmosses evolved 410 million years ago and dominated the forests of the Carboniferous Period (roughly 350 to 300 million years ago), when they could grow up to 100 feet tall. Coal deposits contain the remains of these ancient clubmosses.

Today's clubmosses are small herbaceous plants with shiny, needle-like leaves called microphylls. Their name comes from their resemblance to mosses and their club-like reproductive structures, called strobili. Strobili grow from the tips of erect stems and disperse spores. The dust-like yellow spores were used for flash powder by early photographers. Because of their high oil content, they give off a flash when ignited. Plants can spread vegetatively through horizontal stems that creep along the ground, or through subterranean rhizomes.

Clubmosses grow in woodlands, on forest edges, in bogs and swamps, and in brushy fields. Different species prefer different soil types, ranging from acidic to

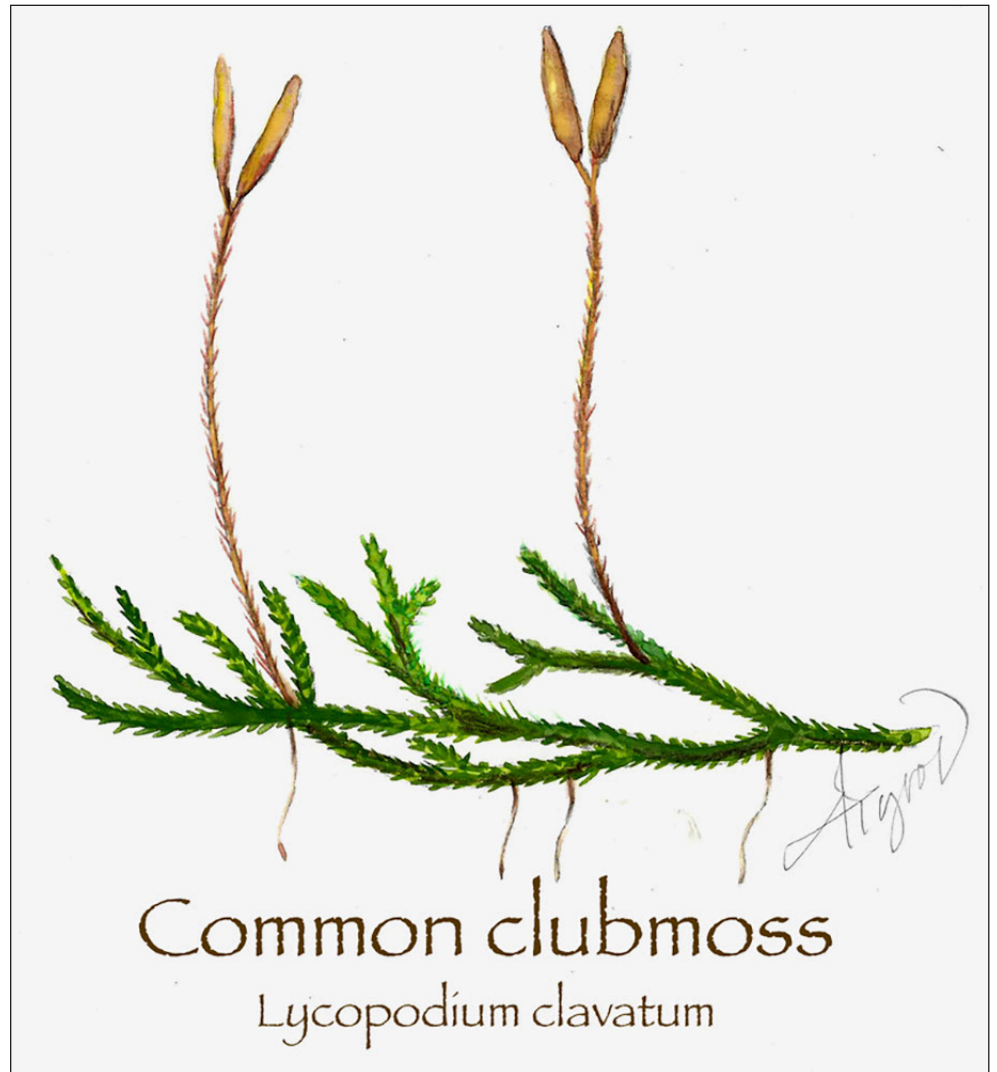
nutrient-rich and from moist to dry. Six different genera, or groups, of clubmosses are found in New England, containing about fifteen species.

Prickly tree clubmoss (*Dendrolycopodium dendroideum*) is a common species that looks like a row of small conifer trees. Vertical stems arise every six inches from underground runners. The upright stems have many branches, with dark green microphylls that are prickly to the touch. Yellow-green strobili that contain the spores grow singly from upper branches. Prickly tree clubmoss is closely related to princess pine, once widely harvested for holiday decorating.

Southern ground cedar (*Diphasiastrum digitatum*) is another common species, though it is quite different from the tree clubmosses. Its yellowish-green vertical stems have flattened, fan-like branches with tiny, scale-like leaves that resemble those of a cedar bough. The yellow strobili rise in candelabra-shaped clusters of two to four from stalks that grow off the upper branches.

Common clubmoss (*Lycopodium clavatum*) is not tree-shaped like the last two species. Its fuzzy, green erect stems grow from horizontal rhizomes that trail across the surface of the ground, often interlacing to form dense colonies. One to five strobili grow on a stalk from the tip of each vertical stem.

Like their fern relatives, clubmosses undergo two very different developmental stages during their lives (sometimes called alternating generations). There is a gametophyte, or sexual, phase, and



a sporophyte phase, the spore-producing phase. When a spore lands in a suitable moist spot, it develops into a gametophyte: a flat, green, heart-shaped body with sex organs that grow underground. When stimulated by water, sperm from one gametophyte can swim to the female organ on another gametophyte and fertilize an egg. The egg divides and grows into a tiny clubmoss, a new sporophyte, at first anchored to the gametophyte. While the gametophyte phase is tiny and hard to see, once a sporophyte develops, it becomes recognizable to us as a clubmoss. The complete life cycle, from spore to gametophyte to sporophyte, can take up to twenty years.

Clubmosses play an important ecological role on the forest floor. Mats of clubmoss hold soil in place, preventing erosion, especially on slopes. They maintain soil moisture and reduce temperature fluctuations, creating a stable, sheltered microhabitat for fungi, microorganisms, invertebrates, and small animals. Clubmosses contribute to

nutrient recycling in the forest. As their dead leaves and stems decompose, they release essential plant nutrients back into the soil. Species that colonize disturbed areas can improve the soil, facilitating the growth of other plants.


I've wondered why clubmosses are abundant in some woodlands, like ours, and not in others. This is likely determined by soil type and past land use and disturbance history, including whether they were harvested for Christmas displays. Because clubmosses are so slow to reproduce, collection can deplete local populations. This practice is now banned or requires a permit on many public lands.

It's best to enjoy these unique evergreen plants in their natural habitat and appreciate the color and diversity they add to the winter woods. In their quiet persistence, clubmosses remain living links to Earth's first forests.

Susan Shea is a naturalist, writer, and conservationist based in Brookfield. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.

Card of Thanks

Thank you for the expressions of sympathy during the loss of our loved one. To those who brought food, sent cards or flowers, called, and stopped by, this has given us great comfort and will be forever remembered.



*The family of
Wilfred Eugene McAllister Sr.*

Thanks
for saying
you saw it in the
Hardwick Gazette
hardwickgazette.org



OUR COMMUNITIES

Alumni session: Transition information, Jan. 14

by Sterling College

CRAFTSBURY – Wednesday, Jan. 14 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., the Sterling College Board of Trustees Transition Task Force and College Leadership Team invite Sterling College alumni to attend a virtual information session via Zoom. Updates will be shared about the College's transition, transcript and records

information from the Academic Office, future programming possibilities, on-campus alumni events, volunteer opportunities and other ways to get involved with the Sterling community in its final undergraduate semester.

To gain access to this meeting, register at bit.ly/4qDszmy. After registering, you will receive an email confirmation with information to join the meeting.

Catching up on climate change, Jan. 15

MARSHFIELD – On Thursday, Jan. 15, at 6:30 p.m., meteorologist Roger Hill will provide an update on what has been happening climate-wise while everyone has been focused on Washington, including the latest world surface conditions and temperature trends, latest updates on the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, the increasing

possibility of future local heat waves, and colder early winter conditions. This is the first program in a series of events at the Jaquith Public Library around Vermont Humanities' 2026 Vermont Reads book, "The Light Pirate" by Lily Brooks-Dalton.

More information is available at jaquithpubliclibrary.org or (802) 426-3581.

"Gone Guys" documentary screens Jan. 15

by OSSU Central Office

GREENSBORO – The Vermont-made documentary "Gone Guys", produced by Montpelier-based Well Told Films, explores the social, economic and emotional pressures contributing to a growing sense of disconnection, isolation, and loss of direction among boys and young men in rural and working-class communities.

On Thursday, Jan. 15, 6 to 8 p.m., the film will screen at the Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro, followed by a panel discussion and audience questions. The screening is free or pay-what-you-can, with tickets available at the door or in advance or via sevendaystickets.com/.

Set in rural Vermont, the 45-minute documentary blends

national data with personal stories from young men, educators, and mentors, exploring issues of academic disengagement, loneliness, and well-being. This community event and conversation is co-hosted by Highland Center for the Arts and Hazen Union School.

"In November, the faculty at Hazen Union participated in a screening of Gone Guys," said Jen Olson, work based learning coordinator. "After examining our own data, we found that nearly 85% of behavior incidents involve male students, and 58% of failed classes are attributed to male students, underscoring the urgency and relevance of the issues highlighted in the film. We will continue to have conversations about the challenges facing young men and to identify meaningful ways to improve their outcomes."

Annual group art show, Jan 18

by Jaquith Public Library

MARSHFIELD – Sunday, Jan. 18, at 2 p.m., the Jaquith Public Library will hold an opening reception for the return of local artists for the annual invitational group art

show, which can be viewed during regular library hours through mid-April. Light refreshments will be served.

More information is available at jaquithpubliclibrary.org or (802) 426-3581.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday observance, Jan. 19

GREENSBORO – On January 19, The Greensboro United Church of Christ (GUCC) will hold a gathering in observance of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday at the GUCC Sanctuary and fellowship hall from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.. This is a time to gather as a

community and hold space for freedom. All are welcome.

Attendees may bring a short reading, a song or a thought pertaining to freedom to share at the gathering. The gathering will conclude in Fellowship Hall with soup and bread.

Film screening series begins, Jan. 22

by Jaquith Public Library

MARSHFIELD – Thursday, Jan. 22, at 6:30 p.m., the first film in a new film series, "Glimpses of a Maybe Future" will be screened at the Jaquith Public Library. A brief overview, a populist Presidential candidate quickly rises to the top and is elected. In the background,

a monolithic global corporate donor quietly arranges for the vice president to take control of the country. The series will continue on the second and fourth Thursdays at 6:30 pm. The series is cosponsored by the Salmon Falls Sangha and the Jaquith Public Library. More information at jaquithpubliclibrary.org or (802) 426-3581.

Sunday afternoon poetry, Jan. 25

by Jaquith Public Library Staff

MARSHFIELD – On Sunday, Jan. 25, at 2 p.m., the Poetry Society of Vermont and the Jaquith Public Library will host Sunday Afternoon Poetry at the Jaquith. This first event of this monthly

poetry reading series will feature Scudder Parker and Judith Janoo. The reading is hosted by the Jaquith Public Library and PSO board members David Hartnett and Elizabeth McCarthy.

More information at jaquithpubliclibrary.org or (802) 426-3581.

"Other Side" film screening, Jan. 25

by HCA Staff

GREENSBORO – On January 25 at 2 p.m., the Highland Center for the Arts (HCA) will hold a film screening for the documentary "Other Side." Admission is by donation, get tickets at the door or at the HCA website: boxoffice@highlandartsvt.org

"Other Side" is a feature-length documentary about Lynda Bluestein's journey accessing medical aid in dying in Vermont as an out of state resident. It premiered to sold-out crowds at South by Southwest Film Festival in March 2025 and has been touring the country since then. This screening of "Other Side" is

co-sponsored by the NEK Death Care Community and Patient Choices Vermont.

The NEK Death Care Community is a local group of community members encouraging compassionate conversations about loss, grief, and dying, and connecting people with resources related to these topics. Patient Choices Vermont is dedicated to education about Medical Aid in Dying and end-of-life choice in Vermont. Members of both organizations will answer questions and facilitate a discussion after the film. All proceeds from ticket sales will go directly to the filmmakers to support their continued work. The HCA is located at 2875 Hardwick St., Greensboro.

Book discussion with Rachael Cohen, Jan. 29

MARSHFIELD – On Thursday, January 29, beginning at 6 p.m., the Jaquith Public Library will hold a book discussion of "The Light Pirate" by Lily Brooks-Dalton with facilitator Rachael Cohen. "The Light Pirate" is Vermont Humanities' 2026 Vermont Reads book. The book considers climate change and the dissolution of the

human-made world. This program is part of a series of events at the Jaquith Public Library around Vermont Humanities' 2026 Vermont Reads. Free copies of the book are available at the library. More information is available at jaquithpubliclibrary.org or (802) 426-3581. Snow date is Saturday, Jan. 31, 2 p.m.

Winter tracking field trip, Feb. 1

by Craftsbury Conservation Commission

CRAFTSBURY – The Craftsbury Conservation Commission is sponsoring a winter tracking field trip on Saturday Feb. 1, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Jonathan Shapiro from the

Fox Paw School will share information about winter creatures and the clues they leave to help identify them. Arrive at the Craftsbury Academy Woodlot on Wylie Hill Road on time because space is limited. The event is free and open only to adults and mature teens.

EDUCATION

2026 chess championship, Mar. 28

HYDE PARK – The 2026 Vermont State Scholastic Chess Championships will be held on Saturday, March 28 at Lamoille Union High School. Registration for all Vermont

students will be open in January and scholarships will be available.

This is an all-day event open to K-12 players. Save the date and watch for registration information.

Rowell named to SNU Dean's List

MANCHESTER, N.H. – Emma Rowell of Greensboro Bend has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's (SNU's) Fall 2025 Dean's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate

students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter-spring and summer.

Three local students named to SNU President's List

MANCHESTER, N.H. – Trys-tine Brennan-Hess of Greensboro Bend, Chelsea Marcus of Wolcott and Lindsay Brennan of Calais have been named to the Southern New Hampshire University (SNU) Fall 2025 President's List. The fall terms run from September to December. Full-time undergraduate

students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter-spring and summer.

Student project exhibition, Jan. 15

CABOT – The end-of-the-semester Cabot High School exhibition is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 15, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., at Cabot School. Students will present their work. On display during the evening, starting at 5:30 p.m., will be: science room: Future Evolutions - class's timeline, Waters of the Win-ooski - topographical map of watersheds; English room: How Things Works - final projects, AP Language

and Composition essays; math room: Geometry House presentations, Design Thinking games and social studies room: video of Model UN debate.

Also, formal presentations at 5:30 in the shop p.m., engineering presentations; 6:25 p.m., in CSPAC, filmmaking film premieres of "Mourning of Silence" (horror), "How to Carry the Light Home" (drama) and 6:45 p.m., in CSPAC, high school band performance.

OBITUARIES

Barbara Lightfoot Woodward

GREENSBORO – Barbara Lightfoot Woodward died peacefully in her home in Greensboro, December 9. She was 96 years old.

Barbara is predeceased by her husband, Tom Woodward Jr., married for 72 years, and survived by her children, Emilie, Tom III, Edie (Martie), grandson Tom, granddaughter-in-law Sara, great-grandson Miles, many dear extended family and friends and beloved cat, Bebe.

Barbara was born in Atlantic City, N.J., April 18, 1929, and attended Bryn Mawr College, where she met Tom, attending Haverford College, in 1950. The couple fell in love and married the day after Tom's graduation in 1952.

Barbara's career began in her twenties as a salesclerk at Scribner Book Store in New York. During Tom's graduate studies she worked at Planned Parenthood in Cambridge, Mass., and also as a secretary in the education and English departments at Harvard University.

Barbara also taught students with disabilities at the Devereux School in Devon, Pa., and was a preschool and fourth grade teacher for several years. She devoted 20 years of her career as the director of college guidance at the Agnes Irwin School in Rosemont, Pa., during which time she published numerous papers and articles on education for young women. After dedicating her career to others for decades, Barbara and Tom retired in Greensboro in 1992.

During retirement, Barbara volunteered for the Craftsbury Chamber Players for 10 years. She also served on the board of trustees of the Greensboro Free Library



Barbara Lightfoot Woodard

and volunteered at the Greensboro Historical Society. Barbara and Tom had the great fortune to travel to warm places in the winter.

Barbara will be remembered for her cheery, outgoing nature, and kindness, strength and resilience. She relished sitting by the fire, immersing herself in a good book, and watching the sun set over the lake with Tom. And she loved her sherry.

The family wishes to extend deep gratitude to all of the many caregivers who loved Barbara as they helped her stay safe and healthy in her home to her final days, as she wished.

Services will take place at the Greensboro United Church of Christ at 165 Wilson St., Greensboro, Saturday, Aug. 1, at 10 a.m. Gifts in Barbara's memory may be sent to the Greensboro Free Library at 51 East Craftsbury Road, Greensboro, VT 05841, or the St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church at 39 West Church St., Hardwick, VT 05843.

Important Annual Notice Regarding Herbicide Use in the Maintenance of Electric Utility Rights-of-Way

The Vermont Public Utility Commission has set forth rules under PUC Rule 3.600 pertaining to the use of herbicides in the maintenance of electric utility rights-of-way (ROW). Each spring, herbicide applications may begin on or after April 1st. These rules afford you important rights and duties. Vermont electric utilities maintain electric line rights-of-way with several methods, including the selective use of herbicides on trees and brush. They also encourage low-growing shrubs and trees which will crowd tall-growing species and, thus, minimize the use of herbicides. Methods of herbicide applications may include stump, stem injection, basal, soil, and foliar. Only electric utility rights-of-way that have tall-growing tree species with the potential of threatening the electric utility system are treated.

If you reside on or own property in Vermont within 1000' of an electric utility right-of-way:

1. Sign up to receive written notification from your local electric utility of plans to apply herbicide on any ROW within 1000' of your property or the property where you reside. Check nearby poles for tags identifying the utility and/or pole number, complete the form below and submit it to your local electric utility by mail before February 15th, 2026 to be added to the notification list. If determined to be qualified, you will receive notification from the utility at least 30 days prior to scheduled herbicide application.
2. You are responsible to make your local electric utility aware of the location of any potentially affected water supply, and of any other environmentally sensitive area where herbicide application ought to be avoided.
3. Watch and listen for public service announcements in newspapers and radio ads noting upcoming herbicide applications.
4. Check with your local electric utility regarding the vegetation management cycle near your particular line.
5. You have the right to request, in writing, that the utility refrain from applying herbicides in the process of clearing the right-of-way, and the utility may offer alternatives such as herbicide stump treatment or herbicide stem injections.
6. You have the right to refuse, in writing, the use of herbicides whatsoever at no cost to you if the type of lines in the right-of-way are distribution lines, bringing electric service directly to individual customers.
7. You have the right to refuse, in writing, the use of herbicides whatsoever by paying a \$30 administration fee if the type of lines in the right-of-way are transmission lines or sub-transmission lines, bringing electricity to or between substations.

For more details, or to ask additional questions, please contact your local electric utility, or one of the following:

(leave blank for local electric co. mailing address and phone)	Agency of Agriculture Public Health & Ag. Resource Mgmt 116 State St., Montpelier, VT 05602 1-802-828-2431	Department of Public Service Consumer Affairs & Public Information 112 State St., Montpelier, VT 05620 1-800-622-4496
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Based on the information above, if you believe you qualify to be notified in advance of pending herbicide applications in the rights-of-way, mail the request below to your local electric company before February 15th, 2026.

Resident/Property Owner Request to be Added to Herbicide Treatment Notification Mailing List			
Name	Town/City of Affected Property		
Street Address	Home Phone Number		
Town	Work Phone Number		
State	Zip Code	O.K. to use work number? (circle one)	Yes No
Electric Utility Account Number	Best time to contact you		
Affected Property: Year-Round Residence Summer Residence Commercial Property Water Supply Organic Farm Land Other (Circle all that apply)			
Line/Pole Identification: Utility Initials		Pole Numbers	
Please fill out this request completely to help us determine if you qualify for herbicide treatment notification. MAIL THIS REQUEST TO YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC UTILITY AT THE ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE BEFORE FEBRUARY 15 th , 2026			

HARDWICK

Enjoy furnished third floor bedroom in spacious in-town home shared with welcoming family. Shared BA. No smoking. Hypoallergenic dog considered, no other pets. \$600-plus utilities. (802) 863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required.

EHO

HARDWICK

Large furnished bedroom and private half bath available in spacious 1800s farmhouse. Plant enthusiast seeking a winter season housemate interested in sharing occasional companionship and shared meals as mutually desired. \$500/mo. plus \$50 utilities in winter months, no smoking, pets considered. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

EDUCATION

New England Journalism scholarships now open

WOBURN, Mass. – Applications are now being accepted for the 2026 New England Journalism Scholarship Program, offering scholarships of up to \$2,000 to outstanding student journalists across the region from the Journalism Education Foundation of New England (JEFNE).

Administered by the New England Newspaper and Press Association, this annual program supports up to ten students who are committed to pursuing a career in journalism or a related field. The program also includes the prestigious MacGregor Fiske Award, presented each year to an exceptional student journalist who demonstrates great promise in the profession. Eligible applicants include high school seniors and undergraduate students who are residents of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island or Vermont. Applicants will be required to submit a cover letter, transcript, résumé or biography, letter of recommendation and a portfolio of at least three published or class-produced journalism pieces. Full application details and links are available on the NENPA website.

To be considered, a completed

application must be submitted by March 27.

Qualifications for JEFNE scholarships include: must be a resident of New England; applicants may attend a college or university outside New England; residency determines eligibility, not school location; must be a high school senior or undergraduate college student planning to attend college in Fall 2026, studying journalism or a related field. Graduate students are currently not accepted; must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher; must demonstrate a strong interest in a journalism career by submitting cover letter, transcript, résumé or biography, letter of recommendation; must submit a minimum of three pieces of published or class-produced journalistic work.

Applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of the application and instructions for submitting the rest of the required documents. For any questions or more information, contact students@nenpa.com. Journalism Scholarship Program information at nenpa.com/scholarships/. Journalism scholarship application at nenpa.com/scholarship-application/

The Hardwick Gazette is a member of NENPA.



Emma Rowell, A recent graduate of Hazen Union High School and a Greensboro native, receives a certificate recognizing her as a finalist for the 2026 John Lewis Youth Leadership Award from Vermont Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas on Monday, January 12, in the Vermont Statehouse. The national honor recognizes young leaders under the age of 25 who demonstrate exceptional leadership, a commitment to social justice and a dedication to improving their communities. *photo by Heather Lumsden*

Emma Rowell finalist for youth leader award

by Paul Fixx

MONTPELIER – Vermont Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas recognized Greensboro native Emma Rowell as a finalist for the 2026 John Lewis Youth Leadership Award at the Vermont Statehouse on Monday.

The national honor recognizes young leaders under the age of 25 who demonstrate exceptional leadership, a commitment to social justice and a dedication to improving their communities.

The John Lewis Youth Leadership Award is presented by secretaries of state across the country through the National Association of Secretaries of State. The award honors the legacy of the late Congressman John Lewis, whose courage during the civil rights movement and lifelong commitment to public service continue to inspire generations of Americans.

Rowell graduated from Hazen Union High School last year and is currently pursuing her college education through Southern New Hampshire University.

While pursuing her studies, she serves her community as a 911 dispatcher for the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department, a role that places her on the front lines of public safety and emergency response.

A dedicated member of 4-H for the past nine years, Rowell made a lasting impact in her hometown by reestablishing a 4-H club in Greensboro after more than 45 years without one.

Her leadership has also been recognized at the state and national levels. In 2024, Rowell was selected as one of four Vermont 4-H representatives to attend the National 4-H Conference in Washington, D.C. During the conference, she gave a presentation on the topic "Supporting Connectedness as a Protective Factor" during a roundtable discussion for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

In 2025, Rowell led her local 4-H club in securing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to create an inclusive, safe and sustainable community gathering space in Greensboro. Serving as a key youth leader, she guided the project from planning through implementation, helping to enhance the town's outdoor environment while supporting local businesses and performers impacted by the pandemic. The sheltered, year-round space is expected to foster community connection, provide opportunities for live performances and strengthen the resilience of local public spaces.



Mrs. Wheeler's second-grade students (from left) Lily Smith and Orchid Dyer, take a moment to thank these beautiful gentle giants for a horse-drawn wagon ride through Hardwick, December 17. The event was sponsored and funded by the Friends of HES PTO.

photo by Lisa Stinson

EDUCATION

High schoolers spark curiosity in younger science learners

by Lisa Stinson



Hardwick Elementary sixth grade students (from left) Caleb Camley (left) and Estella Foster (right) record their observations during a science unit on states of matter, December 18, 2025. Hazen Union 11th-grader Chloey Camley (center) prompts critical thinking as she teaches the class.

photo by Lisa Stinson

HARDWICK – Only blocks apart, two local schools are even closer this year as they collaborate on science education. High school students enrolled in Hazen Union’s Science Enrichment class are learning to see science through the eyes of kindergarteners and sixth graders by planning and teaching lessons to students at Hardwick Elementary School.

Over the past few months, lessons on chemical reactions, air pressure, buoyancy, sound and vibration, and states of matter have engaged younger learners while challenging older students to think more deeply.

Drawing from Next Generation Science Standards, Vermont’s adopted science education



Hardwick Elementary School kindergartener Joshua Camley Jr. (right) feels the vibrations of a tuning fork as Hazen Union student Kolbey Rich describes the properties of sound waves, December 18, 2025.

photo by Lisa Stinson



Hardwick Elementary kindergarteners (from left) Kolton Patten, Lily Beer and Harper Clark wait to see if there will be a chemical reaction between the two mystery liquids Hazen Union 10th grader Kayla Raitanen (with arm outstretched) mixes together, December 11, 2025,

photo by Lisa Stinson

framework, students like 11th-grader Cloey Camley research core ideas that will appeal to the targeted grade level. “When I decide what to teach, it generally depends on what I am interested in teaching. Because if I am not interested in teaching the topic, then the students won’t be interested. Mr. Considine helps us figure out what the standard for our topic is and how we can explain it at a sixth-grade level,” Camley said.

As lessons progress, moments when teaching leads to understanding have been the most exciting. Tenth grader Kayla Raitanen has been impressed with the kindergarteners’ curiosity and critical thinking. “With the chemical reaction lesson, students were engaged in what I was doing and whether something would explode or not. At one point, during the experiment, I heard a little girl say, ‘This one is cloudy; maybe that’s the reaction.’”

Camley takes her cues from the classroom atmosphere. “Generally, after we explain something, we will ask a question to check for their understanding, and that’s generally when you can see their mood change. Usually, if they are happy/excited, they understand it or at least think they understand it, and if they seem to be questioning their answer, they probably aren’t confident in their answer.”

Of course, as any teacher would attest, not everything goes as planned in the classroom. Sometimes lessons run too long or too short, and Hazen’s student teachers must adjust on the fly. “When we don’t have enough to do, we improvise, ask more questions, or explain more



Will the solution fizz, expand, turn color? Kindergartner Raiden Herbert (r) and Hazen Union 10th-grade student Willow Dyer (l) work together in a chemical reaction lab as part of a collaborative science unit between the two schools, December 11, 2025.

photo by Lisa Stinson

to gauge an understanding from the students,” Camley commented.

While the excitement of a bubbling test tube or molecules in motion can kindle enthusiasm, the most powerful moments come from students learning together.

By stepping into the role of teacher, Hazen students are reinforcing their own understanding of science while helping younger learners gain confidence in asking questions and making observations.

For some, the experience has revealed an unexpected interest in teaching. “This experience taught me that the same topic can be taught in so many different ways for different ages and made me realize that I like teaching on a smaller scale,” said Camley.

Both schools hope to continue the program, underscoring the value of peer-led learning in science education.



Sixth-grade students (from left) Gracie Cruichshank, Brantley Gouin and Colton Daigneault learn about the properties of air pressure on December 11, 2025, with Hazen Union School science teacher Marc Considine.

photo by Lisa Stinson

WHERE ELSE?

- Where else would the public get the very complete coverage of the candidates for local and state offices such as appeared in this week’s issue?
- Where else would there be coverage of the exciting news that Habitat for Humanity will be building two housing units in Greensboro Bend?
- Where else was there coverage of the beautiful mural recently unveiled in the Bend?
- Where else has there been unbiased coverage of the critical issues such as the future of the Lakeview School or discussion of the proposed use of Town Hall?
- Where else do you find such complete coverage of events at the Highland Arts Center?
- Where else do you find such complete coverage of Hardwick sports and local teams?

Remember the value received and how an investment by you will make the service even better. As a 501(c)(3), all donations in support of this valuable resource are tax deductible. Your support, through a donation, will help us fill the vacuum in local news and the continuation and expansion of full and unbiased information about the things that directly impact your lives. Please consider giving your support to the Gazette and its hard-working staff.

hardwickgazette.org





The Laddies, consisting of (from left) Rick Atkinson, Bob Barrett and Bob Sassaman and Tom Wales, will lead a singalong on January 18 in Adamant. courtesy photo

Singalong, Jan. 18 in Adamant

ADAMANT – A singalong of 1960s and '70s favorites led by The Laddies will be the free event at the Adamant Community Club's Winter Sunday series on Sunday, Jan. 18, at 3 p.m.

The central Vermont-based group The Laddies consist of Bob Sassaman and Tom Wales on guitar, Bob Barrett on ukulele, and Rich Atkinson on piano and concertina. The singalong audience can expect to hear Beatles tunes and classics

like "Mustang Sally" and "Wooly Bully."

Admission is free. The series will continue each Sunday through March 1. For more information, call (802) 454-7103.

Craven's film, "Lost Nation" screens Jan. 16

HARDWICK – Jay Craven's newest film, "Lost Nation," will screen at 7 p.m., Friday, Jan. 16, at the Jeudevine Memorial Library. Craven will appear at the screening for post-film questions.

"Lost Nation" is a Revolutionary War-era action drama set in the early Republic of Vermont, stars Irish actor Kevin Ryan ("Copper," Harry Wild) as Vermont founding father and rebel schemer, Ethan Allen, who leads resistance to New Yorker land claims, launches an ill-fated attack on British forces in Montreal and leads invasions by his Green Mountain Boys into Yorker strongholds of Guilford and Brattleboro.

Lost Nation was shot at 52 Vermont and Massachusetts locations and includes 43 speaking characters, including Vermonters Ira Allen, Seth Warner, Gideon Brownson, Thomas Chittenden and founding fathers Alexander Hamilton, George Washington and Samuel Adams (played by his direct descendent, Samuel Adams).

This film screening event will be held in the Parker Ladd Community Room of the Jeudevine Memorial Library, located at 93 N. Main Street. This is not a library-sponsored event. For more information and tickets go to keppresents.org.

Quest! Auditions through Jan. 24

CABOT – Cabot Community Theater is seeking performers for its May 7-10 performance of "Quest!" Adults, teens and children are needed for parts of all sizes. The play has lots of lead roles, including wizards, elves, demigods and assorted heroes, as well as smaller parts and ensemble roles with no solo lines. Casting will be flexible in terms of age and gender. Everyone is welcome to audition.

Auditions will be held in the Cabot School Performing Arts Center, 25 Common Road, on Sunday, Jan. 18, 1-4 p.m.; Tuesday, Jan. 20, 7-8:30 p.m.; and Saturday, Jan. 24, 1-4 p.m.

Sign up for one 45-minute

slot at tinyurl.com/Questauditions Younger children who are only interested in a very small or non-speaking role should sign up for one of the designated slots at 1-1:45 p.m., where they will do some theater activities but not have to read from a script.

A list of roles and a link to the script will be sent to everyone who signs up to audition. Rehearsals will be weekend days and Tuesday evenings, February through April, with most people rehearsing once a week; the schedule will be determined after casting.

For questions or further information, email info@cct.aroundvt.org



WGDR 91.1 FM
WGDH 91.7 FM
CENTRAL VERMONT COMMUNITY RADIO

Current 2025 Schedule

as of Nov 2025

Talk/Interview Music

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

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Young Concert Artists on Tour, including (from left) Oliver Neubauer, Lisa Hokomura, Bennett Tsai, James Baik and Toby Appel will perform Sunday, Jan. 25, 3 p.m. at South Church Hall, St. Johnsbury. *courtesy photo*

String Quintet to perform Jan. 25

ST. JOHNSBURY – Young Concert Artists on Tour will appear on Sunday, Jan. 25, 3 p.m. at South Church Hall, St. Johnsbury, presented by the Northeast Kingdom Classical Series.

The ensemble, viola, two violins and two cellos, includes four young, prize-winning musicians and their seasoned master artist. The concert will include works of

Elizando and Dohnanyi that highlight different combinations of the instruments, and they all come together for Schubert’s “C Major Quintet,” one of chamber music’s masterworks.

Tickets are available at the door or online, with a special rate for those on a budget. For more ticket and program information, visit nekclassicalseries.org.

Craven’s film, “Lost Nation” screen Jan. 16

HARDWICK – Jay Craven’s newest film, “Lost Nation,” will screen at 7 p.m., Friday, Jan. 16, at the Jeudevine Memorial Library. Craven will appear at the screening for post-film questions.

“Lost Nation” is a Revolutionary War-era action drama set in the early Republic of Vermont, stars Irish actor Kevin Ryan (“Copper,” Harry Wild) as Vermont founding father and rebel schemer, Ethan Allen, who leads resistance to New Yorker land claims, launches an ill-fated attack on British forces in Montreal and leads inva-

sions by his Green Mountain Boys into Yorker strongholds of Guilford and Brattleboro.

Lost Nation was shot at 52 Vermont and Massachusetts locations and includes 43 speaking characters, including Vermonters Ira Allen, Seth Warner, Gideon Brownson, Thomas Chittenden and founding fathers Alexander Hamilton, George Washington and Samuel Adams (played by his direct descendent, Samuel Adams).

This film screening event will be held in the Parker Ladd Community Room of the Jeudevine Memorial Library, located at 93 N. Main Street. This is not a library-sponsored event. For more information and tickets go to kcppresents.org.

Farmers Night Series presents Bob Wagner and Friends

MONTPELIER – The 2026 Farmers Night Weekly Concert Series begins on Wednesday, Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m., with Bob Wagner & Friends.

Burlington-based musician Bob Wagner is known for his guitar work, vocals and songwriting. His collaborations bring together a cast of musicians. Joining him at Farmers Night will be the Josh Weinstein on bass, and vocals, and Dan Ryan on drums.

Wagner’s longtime collaboration with Vermont singer-songwriter Kat Wright has seen him tour the country, performing at venues such as the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Webster Hall in New York City, NPR’s Mountain Stage and the Montreal Jazz Fest. In 2025 Wagner began touring with Phish bassist Mike Gordon’s solo project, performing at the Joy Theater during Jazz Fest in New Orleans. Wagner is also known for organizing and leading benefit concerts in the Burlington area, and serves as bandleader for the Hug Your Farmer music series.

The Farmers Night Concert Series is a longstanding State



Bob Wagner

House tradition which goes back over 100 years to a time when lawmakers entertained themselves in the House Chamber mid-week while away from home. Artists from around the state, in genres ranging from classical music to bluegrass to spoken word, perform in the well of the House Chamber each Wednesday night at 7:30 during the legislative session. All concerts are free and open to the public.

Auditions for “Pippin,” Jan. 17-18

HYDE PARK – Lamoille County Players will hold auditions for “Pippin,” directed by Shannon Sanborn, on January 17 and 18, 1 p.m., at the Hyde Park Opera House. Performance dates will be

April 17-19 and 24-26. If interested in auditioning, visit lcplayers.com for more information. Auditioners may attend either audition date and do not need to sign up in advance.

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Wedding Policy

The Hardwick Gazette provides space for engagements and wedding news as a free service. Wedding announcements and photos should be received by our office within two months of the ceremony. Photographs supplied will be returned when accompanied by a SASE. Use of engagement and wedding information, as well as accompanying photographs, is at the discretion of the editors.

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

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EVENTS

Wednesday, January 14

HOMESCHOOL UKULELE CLASS for beginners, 11 a.m. for ages 7 and up. Borrow one from the library or bring your own. Sign up required: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

DEATH CAFE, 6 p.m., Albany Public Library, 830 Main St., Albany. Informal conversation. Refreshments provided.

Thursday, January 15

STUDENT PROJECT EXHIBITION, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Cabot High School. Students will present their work.

CATCHING UP ON CLIMATE CHANGE, with meteorologist Roger Hill, 6:30 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, Marshfield. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary.org or (802) 426-3581.

Saturday, January 17

ALBANY LIBRARY WRITING GROUP, 2 - 4 p.m., Albany Public Library, 830 Main St. Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

FIBER ARTS CLUB, 10 a.m., Woodbury Community Library.

Sunday, January 18

ANNUAL GROUP ART SHOW Opening Reception, 2 p.m., Jaquith Public Library. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary.org or (802) 426-3581.

QUEST! AUDITIONS, 1 to 4 p.m., Cabot School Performing Arts Center, 25 Common Road. Casting kids and adults for Cabot Community Theater's spring play. Sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/questauditions>. Questions: info@cct.aroundvt.org.

Tuesday, January 20

KIDS' CHORUS, 3 p.m., Jeudvine Memorial Library, Hardwick, for ages 9 and up. Information: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

QUEST! AUDITIONS, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Cabot School Performing Arts Center, 25 Common Road. Casting kids and adults for Cabot Community Theater's spring play. Sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/questauditions>. Questions: info@cct.aroundvt.org.

Wednesday, January 21

HOMESCHOOL UKULELE CLASS for Beginners, 11 a.m., Jeudvine Memorial Library, Hardwick, for ages 7 and up. Information: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

BAKING CLUB, 3 p.m., Jeudvine Memorial Library, Hardwick, for ages 10 and up. Information: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Saturday, January 24

QUEST! AUDITIONS, 1 to 4 p.m., Cabot School Performing Arts Center, 25 Common Road. Casting kids and adults for Cabot Community Theater's spring play. Sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/questauditions>. Questions: info@cct.aroundvt.org.

BUFFALO MOUNTAIN Town Forest Expansion proposal presen-

tation, 2 to 4 p.m., Parker Ladd Room, Jeudvine Library, N. Main St., Hardwick. Refreshments served. Sponsored by the Hardwick Conservation Commission. Information: Rachel Kane at (802) 472-5512.

Sunday, January 25

WINTER FARMERS MARKET, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Hazen Union School gymnasium.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON POETRY, 2 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, Marshfield. Hosted by the Poetry Society of Vermont and the Jaquith Library, featuring Scudder Parker and Judith Janoo. Information: jaquithpubliclibrary.org or

(802) 426-3581.

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-Bar-koczy in preparing for the Vermont State Chess Tournament on March 28.

KIDS' CHORUS, Tuesdays, 3 p.m., Jeudvine Library, Hardwick. For ages 8 and up. Vocal warm-ups, musical games and group singing. Information: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@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.,

See EVENTS, Next Page

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EVENTS

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

TAI CHI CLASSES, Tuesdays, 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, 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., 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 andshovels.

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

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

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

Exhibits

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.

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Lady Cats take over top spot in Division III



Hazen Union Varsity girls coach Randy Lumsden watches his team during play against Oxbow January 7. Team members from right include Assistant Coach Sue Rivard and players Julia des Groseilliers, Ari Nichols, Ella Renaud, Sadie Gann, Marina Smith and Kennidee Gouin.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

by Ken Brown

NEWPORT – The Hazen Union girls basketball team capped off an impressive run over the holiday break with a statement win over reigning Capital League champs North Country.

Mya Lumsden and Kelsie Rivard scored 17 points apiece to lead Hazen to a 46-34 road win over Division I North Country last Friday. The Lady Cats took a seven-point lead into the fourth quarter and Lumsden doused any chance of a Lady Falcon comeback with 11 points in the final eight minutes. Addie Nelson led North Country (6-2) with 15 points in what was their second loss of the season after falling to Lamoille on the road two nights earlier. Rivard is on a collision course with 1,000 career

points in just her junior season, averaging nearly 23 points per game for the Lady Cats. She has played on the biggest of stages already in her young career, but stepping on North Country's court was extra special for the entire Rivard family. Her mother Sue, who is an assistant coach on the Lady Cat bench, held the all-time scoring record at North Country for 29 years before it was broken by Sabine Brueck last February. Brueck and the Lady Falcons have been the bell of the ball in the Capital the last three seasons, making it to three straight division II state title games and cutting down the nets in 2023. Hazen announcing themselves with a statement win as the new kid on the block in the Capital in a gymnasium Rivard's mother helped build, made it that much more sweeter.

"I feel like we were a little



Hazen Union senior Wildcat Isabelle Gouin (right) looks to pass as she's defended by Kayleigh Davis (left) of Oxbow during action in Hardwick January 7. In the back is official Jordan Blais. The Wildcats beat the Olympians 64-52.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

overlooked by everybody going into the season and into a new league. Peoples Academy is up-and-coming, talented team and coming off big divisional wins over them and top seeded Oxbow, then beating North Country on this court, makes a big statement for our team. It's been really cool hearing stories from people who saw my mom's career. It was awesome playing on this court and to see her announced as a legendary 1,000-point scorer before the game," said Rivard.

Rivard, Lumsden and the Lady Cats have been on roll since suffering their only loss of the season to Division I powerhouse CVU on December 16. The dynamic duo has been on an absolute heater ever since, leading the Lady Cats to dominant wins over Thetford Academy, Randolph, Enosburg, Peoples Academy (PA), Oxbow and now North Country. Rivard has averaged 22 points per game and Lumsden 14 over that span. They have vaulted to the top of the current Division III rankings after a 54-24 dismantling of PA in the 3rd Annual Winter Solstice at the Barre Auditorium, followed by a 64-52 win over an undefeated Oxbow team. The lessons learned in the loss to a CVU team that has claimed two Division I state championships the last four seasons were invaluable to Rivard and her talented squad.

"Going into their gym was definitely intimidating. We had been preparing for that game ever since it was scheduled and we

knew going in that it was going to be a tough match-up. Even thought it didn't end in our favor, it was a huge stepping stone for our team and it showed us what we need to work on to get better," said Rivard.

Hazen will look to make it seven straight wins on Saturday as they travel to take on a Randolph team riding their own four-game winning streak.



Hazen Union 9th-grader Eloise Foster (No. 5) turns the corner on Abby Longto of Oxbow during play at Hazen January 7. Hazen won 64-52.

photo by Vanessa Fournier




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Twinfield-Cabot boys finally make it home, pummel Blue Mountain



Twinfield senior Eli Russell (center) soars to the hoop for two surrounded by Blue Mountain players (from left) Conner Dailey (no. 51), Landon Houle (No. 4) and Evan Farguharson (No.22) In the back is Sam McLane of Twinfield-Cabot. Twinfield-Cabot won the January 8 match 76-30.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

by Ken Brown

MARSHFIELD – The Twinfield-Cabot boys basketball team returned home from a grueling six game road stretch over the holiday break to pummel Blue Mountain last week, improving to 6-1.

Senior Tej Stewart poured in 27 points to lead the Trojans to a dominant 76-30 win over Blue Mountain last Thursday in their home opener. Fellow senior Eli Russell buried a pair of threes on his way to a 14-point night as Twinfield-Cabot took a 39-12 lead into the break and never looked back. Zepherin Hebert added 10 points and freshman Azeem Stewart chipped in with nine in the win. Brody Scott led the Bucks with 10 points as they fell to 0-5.

“It was great to finally play in front of Trojan Nation,” said head coach Kris Bador. “We’re continuing to work on a few wrinkles on both ends of the court and will get ready for a busy week against some tough ball clubs,”

For a second straight season Bador’s talented squad passed several tests over the Holiday Break, including an impressive win over divisional powerhouse Williamstown in the 3rd Annual

Winter Solstice at the Barre Auditorium on January 2. Stewart and Russell scored 13 points apiece and Hebert and Sam McLane complimented with nine apiece to help down the Blue Devils 76-63. The Trojans drained seven field goals from long range and converted 15 free throws on the night to answer any runs from a Williamstown team that was a Division IV semi-finalist last winter. Nick Mascitti paced the Blue Devils with 18 and Alex Clark added 14 in the loss. The Trojans followed that up the very next night with a hard-fought 56-46 road win over Division III Enosburg. Russell led the way with 13 points and Sam Churchill and Thomas Gouge provided the muscle inside against a physical Hornet team with nine points apiece.

The bounce-back wins were much needed for the Trojans after losing another heartbreaker to crosstown rival Danville 52-48 to end the year. Sebastian Eldred punished Twinfield-Cabot with 21 points, 13 boards and Alijah Andrews added 18 tough points in the paint. The defending Division IV champs have handed Twinfield-Cabot losses in five of their last six meetings, including knockout blows to their playoff runs the



Tej Stewart (No. 2) of Twinfield-Cabot races past Blue Mountains Landon Houle (No. 4) at Twinfield, January 8. Twinfield-Cabot outscored their opponents 76-30.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Twinfield-Cabots Omar Miksic Knibb (No. 13) looks to the basket followed by teammate Tej Stewart. Following the play are Connor Dailey (No. 51) and Jamal Saibon (No. 23) of Blue Mountain. Twinfield-Cabot took the January 8 victory 76-30.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

past two seasons. Bador’s Trojans are currently ranked second in the divisional standings behind undefeated West Rutland and will look to continue to build momentum for a highly anticipated rematch against the Bears on their home court at the end of the month.

“We survived a tough stretch of games on the road to start the season with a pair of back-to-backs and to be sitting at 6-1, we’ll take it. We were back in the lab all week to get

ready for a tough Richford team that showed how talented they can be by knocking off Danville last week,” said Bador.

Twinfield-Cabot welcomed Richford to town on Tuesday and will stay at home for a Mountain League clash against Division III BFA-Fairfax on Thursday night. The Trojans will wrap up a four game homestand next Tuesday against Northfield.

Wildcats weather tough schedule with big road win

by Ken Brown

VERGENNES – The Hazen Union boys basketball team bounced back from a heartbreaker against division rival Thetford Academy earlier in the week with a big road win against Vergennes over the past weekend to improve to 4-2 on the season.

Jamison Lamarre scored a game-high 23 points to lead the Wildcats to a tough 65-60 road win over Vergennes on Saturday. Hazen and Lamarre (seven rebounds, five assists) appeared to be on cruise control early, taking a 40-28 advantage into the break.

The Commodores came storming back to cut the lead to one with eight minutes to play behind seven second half threes.

Hazen hit their free throws down the stretch to hold on for a gutty road win as Sully Laflam added 17 points and Ethan Gann chipped in with 10 points and six rebounds.

Theo Elzinga led Vergennes with 18 in the loss, falling to 2-4 on the season. It was a big bounce-back win for head coach Aaron Hill and his veteran club, coming off a gut wrenching 44-42 home loss to Thetford Academy on Thursday.

Connor Sloop led the Panthers with 12, including the game's final basket in the closing seconds.

Hazen led 42-40 with just over four minutes to go and took the air out of the ball for over two minutes before Thetford turned them over and tied the game at the other end. Another Hazen turnover led to Sloop's game-winner and the Wildcats couldn't answer.

Lincoln Hill led the Wildcats with 13 points and Lamarre added nine. Xander Oshoniyi complimented Sloop with 11 points as they continued to have the Wildcats number.

The Panthers have won four out of the last six Division III state championships, beating Hazen in

the title game the last two years.

"They're a good program with big physical players, but we just didn't show up ready to play. For whatever reason they've had our number the last few years. As disappointed as I was with how flat we were Thursday, I was thrilled with the energy we brought on the road over the weekend against a really good Vergennes program," said Hill.

Hill's team sits at 4-2 and is positioned well in a rugged Division III bracket after sweeping Peoples Academy (PA) over the holiday break. Lamarre punished the Wolves with 24 points and 11 rebounds in a 66-53 win in the 3rd Annual Winter Solstice at the Barre Auditorium on January 3. Morgan Michaud was equally as impressive for the Cats with 22 points, seven rebounds and four assists. Hazen's defense held the high scoring Jack Lafayette to 16 points on the night as they fell to 3-4 on the season. The Wildcats

currently sit fourth in the current Division III rankings and will have a chance to officially announce themselves as contenders this week with pivotal matchups against third ranked Enosburg and undefeated Randolph this week.

"I feel like we are starting to figure things out rotation-wise and I started to see some of the hard work we've putting in pay off offensively against Vergennes. It was encouraging to see us starting to get more comfortable with our roles on the offensive end on Saturday. Things ran smoother and I think it will only improve as our understanding of the offense we want to run improves as the season goes on," said Hill.

Hazen welcomes Enosburg to the Cat Den on Thursday night and will travel to Randolph on Saturday. The Wildcats will stay on the road for a match-up against Lake Region next Tuesday. All home games can be streamed live on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

KEN BROWN'S HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

Twinfield-Cabot girls still searching for first win

STOWE – The Twinfield-Cabot girls basketball team couldn't keep up with Danville to start the week before losing a defensive battle to Stowe over the weekend, falling to 0-7 on the season.

An improved Stowe team defended their home court with a hard-fought 28-22 win over the Lady Trojans last Friday. The Lady Raiders improved to 2-4 on the season.

Earlier in the week, Peyton Winn drained five threes on her way to a 19-point night to power Danville to a 57-35 road win. Myah Morgan added 18 as the Lady Bears improved to 2-6. Over the holiday break, Hannah Spencer poured in a career-high 28 points to lead Williamstown to a 51-37 victory over Twinfield-Cabot in the 3rd Annual Winter Solstice at the Barre Auditorium. Chloe North paced the Lady Trojans with 10 points and Finley Washburn chipped in with nine. North has been a bright spot for Twinfield-Cabot, enjoying a breakout junior campaign that included 18 points and five three-pointers in a 45-37 loss to BFA-Fairfax on December 30.

The Lady Trojans will look to get on track with a home tilt against BFA-Fairfax on Monday night. They welcome Williamstown to town on Wednesday before hitting the road for a match-up

against Richford on Friday.

Personal bests for Charger bowlers

CLAREMONT, NH – Junior Kosmos Gletsos led the way for the Craftsbury Academy (CA) bowling team last weekend with a career-high across the border at Maple Lanes.

Gletsos bowled a personal best 169 in his final game after a slow start, taking his average for the season up over 121. Senior teammate Tucker Holcomb was the most consistent, finishing his day with a 141 after a solid 133 to open. Senior Soren Stelma-Leonard continued to improve in his first season, posting games of 130 and 137.

To start the new year, the Chargers lost a heartbreaker in Bakers to White River Valley at Sparetime in Colchester. The Wildcats scratched out a 140-139 in the opening game in the first round before pulling away for a 22 pin win to seal the match. Senior Parker Holcomb led the way, rolling a personal best 131 and junior Eva Small's 127 was her best game of the season.

"Our athletes had a hard time getting started but sowed up in the Bakers. We inevitably lost a heartbreaker in the tenth frame, and it just wasn't our match to win. We continue to improve with personal bests every week and I am so proud of how far this team has come!"

said head coach Ashley Gravel.

In other news, St. Johnsbury Academy won their first match of the season over the weekend and Randolph and Fair Haven continued to roll, both claiming their fourth wins of the year to remain at the top of the team standings. Fair Haven sophomore Aiden Goyette bowled the first perfect game (300)

of the year in week-three and the second perfect game in Vermont high school bowling history to vault him into the No. 6 spot in the individual standings. Randolph sophomore Nathan Luciano continues to pace the field with a 211 average.

The Chargers will be back in action this Saturday at the Valley Bowl in Randolph.



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ERIC HANSON'S SKI REPORT



Craftsbury's Ruth Krebs (119) follows Selma Nevin (71) of the University of Colorado in the 10 km classic national championship race in Lake Placid. Krebs is a first year student at Bowdoin College. photo by Eric Hanson



Craftsbury Green Racing Project skier Michaela Keller Miller (82) takes off in the 10 km classic race at U.S. Nationals in early January at Lake Placid's Mount Van Hovenberg. photo by Eric Hanson

Skiers raise money for warmth

CRAFTSBURY – Over 100 skiers took to the trails to raise money for Northeast Kingdom Community Action's Warmth Fund, January 3, at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center. Kendal Bowen from Green Mountain Valley School won the women's 5 km race in 16:34.

Local skiers included Hannah Dreissigacker 3, Aemilia Terrone 4, Anners Johnson 5, Anna Cotterill 6, Gina Campoli 9, and Polly Allen 12.

For the men's 5 km, Neal Graves was first in 15:59 followed by Jin Ramsay 3, Dean Roy 6, and Kevin Nadzam 10.

In the women's 10 km event, Hallie Grossman took the win in 33:55 with Susan Dunklee 3, Anya Moriarity 4, Emily Dreissigacker 5, Phoebe Bakeman 8, Amalie Pratt 14, and Elizabeth Mackenzie 15. Jake Hollenbach placed first in the 10 km men's race in 30:44.

Other local skiers included Isaac Nadzam 5, Alex Howe 7, Oakley Crawford 11, Travis Roy 14, Ethan Dreissigacker 22, Christopher Gaupe 23, Soren Wilkens 25, Cyrus Kidder 35, Andrew Crawford 38, Alan Moody 40, Matt Moody 43, James Fredericks 45, Craig Taylor 47, Bertrand Ganee 50, and Andrew Ross 54. Over \$3,000 was raised for the Warmth Fund.



Craftsbury Ski Club (CSC) coaches Audrey Magnan and Raleigh Gossling (on the right facing downhill) launch themselves down the ski wax testing lanes to help prepare fast skis for CSC and Craftsbury Green Racing Project skiers at U.S. Nationals, January 4-9.

photo by Eric Hanson.

Locals at U.S. Cross Country Skiing Championships

LAKE PLACID, N.Y. – Many local skiers convened at the Mount Van Hovenberg trail network for the U.S. Cross Country Ski Championships from January 4-9. Craftsbury Ski Club juniors, college level skiers, and Craftsbury Green Racing Project (GRP) skiers joined nearly 700 athletes from across the U.S. and Canada.

GRPer Brian Bushey had some of the top results with a 9th in the 10 km classic race and a 7th in the 20 km mass start skate race (4th U.S. skier). John Schwinghamer (GRP) had the fastest classic sprint qualifier time but did not move out of the quarterfinals in the heats.

Ruth Krebs from Craftsbury and now a student at Bowdoin College, made it to the top 30 U18-U20 skier grouping in the skate sprint, won her quarterfinal and semifinal, and placed 3rd in the final. Ava Thurston from Waterbury, Vt., and currently a Dartmouth student had a 6th in the 10 km classic race and 4ths in the freestyle sprint, 20 km freestyle, and classic sprint races for an impressive showing.

Northern Vermont High School Race at Outdoor Center

CRAFTSBURY – On January 7, teams from BFA Fairfax, Stowe, Peoples Academy, Lamoille Union, St. Johnsbury, All Saints, Lake Region, and Craftsbury Academy (CA) tested their classic ski skills in an afternoon of races at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

Craftsbury's Oakley Crawford won the boys races in 18:44 followed by Magnus Hayden (PA) and Max Demaine (Lake Region). Oryon Hart (CA) was 6th, Jin Ramsey (PA) 25, Linden Urie (LR) 32, and Eli Davis (LR) 33.

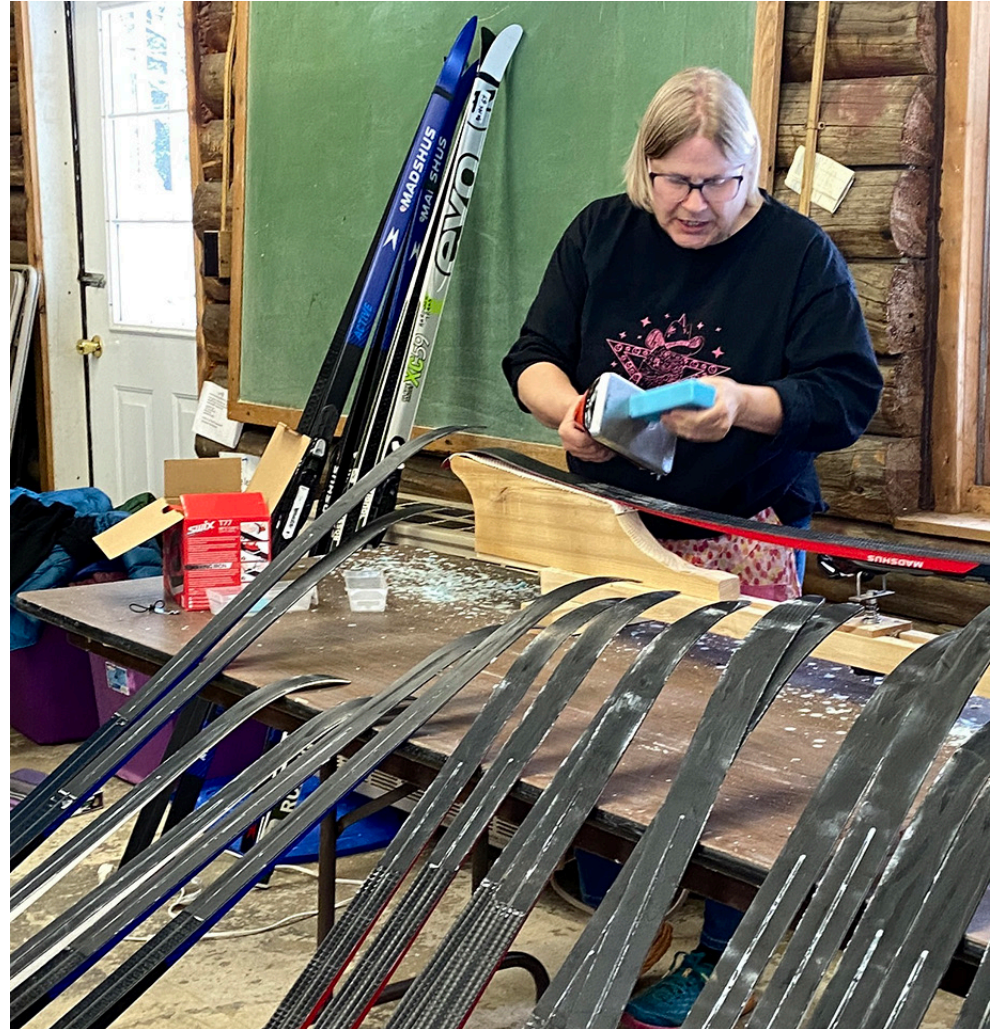
In the girls varsity race, St. Johnsbury's Anya Moriarity placed 1st (21:19) followed by Aemilia Terrone (CA) 2, Nora Demaine (LR) 3, Kate Mackenzie (St. J) 10, Lila Bunten (CA) 12, and Lila Mackenzie (St. J) 17.

Ada Allen was 5th in the JV girls' race.

For the middle schoolers, Bowman Suddaby (PA) placed 1st in 9:54 with CA skiers Hollis Allen 3, Bea Johnson 5, Joe Krebs 10, Eleanor Hammond 11, and Beckham English 25.



Hardwick Trails volunteers (from left) Corey Hathaway, Brendan Buckley and Andrew Gilbert apply glide wax to cross country skis to prepare them for the upcoming ski season during a Hardwick Trails work party, Saturday, Jan. 3, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Cabin behind Hazen Union School, which serves as a base for cross-country ski and snowshoe equipment and winter trails committee programming. photo by Helen Beattie



Kristen Leahy waxes skis during her four hour shift, at the Hardwick Trails waxing party Saturday, January 3. photo by Helen Beattie

Free loaner skis, snowshoes available for lessons, tours, games

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – This year’s early snow cover has allowed the Hardwick Trails Committee to get an early start grooming the extensive trails network. Trails are now open to all community members.

For the first time in the history of the Hardwick Trails ski program, a team of volunteers glide-waxed the entire ski inventory. Five volunteers joined the waxing party, Saturday morning, Jan. 3, with an upgrading of the loaner skis, owing to the Prevot Family Foundation’s contributions over a number of recent years.

The waxing crew included Kristen Leahy, Brendan Buckley and Hardwick Trails members Eric Remick, Corey Hathaway and Andy Gilbert.

With loaner skis waxed, the committee was ready for the January 10 start of beginner ski lessons and staffing the cabin to offer loaner skis and snowshoes last weekend.

Loans of snowshoes or skis (classic or skate), boots and poles are available to community members of any age on Saturday mornings, between 9 and 11 a.m., in the cabin behind Hazen Union school through to February 14. There is a week loan option.

Those walking or snowshoeing on the trails should avoid the ski tracks created for classic skiers, with the blue-Shepard’s trail reserved for skiers and snowshoers only.

Saturday morning beginner ski lessons for Hardwick area community members are offered when snow and weather conditions are favorable. Instructors are

available to work with those who are new to the sport or would like to improve their skills.

Beginner Nordic ski lessons are from 9:15 to 10 a.m., with skiers gathering at the log cabin behind Hazen Union School.

Those wanting to borrow equipment for a lesson should arrive 15 minutes early to be fully outfitted. Young children must be accompanied by an adult. Family participation is encouraged.

This year, expanded options are being offered to further skill development beyond the introductory level. There are three options.

Multi-generational games on skis at the Hazen Union field will be held from 10 to 10:45 a.m. each

Saturday. The variety of games might include Red Light-Green Light on skis. “Playing games is a great way to improve your skiing comfort level and have a hoot in the process,” said trails committee member Helen Beattie.

Small group tours of the trails from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday’s will be tailored to participant’s skill levels and led by an experienced skier. Participants must pre-register to ensure the availability of volunteer guides. Email how many in a party will be participating and the estimated skill level to HardwickTrails@gmail.com by the Wednesday preceding the Saturday offering and look for confirmation.

Skate skiing clinics will also be offered in the 10 to 11 a.m. time

slot. Look for notice of this offering and a sign-up process.

Lessons may be canceled due to adverse weather or trail conditions. Check the Hardwick Trails website at hardwicktrails.com or the Hardwick Trails Facebook page by 8:30 a.m. on the Saturday morning of the lesson for notice of cancellation.

The goal of the Hardwick Trails and recreation committees is to increase the number of people using the trails during winter months and ensure access to equipment is not a barrier. The Hardwick Trails are one of the hidden treasures of the community, available to explore in all their quiet beauty, said the committee.

Outdoor Center adapts to new wax technology

by Paul Fixx

CRAFTSBURY – A July 2025 WCAX story reported that “Researchers have uncovered so-called forever chemicals at regional ski racing areas.” While that story said, “. . . it’s a sign that change is needed, starting at home.”

Ollie Burrus at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center (COC) says that change has already come.

Until 2019, ski waxes used in the U.S. routinely contained per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances-- or PFAS-- a dangerous and persistent group of chemicals.

The use of PFAS was an issue mostly at the elite racing end of the nordic skiing spectrum, where a room full of technicians preparing

skis without any personal protective equipment, said Burrus. Now gloves and masks are standard equipment for those prepping skis for elite racers, he said.

Newer waxes don’t have the same properties as the old ones, but the playing field is leveled even if those who’ve been in the sport longer recall being able to go faster, said Burrus.

Burrus, a nordic skiing race director, says it’s now his mission to make sure that no skier uses wax containing PFAS at Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

“Vermont banned the sale of ski waxes with intentionally added PFAS in 2023 and they will be banned in New Hampshire in 2027,” said the WCAX story. “Still,

on many ski slopes, the damage may be done.”

Soil under ski trails at COC has been tested and found to contain low levels of PFAS, including some that have broken down in the environment, making them more dangerous

Burrus said there’s no current danger to Craftsbury residents or skiers at COC. Ski areas in general show a much lower impact than airports, for example. “While it’s a low impact, it’s not as low as was thought,” he said.

Coming to grips with a problem we didn’t know was an issue, has been a societal issue, said Burrus. “Ski areas are not hiding from the impact of PFAS, We’re dealing with it.”

KEN BROWN'S SPORT NUGGETS

Runners Roundup

MONTPELIER – Several local runners braved the cold over the holiday break to post strong results in the Central Vermont Runners (CVR) New Year's Eve 5K.

Calais native Sargent Burns posted a fourth overall finish in frigid temperatures with a time of 19:19 to wrap up the final event of 2025 in the CVR/Onion River Outdoors Race Series. The 20-year-old former U-32 standout helped lead both the Raider track and field and cross-country boy's programs to a combined six Division II state championships. Burns was also a member of the 2021 U-32 team that took home Vermont's first New England High School Cross-Country championship in three decades.

Equally impressive was Cabot's Dahe Stoddard's eighth overall finish with a time of 21:10. The 48-year-old Hazen Union cross-country head coach finished second to East Montpelier's Peter Maksimow in his age group. The cold temps didn't slow down Mack Garder-Morse of Calais as the 64-year-old finished 24th overall with a time of 25:03. St. Johnsbury's Peter Luyckx (54) posted a top twenty finish with a time of 23:59. John Brenner (28) of Needham,

Mass., bested the field of nearly 100 runners with a time of 17:49.

Dillon Burns (46) of Calais finished 37th overall and was tops in the female 45-49 age group with a time of 27:17. Plainfield's Laura Lapierre (43) was fourth in her age division and posted a 61st overall finish with a time of 32:13. Winooski's Sophie Doman (26) finished 9th overall and was top female in the field with a time of 21:12.

The first competition on the 2026 CVR schedule is the Millstone Madness Snowshoe Race in Barre on February 8.

Otten named to Vermont Lions Cup roster

MARSHFIELD – Twinfield-Cabot's Jola Otten put a bow on an outstanding high school soccer career earlier this month by being named to the 2026 Vermont Lions Cup boys roster.

Otten had a stellar senior campaign for a record-breaking Caledonia United (Twinfield-Cabot-Danville) boys soccer team this past fall, leading the program to its first undefeated regular season (16-0) and its first Division IV state championship match. Cal United fell to

top-seeded Twin Valley 2-0 in the state title match at Rutland High School. Otten formed a three-headed monster with senior teammates Eli Russell and Sam McLane as Cal United outscored its opponents 90-10 throughout their historic run. Otten scored a career-high 14 goals and was a First Team All-Mountain League selection.

Joining Otten on the Vermont boys roster this summer are Randolph's Zane Cooper and George Rosalba, Mount Mansfield's Levi Causey and Otis Lee, Twin Valley's Tucker Magnant, Montpelier's Will Curtis, Burlington's Faraja Diedonre, Peoples Academy's Noah Brown, CVU's Sebastian Bronk, Will Wallace and Julian Olin, Harwood's Brycen Scharff and Emmanuel Mego-Vasquez, Mt. Abe's James Graziedei, South Burlington's Sebastian Bertmann, West Rutland's Brayden Schutt, Burr & Burton Academy's Bodie Smith, Eagan Murray and Ethan Pringle-Corcoran of Essex, Ryker Mosehauer of Vergennes and Evan Bretton from Rice.

The Lions Cup match-up between state rivals Vermont and New Hampshire will be held at Hanover High School on July 18.

New Vermont turkey, deer, moose regulations, seasons

by Vermont Fish and Wildlife

AREA TOWNS – Vermont Fish and Wildlife periodically updates hunting regulations as new issues arise, conditions change or new opportunities become available. Several changes take effect in 2026. They are intended to provide additional hunting opportunity and allow for more effective management.

For turkey, the fall archery season has been extended. It now begins on October 1, and runs until the Friday before the regular deer season in November.

The regular moose season has been extended from six days to nine days, and now includes two weekends. The harvest is still controlled by adjusting the number of permits available, but this change provides more flexibility for hunters. Success rates will be more consistent and less affected by poor weather.

Deer regulations saw a number of changes. The youth and novice weekend has been moved back to the original youth weekend timing, on the weekend before the regular season. The earlier timing since 2020 had resulted in reduced participation due to conflicts with other fall activities.

The antler point restriction has been reinstated in Wildlife Management Unit-D1 (WMU). After the removal of the antler restriction in 2020, too many young bucks were being harvested in this WMU, which resulted in a decline of mature bucks. All the

other WMU's have been able to meet buck age structure objectives under existing regulations.

The archery season is no longer closed during the regular season and now runs continuously from October 1 to December 15. This simplifies regulations and provides additional opportunities for some hunters.

Expanded archery zones have been established in eight areas around the state. These are primarily developed areas around major cities and towns where deer cannot be effectively managed with firearms. Within these areas, the archery season will begin September 15 and will be for antlerless deer only until the regular archery season begins.

Antlerless permits may now be used during the regular season. Hunters with an antlerless permit may use it during the muzzleloader seasons, as in previous years, or during the regular season. This change was necessary to achieve antlerless harvest objectives in some parts of Vermont. It also provides a new antlerless deer harvest opportunity for a large segment of Vermont's deer hunters.

Hunters may now hold two antlerless permits at one time, provided the permits are for different WMU's. Only one permit may be acquired through the lottery. If unallocated permits are available, a second permit, for a different WMU, may be purchased before filling the first permit.

Hunters may take a second buck if they meet the following

conditions; they purchase a second buck tag; their first buck has three or more points on one antler; they harvest an antlerless deer.

The order of the conditions doesn't matter, as long as they are all met. Only one buck may be taken per season.

Hunter's education classes scheduled through year

by Raymonda Parchment

AREA TOWNS – Hunter, bowhunter and trapper education classes in Vermont are scheduled throughout the year, with a focus on preparing students for safe and responsible hunting. Classes are generally held just before the hunting seasons, and peak in March and April in advance of spring turkey season, and again in August and September before the fall hunting seasons.

Classes are held in various locations across the state. Courses cover a wide range of topics, including firearm handling, survival skills, ethics and hunting regulations. Prospective hunters are guided through interactive lessons, practical demonstrations, and hands-on exercises to ensure a comprehensive learning experience.

While there are no in-person courses within a 50-mile radius, registration for the nearest Vermont Hunter's Home Study in Randolph will open February 1. The class will meet Saturday, April

Five days have been added to the December muzzleloader season. It now begins on the Monday immediately after the regular season and extends for 14 days. This provides additional opportunity and flexibility for muzzleloader hunters.

18 from 4 to 8 p.m., at Randolph's Fish and Game Club, located at 549 Lefebvre Road in Randolph. Students must bring their certificate of completion or completed workbook with them to the start of class.

The homework can be completed online at hunter-ed.com/vermont/, or students can complete the manual and workbook. To request a manual and workbook contact the Hunter Education Program at (802) 828-1193 or email them at HunterEducation@vermont.gov.

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