THE Hardwick Gazette

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Essential Services Complex plans unveiled

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – During an evening meeting last Wednesday, Jan. 21, town officials and an architect laid out problems with the buildings occupied by three of Hardwick's essential services and plans for a new campus to accommodate them, said Town Manager David "Opie" Upson.

The Creamery Road property where the town garage is now was considered for housing redevelopment in 2021, with plans to move the public works department elsewhere. However Hardwick flooding at the fire station led town officials to begin exploring options to move that building while staying close to downtown Hardwick. That led to exploration of the Creamery Road property as a campus for the department of public works, in deteriorating buildings there; the fire station, regularly flooded on Wolcott Streete and Hardwick Rescue, in a cramped building on Creamery Road.

In November 2024 Vermont Integrated Architecture (VIA) was selected to begin looking into designs, with planning happening over the past year.

Select Board Chair Eric Remich and Upson say a conversation about the project will happen with the wider community at this year's March 3 town meeting.

Development of a complete design package could begin as soon as June this year with town voter approval of a bond at a special meeting following the March town meeting.

If that schedule holds, new facilities could be ready as soon as the beginning of 2028, according to a preliminary project timetable.

See COMPLEX, 4



Preliminary plans for a Hardwick Essential Services Complex to the northwest of Creamery Road, where the town garage facility is now, creates space for the public works department to store salt, store and maintain town trucks and other equipment in the large center building and provides space in the building to the right for the Hardwick Fire Department on the left and Hardwick Rescue on the right. *courtesy photo*

Town, farmer dispute protection of ancient maples

by Paul Fixx

CALAIS – Doug Lilley has been farming on Lightening Ridge Road in Calais for most of his 82 years. The Lilley Hill Farm where he grew up and still raises beef cattle was one of 50 dairy farms in Calais then. It was the last dairy farm when he stopped milking cows three years ago, he said.

Lilley cares about his farm, continuing to grow forage for his small herd of beef cattle and working to protect its scenic attractions, which include a line of ancient maples beside the road, some of which have been there for more than 250 years, he says.

The town has been working to widen roads, which is causing the roots of those maple trees to become exposed and killing them.

In a dispute that's been going on for several years, this year he placed round hay bales beside the trees to encourage the town's trucks and other vehicles to avoid them.



Hay bales placed against maple trees on Lightening Ridge Road in Calais by 82-year-old farmer Doug Lilley are there to protect them from vehicles, he says. *courtesy photo*

That, once again put him at odds with town officials, who pointed to the town's Right-of-Way Ordinance that grandfathers old trees, allows them to be replaced, but requires permits for other things to be in the right-of-way, including hay bales. A January 13 letter to Lilley from the Calais Select Board noted civil penalties of not less than $100, and up to $10,000, could be assessed under the ordinance beginning after January 25, with each day being a separate offense.

See MAPLES, 4

Headwaters elects officers, explores future of Sterling Campus

CRAFTSBURY – The Headwaters Community Trust board met, January 8, to elect officers and laid out next steps in business planning and organizational development. Board officers are Linda Ramsdell, president; Bill Berman, vice president; Rick Morrill, treasurer; Leslie Taylor, secretary; and Carey Crozier, Bill Day, Meryl Friets and Michael Reddy, directors.

The board reviewed developments following Sterling College's November announcement

See HEADWATERS, 5

Town meeting days, Feb. 28, Mar. 3.

by Raymonda Parchment

AREA TOWNS – Town meeting day is traditionally held on the first Tuesday of March. Some towns have published and mailed warnings contained in their annual town reports. The following have officially warned town meeting day:

WOODBURY– Town meeting day will take place on Saturday, Feb. 28, at the elementary school for Woodbury residents. Voting on Mountain View Union and Hazen Union budgets will occur March 3, beginning at 10 a.m. until 7 p.m., also in the Woodbury Elementary School Gymnasium.

CALAIS – Calais residents will meet March 3 at the Calais Elementary school gymnasium,

See MEETING, 5

Eight vie for three seats

by Raymonda Parchment

HARDWICK – Three select board seats are up for election this year in Australian balloting on Town Meeting Day, Tuesday, March 3.

A three-year term has current select board member Ceilidh Galloway-Kane running for reelection unopposed.

For two one-year terms, Town Clerk Tonia Chase reported seven petitions have been received for the position. Candidates include Miranda (Davison) Brown, Tyler LeBeau, Derek Richardson, Joe Nudell, Larry Fliegelman, Andrew Gilbert and Bruce Larrow.

A candidate forum is being planned for sometime in February.

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HOUSE MADE BAKED GOODS
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COFFEE SHOP AND BAKERY
SUPPORTING LOCAL & SMALL SCALE FARMERS, PRODUCERS, AND ARTISTS.
7AM–3PM
SEVEN DAYS/WEEK
FREE WIFI

Police Report

Cabot Fire Department

Carbon monoxide response

CABOT – Sunday morning, January 25, Cabot Fire Department responded to a Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarm at a Cabot residence. Firefighters used a gas meter and thermal imaging camera to identify the source of CO to be a malfunction in a wood burning stove after ruling out other sources. The firebox was emptied and ventilation commenced before turning the residence back over to the homeowners.

Hardwick Police Department

Retail theft

by Hardwick Police Department

HARDWICK – On January 17, the Hardwick Police Department was advised of a retail theft that occurred at the Dollar General in Hardwick. Investigation revealed that Heather B. Quinn of Hardwick had secreted and altered packaging on items valued at $44.50.

Ms. Quinn was issued a citation to appear at the Superior Court of Vermont, Criminal Division, Caledonia Unit, to be arraigned on the charge of Retail Theft.



Hardwick Police Department

Media Log

HARDWICK – January 11: Medical, Craftsbury Rd.; Assist - Public, Main St.; Suspicious Event, Spring St.; Accident - LSA, Marshall St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 14.

January 12: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Main St.; Suspicious Event, Spring St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Animal Problem, High St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Mill St.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Dr.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15 West; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 16; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main; Traffic Stop, Wolcott.

January 13: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, High St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, High St.; ATV Incident, Vt. Route 15; Fingerprints, High St.; Suspicious Event, Woodbury St.; Assist - Public, Spruce Dr.; Accident - TCNR, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Granite St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, Mill St.; Traffic Stop, Mill St.

January 14: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Suspicious Event, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Route 14 South; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Theft, Vermont Ave; Assist - Public, Maple St.

January 15: Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 14; Citizen Dispute, Hardwick Farms Rd.; Wanted Person, High St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15.

January 16: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Assist - Agency, Hardwick Farms Rd.; VIN verification, High St.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Dr.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Assist - Motorist, Wright Farm Rd.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15.

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Weather Watch



A parhelion, often called a sun dog, mock sun or phantom sun, was seen Tuesday morning from Montgomery Road in East Hardwick. A parhelion is a halo phenomenon near the sun when it is low in the sky.

photo by Dawn Gustafson

Mostly light snow with mix of sun and clouds; cold

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – It's hard to summarize the span of events we've experienced in the past week around here. Let's put it in the category of what we've come to expect as we progress through Vermont winters: cold and windy; with all roads leading to snow. Perhaps all snow landing on all roads is a more accurate depiction of it.

The first accumulation of snow came between two cold fronts delivering reinforcing shots of cold air and some snow squalls with terrain-enhanced snow showers. This led to 5.7 inches of snow over the course of three days, before skies cleared and temperatures dropped to well below zero. Some blustery northwest winds made it feel even colder. A wind chill of -22 F was recorded at the VTrans weather station on Route 14 in Hardwick, with a low of -13 F here in East Hardwick without the wind Saturday morning. The following morning, the low temperature was -24 F in Hardwick and -16 F in East Hardwick.

A coastal low-pressure system approached for Sunday and took a track further north than originally expected, arriving midday and progressing to heavy snow overnight. By the end of Monday, Walden recorded 18 inches of accumulation, with 15.9 inches in East Craftsbury, 15.5 inches in both Marshfield and East Hardwick, and 14 inches in Wolcott. A new daily snowfall record of 7.0 inches was set in Burlington Sunday, nearly double the previous daily record of 3.8 inches set in 1924.

We are entering the part of winter where steep gradients between air masses do result in coastal developments like this, and the time we go to press certainly puts us at a disadvantage in terms of getting the best forecast when it comes to the details we need for an accurate storm track later in the period. If one system wasn't enough, another area of low pressure looks to form off the southeast coast again this coming weekend. It's competing with a high-pressure system stationed over the Upper Midwest. Widespread variability exists in possible outcomes, so a middle-of-the-road snow event is placed in the forecast, with encouragement to follow forecasts as we get closer to the weekend. It's still possible we see no snow, although it would remain mostly cloudy on Sunday.

In the interim, upper-level disturbances look to pinwheel in on a northwest flow, which will bring episodes of brief light snow and persistently cool temperatures. Highs will be in the teens, with lows on either side of zero. Friday morning, we may get closer to ten below as skies clear briefly. Wind chills could be closer to -20 F at that time. Here are the forecast details:

Wednesday: Partly sunny. Scattered snow showers, with an inch of new snow. High: 15. Low: -2. Calm wind.

Thursday: Partly sunny, with decreasing clouds in the afternoon. Isolated snow showers in the morning. High: 12. Low: -7. Northwest wind 5-10 mph. Wind chill values as low as -20 overnight.

Friday: Partly sunny in the morning. Increasing clouds with isolated afternoon snow showers. High: 7. Low: -4. Northwest wind 5-10 mph. Wind chills of -10 to -5 during the day.

Saturday: Partly sunny. High: 16. Low: -1. Northwest wind around 5 mph.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy. A chance of snow, with light accumulations possible. High: 19. Low: 3. Northwest wind 5-10 mph.

Police Report

Hardwick Police Department

DUI, flee and spree, burglary

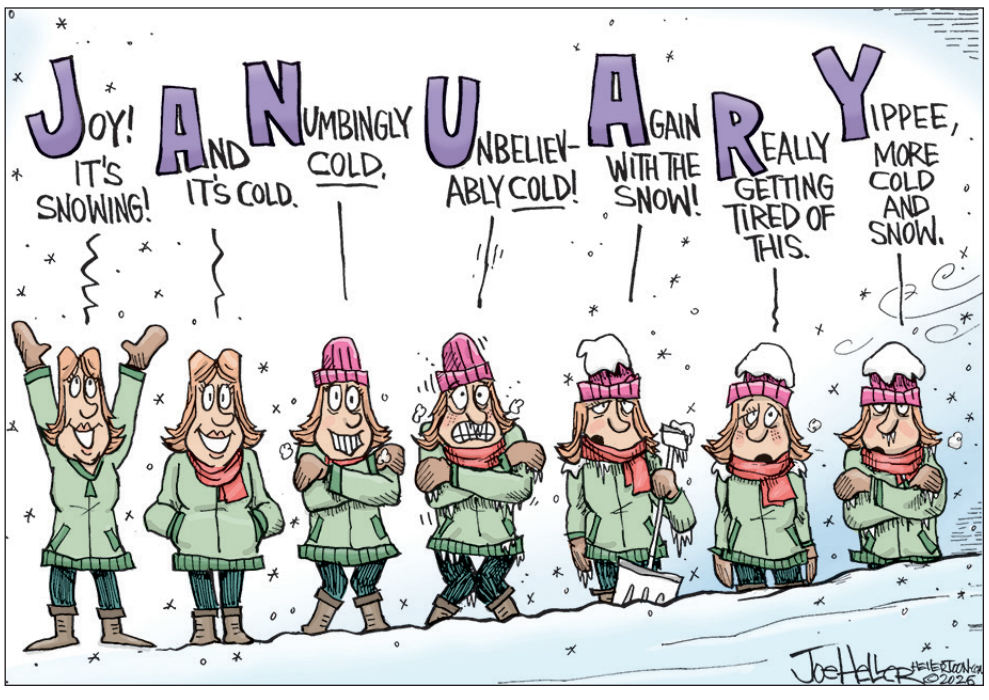
HARDWICK – On January 18, at 2:48 p.m., officers from the Hardwick Police Department responded to Putnam Avenue for the report of a vehicle off the road. Investigation revealed that Michael W. Gallant of Hardwick had operated his pickup truck while under the influence of intoxicants. He was taken into custody without incident for DUI. He was issued a citation to appear in the Superior Court of Vermont, Criminal Division, Caledonia Unit to be arraigned on this charge.

On January 19, at 2:22 a.m., Hardwick Police and Lamoille County Sheriff's Department responded to a report of a domestic assault at 1795 Hopkins Hill Road in Hardwick. The victim was subsequently transported to Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital by Hardwick Rescue Squad. The alleged offender, Michael Ewen of Hardwick, left the residence on foot. Officers tracked the Ewen to the Ackermann Farm on Brown Farm Road. They discovered Ackermann's silver Dodge Ram 3500 truck had been stolen. At 4:47 a.m., officers located the truck crashed on Nichols Pond Road. The operator had fled the scene; however, evidence at the scene indicated Michael Ewen was the driver. At 10:30 a.m., Michael Ewen was taken into custody by Hardwick Police without incident and transported back to the Hardwick Police Department. Ewen was charged with Second Degree aggravated domestic assault, violation of conditions of release (x4), aggravated operation without consent of owner, and operating after suspension of license. Ewen was transported to Northeast Correctional Complex in St. Johnsbury. He is scheduled for arraignment in Caledonia Superior Court; Criminal Division on January 20.

On January 19, at approximately 1:31 p.m., Tops Market called Hardwick Police Dept to report a theft of a bottle of liquor from the store. Investigation revealed that Casandra Rich had taken a bottle from the store. On January 20 Casandra Rich was located and charged with retail theft and cited to appear at the Caledonia County Court.

On January 20, at 1:49 p.m., Hardwick Police were notified that Casandra Rich of Hardwick stole money from a family member. Rich had fled the residence after taking the money. Hardwick Police located Rich later that day and arrested Rich. Rich is scheduled to appear in Caledonia District Court on February 23, at 8:30 a.m., to answer the charge of Burglary.

Heller's World by Joe Heller



Police Report

Vermont State Police

DUI, Car crash

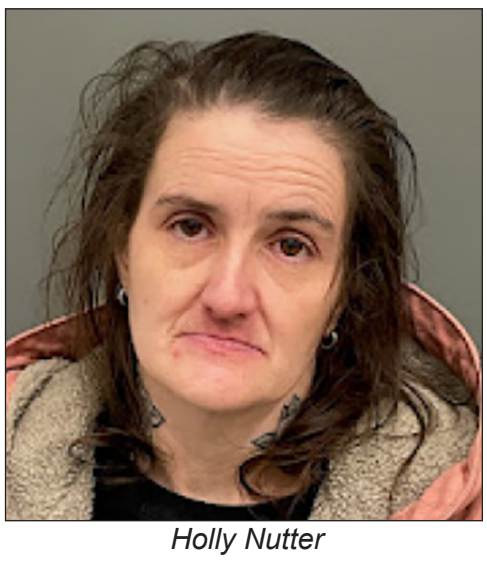


Gavin Deiss

EAST MONTPELIER – On January 15 at 5:30 p.m., Vermont State Police - Berlin Barracks received a call for a single vehicle crash at 2528 County Road in the town of East Montpelier. The operator at the scene was identified as Gavin Deiss. Troopers responded to the scene, and subsequent investigation revealed Deiss was operating his motor vehicle while impaired. Deiss was placed under arrest for suspicion of DUI. He was transported to the Berlin Barracks for processing without incident. He was later released with a criminal citation to appear in Vermont Superior Court, Washington Unit, Criminal Division on February 12 at 12:30 p.m.

NEW HAVEN – On January 18 at approximately 8:31 p.m., the Vermont State Police conducted a traffic stop after multiple observed motor vehicle violations on U.S. Route 7 near the intersection with S. Middlebrook Road in the town of New Haven. The operator was identified as Nicolas L. Garcia of Marshfield. While speaking to Garcia, troopers observed indicators of impairment. Garcia was subsequently placed under arrest for suspicion of driving under the influence and transported to the New Haven Barracks for processing. At the conclusion of processing, Garcia was released with a citation to appear in Addison County Superior Court, Criminal Division, on March 16 at 12:30 p.m.

PLAINFIELD – On January



Holly Nutter

25 at 12:58 p.m., Vermont State Police received a report of a vehicle being operated erratically on Route 2 in Plainfield. A Fish and Wildlife Warden was in the area and stopped the vehicle. The operator, identified as Holly Nutter, showed signs of impairment, and State Police arrested her for suspicion of DUI. She was processed at the Berlin Barracks and later released with a citation to appear in Washington County Superior Court, Criminal Division on February 12 at 8:30 a.m.

Hardwick Police Department

Retail theft

by Hardwick Police Department

HARDWICK – On January 17, the Hardwick Police Department was advised of a retail theft that occurred at the Dollar General in Hardwick. Investigation revealed that Heather B. Quinn of Hardwick had secreted and altered packaging on items valued at $44.50.

Ms. Quinn was issued a citation to appear at the Superior Court of Vermont, Criminal Division, Caledonia Unit, to be arraigned on the charge of Retail Theft.

Town plow truck ditched avoiding snowmobile

by Paul Fixx

WALDEN – Town Clerk Debbie Messier confirmed a January 18 social media post indicating that a snowmobile neglected to stop at the crossing on Upper Harrington Hill in Walden, Saturday, Jan. 17, causing the town plow to veer to avoid it and go into a deep ditch. The process of extricating it took well over an hour during which the road was blocked.

"I can confirm that it happened," Messier said.

"The Town is grateful that due to our driver's quick actions no one was injured. This could have had a very different outcome. It did require the town hiring Cochran Transport to lift the truck out of the ditch with its 30 Ton Wrecker."

The truck received damage but was able to be driven back to the Town Garage, said Messier.

Complex

Continued From Page One

Hardwick Rescue has needed larger accommodations for quite some time, as its services have been called on significantly more over the years since its founding. With 50 staff and volunteers answering 1024 calls in 2025, its board had already begun looking to expand. There's been interest in fundraising for the project to add a third bay for vehicles and create accommodations for those sleeping overnight, replacing a mattress thrown on the floor in a corner.

The 1963 Hardwick fire station lies in the first area to flood when waters of the Lamoille River and Cooper Brook rise, said Upson.

While FEMA is requiring the town to look into the cost of raising the building by three feet, it's clear that would send more water into the Atkins Field neighborhood, he said. That would improve the fire station, while causing more harm elsewhere.

Upson said the town hopes to ask that funds offered for a FEMA buyout be increased by the additional cost of raising the building, which would help fund that portion of the new campus.

The deteriorating department of public works garage, built in 1972, is in need of significant repairs, estimated to be $500,000 by Tom Fadden, though a lesser amount might get the building through a few years while a new facility is built.

The quonset hut, older still, is considered historic and might be disassembled and offered for another use elsewhere.

Architect Ashar Nelson, with VIA has been working with the town to evaluate the needs of each facility and offer preliminary designs that share overlapping functions, which include a meeting room, sleeping bunks, storage and rest rooms.

Nelson presented scenarios with from just under 25,000 square feet to a little over 29,000 square feet and a total shared budget ranging from $13.1 million to $14.8 million. Several million dollars of that are allocated to site costs.

Construction costs break down with 28% allocated to Hardwick Rescue at $3.2M, 31% to the fire department at $3.6M and 41% to public works at $4.6M.

Remick said the FY27 budget to be passed at this year's town meeting includes $150,000 for the first year's bond payments in anticipation of a positive town bond vote.

Maples

Continued From Page One

Calais Town Administrator and Road Commissioner Kari Bradley stopped by to explain to Lilley how the ordinance works, but Lilley wasn't listening, he says.

Bradley then sent the Washington County Sheriff to explain the ordinance to Lilley, but the hay bales remained in place.

Lilley enlisted WCAX to tell his story, which appeared on the broadcast channel last Thursday and can be seen now at wcax.com/2026/01/22/calais-farmer-feuds-with-town-over-old-maple-trees-right-of-way/

Lilley has now removed those hay bales because a neighboring farmer needed the hay, he says.

He's replaced the bales with stakes beside the road to protect his trees, saying it's the same thing long ago road crews once did.

Removing the bales has satisfied Bradlay, who says Lilley is welcome to ask that the town install stakes to protect the trees, which is something the road crew may do when asked.

Bradley says he doesn't think the issue is fully resolved and Lilley says the same.

In Lilley's quest for justice he wrote to Vermont Lieutenant Governor Rodgers, saying, "Thank you so much for listening to my concerns about the town's plow killing my old maple trees. Years ago, for decades, the road commissioner sharpened big sticks he collected from the woods, and in the fall, pushed them into the ground marking the edge of people's lawns and property in Calais. It was so simple, so thoughtful. My trees and lawn were never harmed.

"The past two commissioners' goal has been to widen all roads so cars can travel fast. And they do.

"They are plowing deliberately up against my trees, killing them, so the road can be wider. They've killed so many it's disheartening. Recently I placed a round bale in front of six remaining old maples, not in the path of travel, to save them from harm. "The select board had a sheriff deliver information to me, twice, detailing the fine I am about to receive, between $100 and $10,000 per bale.

"Please let me know if you have any ideas or can help in any way."

After removing the bales Lilley said, "They are harassing me and I'm looking for a fight."

He's looking to hire an attorney and raising funds through a gofundme account, "Save Doug's 250-Year-Old Maples from Town Plows," created by Andrea Lilley. Five donations had raised $110 of the $4,000 goal Tuesday afternoon.

Economic development leader denies embezzling

by Alan J. Keays, VTDigger

BARRE – The former leader of a nonprofit economic development organization has denied a charge accusing her of embezzling more than $70,000 from the group.

A charging document filed ahead of Thursday's arraignment for Melissa Bounty also provided new details into what authorities say she spent the money on.

Bounty, 42, of Waitsfield, entered a not guilty plea to the single felony count through her attorney Thursday during a brief arraignment in Washington County Superior criminal court in Barre.

Washington County Deputy State's Attorney Corina Olteanu said in court Thursday that the investigation remained "ongoing."

The court appearance was the first for Bounty since the Montpelier Police Department announced in December it had issued her a criminal citation for the alleged embezzlement following a months long investigation.

Montpelier Police Detective Alesha Donovan wrote in the 22-page charging affidavit filed ahead of Thursday's hearing that officials with the economic development group contacted authorities in July reporting that they believed that Bounty had embezzled from the organization and had been placed on leave.

The filing stated that Bounty had embezzled $71,151 between March 2023 and July 1, 2025, and that an employee at the organization had "grown suspicious" of certain financial transactions.

The transactions, according to the filing, were payments to an account belonging to Bounty's husband.

Through researching financial records, Donovan added, authorities concluded that Bounty used the organization's credit card to pay for personal expenses. In addition, Donovan wrote, investigators believe Bounty also paid her husband more than $42,283 with money from the organization.

According to the court filing, Bounty said the payments to her husband, Nermin Elezovic, were for work he had done as a contractor for the organization.

However, Heather Hurlbert, the organization's interim executive director, told police that had Bounty's husband been a contractor, there would have been a contract and tax documents. Neither of those were on file, Donovan wrote.

Authorities also claimed that Bounty regularly used the organization's credit card for personal groceries, dining out, personal shopping expenses, luxury car rentals and other non-business related expenses, the court filing stated.

The embezzlement charge carries a maximum penalty of up to 10 years in prison and a $10,000 fine.

Bounty and her attorney, Brooks McArthur, both declined comment following the hearing. Jon Valsangiacomo, an attorney for the organization's board of directors, also declined comment after the hearing.

Volunteers meet to consider needs

HARDWICK – Twenty-five residents from Hardwick and surrounding towns met Monday, Jan. 19, at the Jeudevine Library to further organize the regions ability to respond to emergency situations and day-to-day needs of residents.

After a supper of homemade soups, rolls and desserts, Helen Beattie opened the meeting by asking attendees to name what they most treasured about the area. Comments ranged from the richness of community, the ever-present sharing of food and the readiness of neighborly assistance to the perception of Hardwick as a vital regional hub.

Beattie identified areas to be addressed during the meeting, including the day-to-day operation of the Helpline, the organization of neighborhood gatherings and improving outreach.

Beattie highlighted the effort that a volunteer committee, in partnership with the town, has made in the time since the floods of 2023 and 2024. From that work has emerged a plan for the coordination of various services that can be activated quickly in response to a disaster. That plan has been adopted by the Hardwick Select Board as an addendum to the Local Emergency Management Plan.

Attendees were offered the opportunity to learn more about, and volunteer for, the Emergency Supply and Support Center (ESSC), the Emergency Communication Center or disaster-related clean up.

Attendees formed groups to consider subject areas, headed by a person who is involved in addressing that topic. Those new to the process were invited to sign on as volunteers in whichever area they felt best equipped to be of service.

Finalists for superintendent position named

by Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union

HARDWICK – The Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) Board has named Rebecca Tatistsheff and Becky Read as finalists for superintendent of the OSSU.

As part of the superintendent search process, staff, families and community members may participate in two online community forums to learn more about each candidate and to share feedback with the board.

The forums will be held virtually on Thursday, Jan. 29, and moderated by a member of the search screening committee.

The forum for candidate Becky Read will be held Thursday, Jan. 29 · 3 to 3:30 p.m. The video link is meet.google.com/wpb-xsmv-uit, or dial (458) 203-0416 PIN: 786 633 879 #

The community forum for candidate Rebecca Tatistcheff will be held virtually on Thursday, Jan. 29, 3:40 to 4:10 p.m. The video call link is meet.google.com/ffv-bmbj-ozg, or dial (470) 207-2190 PIN: 968 567 814 #

Materials available for public review include Rebecca Tatistcheff's, resume and cover letter at *drive.google.com/file/d/1KEkgZo721vpXNyGdymllN04lswCn-F-g/view?usp=sharing;* Becky Read's resume and cover letter at *drive.google.com/file/d/1Lt0XNYsTbdnJK5BJaEz0k9glyLwzWG-S/view?usp=sharing*

Following review of the candidates' application materials and/or participation in the forums, the public is invited to provide feedback through an online survey at (Becky Read) *//forms.gle/TLDSyyRhTFKibMpy5* and (Rebecca Tatistcheff) *//forms.gle/X9sMXD2F4ND3v33* Feedback must be submitted by January 29, at 5:15 p.m., and will be shared with the OSSU Board for consideration as part of the final candidate selection process.

Headwaters

Continued From Page One

that its degree-granting programs will end this spring.

Headwaters dedicated 2025 to organizational development, capacity building, and community engagement, forming relationships with individuals and institutions in the service area and beyond. Following Sterling's announcement, Headwaters made plans to ensure the campus continues to benefit Craftsbury and surrounding communities.

With the support of other Craftsbury organizations, and in communication with the college, Headwaters is exploring the acquisition of the Sterling College campus.

Headwaters' mission and the community land trust model offer compelling possibilities to create a thriving, economically viable mixed-use campus that will serve Craftsbury and the surrounding community now and for generations to come.

Headwaters supports Craftsbury Saplings' expansion on the Sterling campus, as well as efforts by Sterling faculty and staff to develop new programming.

Headwaters proposes a robust, holistic and transparent planning process that respects the Sterling College legacy and includes neighbors, area organizations, local businesses and other potential partners.

The Headwaters Community Trust serves the towns of Albany, Craftsbury, Glover and Greensboro.

Meeting

Continued From Page One

with voting by Australian ballot for municipal offices from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Childcare will be available at no cost for parents attending Calais Town Meeting from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Registration is required: forms are available at CES or through Community Connections. For information, contact CES Administrative Assistant Danielle Mackay at (802) 454-7777, via email at dmackay@u32.org; or Community Connections Coordinator Kim Bolduc at 223-7936, ext. 305, via email at kbolduc@u32.org.

HARDWICK – Hardwick residents will meet at the Town House for their town meeting, March 3, at 10 a.m. The polls for Australian ballot voting will be open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. A preliminary budget informational meeting for people to ask questions will be held February 19, 5:30 p.m., before the regular select board meeting.

GREENSBORO – Town meeting will be held Tuesday, March 3, at the Highland Center for the Arts, with polls for Australian ballot voting open there from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

CRAFTSBURY – Craftsbury residents will meet March 3 in the Craftsbury Academy Gymnasium, with polls open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

WALDEN – Town meeting will be held at Walden Elementary School on March 3. Polls will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Town meeting times, as well as preliminary informational meetings, will be updated weekly as information becomes available.



Sunday afternoon to Monday morning brought 14 inches of fluffy, freshly-fallen snow, covering everything in sight, including this Honda parked in a driveway on Spring Street and adding to what Hardwick had already accumulated.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Budget woes plague area education boards

by Raymonda Parchment

WOODBURY – The January 12 regular select board meeting had a mixed agenda, with Darren Usinowicz and Heather Meacham of the Mountain View Union Elementary School District (MVU) informing the board of concerns for the longevity of Woodbury Elementary School, arising from the ongoing budget talks.

According to Meacham and Usinowicz, the board was faced with an 80% increase in costs that came from "sources that were out of the control of the MVUESD board", teachers health insurance being the main item of the cost increase.

To offset these increases, the Hazen Union and MVUESD boards have dropped $500,000 from their proposed budgets by placing most capital improvements on hold for all its campus buildings.

For Woodbury, this means work to replace the fire escape and put in a fire egress in the lower level of the school, as well as an upgrade to the elevator, will not be completed this year. However, the placement of the fire escape and additional egress is mandated; not replacing them in the required time frame would mean the third floor, which contains the gym, cafeteria, and kitchen, will be off limits.

These cuts in the school budget were also made to keep the school budgets within a state imposed threshold. A budget over the threshold would have triggered a further increase in the school taxes. Woodbury's lack of an updated property appraisal, which results in the Common Level Appraisal (CLA), will affect the education tax rate. The town had planned to start a new town-wide appraisal in 2026, but that has been postponed to 2028 due to a backlog in the availability of appraisers.

Also of concern for Woodbury's school is that some members of the MVUESD board want to close the school. They feel that all elementary students in the district could be placed in Hardwick's elementary school and they think it would save money to close the school.

The matter of the ownership of the building (the town still owns it) has been a point of contention for some people in Hardwick. When the schools were forced to merge by Act 73 several years ago, the issue was negotiated at length, and it was decided that the town would lease the building for $1 a year, rather than sell it to the new school district for $1.

According to Meacham and Usinowicz, this issue has never set well with the other towns in the district and continues to be a source of contention within the MVUESD board and some of the public in Hardwick.

Another concern is that class sizes at Woodbury barely meet or are just under some proposed mandates within the latest changes brought by Act 73. Meacham and Usinowicz say all this is compounded by the confusion and disagreements now ongoing as the legislature attempts to remedy the longstanding property tax issue.

The full minutes of this meeting are available at woodburyvt.org.

Welch discusses FEMA reform

by the office of Sen. Peter Welch



Vermont Senator Peter Welch talks with a crowd at the Plainfield Town Hall last Thursday, Jan.. 22, listening to stories about the work of FEMA and sharing his ideas for reform to bring decision making closer to those who need the agency's assistance.

courtesy photo

PLAINFIELD – U.S. Senator Peter Welch (D-Vt.), ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Subcommittee on Rural Development, Energy, and Credit, joined community leaders and residents in Plainfield, Thursday, Jan. 22, to discuss ongoing flood recovery efforts and his work to reform the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Senator Welch discussed his Disaster Assistance Improvement and Decentralization (AID) Act, legislation to streamline the road to recovery for disaster-stricken communities and cut red tape by empowering state and local governments to access recovery assistance when it is needed.

"Flood recovery is a long and demanding process that tests the resilience of an entire community, something Vermonters know all too well. I heard directly from folks in Plainfield about what's working and where the federal response is falling short. Many of the challenges folks are facing in Vermont stem from the fact that FEMA wasn't designed with small, rural communities in mind," said Senator Welch. "I'll continue to lead efforts to reform FEMA and make sure recovery decisions are driven by local leaders who know their communities best." see details of the bill at welch.senate.gov/welch-unveils-bill-to-reform-fema/

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Public comment sought on species conservation plan

by Vermont Fish and Wildlife

MONTPELIER – The Southern bog lemming, whorled pogonia orchid, lake sturgeon and wood turtle may not seem to have much in common. But, all four are classified as "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" (SGCN) in a newly-drafted update to Vermont's Wildlife Action Plan, which is now available for public comment.

To qualify for special biodiversity conservation funding from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, every state is required to have a Wildlife Action Plan. The plans are written by each state's fish and wildlife agency, in Vermont, the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, and revised every decade.

Vermont is now in the final stages of updating its Wildlife Action Plan for the next 10 years, following an extensive review and drafting process in partnership with top wildlife experts from around the Northeast.

"Over the past two years our biologists have teamed up with outside experts including faculty from the University of Vermont, Middlebury and other colleges, and scientists from our NGO partners to update Vermont's SCGN list and identify new conservation strategies," said Dr. Rosalind Renfrew, who leads the department's Wildlife Diversity Program. "Now, a new draft of Vermont's 10-year Wildlife Action Plan is ready for public input."

To develop the new draft plan, department biologists and their collaborators worked in teams based on their areas of expertise, focusing on groups of species including mammals, reptiles and amphibians, insect pollinators, and fish. The process also included teams for plants and even fungi, earning Vermont a place among the handful of states whose Wildlife Action Plans cover the latter.

Each expert team recommended conservation actions to restore or maintain healthy populations of dozens of related species. For species that are already listed as threatened or endangered, like Vermont's lake sturgeon, recommendations are geared to recovering the species' numbers. For those that are not threatened or endangered but are at risk of becoming so, like the wood turtle, the plan identifies ways to keep populations from veering into decline.

Regardless of conservation status, a key for nearly every species in the new draft Wildlife Action Plan is habitat.

"Both department biologists and our outside partners really pushed for strategies that benefit whole groups of species using the same habitats to be the core of our new draft plan," said Renfrew. "The speed and scale of threats like climate change and habitat loss mean that single-species conservation measures alone cannot keep pace."

To encourage a shift from single- to multi-species conservation, the new draft Wildlife Action Plan emphasizes strategies that restore, enhance and protect landscapes encompassing the full range of habitat types in the state.

Vermont is among the states best positioned to make this shift through its longstanding strategic mapping initiative, Vermont Conservation Design (VCD). VCD prioritizes landscapes and habitat blocks for conservation based on their potential to support species and provide benefits like clean water and wildlife travel corridors. Drawing from VCD, Vermont's new draft Wildlife Action Plan offers guidance for conservation groups looking to improve the outlook for many species at once.

"Our new draft Wildlife Action Plan outlines ways to give all of Vermont's species their best shot in the face of threats like climate change," said Renfrew. "Now, we're inviting Vermonters to let us know if what we've developed lines up with their vision for biodiversity conservation in our state."

Vermont's draft 2025-2035 SWAP can be reviewed on the department's website. Public comments can be submitted via online form through February 27, on the department's website or directly at forms.office.com/g/megnWGwpZG

The department will also offer presentations on key elements of the draft plan with opportunity for public comment at a series of in-person and virtual meetings to be held February 5, U32 Middle and High School. 930 Gallison Hill Road, Montpelier; February 10, Orleans Lake Region Union High School. 317 Lake Region Road, Orleans; and February 17, phone conference call at (802) 828-7667, conference ID 999 402 398#

All sessions will begin at 6 p.m. and end by 8 p.m. In the event of cancelations due to weather, the department will issue updated dates and locations on its website.

Tri-partisan vote passes vaccine policy bill

MONTPELIER – House Speaker Jill Krowinski issued the following statement following the tri-partisan vote of 127-9 to pass H.545, an act relating to issuing immunization recommendations:

"Today's vote on H.545 is another example of the Vermont House of Representatives taking action to protect the health and safety of Vermonters in the face of the federal government refusing to do so," said House Speaker Jill Krowinski. "The recent decision by the Centers Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce the recommended vaccines isn't based on scientific research or consensus from the medical field. This bill simply allows Vermont health care providers to continue their work caring for Vermonters and making health decisions based on their patients' needs - it does not mandate immunizations for individuals or families.

"I appreciate the diligent work of the House Human Services Committee for their work to get this critical piece of health legislation done before unnecessary and avoidable harm was caused. The Vermont House of Representatives will continue to stand up for Vermonters and do everything we can to ensure the health and safety for all who call Vermont home."

H.545 is supported by the Vermont Commissioner of Health, the Vermont Medical Society, The Vermont Medical Society, American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter, and the Vermont Academy of Family Physicians.

Statehouse rally centers NEK issues

by Olivia Geiger, VTDigger

MONTPELIER - "All roads lead to the Northeast Kingdom," at least according to U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt., who stood before a packed Cedar Creek room last Thursday afternoon to rally support during the region's Statehouse takeover day. On either side of the lunchtime rally, local advocates, elected officials and NEK residents testified on a range of issues that hit close to home.

Welch was joined by State Treasurer Mike Pieciak; Rep. Michael Marcotte, R-Coventry; Rep. Leanne Harple, D-Glover; and fellow Glover resident Lt. Gov. John Rodgers in summing up the matters most pressing to NEK residents: how to attract and keep young people in the area, how to build affordable houses that allow people to own a patch of land and how to support farmers who rely on marketplace health insurance and have recently lost the enhanced subsidies that helped keep plans affordable.

But the biggest applause of the day went to Harple, in her plea to keep small schools small: "A small school isn't a failed school. A rural school isn't a business mistake," she said. "We can't legislate away geography. We can't consolidate rural life, and we can't remap Vermont into being something it's not."

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NEK members gather at statehouse to focus on unique needs of region

by Neighbor to Neighbor Staff

MONTPELIER – "All roads lead to the Northeast Kingdom." Senator Peter Welch shared as community leaders from across Vermont's Northeast Kingdom gathered at the Statehouse on Thursday, Jan. 22, for NEK Day, a day of collective advocacy focused on the unique needs and strengths of the region.

Nearly 100 Northeast Kingdom community members, from Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties, participated. Meeting with legislators, providing testimony, and joining in the NEK Day Press Conference with Abby Long, of the NEK Collaborative, introducing Senator Peter Welch, State Treasurer Mike Pieciak, Representative Mike Marcotte, Representative Leanne Harple, and Lieutenant Governor John Rodgers.

"There's no place better than the Northeast Kingdom to showcase the strength and opportunities in rural life. Folks in rural Vermont just know how to figure it out. The role we have in government is not about handouts, it's about creating a level playing field for rural communities. That means affordable and accessible health care. That means state-of-the-art broadband. That means opportunities for small businesses and farms to grow and thrive. What's happening in the NEK is really special, and the federal government's absolute responsibility is to make sure the infrastructure to succeed is strong in rural America," said Senator Welch.

Long shared the beauty and strengths of the region are due in part because of the Kingdom's rural nature. Yet it is recognized that rural character layers unique economic and social challenges. The region is geographically isolated, experiencing consistent population decline, and deep poverty. The NEK has been deemed a federally recognized REAP Zone, Rural Economic Area Partnership Program, one of only five in the nation. This allows for additional and priority funding dedicated to the region and the NEK Collaborative houses this agreement with USDA Rural Development.

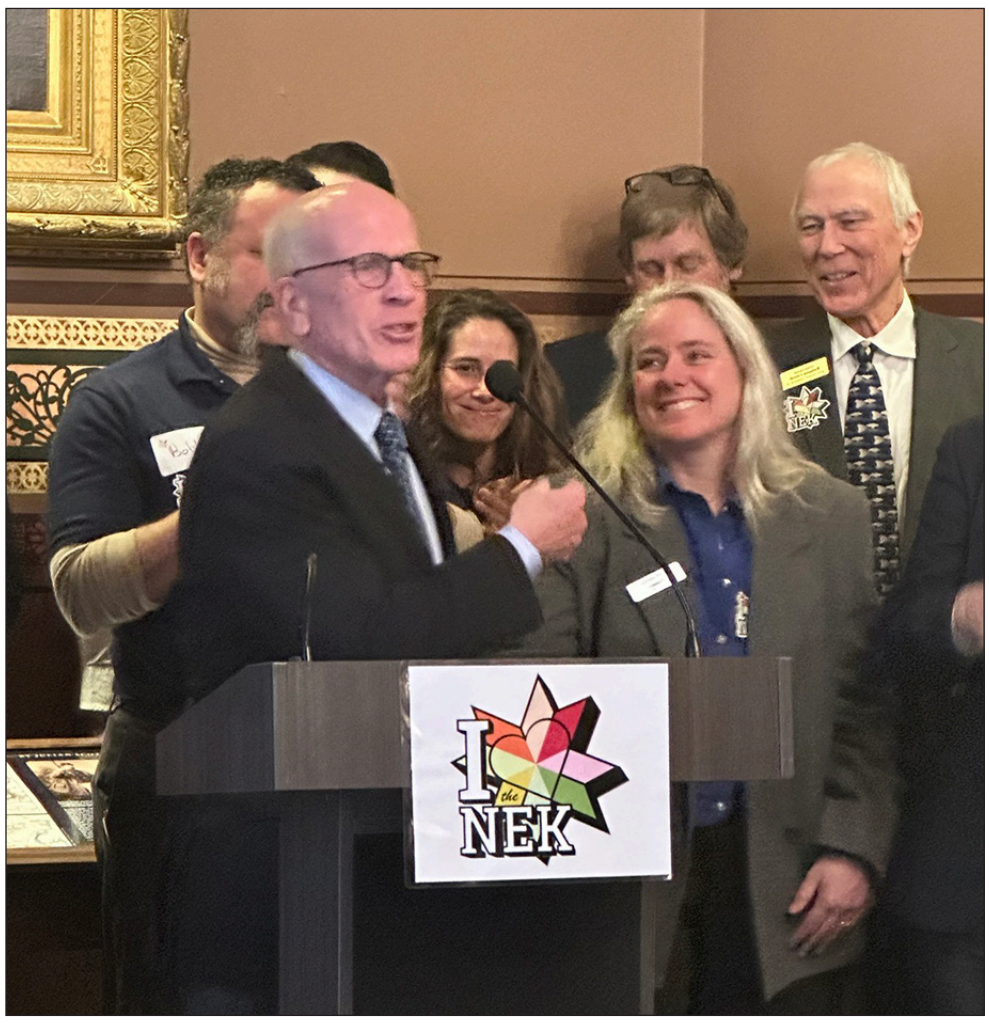
"It is the Collaborative's role to consistently keep our pulse on the region's needs. To share with USDA, but also policy and decision makers on all levels, what our Kingdom needs to thrive." said Ms Long. "It was clear from the region's annual NEK Together convening this past November 2025, that housing, healthcare, affordability, flood & climate resilience all layered with the concern over the shift in sustainable funding are our highest priorities."

NEK Representative Mike Marcottee, shared "When we look at our workforce needs, we need high quality affordable housing, healthcare, childcare, and education in order to keep Vermonters here and to entice new, younger people to come to Vermont."

State Treasurer Mike Pieciak spoke about his recent NEK Baby Bonds pilot program, a creative solution to the wealth inequality in the region. "The Northeast Kingdom has a number of advantages, its natural beauty, easy access to outdoor recreation, and its deep sense of community, but Vermonters also have to be able to afford to live there," said Treasurer Mike Pieciak. "The lack of affordability impacts the entire state, but it is felt deeply in rural communities. It's why investments in housing, healthcare, transportation, and job creation are so critical to rural Vermont to ensure no Vermont community has left behind."

The region also understands education reform is up for discussion this session in Vermont's statehouse, therefore they will use their collective voice in support of strong, equitable rural education that sustains NEK communities and future.

NEK Representative Leanne Harple, who serves on the House Education Committee and is an NEK educator herself received the greatest applause, saying passionately, "We know what our small schools contribute. They anchor communities. They pass down skills, values, and responsibility. They shape the character of the places we love. And yes, sometimes they need support. Sometimes they need to adapt. But we never start from the assumption that smallness itself is the problem. We can't legislate away geography. We can't consolidate away rural life. And we can't remap Vermont into being something it's not. In the Northeast Kingdom, our schools are smaller because our communities are smaller. That's not a flaw—it's a feature of a very special place defined by distance, independence, and strong local ties. Our schools know their students. They know their families. And they are often the heart of the town. Strong rural schools are essential to strong rural communities. And if we want the Northeast Kingdom to have a future—if we want families to move in, stay, and put down roots—we must maintain and protect strong schools in those communities."



NEK Day at the Vermont Statehouse last Thursday featured a press conference in the Cedar Creek Room where Vermont Senator Peter Welch (at podium, center) recognized NEKCV Executive Director Christa Shute for her leadership and success in bringing high-speed internet to the Northeast Kingdom and Central Vermont. *courtesy photo*

Highlights of the day also included multiple Northeast Kingdom leaders testifying in the House Committees on Commerce & Economic Development, Human Services, General & Housing, Government Operations, and Education, where witnesses shared powerful accounts of their lived experiences tied to the region's priorities.

Lieutenant Governor John Rodgers, a resident of the Northeast Kingdom, welcomed his fellow NEK neighbors to a personal meet & greet. "As someone with Kingdom roots five generations deep, I know firsthand the grit and heart that define our communities. Our rural heritage may present challenges, yes, but it also fosters collaboration, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to one another. NEK Day is about showing up together and celebrating the power that comes from who we are. I know that's why you're here and is definitely why I'm here. Thank you for being you." said Lieutenant Governor John Rodgers.



The Civic Standard's Rose Friedman (in green checked shirt) announces the format for judging the Chili Cookoff at the Wednesday Community Meal, Jan. 21. The judge's picked Rachelle Rodriguez's chili as the best and the people's choice was the chili created by Jessie Upson.

photo by Paul Fixx

Aurora Borealis



Looking north over Caspian Lake, an aurora over the night of Tuesday January 20 adds a green glow in the starry sky. *photo by Joe Nudell*



The aurora borealis glows green in the sky over Hardwick the evening of January 20, from the lookout above power lines on the slope of Buffalo Mountain, behind Atkins Field on land now owned by the David family which is being proposed to become a future Hardwick Town Forect..

photo by Joe Nudell



An aurora borealis seen from Cabot, the evening of September 14 shows the blinking navigation lights of an airplane across the top.

social media photo by Brittany Butler



The aurora borealis over Greensboro, January 19.

social media photo by Jeremy Silansky



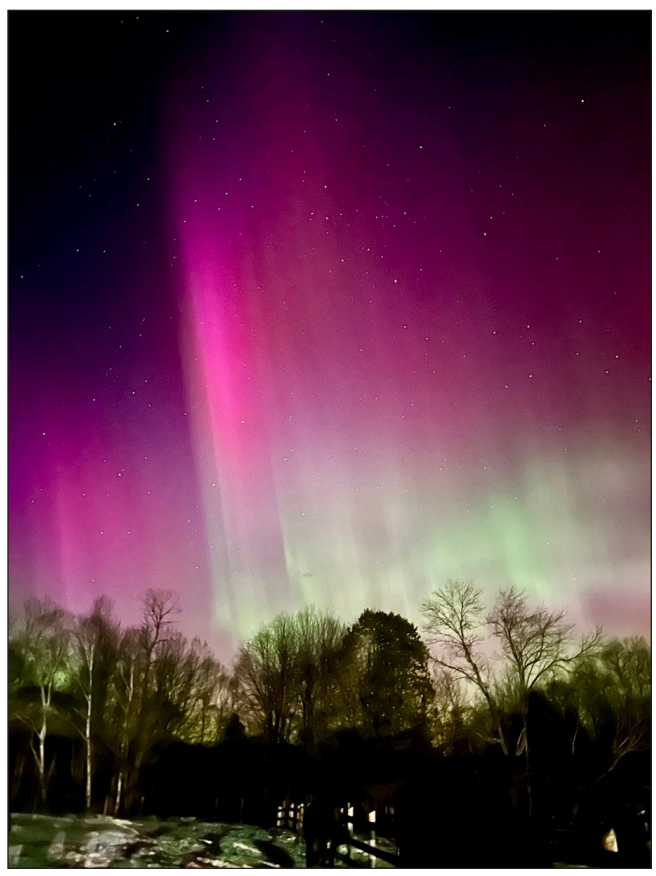
The aurora from a porch in East Hardwick in the early evening of January 20 displays a red glow above the usual green.

social media photo by Stephanie Block



A view of the aurora from the top of Schoolhouse and Tousant Roads in Stannard at 7 p.m., January 20.

social media photo by Elizabeth Hook



An aurora caught over Marshfield early in the evening of January 20 displays a curtain of color that is often absent from auroras at this latitude.

social media photo by David Southwick



An aurora borealis illuminates the frozen Lake Willoughby and the cliffs beside it looking north the evening of January 20.

social media photo by Richard Ennis

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

EDITORIAL

Gazette fundraiser: unprecedented success

The Hardwick Gazette's end-of-year fundraising campaign began in November with an ambitious goal: $40,000 in reader donations. It seemed like a real stretch, because the 2024 campaign's total was about $30,000.

In the end, readers delivered beyond all expectation. At last count, reader donations totaled $45,451.89. Add in matching funds from local donors and national organizations, and the grand total for the drive will be $89,851.89.

By contrast, the 2024 end-of-year campaign netted about $30,000. Local donations alone increased by more than one-third and the grand total is almost three times as large.

It is amazing and inspiring.

The Gazette enters the new year with more money in the bank than ever before!

The Gazette's board and staff are overwhelmed with gratitude, and full of confidence that our communities are willing to support a strong local paper.

There's a renewed commitment to our mission of providing quality journalism for our 11 communities.

Here's how the money breaks down. Readers donated $40,400 during the campaign, which met or exceeded every matching target. Generous local donors created a matching pool of more than $20,000. Another $20,000 in matching funds will come from the Institute for Nonprofit News, a national organization working to build nonprofit journalism across the country.

INN's NewsMatch program provided $20,000 in matching funds including a base fund of $15,000 and another $5,000 from the Barr and Knight Foundations. The local matching pool qualified The Gazette for a $3,000 bonus grant from INN. There was also a $1,000 incentive for receiving first-time gifts from at least 50 readers, which was easily achieved.

Add that all together and The Gazette will receive $24,000 from INN and related sources outside Vermont to enhance our local news ecosystem.

Three hundred and nineteen readers showed their support by making donations during the drive, including the local matching pool. That represents 30% or more of the regular readers of our weekly newsletter. It is a percentage any nonprofit organization would love to achieve. (Most would settle for 10%.) Tripling that rate is incredible. It speaks to our readers' desire for local news and their trust in The Gazette. Thank you again.

The results ensure continued operation of The Gazette, giving us time to strengthen the financial side of the enterprise, which is necessary to achieve the ultimate goal of becoming a sustainable operation.

In its two years as a nonprofit, The Gazette has published every week (except the usual vacation the first week of January) with a small paid staff and a lot of volunteer effort. Much has been achieved, but it's not a formula for long-term success.

The news operation needs to be strengthened to provide the depth of coverage our communities deserve. Fundraising, advertising sales and sponsorships must be bolstered for The Gazette to become a sustainable enterprise. There is a plan in place that has been proven to work elsewhere. It will be challenging, but with your continued support it can be done.

If you're wondering how you can help, here are a few ideas. First, keep on reading every week and sign up for our weekly newsletter if you haven't already at hardwickgazette.org/subscribe/

Second, if you operate a business or provide a service, consider advertising in The Gazette, or asking abut sponsorship opportunities. It's the best way to reach your area customers.

Third, if you aren't already a monthly sustaining supporter, please consider becoming one. Monthly contributors provide a strong foundation for the entire operation.

Fourth, tell your friends and neighbors about The Gazette; we continue to learn of people who thought The Gazette disappeared completely when it stopped publishing a print newspaper during the Covid-19 pandemic. Help get the word out that we are here and let people know there are now printed copies for sale at the Buffalo Mountain Market in Hardwick and Willey's Store in Greensboro

Finally, if you're in a position to contribute to funding the start-up period for us to bring on an employee who will take on development, advertising and sponsorship sales, eventually funding their own position and ensuring The Gazette's sustainability for many years to come, please contact The Gazette at editor@hardwickgazette.org.

The staff and board of The Hardwick Gazette thank you for your support. The dollars are important; your readership and loyalty, even more so.

John Walters, NEK Public Journalism Fundraising Chairperson

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.

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

Yankee Notebook

This stuff never gets old

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – One of the advantages of a three-day weekend is that we get an extra day just to talk. It doesn't matter what else we may be doing, there's just more time to chat and share points of view on what's happening around us. Thanks to the wild cascade of news created by the Trump administration, there's little problem of finding a subject. It's a blessing to me that Bea usually sees more sides of an issue than I do, and she's typically done more reading about it than I have.

This weekend just past, celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.'s, birthday, was perfect. We had only two social events: the Saturday morning Kaffeeklatsch at Capitol Grounds and the performance of a delightful sort-of-Shakespearean farce that evening at the local theater. I have two reclining chairs in the living room again, and it's the perfect time of year to sit in there with the light streaming in from behind. Kiki pretty much lives in my lap these days, so the three of us just sat while the two of us commented on the news flooding in on my cell phone or her laptop.

If a playwright were to try to recreate what's been in the news in the past few weeks, the result would be a farce-fantasy. People leaving the theater afterward would be saying. "Boy, it's hard to imagine all that happening here!" Yes, it is. But it is.

Minneapolis appears to be the biggest story, if only because it seems to be at a fever pitch, involves thousands of people, and presents thousands of videographic episodes. It also represents the perfection of the president's expressed ambition: to punish liberal enclaves that contain hundreds of juicy opportunities to arrest and harass vulnerable populations of immigrants. Bea has family there who cannot be among the demonstrators, so she has a particular interest in the developing situation.

The whole mess is complicated by confusion over the authority of the bullyboys to detain, arrest or confine suspected candidates for transportation. It appears they have little, if any, and have abused it occasionally, notably with regard to children. But as the murder of Renee Good illustrates all too clearly, the presence of weapons creates a background of threatening violence. Still, I really enjoy the video of a 35-ish Mediterranean-looking woman who responds to a large, armored goon grabbing at her by whacking him repeatedly and hollering, "Beat it! Beat it!" Which he does.

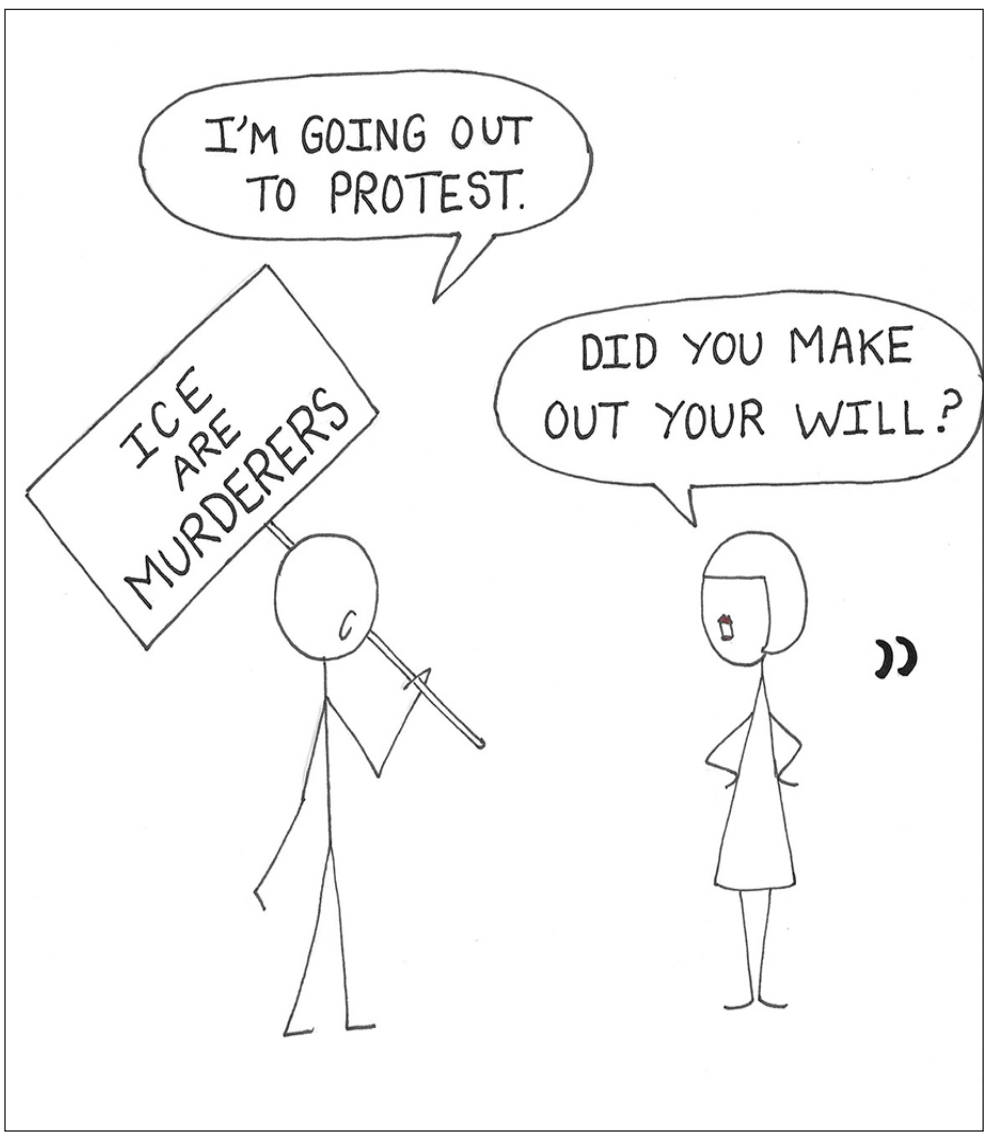
The whole mess is fraught with the threat of the president declaring the existence of an emergency as a pretext for sending in troops. Speaking of which, the pretext for sending in ICE in the first place was the alleged presence of thousands of undocumented Somali immigrants who were committing violent crimes and bilking the government of billions of dollars. There are exponentially many more undocumented immigrants in Houston or Miami than in Minnesota, but those states and their governors are friendly to the administration.

If I were one of the goons, I'd a damn sight rather be in Texas or Florida right now. Minnesota is really cold, and the locals make noise to keep interlopers awake at night. In addition, someone has apparently been reading the contract that a goon signs and sharing the fine print with the lads who signed it. The word is, that $50,000 signing bonus is paid out in $10,000 annual increments; and if you quit before five years' service, you have to pay back the money you've received to date. True or not, that's got to make even a bullyboy become a bit thoughtful, especially if his toes are icy cold all day and his boss, Tom Homan, got his $50,000 non-taxable, in a paper bag.

So we pass the quiet parts of the day, tossing the conversation back and forth like a volleyball. Occasionally we agree that there's no point in commenting on the fitness of the president for office. Those of us who deplore his presence couldn't possibly think any less of him than we do (for us the Epstein files will be simply evidence for what we already believe); those who defend him are beyond convincing otherwise.

There are brighter spots in the conversation. We're looking forward to a trip down the Rhine in the break between Bea's last class and commencement; maybe a trip to visit friends in Nova Scotia in May; a tour of the Yorkshire Dales in September (all this from a guy who no longer dares buy green bananas). But then one of our devices pings, and we read that Himself has told the Norwegian prime minister he wants to take over Greenland because he's failed to win a Nobel Peace prize. Also that he's storing in Qatar the proceeds from the sale of hijacked oil. This stuff never gets old.

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



Meeting Memo

Wednesday, January 28

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

Tuesday, February 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wednesday, February 4

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

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

Thursday, February 5

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

Town Clerks

Cabot: cabotvt.us
Calais: calaisvermont.gov
Craftsbury: townofcraftsbury.com
Greensboro: greensborovt.gov
Hardwick: hardwickvt.org
Marshfield: town.marshfield.vt.us
Plainfield: plainfieldvt.us
Stannard: Stannard town clerk: (802) 533-2577, open Wed., 8-noon, townofstannard@myfairpoint.net
Walden: waldenvt.gov
Wolcott: wolcottvt.org
Woodbury: woodburyvt.org



Letters From Readers

Bridge 31 options being considered

To the editor:

Bridge 31 in East Hardwick was removed in April 2024 after flood damage. Since then, people who relied on the bridge have used an alternate crossing.

The Town of Hardwick is evaluating long-term options and has begun targeted written outreach to people who relied on Bridge 31 prior to its removal, including residents of Hardwick, Stannard, Walden, and Greensboro. No decision has been made.

Options under consideration include restoring the bridge (estimated total cost $2.8 million, with a local share of about $140,000) or permanent removal with floodplain restoration (estimated total cost $225,000, with a local share of about $11,250).

People who relied on Bridge 31 prior to its removal are invited to complete a short survey at forms.gle/LPPSQxFzw6grbSBM7

Kristen Leahy
Hardwick Zoning and Floodplain Administrator, Resilience & Adaptation Coordinator

Purple and Gold night: Hardwick Academy heritage

To the editor:

Aaron Hill's infamous Purple and Gold night got its beginnings back on December 30, 2022.

What an event it was, reliving the glory days of the Hardwick Academy Terriers. Hill went above and beyond in preparation to make that Hardwick Academy evening one for the history books. The hallways at Hazen were peppered with legacy articles detailing Hardwick Academy's sports history. A special purple and gold banner was made and unveiled that night detailing Terrier state championships and runners-up accomplishments.

The crowd was entertained by former Terrier cheerleaders singing Hardwick Academy's alma mater. And who can forget the moment when Hazen's varsity team, first dressed in their normal Hazen colors, later paraded out onto the court dressed in legacy Purple & Gold basketball uniforms.

It was a special night indeed. The fourth anniversary of this special evening happens again on Thursday evening, Jan. 29. Hardwick Academy/Hazen Union Alumni Association board members will be on hand to hand out purple and gold pom poms. The Wildcats will once again be going up against the ancient rivals, Peoples Academy. The JV game starts at 5:30 with the varsity game to follow at 7 p.m. Please come out and support this salute to our great Hardwick Academy heritage.

Go Wildcats - Go Terriers!

Patrick Hussey
Walden

No judge

To the editor:

No judge. No jury. No trial.
Put him on the ground.
Shoot him.
He's dead.

Ross Connelly
Hardwick

Heller's World by Joe Heller



Another Opinion

Enough, restore Constitutionality

by Phil Scott, Vermont Governor

Enough…it's not acceptable for American citizens to be killed by federal agents for exercising their God-given and constitutional rights to protest their government.

At best, these federal immigration operations are a complete failure of coordination of acceptable public safety and law enforcement practices, training, and leadership.

At worst, it's a deliberate federal intimidation and incitement of American citizens that's resulting in the murder of Americans. Again, enough is enough.

The President should pause these operations, de-escalate the situation, and reset the federal government's focus on truly criminal illegal immigrants. In the absence of Presidential action, Congress and the Courts must step up to restore constitutionality.

Greensboro Historical Society details resources, programs

Year In Review

by B.J. Gray

GREENSBORO – The Greensboro Historical Society's (GHS's) summer exhibit last year, Rails to Trails, offered an expanded history of the St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad, its role in creating and sustaining The Bend, and the conversion into the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.

Skip Hoblin installed a bulletin board and the summer opening of the museum featured punch in memory of Martha Niemi.

The society held an ice cream social and two book sales in the village and facilitated fundraising to acknowledge the legacy of Tom Hurst with the installation of a Woodbury Granite memorial bench on the GHS lawn.

With the help of a grant from the Greensboro Association, the society began reorganizing and renovating the historic garage behind the GHS Museum, with the goal of having new space for exhibits and programming by next summer.

The society hosted two presentations at Fellowship Hall. In March, a panel of 15 Greensboro High School alumni gathered to share their stories. Guests and panelists explored high school artifacts and ephemera from the museum's archives.

In August, local historian Timothy Breen presented his history of the Great Maple Sugar Bubble in late eighteenth century Vermont, as he shared sometimes serious and sometimes humorous tales of financial successes and failures.

With funding from Vermont Arts Council and the Greensboro Association, displays in permanent exhibit space at the museum are now protected by window shades and film designed to mitigate the effects of ultraviolet light.

The society has accepted the Lakeview Union School records collection, while earlier accessions of the Alpha Tolman papers are processed.

Society members have organized and digitized information on Greensboro's heritage, researched and answered questions from the public and worked to make resources more searchable and accessible on the website.

With experience as a freelance writer and editor, Dan Penrice has became editor of the historical society's annual "Hazen Road Dispatch" and two editions of the Greensboro Historical Society Newsletter for spring and fall, were produced and mailed.

The annual holiday party was hosted by Nancy Hill and Clive Gray.

The town's appropriation helps cover the costs of an archivist, IT support, utilities, supplies and upkeep of the museum's interior. Donations and project grants from the Greensboro Association and the Vermont Arts Council help fund many of the organization's activities. The historical society is a volunteer organization with about 15 volunteers who tend to GHS administrative and financial tasks, research, design exhibits, publish newsletters and the historical journal, maintain museum spaces and more.

The winter meeting on March 1, will feature the film, "The Farm Boy." The upcoming summer exhibit will feature the homefront during WWII.

Greensboro Historical Society's next meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 10. at the GHS Museum, next to Willey's store. The society meets on the second Tuesday of each month.

Another Opinion

Granite Street Historic District: What's changed since the floods

by Kristen Leahy

HARDWICK – After the floods of 2023 and 2024, the Town of Hardwick heard versions of the same question: what changes after the water goes down?

In the Granite Street Historic District, the answer has not been a single project or a single fix. There has been a slow shift in how the neighborhood, the town, and local partners work together and in how flood risk is understood and addressed.

The Granite Street neighborhood has always been shaped by water. Flooding here is influenced by both Cooper Brook and the Lamoille River, and residents have lived with repeated impacts for years. What has changed since the last two floods is that the work is no longer happening in isolation or only after damage occurs.

Over the past year, residents have begun organizing under the name Granite Street Neighbors, working with the Town of Hardwick and the Center for an Agricultural Economy. It's a simple thing, a shared identity, but it has made coordination easier and communication clearer. It has also made it possible for residents to be involved earlier, before decisions are finalized rather than after.

Last summer, the Town of Hardwick, with funding from a Municipal Planning Grant, began work on a Granite Street Historic District Flood Resilience Plan with SLR Consulting, in coordination with neighborhood partners. The focus is narrow and practical: understanding conditions on the ground, identifying realistic options and talking honestly about trade-offs. While the plan is specific to Granite Street Historic District, it is expected to inform flood resilience work elsewhere in town.

Some changes are already moving from planning to implementation. A new outdoor early-warning siren for the neighborhood has been funded in the Town's FY2027 budget and is moving forward. For residents who have experienced fast-rising water, earlier warning is not abstract: it means more time to act.

Other efforts are happening at the watershed scale. Modeling has identified several actions that, together, reduce pressure on the river system during high-water events. These include evaluation of Jackson Dam for potential flood-peak reduction, work with partners to address flood-related constrictions along the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, newly funded flood bench restoration along the Lamoille River, and the continued transformation of the Sawmill Lane area following multiple buyouts. None of these actions solves flooding on its own, but they work better as a system than as stand-alone projects.

At the household level, Hardwick has secured $700,000 in state funding to help elevate utilities and relocate mechanical systems above flood levels in the most frequently flooded homes. Granite Street Historic District properties in the floodplain overlay will be prioritized, with consistent site assessments guiding how and when work occurs. These improvements do not stop flooding, but they do reduce damage and shorten recovery.

Less visible, but just as important, is the growth of local response capacity. Working with community organizations, including Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor, the Town has expanded volunteer support, staged an emergency supply and support center, and begun planning a series of winter and spring workshops focused on preparedness and neighborhood connections.

There are also efforts to make flood history visible. A high-water mark installation is planned to document past flood levels and keep risk from fading into the background once cleanup is complete. Coordination is also continuing on upstream high-hazard dams, building on existing modeling and review.

None of this means that the Granite Street neighborhood is fixed. Flooding remains a reality, and future storms will test these systems. What has changed is that the work is more connected, more transparent, and more grounded in the experience of the people who live there.

That shift matters, not just for the Granite Street Historic District, but for how Hardwick approaches resilience as a whole community.

Kristen Leahy is the Town of Hardwick zoning and floodplain administrator.

Legislative Report

Doing nothing is not an option

by Rep. David Yacovone

MONTPELIER – It seems that throughout the statehouse, in every corner, hallway, and committee room, you can hear conversations about property taxes and education. From the men's room to the cafeteria and the parking lot, lawmakers are musing on this vexing issue. In our communities, whether on social media pages or the aisles of the grocery store, people are sharing that they are totally maxed out and cannot afford higher property taxes.

Solutions to lower taxes are not easy to find. In 2024, Vermont had 50 schools with fewer than 100 students. We lack the scale to achieve easy savings. Some say close the small schools; others say mandate larger class sizes and reduce the number of teachers. Others claim, in a state of our size, with 51 school superintendents, there are too many, and administrative savings must be part of the solution.

Others say that we should alter our income tax structure and increase income taxes on those with incomes in excess of $500,000, and they want the 1% percent to help more with the cost in light of the, on average, $57,000 in annual tax reductions they received from Congress. Some are quick to say we have a spending problem and not to rely just on more money.

The law passed last year, known as Act 73, which is strongly supported by the governor, calls for fewer school districts, thus consolidating education to achieve savings and lower taxes. The belief is that consolidation of districts would lead to fewer schools and result in larger classrooms, resulting in fewer teachers. Many are skeptical that fewer school districts will reduce spending and could increase spending as lower-paid teachers would need wage increases to match those of the schools in the district that pay more. Throughout all the talk is downsizing.

A spirited discussion about who should decide whether a school should close is percolating. Should district boards have that authority, or should the townspeople decide? Some argue the locals will never vote to close their beloved schools; others say the consent of the governed should matter, as I do.

There are many complex and serious aspects to these issues. One thing is clear: doing nothing is not an option. I would greatly appreciate your insight and advice as we move forward on our efforts to make property taxes more affordable.

David Yacavone represents Lamoille-Washington, including Elmore, Morristown, Woodbury, Worcester and Stowe.

Heller's World by Joe Heller



The Hardwick Gazette
PEOPLE SERVING PEOPLE

Another Opinion

The monetary value of volunteer committees

by Cheryl Michaels

EAST HARDWICK – I just watched the recording of the January 8 select board meeting. Of particular interest were discussions about funding for NEK Arts related to Town House improvements and funding for the Equity Committee. Given the national discourse about the word "equity" the discussion was civil and I commend all of the members of the select board on setting that tone. I also think the decision, to cut the $1,500 budget of the Equity Committee to $500 was reasonable as measured against the stipends given to other committees. However, the discussion about disbanding the Equity Committee altogether came off as petty and political. It was disconcerting to hear negative views expressed by some members of the Hardwick Select Board who demonstrated a lack of understand of the purpose or benefits of an Equity Committee.

More troubling is the disconnect in the select board about the role of town government when it comes to soft services. Unlike larger towns and cities Hardwick does not have functioning full-time social services or health departments, a department of arts and culture or a fully-funded parks and recreation department. We have a volunteer fire department and we have only recently hired a part-time planning and development coordinator. That's all okay, given our size and budget, but it doesn't diminish the need for these skills and services.

There is a void between what the town can provide and what is needed. Hardwick is extremely lucky to have a history of organizations and individuals who, in partnership with the town, step into that void.

Unfortunately, the cost in goodwill and appreciation towards all volunteers who serve on town committees and civic organizations in Hardwick was embarrassingly damaged with a long discussion at the select board meeting over cutting the Equity Committee's $1,500 stipend from the town's budget of over $4.million.

This year, the members of the Equity Committee, in addition to other work, brought a grant of $10,000 to the town. The purpose of the grant was to train Town personnel and members of those committees and organizations who receive town funds. The majority of the grant money was distributed directly to the local organizations who participated.

NEK Arts volunteers manage, maintain and improve the Town House, a historic building owned by the town. Unlike the usual landlord/tenant relationship, NEK Arts raises funds and provides any hours of volunteer time to benefit the property. When the organization asked the select board for assistance with unexpected costs related to a NEK Arts' funded addition to the building one select board member simply dismissed the request as "not our problem."

Other examples of volunteers working to provide town services include Friends of the Jeudevine Library who brought in funds to improve the town-owned building; the East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization who brought $50,000 in grant funds to Hardwick in order to develop a park on the rail trail on land leased by the town; and Neighbor-to-Neighbor who put together an extensive disaster recovery plan, a municipal responsibility.

The Conservation Committee, Recreation Committee, Hardwick Downtown Partnership, Hardwick Historical Society, Center for an Agricultural Economy as well as AWARE, churches, veterans and benevolent organizations and more, bring skills, time, grants and community donations to benefit the town and people of Hardwick. Without volunteers we would not have Hardwick Trails; The Old Firehouse (NEK Arts); The Civic Standard; Hardwick Food Pantry; Atkins Field; Jeudevine Library; the Depot; the Town House; the Yellow Barn; Memorial, Overlook, Peace or Idle Hour Parks; Mill Street Murals; the Swinging Bridge restoration project; the Farmer's Market; Spring Fest, Children's Parade or an ambulance service.

Look at the list above. It's a testament to the people of this community. With two open seats on the Hardwick Select Board this year, I am hopeful the new board members will recognize the monetary value that a strong history of volunteer committees and town partnerships with non-profit organizations, has brought to Hardwick.

Year In Review

More than books: Year at the Library

by Edward Lemery

GREENSBORO – Over the past year, the Greensboro Free Library has continued to be a steady and familiar part of everyday life in Greensboro, offering space, resources and connection in ways both big and small. The library has remained a place where people gather, learn, work, rest and connect. It serves residents, visitors, families and anyone who walks through the door looking for information, warmth or a sense of belonging. While libraries are often thought of as quiet places for reading, ours is frequently lively and full of energy, especially during children's programs and community activities. At the same time, there are corners reserved for quiet work, study and reflection. Together, these spaces reflect the many ways people use and value the library. Looking back on the past year, the numbers offer a glimpse into just how woven the library is into community life. For a small town, it is striking that more than 10,000 people came through the library's doors. Staff and volunteers hosted over 250 programs for children and adults, circulated more than 17,000 items, and provided a regular meeting place for 14 community groups. Volunteers contributed more than 1,000 hours of their time, and the library continues to support partnerships such as Lakeview Early Education Center and Four Seasons of Early Learning. Those numbers, however, only tell part of the story.

The library is often associated with books, but what happens inside its walls each day goes well beyond that. People come in to print job or housing applications, complete online forms, attend programs, take online courses or use reliable internet when service at home is limited. Others arrive looking for a quiet place to focus, a warm room during colder months or simply the ease of being around other people. Along with books and digital resources, the library offers statewide interlibrary loan access, public computers, meeting and study spaces, a Library of Things, printing and scanning services, yearly volunteer led tax preparation help and a welcoming environment for children and families. This past year brought meaningful improvements behind the scenes. Technology upgrades expanded internet speed and coverage, new computers and printers improved access for patrons and the collection continued to grow with new books and materials. Energy efficiency improvements, including the installation of new windows, helped make the building more comfortable and sustainable year round.

Programming remained strong across all ages, and the library gallery continued to feature local artists, offering an accessible and welcoming platform for people to share their work and creativity with the community. There is much to look forward to in the year ahead. Long-needed fire and security improvements are underway to significantly enhance building safety. The library is in the process of adding backup battery power and expanding its heating and cooling systems to improve resilience, comfort and year round use of the space.

Continued technology upgrades and expansion of the Library of Things will help ensure the library remains responsive to changing needs. At the same time, the library is creating new volunteer opportunities, recognizing that volunteering remains one of the most meaningful ways for people to connect with one another and support a shared public resource. At its core, the Greensboro Free Library exists to serve the people who rely on it, often in ways that are easy to overlook but hard to replace. It is a place for learning and curiosity, for connection and care, and for the everyday work of building community.

Edward Lemery is a director at the Greensboro Free Library.



In the Garden

It's sharp to keep garden tools maintained

by Benjamin Block

MONTPELIER – Home gardeners use a variety of hand tools to achieve their desired results for gardening and landscape maintenance. A quick search at any garden center or online retailer uncovers a vast diversity of equipment, implements, and gear. These include, but are certainly not limited to, shovels and hoes, loppers and pruners, trowels and soil knives.

When new, these tools help with garden tasks flawlessly. However, like most things in our world, they need a bit of maintenance to perform well over the long term. High-quality tools can last over 30 years with regular care. To ensure the investment you make in these tools lasts for a long while, let's discuss how to maintain the most common garden tools.

The first step is to keep tools clean. Dirty tools can be washed with soapy water, but do not leave them to soak. Always dry your tools thoroughly to prevent rust. Tools used to prune diseased plants should be sanitized. A quick wipe with rubbing alcohol after (and even during) pruning should do the trick. Rust and residues from metal components can be removed with a wire brush or steel wool. A nylon brush is best for more sensitive pieces, such as wooden handles.

The second step is to keep tool edges sharp. Sharp tools equal less work. Shovels, trowels, hoes, and soil knives all do similar tasks of penetrating soil. It's reasonable to assume that these tools are blunt instruments, yet they benefit from a sharp edge. A dull edge can be sharpened with a mill file.

Similarly, pruners, loppers and shears can benefit from frequent sharpening to improve how well they cut. A sharp blade not only makes efficient cuts but also decreases the surface areas of branch cuts, helping reduce the incidence of disease.

A hand file or whetstone, even medium-grade sandpaper, can be used to sharpen single- and double-bevel blades. When sharpening tools yourself, be sure to wear eye protection and gloves in case of any errant metal slivers.

Sharpen by moving the file or whetstone in the same direction across the blade, following the tool's original bevel. Avoid using a scrubbing or back-and-forth action, as that can dull the blade. Typically, you want to start at the inside (closest to you) of the blade and use long, one-directional strokes outward. If your tool allows, disassembling it and removing the blade can help make this task easier. It also gives you a chance to remove rust and debris hidden in the joints and screws.

Now that the action-end of the tool has been addressed, the third step is to consider the other parts of the tool. Many tools are made of wood and should be regularly sealed and finished. Linseed oil works well here. If wooden handles have splintered, sand them and then seal.



Steel wool can be used to clean debris and remove rust from your favorite garden hand tools. *photo by Debra Heleba*

Any tool with a movement would benefit from the application of penetrating oil. Some oils also contain a dissolving component that helps remove built-up residues, such as sap or other sticky substances.

Ultimately, the more frequently tools are maintained, the longer they will last. There are plenty of tutorials online, should you need help with technique, or visit a local knife sharpener to do the job for you. Remember that high-quality tools can last a lifetime, but their longevity can be severely reduced if neglected

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



Ella Price, of Burdock Acres in Hardwick, sold her home farm-grown tulips at the Hardwick Community Winter Market at Hazen Union Sunday. She joined 19 other vendors at the event hosted jointly by the Center for an Agricultural Economy, the Hardwick Farmers Market and Hazen Union.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

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More Info: nenpa.com
students@nenpa.com
Deadline: March 27, 2026

Our Communities

Financial literacy presentation

GREENSBORO – Erik Schultz will lead a discussion on the basics of financial literacy at the Greensboro Free Library on January 29, at 4 p.m. The audience will help shape the presentation with questions. Schultz is a financial coach from Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NECKA). Topics covered will be the foundations of financial literacy, such as budgeting, debt management, building credit, goal setting and retirement planning.

Game night at Front Seat Coffee

HARDWICK – Thursday, February 5, from 6 to 9 p.m., game night is back. Bring a game and friends, or join a hosted game with Adam and Rachel. There are also games available for use. Front Seat will have foods (baked goods, soup, etc) and drinks (beer, wine, or barista drinks). Game nights will also be on March 5, and April 2.

"Other Side" film screening moved to Feb. 1

GREENSBORO – The film screening of "Other Side" at the Highland Center for the Arts has been postponed to Sunday, Feb. 1, at 2 p.m. "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. This screening of "Other Side" is co-sponsored by the NEK Death Care Community and Patient Choices Vermont. All proceeds from donations made online or at the door will go directly to the filmmakers to support their continued work.

"Whodunits and Whydunits", murder mystery in film, Feb. 13

HARDWICK – Film aficionado Rick Winston will host a talk at 7 p.m., February 13, at the Jeudevine Library in the Parker Ladd Community Room. Winston will discuss the components of the murder mystery film genre and specific films that use the genre to make larger points about social issues, such as race, official corruption, sexuality or class divides.

From 1972 to 1980, Winston ran the Lightning Ridge Film Society in Montpelier. He was co-owner and co-manager of the Savoy Theater from its founding in 1981 until 2009 and was programming director of the Green Mountain Film Festival from 1999 to 2012. Using the films discussed in Winston's talk, the Friends of the Jeudevine Library will host a Friday night murder mystery film series through the remainder of the winter. The dates will be Feb 27, March 13, March 27 and April 10, also in the Parker Ladd Community Room.

All events are free and include popcorn.

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

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? Yes No (circle one)
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 15TH, 2026	

Healthy Lamoille Valley Coalition Meeting

MORRISVILLE – Every third Tuesday from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Healthy Lamoille Valley (HLV) will host a coalition meeting. HLV is a drug-free community coalition seeking to prevent and reduce youth substance use in the Lamoille Valley and create a community where youth and adults feel valued, connected, and supported. Coalition meetings are a collaborative space to discuss topics, get involved in projects, and get the latest updates on our work. See the website at healthylamoillevalley.org to get the details on upcoming meetings.

Hybrid meeting format: attend in person at the Morrisville Health Department in the large conference room, located at 67 Professional Drive, or email jessica@healthylamoillevalley.org for the meeting link.

Friday night murder mystery series begins Feb. 27

HARDWICK – The Friends of the Jeudevine Library will host a Friday night murder mystery film series through the remainder of the winter. The dates will be February 27, March 13 and March 27, as well as April 10, in the Parker Ladd Community Room.

All events are free and include popcorn.

Discover Engineering Day, Feb. 21

BURLINGTON – For Vermont students grades 5 – 12, Aiken Discover Engineering Day is scheduled for February 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the University of Vermont. Registration will remain open until filled, or until Monday, Feb. 17 at 5 p.m.

The annual event is organized by UVM's College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (CEMS) and UVM Extension 4-H and sponsored by the Lola and George Aiken Fund. It's free, with snacks and lunch and hands-on learning about engineering.

In the morning, the program begins with an engineering scavenger hunt, where participants will interact with exhibits showing off the different kinds of engineering and career pathways. Then in the afternoon, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., there will be hour-long workshops to choose from, including coding with Python; making a custom fabrication project in the UVM FabLab; learning how bridges are designed from VTrans bridge design engineers; receiving an introduction to designing and building electric and hybrid vehicles from UVM's alternative energy racing organization; creating cartilage hydrogels in the Biomedical Engineering Teaching Lab; building a series of circuits using breadboards, wires, resistors and LEDs; discovering the power in wind by using the engineering and design process to make turbine blades and generate electricity.

To request language interpretation/translation assistance and/or a disability-related accommodation to participate in this program, email Accessibility Services at access@uvm.edu and include amanda.royce@uvm.edu before Friday, Jan. 31.

State chess championships, March 28

by Vermont Chess

HYDE PARK – The 39th Annual Vermont State Scholastic Chess Championships will be held Saturday, March 28, at Lamoille Union High School, located at 736 Vt. Rte.15, Hyde Park.

This is the selection tournament for Vermont's nominees to the national Denker, Haring, Barber, Ashley and Rockefeller invitationals. This tournament is open to Vermont students in grades K-12. Participants must be Vermont residents or be enrolled in a Vermont public or private school. Vermont resident home school students are eligible. Chessboards, pieces, and clocks will be provided.

No prior tournament experience necessary. High school, eighth-grade and fifth-grade sections will be USCF rated. Remaining sections will be unrated. Individual and team prizes will be awarded. All players must pre-register for the event. No walk-ins allowed. Registration closes March 23. Registration may close prior to March 23, due to space limitations. Online registration only, no entries will be accepted via mail or email. Complete rules and registration information can be found at vermontchess.org.

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News, Opinion, Entertainment, Sports & More!

Our Communities

Forest property management course, Feb. 1 to April 3

ONLINE – Taking Stock is an online course for forest landowners who want help thinking through what will happen to their woods in the future when they are no longer able to manage the land themselves. The course focuses on understanding options, whether the goal is to keep property in the family, sell it, or protect it from development. Register by February 1.

The course offers five live webinars delivered over Zoom (all sessions are recorded) and offers optional worksheets and activities to reflect and prepare between sessions. Landowners will with a legacy planning coach for one-on-one support to clarify goals, discuss options, and begin outlining next steps.

The webinar schedule includes February 19, Woodland Legacy planning 101, with Kate Forrer, Vermont Woodlands Association and Mark Raishart, County Forester, Vt. Forests, Parks and Recreation; March 5, Getting Started, Identifying Goals, and Communicating with Family, with Liza Walker of Environmental Mediation Center; March 12, Understanding Legal Tools and Strategies, with estate planning lawyer (to be determined); March 19, Exploring Your Legacy and Establishing a Vision, with Jay Sherwin of the Life Reflections Project; April 3, Exploring Conservation Options, with presenters from Vermont Land Trust, New England Forestry Foundation, Vermont Tree Farm, and Use Value Appraisal Program. All sessions are held as live webinars and recorded for future access by participants and their families. All webinars begin at 5 p.m.

There is a small fee for participants. For questions, director@vermontwoodlands.org or phone at (802) 214-4848.

Author Lew-Smith leads book discussion, Feb. 5

HARDWICK – Jodi Lew-Smith, author of the new book, "Asa James," will lead a discussion of the book at the Jeudevine Memorial Library, on Thursday, Feb. 5, at 6:30 p.m. Lew-Smith is a biologist and scientific curator who reads primary literature for the Candida Genome Database and lives on a farm in the Northeast Kingdom with her family, their apple trees, and their animals. This event is free and open to the public in the Parker Ladd Community Room at the Jeudevine, 93 N. Main Street.

For information, call (802) 472-5948.



Education

VSU announces Class of 2025 December Graduates

RANDOLPH CENTER – Vermont State University announces that the following students completed their academic journey this fall and are now part of Vermont State University's Class of 2025: Jennifer Jones and Emily Willems of East Hardwick, and LauraLee Sweeney of Craftsbury.

Ruffle named to Dean's List

ADELPHI, Md. – David Ruffle of Wolcott was named to the dean's list for the fall 2025 term at University of Maryland Global Campus. To be eligible for the honor, a student must complete at least six credits during the term, earned a grade point average of at least 3.5 for the term, and maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at UMGC.

VSU announces fall President's List

RANDOLPH CENTER – Vermont State University announces the students who earned placement on the President's List for the Fall 2025 semester: Katalina Corp of Wolcott, Fritz Fritz of Craftsbury Common, Serena Gahagan of East Calais, Levi Mulligan of Marshfield and Sadie Skorstad of Hardwick. This highest academic honor recognizes full-time students who achieved a 4.0 semester grade point average.

Jorja Washburn named to Dean's, President's List

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. – The University of Hartford announces that Jorja Washburn of Marshfield has been named to the University of Hartford's Dean's List and President's List for the spring 2025 semester. The Dean's List recognizes students achieving superior academic standing. The requirement, with some exceptions, is a grade point average of at least 3.0 and no grade below C.

VSU announces fall Dean's List

RANDOLPH CENTER – Vermont State University announces the students who earned placement on the Dean's List for the Fall 2025 semester. To qualify for this academic honor, students must maintain full-time status and achieve a 3.5 or greater semester grade point average. The local students are

Sarah Collier, Desirae Pelletier, Kristen Lavine and Ava Renaud of Hardwick, Joshua Murphy of East Hardwick, Sarah Peterson of Cabot, Karna Davis of Marshfield, Esme Kelley of Plainfield, Asa Davis of Craftsbury Common, Nickels Thomas of Craftsbury, Sadie Young of West Danville, Mariana Moore, Eliot Rosendahl and Natalie Tanner of Wolcott.

Fowler named to Champlain College President's List for Fall semester.

BURLINGTON – Caleb Fowler of Plainfield, VT was named to the Champlain College President's List for the Fall 2025 semester. Students on the President's List have achieved a grade point average of 4.0 or higher during the semester.

Fowler is majoring in Communication.

Demag named to Deans List

BIDDEFORD AND PORTLAND – Olivia Demag of Wolcott, VT, has been named to the University of New England's Dean's List for the fall semester 2025.

Dean's List students have attained a grade point average of 3.3 or better out of a possible 4.0 at the end of the semester.

Kathleen Menard named to Dean's List

BURLINGTON – Kathleen Menard of Hardwick was named to the Champlain College Online Dean's List for the Fall 2025 semester. Students on the Dean's List have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher during the semester.

Menard is currently majoring in Accounting.

Area students named to Dean's List

BURLINGTON – Casee Fowler of Plainfield, Skyler O'Riordan of East Calais and Victoria Shepard of Hardwick have been named to the Champlain College Dean's List for achieving a grade point average of 3.5 or higher in the Fall 2025 semester;

Education

Students showcase work on Exhibition Night

by Chris Tormey

CABOT – On a chilly early evening in January, the classrooms and snowy sidewalks of Cabot School were busy. As one semester drew to a close students had prepareD exhibitions showcasing their work, and parents, siblings and interested community members had turned out.

Across the campus there was a lot to see, read about and hear.

In the shop space, students in Dan Parrella's Engineering History course had been challenged to research iconic structures around the world and demonstrate how a small replica of them might serve a valid purpose in Cabot. Included in the project was building a scale model of the structure, pricing out its cost and preparing a presentation pitching the new construction to the select board or school board. The students' choices were diverse, from a four--foot long Golden Gate Bridge spanning a small brook to a Great Wall encircling the campus, to a Torii (a traditional Japanese gate.) The students who'd researched that gate suggested adding it to the entrance of Cabot's Elm Street Cemetery to both enhance the area's beauty and to spur residents' interest in Japanese culture.

In the science room, students in Thomas Dunbar's Future Evolutions class created a chronology of mass extinctions across one wall, part of their larger research into genetics, mutations and population changes over time. In the same room students in the Waters of the Winooski class had built a variety of exhibits to showcase their learning about watersheds in general as well the Winooski River watershed in particular. Photos and macroinvertebrate (insect larva) samples documented students' investigations of the current health of the river's headwaters in Cabot, while models of septic systems illustrated human efforts to maintain that health. A table-size 3-D model of the watershed helped put the impact of the recent intense rain events in Cabot on downstream cities like Montpelier and Waterbury into context, while smaller displays explained why and how rivers change the course of their channels over time.

Students in Collin Cole's geometry class had used a digital program to plan and model either their dream house or a narrative character's living space. For the exhibition students had built intricate 3-D models of these dwellings, complete with an estimated construction cost for each.

In Laura McCaffrey's classroom, essays written by students in her AP Language and Composition class throughout the semester were on display. Some were rhetorical analysis essays about both fiction and nonfiction, while others were argument essays about issues that interested the students. In the same room, students in her How Things Work class had researched the construction and operation of a specific tool, machine or structure of their choice. On display were models, diagrams and written work they had completed to demonstrate what they'd learned.

At 6:25 p.m., almost all students, teachers and visitors converged for the screening of two student-made films. They were the final product of a semester-long course in film making co-taught by Laura McCaffrey and Jonny Flood. Using their complementary skills in writing and filmmaking, the teachers guided two teams of students through the process of planning, writing, filming, adding music and the editing needed to reach their goal. One a drama, "How to Carry the Light Home," and the second, an outdoor horror film called "Mourning of Silence." Following the screenings there was time for the students in each production team to field questions from the audience about the challenges of the process and the particular choices they made along the way.

As the finale to an evening showcasing the wide range of opportunities for students to both learn and demonstrate that learning at Cabot, the high school band performed two numbers, assisted on trumpet by their teacher Jonny Flood and with a guest vocal by science teacher Thomas Dunbar.

OUR E-MAILS

news@hardwickgazette.org
ads@hardwickgazette.org

Our Communities



The Jack Lazor Memorial Soil Stewards 2025 cohort visit Blackbird Organics in Marshfield and observe buckwheat cover crop, which suppresses weeds and attracts pollinators. New sessions tailored to vegetable producers will be offered at the 2026 No-Till & Cover Crop Conference.

photo by Becky Maden

No-till, cover crop conference, Feb. 19

BURLINGTON – Thursday, Feb. 19, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., the no-till and cover crop conference will take place at the DoubleTree by Hilton, located at 870 Williston Road.

Farmers, technical advisers, researchers, students, consultants, agricultural businesses and local agencies are all welcome to get together at this annual event and discuss updates and insights on reduced tillage and cover cropping practices.

Many Vermont farmers are troubleshooting through year after year of extreme weather events. Following the 2025 drought, a survey by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets received responses from 200 farmers who collectively reported around 80,000 impacted acres and almost $16 million in coping costs and production losses. These losses and more will be discussed at the conference.

Conference speakers include Aaron Daigh, Associate Professor of Agronomy & Horticulture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Ken Ferrie, co-founder of CropTech Consulting in Illinois; Matt Ruark, Professor and Extension Soil Scientist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Etienne Sutton, National Cover Crop Variety Project Program Manager at the University of Missouri Center for Regenerative Agriculture.

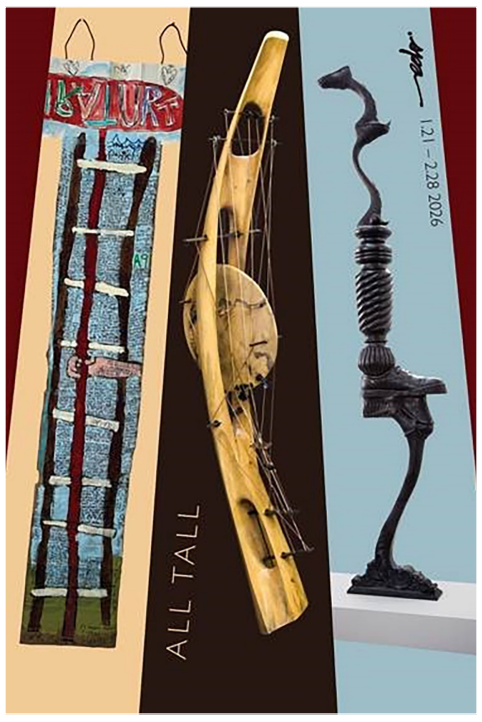
Online pre-registration is available online or by phone by calling UVM Non-Credit Registration Office at (802) 656-8407. In-person registration opens at 8 a.m. on the day of the event. For an accommodation related to a disability, contact UVM Student Accessibility Services at access@uvm.edu or 802-656-7753 as soon as possible.



A major January 25-26 snowstorm brought 14 inches of powdery snow to Hardwick almost covering this Suzuki SX4 vehicle.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

"All Tall," through Feb. 28



The Studio Place Arts show, "All Tall," curated by Janet van Fleet, is in the main gallery until February 28 with works by 30 artists including (left to right) Chip Haggerty; Bruce Hasse and Leslie Fry.

courtesy photo

BARRE -- "All Tall," a group show involving freestanding and suspended sculptures surrounded by vertical wall works, curated by Janet Van Fleet is in the Studio Place Arts Main Gallery, through February 28.

Exhibiting artists from the local area include Hardwick's Alex Bottinelli and West Glover's Elizabeth Nelson. They are joined by Sara Ashe, Ria Blaas, Rebecca Boardman, Bill Botzow, Elektra Buholis, Sandra Mackintosh Buholis, Bill Cohn, Rosalind Daniels, Clark Derbes, Martha Elmes, Chris Esten, Kate Fetherston, Janet Fredericks, Leslie Fry, Kerry O. Furlani, Bruce Hasse, Chip Haggerty, Lily Hinrichsen, Patty Hudak, Jon Roberts, Sabine Likhite, Emery Lynd, Rob Millard-Mendez, Jason Pappas, Julie Parker, Julia Pavone, Marcie Scudder, Susan Wilson and Ann Young.

Studio Place Arts is located at 201 N. Main St., Barre, (802) 479-7069 , nfo@studioplavcearts.com. Gallery opens 11:30 a.m. Wednesday to Saturday, closes 5 p.m., except 4 p.m. Saturday. Admission is free.



Juliana Greene (left) of West Danville and Ann Gilcris (center) of Hardwick check to see the pickles and jams vendor Carol Fairbank (right) of Broadfork Farm in Greensboro has for sale at the Hardwick Community Winter Market, January 25, at Hazen Union. Twenty vendors participated in the event. Two other winter markets will be held, Sunday, Feb. 15, and Sunday, March 15.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



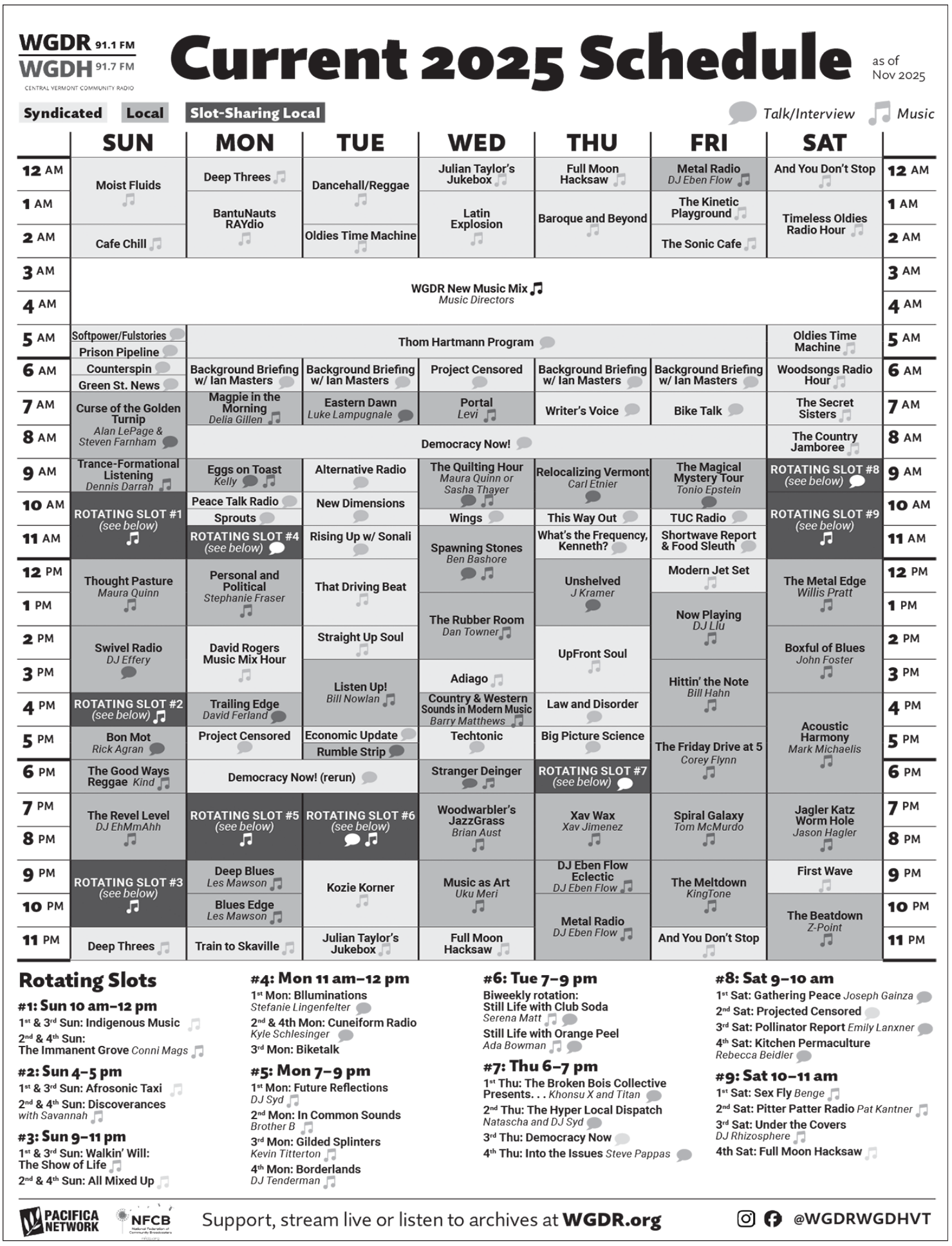
Miram Bernardo and Michael Chorney perform Sunday, Feb. 1, at the Adamant Community Club.

courtesy photo

Bernardo, Chorney perform Feb. 1

ADAMANT – Vocalist Miriam Bernardo and multi-instrumentalist and composer Michael Chorney will perform at the Adamant Community Club, Sunday, Feb. 1, 3 p.m., as part of the Winter Sunday series.

Bernardo, originally from Athens in Windham County, has provided vocals to local projects, including the all-women ensemble Steady Betty, salsa combo Afinque, High Summer and Michael Chorney's Sun Ra tribute, Magic City. The collaboration between Bernardo and Chorney stretches back to their days as members of the original "Hadestown" ensemble. Their program will feature works by Paul Bowles, Sun Ra, Llasa de Sela and Chorney. Admission is free. The series will continue each Sunday through March 1. For information, call 802-454-7103.



Art Resource Association celebrates 50 years

by Kate Mueller

MONTPELIER – The Art Resource Association, a central Vermont arts organization, was officially born on Nov. 17, 1975, when cofounders Patricia de Gogorza and her husband James Gahagan registered the ARA as a nonprofit with the state of Vermont.

De Gogorza and Gahagan moved to Vermont in 1971 from New York City, settling into the house they bought in 1964, on Dog Pond Road in South Woodbury. In the city they had been an active part of a dynamic art community. Gahagan, an abstract expressionist painter, was associate director of the Hans Hofmann School and taught painting at Pratt Institute, while de Gogorza, a printmaker and a sculptor, taught art at Bard College.

The couple soon realized the many artists living and working in the hills of Vermont needed a way to connect.

"I think of artists in Vermont like raisins in a cookie. They're separated, may not know about each other's existence, but still they're all together in the same cookie, Vermont," notes de Gogorza.

The ARA would offer education and exhibition opportunities while also providing a source of income for the two cofounders and other artists. They got a three-year grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and also secured funding from Comprehensive Employment and Training Act and the Vermont Council on the Arts. Artists paid a yearly two-dollar fee to join the organization.

These days the ARA is more egalitarian, welcoming anyone with an interest in making art. But in its early days, the ARA was more selective about who could join. Prospective members had to submit résumés, slides of their artwork, and a biography. Whereas today, group shows are only occasionally juried, exhibits then were always juried.

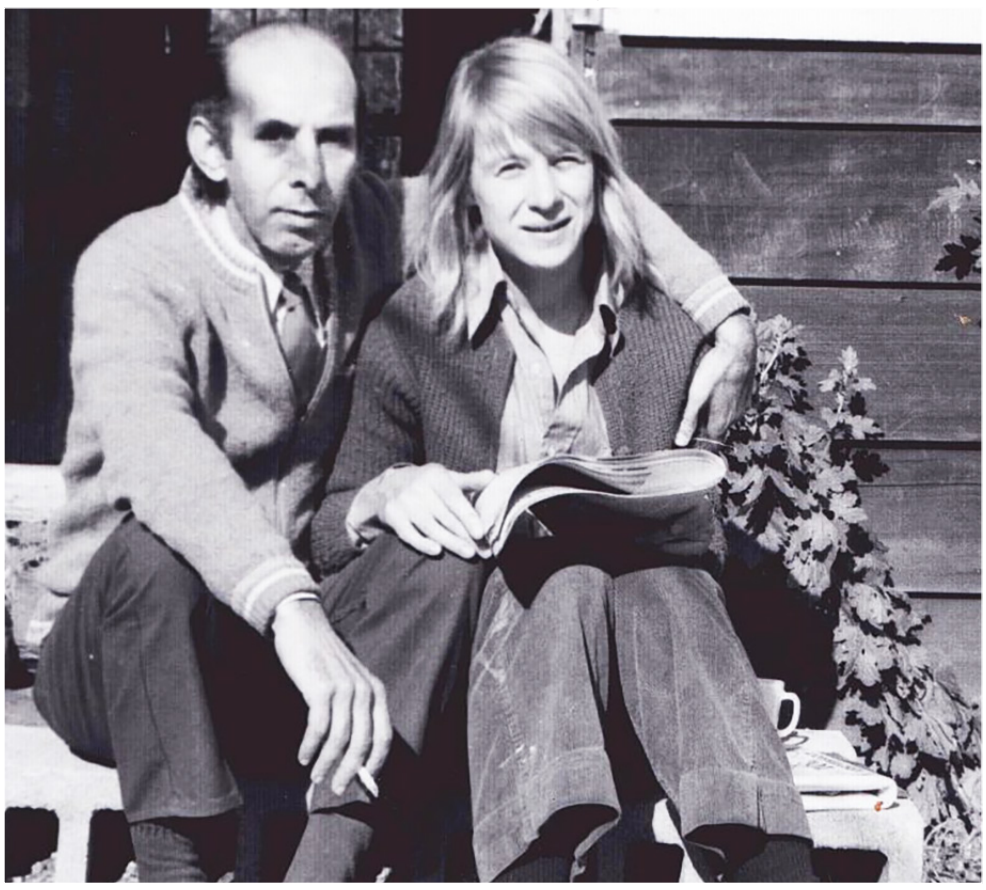
A key part of the ARA's early days was running workshops, taught by both local and visiting artists. The workshops included sessions on glass blowing, printmaking, blacksmithing, casting in bronze, and painting murals.

The ARA made certain to pay instructors. "We made it a rule that you can't have artists working for nothing," says de Gogorza. Thanks to the NEA funding, the ARA was able to pay instructors 10 dollars an hour and assistants five dollars, respectable sums in the mid-1970s.

Along with grants from the VCA and NEA, the ARA raised money during the late 1970s and early 1980s by holding an Art and Zucchini Auction every August. Dick Hathaway, a history professor at Goddard College, served as the auctioneer. Hathaway was well known for his clever auctioneering repartee, and the auctions did well, raising nearly a thousand dollars from artwork donated by members.

For a time the ARA's address was that of de Gogorza and Gahagan's house in South Woodbury. Classes and some of the workshops were held there, affectionately called "Crazy Acres," but often they had to be held elsewhere, such as artists' studios. Work was exhibited wherever the ARA could find space; favored places were the Wood Art Gallery (now known as the T.W. Wood Museum), the Mad River Barn, and the Pyralisk Gallery.

Members dreamed of a building of their own, where the ARA could hold workshops and exhibitions in one central location. In 1978, the dream seemed about to come true with the purchase of an old schoolhouse in Maple Corner. It was a big disappointment when the purchase fell through, but it turned out to be a blessing in disguise. De Gogorza notes today that the ARA would likely have not survived had it been saddled with the overhead of a bricks-and-mortar location.



Jim Gahagan and Pat de Gogorza sitting in front of their house in Woodbury, Vt., October 1973. photo courtesy of the ARA.

In 1982, de Gogorza stepped away from her role as president, which she had held for seven years. A succession of presidents soon followed. Funding from the NEA having dried up, the organization became all volunteer.

Among the many ARA presidents, Jane Pincus is a standout, having led the ARA for nearly 11 years (2000–2011) with, she says, "all my heart and soul." The organization is currently helmed by Linda Hogan, who has been president since 2015. The ARA continues its mission of hosting workshops and providing artists with opportunities to exhibit their work.

Through the years scores of local artists have been members of the ARA at one time or another, many of them well known to the community. Among them are (in no particular order): Robert Fisher, Delia Robinson, Frank Woods, Bill Brauer, Sarah Munro, Eddie Epstein, Mary Admasian, Sam Thurston, Janet Van Fleet, Fred Varney, Marie La-Pre Grabon, David Smith, Jill Waxman, Lois Eby, Ed Levin, Regis Cummings, Nicholas Hecht, Marilyn Ruseckas, Jim Sardonis, Janet MacLeod, Phil Osgatharp, and the list goes on.

This lean and flexible organization with no fixed physical address is much valued and loved by the central Vermont arts community and has continued to this day thanks to the devoted efforts of its artist members.

A more complete history can be found at the ARA website, aravt.space, where you can also find information about the organization and becoming a member.

Kate Mueller serves on the board of the Art Resource Association. Mueller, a visual artist, freelance editor, and graphic designer, lives in Montpelier. This article first appeared in The Bridge, and may be accessed at https://thebridgevt.org/2026/01/art-resource-association-celebrates-50-years-of-serving-central-vermont-artists/



Hanging an ARA art show, circa late 1970s (Jim Gahagan standing on table). photo courtesy of the ARA



Events

Thursday, Jan. 29

Financial literacy presentation, lead by Erik Schultz, 4 p.m., Greensboro Free Library. Topics covered include budgeting, debt management, building credit, retirement planning and more.

Friday, Jan. 30

Gallery Opening, 6 to 8 p.m., Front Seat Coffee. Opening reception for Josh Kuckens' photographic series capturing the Aurora Borealis across the Northeast Kingdom. Appetizers provided. Beer and wine available for purchase. Features projections of real-time aurora video footage.

Sunday, Feb. 1

Artist's Talk, 3 p.m., The Front art gallery, 6 Barre St., Montpelier. The talk by Elizabeth Nelson of Glover, was canceled from Jan. 25, due to weather.

"Other Side" film screening, 2 p.m., Highland Center for the Arts. Co-sponsored by the NEK Death Care Community and Patient Choices Vermont.

Forestry property management course, Feb. 19 to April 3. Taking Stock is an online course. All webinars begin at 5 p.m. Register by February 1. Information: director@vermontwoodlands.org or call (802) 214-4848.

Tuesday, Feb. 3

Honk & Wave, with Indivisible Hardwick, noon, Hardwick Peace Park, 34 Main St., Hardwick. Information: IndivisibleHardwick@pm.me.

Thursday, Feb. 12

Masterclass in Chocolate Drink-making, led by Prophecy Chocolate founder Mateo, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Cabot Library. Information: cabotlibrary.com.

Sunday, Feb. 15

Winter farmers market, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Hazen Union High School.

Tuesday, Feb. 17

Tech literacy series, with Seth O'Brien, 10:30 a.m. to noon, Cabot Public Library. This session concentrates on mastering video calls with Facetime, Google Meet and Zoom. Bring digital devices. Information: cabotlibrary.com.

Wednesday, Feb. 18

Lego Club, for ages 5 and up, 2:30 to 4 p.m. Information: cabotlibrary.com.

Wednesday, Feb. 25

Pizza and movie, for ages 5 and up, 1 to 4 p.m., Cabot Public Library. Pre-registration is appreciated. Information: cabotlibrary.com.

Ongoing Wednesdays

Death Cafe, second Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m., Albany Public Library, 830 Main St. Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

Pilates, 9 a.m., mat level 2, at the Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Chair Yoga, 9 a.m., Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

Historical Society, 10 a.m. – noon, Craftsbury.

Parents of Challenging Children, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.,, first Wednesday of month, support group for adoptive parents of children presenting serious emotional and behavioral challenges, Easter Seals Vermont, 641 Comstock Road, Berlin. Information, (802) 223-4744.

Outdoor Story, Activity, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., Cabot Recreation Field Pavilion with the Cabot Public Library's Amanda Otto for stories, songs, snacks, crafts, open play and special programming.

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

Brain Injury support group, 1 - 2:30 p.m., second Wednesday of month, Vermont Department of Health, 107 Eastern Ave., Suite 9, St. Johnsbury, hosted by The Vermont Center for Independent Living. Information, (800) 639-1522 or tyounkman@vcil.org.

Quilters, 1-4 p.m, Jeudevine Memorial Library, the second and fourth Wednesday of the month. All levels welcome.

Acudetox, 4 p.m., ear Acupuncture, good for anxiety, depression, various organ supports, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information, 802-851-8120.

See EVENTS, Next Page

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Events



This thermometer read -14 degrees on Spring Street in Hardwick Sunday morning at 7:30 a.m.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Community Supper, 5:30 p.m., The Civic Standard, S. Main St., Hardwick.

Food Shelf, 5 to 6:30 p.m, fourth Wednesday, , 49 Valley Lake Road, South Woodbury. Information, (802) 472-6292.

AL-ANON, 5:30 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. Weigh-in at 5:15 p.m. United Church dining room, Hardwick.

Jam Session, 6 to 8 p.m., J.W. Simpson Library, 1972 East Craftsbury Road, East Craftsbury. All ages and abilities. Old-time jam sessions held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

Alcoholics Anonymous, 7 p.m., The Church in Cabot, 2 Common Road. Beginners' and open meeting.

Ongoing Thursdays

Alcoholics Anonymous, 8 - 9 a.m., St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, West Church St., Hardwick. Literature and open meeting.

Arthritis Relief, Thursdays, 10 a.m., Community Center, Hardwick. Exercise class sponsored by the NEK Council on Aging. Information at Sara, Shbehrsing@gmail.com.

Tai Chi, 9:30 – 10:15 a.m., Church of Christ, Greensboro. Advanced Tai Chi taught by Norma Spaulding. Information, (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com

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

Story Time, 10:30 a.m. preschool, Greensboro Free Library. Information, (802) 533-2531.

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

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.

Diabetes support group, 1:30 p.m., The Health Center, Plainfield. third Thursday each month. Information, (802) 322-6600 or dgrabowski@The-Health-Center.org.

Peace Vigil, Thursdays, 2 - 3 p.m., Hardwick Peace Park, S. Main St., Hardwick, (beside the river).

Sign Language, 2 p.m., practice group, John Woodruff Simpson Memorial Library, 1972 East Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury. Information at (802) 586-9692 or jwsimpsonmemorial.org.

Hang Out, 2:45-6 p.m., The Civic Standard, S. Main St., Hardwick. Relax, make art, play games, get help with homework, 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.

Refuge Recovery, 3 p.m. Thursdays, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

All Recovery, 4 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Craftfit, 4:30 p.m., Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

Taming Knotweed, 4:30 p.m., Town Highway 19 across from Little Hosmer Dam. Bring water, bug spray, gloves, assorted clippers, shovels. Craftsbury Conservation Commission.

Dance, 5:30 p.m., Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Grief Support, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., first and third Tuesday of each month, a safe, confidential space to can share a story or be surrounded by those who understand and care, Lamoille Home Health & Hospice Building, 54 Farr Avenue, Morrisville. Information, Oona Lee at (802) 888-4651 or olee@lhha.org.

Trivia, 6 - 8 p.m., Village Restaurant, S. Main St., Hardwick, unless there is a home basketball game. Limited menu of burgers and appetizers. Hosted by Annie Houston. First come, first serve event, with room for about 10 teams.

AL-ANON, 6 p.m., Church on the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Narcotics Anonymous, 7 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Ongoing Fridays

Pilates, 9 a.m., level 3, at the Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Taiji, 10:15 a.m., intermediate, Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Storytime, Playgroup, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, 122 School St., Marshfield. Information at jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, (802) 426-3581, jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

Homeschool Program, 10:30 a.m., Friday, Greensboro Free Library. Information, (802) 533-2531.

Meditation, 3-3:45 p.m., Craftsbury Community Care Center, 784 East Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury, the second and fourth Fridays, with Nancy Milholland. Open to all, sponsored by the Mental Health Resource Group of Craftsbury.

Farmers Market, 4 to 7 p.m., 13 Mill St., Plainfield. Food and craft vendors, baked goods, fruits and veggies and more.

Haiku Club, 5:30 - 7 p.m., The Civic Standard, S. Main St., Hardwick, every first Thursday, Read published haiku, brainstorm Vermont kigo, or season words, write a haiku. No previous writing experience needed. Hosted by Mark Scott.

Contra Dance, 7-9:30 p.m., Cabot Town Hall, 3084 Main St., Cabot, second Fridays, through June 7. All dances taught, no partner needed, all welcome. Information, cabotdance@aroundvt.org.

Alcoholics Anonymous, 7 p.m., for women only, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

The Hardwick Gazette at Front Seat Coffee, Fridays, 10 a.m. Visit with Gazette staff.

Ongoing Saturdays

Alcoholics Anonymous, 8:30 a.m., step meeting, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Food Shelf, 9 to noon, third Saturday of each month from 9 to noon, 49 Valley Lake Road, South Woodbury. Information, (802) 472-6292.

Fiber Arts, 10- 11 a.m., Woodbury Community Library, meets the third Saturday of the month.

Historical Society, 10 a.m. – noon, Craftsbury.

AL-ANON, 10 a.m., Community Justice Center, St. Johnsbury, information, (802) 626-5355.

Overeaters Anonymous, 10 a.m., Zoom meeting, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.



Snow depth measured almost 12 inches, Monday morning, according to this ruler in the snow on Montgomery Road in East Hardwick.

photo by Dawn Gustafson

Acudetox, 11 a.m., every fourth Saturday, ear acupuncture, good for anxiety, depression, various organ supports, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information: (802) 851-8120.

Taming Knotweed, 11 a.m., Town Highway 19 across from Little Hosmer Dam. Bring water, bug spray, gloves, assorted clippers, shovels. Craftsbury Conservation Commission

Osteoporosis Education and support group, 1 p.m., first Saturday of month, Better Bones of the Northeast Kingdom,Community Room at Community National Bank, Derby. Information, BetterBonesNEK.org or Mary King at Mary@BetterBonesNEK.org, or (802) 535-2011.

Craftfit, 2:30 p.m. Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

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

Albany Library Writing Group, first and third Saturdays of

See EVENTS, Next Page

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Events

month, 2 to 4 p.m., Albany Public Library, 830 Main St. Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

Ongoing Sundays

Pickleball, 11 a.m., Hardwick Elementary School gym. Beginners group. Information, Sara at Shbehrsing@gmail.com.

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

Pickleball, noon, Hardwick Elementary School gym. Intermediate and above, noon to 2 p.m. Information, Sara at Shbehrsing@gmail.com.

Mending Circle, 3 to 5 p.m., every third Sunday, The Civic Standard, S. Main St., Hardwick. Bring clothes in need of fixing. Materials, instruction, snacks supplied.

Alcoholics Anonymous, 6 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Ongoing Mondays

Pilates, 9 a.m., level 1, at the Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Adaptive Biking, 2 - 3 p.m., the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, beginning at the trailhead parking lot on Creamery Road in Hardwick. Reservations or information, kerry@adaptivesportspartners.org, call (802) 427-4116.

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

Mending, 3 p.m., Craftsbury Public Library.

Quit Tobacco, support group, 3 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Adaptive Biking, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m., on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, beginning at the trailhead parking lot on Creamery Road in Hardwick. Reservations or information, kerry@adaptivesportspartners.org, (802) 427-4116.

Dads' Group, 5 - 6 p.m., at the Oxbow in Morrisville. Connect with other dads. Information, Rob at rcary@LRCVT.org or (802) 730-3000.

Dance, 5:30 p.m., Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Families Anonymous, 6 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Alcoholics Anonmous, 7 p.m., United Church of Hardwick, 216 S. Main St. Open discussion. Information, (802) 748-3708, local AA (802) 334-1213 or toll-free (877) - 334-1213.

Ongoing Tuesdays

Qigong, 8:30 a.m., the Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Tai Chi, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m., Jeudevine Memorial Library Parker Ladd Community Room, Hardwick. Advanced Tai Chi, taught by Norma Spaulding, Information at (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com.

Tai Chi, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Jeudevine Memorial Library Parker Ladd Community Room, Hardwick. Tai Chi for Fall Prevention, taught by Norma Spaulding. Information at (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com.

Storytime, 10 a.m., Craftsbury Public Library, early literacy for children ages 0 - 5. Information at childrenslibrarian@craftsburypubliclibrary.org or (802) 586-9683.

Moms in Recovery, support program, 1 - 2 p.m., tailored to support pregnant and parenting mothers and their families. In person, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Suite 2, Morrisville. Information, crystal.morrissey@ncvrc.com, (802) 635-0084.

Kids' Chorus, 3 p.m., Jeudevine Library, Hardwick. For ages 8 and up. Vocal warm-ups, musical games and group singing. Information at jeudevineyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

After School, 3 – 5 p.m., Greensboro Free Library. Information, (802) 533-2531.

Dungeons & Dragons, 3:30 – 5 p.m., Cabot Public Library, ages 9 - 13. Mysteries and magic, tails and talons, puzzles and prophecies.

Smart Recovery, 4 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Craftfit, 4:30 p.m., Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

Crafting Group, 4:30 - 6 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, 122 School St., Marshfield. Information, jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, (802) 426-3581, jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

Magic, 5 p.m., The Civic Standard, S. Main St., Hardwick, A group of young people get together at to play Magic: the Gathering, hosted by Dean Burns. New players are welcome.

Friends of Jeudevine Library, 5:15 p.m., third Tuesday of every month at the library, N. Main St., Hardwick.

As Bill Sees It, AA Meeting, 6 p.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Morrisville. Information, (802) 851-8120.

Taiji, 6 p.m. Barn off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Alcoholics Anonymous, 6 p.m., meditation meeting, United Church, 6 Church Lane (next to library), Craftsbury Common. Open meeting.

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, e-mail news@hardwickgazette.com.

Education



Craftsbury Schools Principal Lisa McCarthy (top center) speaks to the Vermont House Committee on Education during NEK Day, Thursday, Jan. 22 minutes after Hazen Union School World Language Teacher and Danville School Board member, who offered her testimony from the perspective of a community member and teacher in the Northeast Kingdom. Committee member Rep. Leanne Harple is to the right in both photos. YouTube photo

OSSU voices heard at NEK Day

by Craftsbury Schools social media post

MONTPELIER - Two Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) employees testified before the Vermont House Committee on Education during NEK Day, Thursday, Jan. 22,.

Kay Freedy, a Hazen Union teacher and Danville School Board member, spoke as did Lisa McCarthy, principal of Craftsbury Schools, offering her testimony from the perspective of a school leader in the Northeast Kingdom.

Both voices add to the conversation around Act 73 as Vermont works to educate and care for its children, and legislators grapple with the urgent questions before them.

Listen to those, and other, testimony from Northeast Kingdom educators and students, whose lived experiences add critical depth to the discussion. Freedy's testimony begins at 1:40, followed by McCarthy's at 7:22. Access the testimonies at youtube.com/live/Qr_3F59pdEE

Alumni reunion will begin June 18

by Patrick Hussey

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Academy/Hazen Union Alumni Association will have a new addition to its upcoming 2026 alumni weekend: the association has teamed up with Hill Farmstead Brewery in Greensboro to host a kick-off event at the brewery on Thursday, June 18.

All alumni, family and friends will meet at the brewery from 3 to 5 p.m. for a social to help jumpstart the alumni weekend.

Hill Farmstead, a craft beer brewery, celebrated its fifteenth anniversary last year, led by Hazen Union alum Shaun Hill. The Hill family has a long history in the tavern business, including the first tavern built in the Greensboro area by Aaron Hill in 1809.

The brewery is located at 403 Hill Road in Greensboro Bend.

The brewery event will be followed on Friday, June 19, with the eighth edition of the Master's Memorial Golf Tournament at Mountain View Country Club in Greensboro. The tournament honors local golfers who have passed and has become a fundraiser. Proceeds from the tourney are used to award monetary gifts to some Hazen Union seniors. There are two tee times for the golf tourney, at 12:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m., and the tourney is open to all golfers, not just alumni. Tournament sign-up forms can be downloaded from the alumni website: hardwickhazenalumni.com.

On Saturday, June 20, the HA/HU Alumni Association will be hosting the annual alumni reunion at the Brochu Pavilion in Hardwick, located at 2244 West Hill Road, starting at 11 a.m. and continuing into the late afternoon. Five-year classes ending in 6 and 1 will be honored, but the reunion is open to all classes, all alumni, family and staff. Registration forms for the reunion can be downloaded at hardwickhazenalumni.com.

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Hazen Union junior Jameson Lamarre (No. 11) looks to pass by Braedon Bellows (No. 15) and Pyke Nelson (right) of Harwood during play in Hardwick January 22. Lamarre scored 22 points and Lincoln Hill (No. 22) (in back) scored 14 points. Hazen won 59-37.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Hazen Union Wildcat ninth-grader Noah Foster aims for the basket defended by Harwood's Leo Costanza (left) and Garrett Brewer (right) during action at Hazen January 22. At left (in back) is official Clyde Cook and at right (in back) is Wildcat Jeter Demers. Hazen defeated Northfield 59-37.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Wildcats vault up the standings with pair of wins

by Ken Brown

ORLEANS – The Hazen Union boys basketball team improved to 7-3 last week with a couple of big Capital League wins over Lake Region and Harwood, moving them up to the No. 3 spot in the current Division III standings.

Lincoln Hill poured in a career-high 26 points to power the Wildcats to a 67-37 road win over Lake Region last Tuesday. The junior guard caught fire from long range, draining six three-pointers to help give Hazen a 33-15 lead heading into the break. Jameson Lamarre complimented with 14 points for Hazen, Morgan Michaud added seven points and seven rebounds and Sully Laflam dished out seven assists. Keagan Tartaglio led the Rangers with 18 points and Landon Richards chipped in with nine in the loss.



Wildcat Morgan Michaud soars to the hoop as Harwood's Sawyer Pekarski (center) and Hazen Union's Ethan Gann (right) follow the play, January 22, in Hardwick. Hazen took the victory 59-37.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Lamarre took over on Thursday night, dropping 22 points to lead Hazen to an impressive 59-37 home win over Harwood. He added six assists and Michaud did the dirty work inside with eight points and 10 boards to give the visitors a 32-13 halftime lead. Hill connected on two more threes to score 14 points and Laflam added 11 points and seven boards in the win. Steele Nelson led the Highlanders with 13 points as they fell to 6-3 on the season.

Head coach Aaron Hill and his experienced squad have struggled on the boards at times this season as well as finding a consistent three-point shooter. The Wildcats crash the boards collectively against bigger teams and Hill emerging as a reliable deep threat has the potential to open up the offense for Hazen in the second half of the season.

"I think we are starting to grow into the team we want to be by season's end and I like the direction we are headed in. I like the versatility of this group, which allows us to play different styles. I also love how unselfish they all are," said Hill.

The Wildcats will wrap up their three-game series with Peoples Academy (PA) later this week on Hill's fourth consecutive year honoring past greats who paved the way on Hardwick Academy (HA) Night. His team will once again don the Purple and Gold uniforms of the Terriers in what has become an annual tradition.

"We encourage everyone to come to the game and wear purple and gold. The alumni association will also be there giving out purple and gold pom poms to fans. We have added HA championship and runner-up team plaques to our gym hallway this year so people can see the team pictures and scores from HA's most successful teams," said Hill.

Hazen was scheduled to travel to a much-improved Lyndon Institute team on Tuesday before matching up against PA for a third time this season at the Cat Den on Thursday night. All home games can live streamed on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).



Twinfield-Cabot's Tej Stewart (left) crosses by Ethan Middleton (center) of Northfield as his teammate Damian Morrison (right) follows the play during action at Twinfield January 20. Twinfield-Cabot topped Northfield 90-44.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Thomas Gouge of Twinfield-Cabot shoots for two as Northfield defenders Elijah Scott (center) and Alex Colgan (right) try to prevent the shot during a January 20 game in Twinfield. At left is Azeem Stewart of the Trojans. Twinfield-Cabot won 90-44.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Twinfield-Cabot Trojans pass tough road test

by Ken Brown

MARSHFIELD – After racing past Northfield at home to start the week, the Twinfield-Cabot boys basketball team outlasted a tough Division III Oxbow team on the road to run their record to 10-1 on the season.

Eli Russell pumped in a game-high 29 points to lead the Trojans to a 90-44 lopsided home win over Northfield last Tuesday. Tej Stewart complemented with 15 points and Thomas Gouge had a strong 10-point effort in the paint for Twinfield-Cabot. Omar Miksic-Knibb added 10 points and fellow sophomore Azeem Stewart chipped in with nine in the win. Former Hazen Union standout Damian Morrison paced the Marauders with 11 points as they fell to 2-6 on the season.

"Eli has become a flat-out bucket getter. We ask a lot of him on both ends of the floor and him along with Tej's improvement of his all-around game over four years, they can be a real headache for opposing teams. The way that Sam Churchill, Thomas Gouge and Sam McLane physically challenge our team in practice has elevated everyone's game and Zepherin Hebert and Ben Monaco continue to spark us defensively every single game," said head coach Kris Bador.

Miksic-Knibb had a breakout moment in a big spot on Thursday night, exploding for a career-high 32 points to lead the Trojans to a tough 82-72 road win over Division III Oxbow. Russell orchestrated the offense once again with an efficient 21 points and Azeem Stewart had his best game as a varsity player with 14. Kobin Ellsworth (25 points) had the Olympians in good position, down 40-39 at the break and within four with eight minutes to play, but Miksic-Knibb and the Trojans were too hard to handle down the stretch. Jayden Huntoon added 20 points for Oxbow as they fell to 5-4 after coming into the matchup with impressive wins over reigning state champs Thetford Academy and Danville.

"The two sophomores took a big step this week. Omar is starting to pull things out of his bag that we didn't even know he had and Azeem gave us some huge minutes off the bench. Oxbow is a physical team but our three bigs in the middle continued to do their thing and we'll need them to keep anchoring that spot together if we're going to get where we want to go this season. We're positioned well at the halfway point in the season, and we need to continue to grow as a group and control what we can control. We have another big test this week and we're calling on Trojan Nation to come out in droves on Thursday night," said Bador.

Twinfield-Cabot's only loss of the season came against crosstown rival Danville on the road late last Month. They'll get a chance to exact some revenge on Thursday night at home against the Bears. The Trojans will be back on the road next Tuesday in a Mountain League match-up against Blue Mountain.



Third year Twinfield-Cabot head varsity coach Kris Bador (center) leads his team to the locker room during half time. Left to right are assistant coaches Anthony Golden, Jordan Moore and players Thomas Gouge, Azeem Stewart (No. 11), Ben Monaco, Brennen Nagle, Samuel Churchill (No. 21), student manager Casey Lackey, Sam McLane (No. 1) and Tej Stewart (No. 2).

photo by Vanessa Fournier

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Eric Hanson's Ski Report



Margie Freed competing at the U.S. Biathlon trials.

photo by Eric Hanson



Jack Young (7) on the left, ski sprinting for Colby College in 2024 at the UVM College Carnival.

photo by Eric Hanson

Jack Young and Margie Freed Headed to Italy for the Olympics

CRAFTSBURY – Two Craftsbury Green Racing Project (GRP) skiers will be in Italy next month to compete in the Olympics. Margie Freed, a Minnesota native and UVM graduate, will be on the U.S. Biathlon squad, while Jack Young will be part of the U.S. Cross Country Ski Team sprint crew. Young is from Jay, and graduated from North Country Union and Colby College. Both live and train in Craftsbury during the non-racing months.

This past weekend in Novo Mesto, Czech Republic, Freed was part of the U.S. mixed relay team placing 4th, tying the team's best ever finish in this event in 2015. Deedra Irwin led off, keeping the U.S. in contention by shooting really well using one spare in prone and a clean standing stage. Margie Freed headed out in the pack of skiers in 10th place. Despite the pressure of racing in front of 20,000 fans (no typo on this), she used just one spare in both prone and standing tagging off to Campbell Wright in 8th place. Freed had the fifth fastest ski time of her leg. Wright skied the fastest 3rd leg time and tagged to Max Germain in 4th. After shooting clean in prone, Germain moved up to 3rd. He had to use two spare rounds in standing and left the range one second ahead of the Czech Republic skier. Germain ended up in 4th a few seconds back.

Young continues to ski well in freestyle sprint races on the World Cup with a 22nd place finish in the qualifier in Oberhof, Germany, on January 10. He placed 5th in his six-person quarterfinal. He was 39th in the classic sprint qualifier in Goms, Switzerland, this past weekend. His teammates Gus Schumacher and Ben Ogden finished 2nd and 6th respectively for a super strong U.S. showing. Unfortunately, the sprint competition at the Olympics will be a classic race, where Young is still trying to improve his technique and results. Whether the he receives a start or is a back-up, he's earned his spot on the team.

Five other GRP biathletes have been skiing for the U.S. team on the IBU circuit (level below World Cup), including Bjorn Westervelt (Stowe), Jake Brown (St. Paul, Minn.), Luke Brown (St. Paul, Minn.), Kesley Dickinson (Methow Valley, Wash.), and Jackie Garso (Saranac Lake, N.Y.).

Two weekends of Ski Racing Action

The Craftsbury Outdoor Center (COC) will host its' two day marathon series on January 31 and February 1. The first day will be the 46 and 23 km classic race followed by a 23 km freestyle race on Sunday. There will be four road crossings along Creek Road and Lost Nation Road. The following weekend (Feb. 6-8) the Outdoor Center will play host to the UVM college carnival and the New England Nordic Ski Associations Eastern Cup series. Sprint races will take place on a 1.6 km course on Friday and Sunday, while on Saturday, the racers will ski around the 5 km race course for multiple laps. This weekend provides better spectating of some the Northeast's finest skiers. For those who just want to ski and avoid the crowds, the COC encourages people to use the Craftsbury School parking lot on the weekend and Highland Lodge to ski the Greensboro trail network.

Susan Dunklee to be Inducted to the Vermont Sports Hall of Fame

VERMONT – Susan Dunklee is the most decorated U.S. women's biathlete with two silver medals at World Biathlon Championships in 2017 and 2020. She will be one of ten people to be inducted into the Vermont Sports Hall of Fame on April 25 in Burlington, along with moguls skiing star Hannah Kearney. Dunklee grew up in Barton and ran and skied for St. Johnsbury Academy. She went to Dartmouth College first as a runner but she made her way onto the Cross Country Ski team as well. She remembers showing up at dryland training for skiing and the coach did not know who she was. She quickly changed that, earning all-American honors a few years later. She switched to biathlon following college and just missed making the U.S. Olympic team in Vancouver in 2010. She went on to compete in the next three winter Olympics along with the two to three World Cup races most weekends on the biathlon circuit from 2012-2022. She moved to Craftsbury to take on coaching and event organizing at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center. She has helped revive biathlon competitions in the Quebec and the Northeast so that both young and old from novice to experienced can have a chance to explore and learn biathlon skills.



Susan Dunklee

courtesy photo

Ken Brown's Sport Nuggets

Vermont Twin State Lions Cup girls roster released

ST. JOHNSBURY – The Vermont Lions Cup girls roster was released last week, recognizing the top high school soccer seniors in the state as they ready to take on New Hampshire this summer in the 51st Annual Lions Cup Twin State soccer match this coming summer.

St. Johnsbury Academy's Addison Ely led the way for local selections as one of the premier defenders in the state. Ely helped lead the Lady Hilltoppers to the Division I Final Four last fall with a 10-5-1 record. Joining Ely on the backline will be Oxbow's Natalie Spear. The Mountain League standout helped turn the Lady Olympian soccer program completely around in 2025 with a 10-4-2 record. Rounding out the Vermont roster was: North Country's Annabella Aiken, U-32's Morgan Towne, Ashtin Stearns and Ava Francis of Vergennes, Peyton Borick of Rice, Emma Hodgson and Hazel Fry of Essex, CVU's Rachel Bialowoz and Reese Kingsbury, Spaulding's Sophie Guarriello, Colchester's Brinlee Gilfillan, Poultney's Eme Silverman, Brattleboro's Reese Croutworst, South Burlington's Reese Gordon, Sofia Randall and Chloe DeJong of MMU, Hartford's Harper Traendly, Windsor's Kenzie Wescott, MAU's Ella Palisano and Marlie Bushey of Milton.

Twinfield-Cabot's Jola Otten and Peoples Academy's Noah Brown were named to the Vermont boys roster late last month.

Vermont will square off against New Hampshire's top seniors on July 18.

Lady Trojans drop pair on the week

MARSHFIELD – The Twinfield-Cabot girls basketball team fell to Blue Mountain and Vergennes last week, dropping to 0-12 on the season.

Ava Kingsbury led all scorers with 13 points to lead Blue Mountain to a hard-fought 30-21 road win over the Lady Trojans last Wednesday. Kingsbury added nine boards to fill up her impressive stat line, Kobie Moulton chipped in with 6 points and Bryn Nelson and Heidi Wohleb combined for 10 rebounds in the win. Senior Teagan Trader had her best game of the season, scoring a team-high nine points for Twinfield-Cabot. The Lady Bucks have won 3 of their last 4 games, evening their record at 5-5.

Division III power Vergennes flexed its muscles on Friday, racing past the Lady Trojans on the road 80-32. It was the Lady Commodores' eighth win in their last 10 games, moving them up to sixth in the current Division III rankings.

Twinfield-Cabot will wrap up their season series against BFA-Fairfax on Wednesday night at home and are scheduled to host Winooski next Monday.

Hazen girls roll to ninth straight win

by Ken Brown

HARDWICK – Dominant wins over Spaulding and Thetford Academy last week pushed the Hazen Union girls basketball team's win streak to nine games, improving to 10-1 on the season.

Kelsie Rivard punished the Crimson Tide with a game-high 32 points last Wednesday night as Hazen rolled to a 69-48 win at home. The junior star has scored 92 points over her last three games and is only a handful of points away from being the next 1,000-point career scorer for the program. Isabelle Gouin scored 11 points, fellow senior Julia des Groseilliers added nine and Mya Lumsden chipped in with seven in the win. Rory-Anne Glassford tried to keep Spaulding within striking distance with 21 points and Sophie Guarriello added 13 points and seven assists in the loss. The Crimson Tide fell to 3-7 on the season as they finished up a brutal four games stretch against powerhouse Oxbow, North Country, Lamoille and now Hazen.

The Lady Cats pulled away in the second half behind a season-high 19 points from des Groseilliers in a 50-22 road win over Thetford Academy on Friday night. Hazen's offense sputtered early, taking a 19-8 lead into the break with limited minutes from Rivard. A 22-5 run to open the second half put the game away behind Autumn Dailey (eight points), Mya Lumsden (seven) and a pair of threes from Taylor Thompson. Kassidy Gann chipped in with 4 points for Hazen in the win. Natalie Perry led the Lady Panthers with seven points as they fell to 3-10. It's the second year of a total rebuild for a Thetford program that won 32 games over a two-year span, including a trip to the 2023 Division III state title game.

"We just need to keep fine tuning our own stuff," said head coach Randy Lumsden. "We need to make sure that what we are doing is well refined by playoff season,"

Lumsden once again has his team positioned at the top of the Division III standings ahead of Windsor, Bellows Falls and Oxbow. Windsor defeated the Lady Cats last March in the state title game and have cut down the nets at the Barre Auditorium three of the last four years. Hazen bested Windsor two years ago to bring the program's first state championship back to Hardwick in over three decades. The Lady Yellowjackets are loaded once again this season, but Lumsden is only focused on pushing his team to play their best brand of basketball come tournament time.

"I've learned over the last three years that you can't worry so much about what all the other teams in our division are doing. We do make small adjustments and talk about opponent's player tendencies, but 90% of our focus is on what we need to do. That's what we can control," said Lumsden.

Rivard is set to become the first Lady Cat underclassmen to reach 1,000 career points since the great Jenn des Groseilliers and has positioned herself to do so at home on Wednesday night against U-32. Hazen will make the short trip to Morrisville for a highly anticipated match-up against Peoples Academy on Friday. All home games can be live streamed on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

Arctic blast forces cancellation of Greensboro ski event

GREENSBORO – The arctic blast of cold air over the weekend canceled many outdoor outings including the Tour de Greensboro. After monitoring the weather forecast going into the January 24 event date, it was very clear that the safety of the participants and volunteers would be at risk in the subzero temperatures. The decision to cancel the event was made on January 21, by Jim Fredericks, the volunteer event director. "Cancelling the event was very disappointing after one hundred plus hours of preparation time," said Fredericks. This 25km single loop non-competitive ski tour starts and finishes at the Highland Lodge and takes people over the public and private trail system in Greensboro. The Tour de Greensboro attracts participants from throughout New England and New York with a maximum capacity of 140 skiers. The event is a fundraiser for the Greensboro Association.

Preliminary Report on deer seasons

by Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department

MONTPELIER – The final number of deer taken in Vermont's 2025 hunting seasons will not be available for a few more weeks, but the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department says the final tally will be a little over 17,700 deer.

Hunters took nearly 9,700 bucks, which was up slightly from 2024 (9,356) but very close to the previous three-year average of 9,608. The antlerless deer harvest was a little over 8,000, which was up from the previous three-year average of 7,598.

"Season totals were remarkably average in 2025," said Nick Fortin, the department's deer project leader. "Most seasons had total deer harvests that were within one to two percent of the previous three-year average. The only exception was the December muzzleloader season, when consistent snow cover across the state contributed to an increased harvest."

The primary goal of Vermont's deer management strategy is to keep the deer herd stable, healthy and in balance with available habitat. "Maintaining an appropriate number of deer on the landscape ensures deer and the habitats that support them remain in good condition and productive," said Fortin.

The 2025 White-tailed Deer Harvest Report with final numbers will be on Fish and Wildlife's website in early March. Beginning in late March, the department will be holding informational hearings to share biological information and to listen to any information people wish to share.

Athletes with Vermont ties named to US Olympic team

by Kevin O'Connor, VTDigger

VERMONT – Ask Julia Kern about her upcoming trip to Italy and she'll talk up the appetizers and savory scenery. Then comes the main course, the one where she'll compete alongside more than a dozen other athletes with Vermont ties at the 2026 Winter Olympics.

Like a majority of the state's qualifying skiers for Alpine, biathlon, cross-country and freestyle events, Kern has attended the games before. But this time, the 28-year-old member of Stratton's SMS T2 elite Nordic training team will be able to partake of the host country more easily than in the past.

"The last one was in lock-down during Covid-19," Kern recently told VTDigger about her 2022 Olympic debut in Beijing, China. "All of us agree that wasn't a normal experience."

Alpine skiing will offer Vermonters the best chance to see a familiar face ascend a podium at the games Feb. 6 ro 22 in the Italian competition centers of Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo:

Mikaela Schiffrin, a 30-year-old graduate of Burke Mountain Academy, is aiming for a comeback after winning slalom gold in Sochi, Russia, in 2014 and giant slalom gold and alpine combined silver in Pyeongchang, South Korea, in 2018, only to fail to medal in 2022 and fall during the 2024 Killington World Cup. Shiffrin has told the press she won't compete in all six Olympic races like she did four years ago, but instead will focus on her current strongpoints: going down and around the gates in the slalom, giant slalom and team combined events.

Ryan Cochran-Siegle, 33, of Starksboro, whose mother, Barbara Ann Cochran of Richmond's Cochran's Ski Area, won slalom gold in 1972, is returning to his third Olympics after scoring silver in the super-G (super giant slalom) in 2022.

Paula Moltzan, 31, a former University of Vermont NCAA champion, will be competing in her second Olympics, having just purchased her first house in Waitsfield.

Nina O'Brien, 28, a graduate of Burke Mountain Academy, will return to the games after scoring the sixth-fastest time in the first round of the 2022 giant slalom, only to crash and break her leg in the second run.



Mac Forehand of Winhall executes a trick in a World Cup freestyle ski finals in Colorado in 2022.
photo by Hugh Carey, Associated Press

And Mary Bocock, a 22-year-old Dartmouth College graduate, will be making her Olympic debut as the daughter of a member of the Sullivan family of skiers from the Mount Snow region.

Jessie Diggins, a 34-year-old SMS T2 team member, is seeking to add to her medal count before wrapping up her racing career this March. She won U.S. Nordic's first-ever gold in 2018 and a silver and bronze in 2022. Diggins is expected to compete in all six Olympic cross-country events, which will require her to ski as little as 7.5 kilometers in one race and as many as 50 in another.

Ben Ogden, a 25-year-old University of Vermont graduate, will be representing his Bennington County hometown of Landgrove, population 177, for his second games. He's expected to focus on his sport's shorter sprint races.

Jack Young, 23, of Jay, will ski as part of Craftsbury's Green Racing Project.

And Lauren Jortberg, a 28-year-old Dartmouth College graduate, will participate as a member of the Mansfield Nordic Pro Team.

Biathlon, a sport mixing skiing and shooting, will see the most Vermont representation, with four of the team's eight racers connected to the state, including three who belong to its Army National Guard:

Deedra Irwin, a 33-year-old guard staff sergeant from Jericho, placed seventh in the 15-kilometer race during her first Olympics in 2022, the best-ever finish for an American in an individual biathlon event.

Sean Doherty, a 30-year-old guard member, will be attending his fourth Olympics.

Two biathlon teammates will be making their Olympic debuts:

Margie Freed, a 28-year-old University of Vermont graduate, is a member of Craftsbury's Green Racing Project.

And Maxime Germain, 24, is a guard aviation operations specialist.

(Biathlon alternates are Jake Brown, 33, of Craftsbury's Green Racing Project, and Chloe Levins, 27, of Rutland.)

And in freestyle skiing:

Mac Forehand, a 24-year-old Stratton Mountain School graduate from Winhall, is set to offer acrobatic tricks, flips and spins in his second Olympics.

And Olivia Giaccio, 25, will hit the moguls course, having grown up skiing at Killington.

After the Covid-19-confined 2022 games, many Vermont athletes are planning to travel to Italy with family and friends. Kern is ready to show them her top speed.

"Then I'll make sure to slow down," she said, "to appreciate and share this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Free ice fishing day, Saturday, Jan. 31

by Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department

MONTPELIER – Free Ice Fishing Day is held annually on the last Saturday in January. The day is geared toward giving new ice anglers an opportunity to try ice fishing before purchasing equipment or a fishing license, but any angler may ice fish on any waterbody open to ice fishing statewide without a license on Free Ice Fishing Day.

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is holding an Ice Fishing Festival at Elmore State Park in Elmore. The festival will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event is free and open to all ages as well as families with kids.

"The Ice Fishing Festival typically draws 500 to 700 participants for a day of fishing, skill-building and community," said Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Jason Batchelder.

Vermont Fish and Wildlife staff, as well as instructors from Vermont's Let's Go Fishing Program, will be on-hand to teach ice fishing skills. These include knot tying, baiting and using ice fishing rods, tip-ups and other specialized ice fishing gear, and most importantly, how to stay safe on the ice. They will also discuss fishing regulations and fish identification.

Fish and Wildlife staff will operate a fish fry station, serving up samples of locally caught Vermont fish, as well as cooking up participants' catch. Participants are encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather, and ice cleats are strongly recommended.

Fishing equipment will be loaned for this day on the ice, or participants may bring their own.

For more information, go to Upcoming Events on Vermont Fish and Wildlife website.

Registration can be completed online in advance, or people may register when they arrive, although registering in advance will enable participants to get on the ice faster.

Public invited to comment on changes to public waters rules, wake-sports regulations

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) is seeking public input on proposed changes to Vermont's Use of Public Waters Rules. ANR will host two hybrid public meetings on January 27 and February 4. The public can provide feedback during these meetings or through written comments.

The public can submit written comments through an online form, or attend a public meeting in-person or online January 27, 5:30 to 8 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 49 Center Street, Brandon, or join by phone at (802) 828-7667; and February 4, 5:30 to 8 p.m., VTrans Dill Building, 2178 Airport Road Unit B, Barre, or by phone at (802) 828-7667.

Learn more online about the proposed changes to the Use of Public Waters Rules, the rule-making process, and opportunities for public participation at the ANR website.

"The Use of Public Waters Rules protects the uses and natural resource values of all public waters for this and future generations," said Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Misty Sinsigalli.

In 2024, Vermont adopted new wake-sports regulations that limit wake sports with a wake-boat to the wake-sports zones of inland lakes. There are 30 inland lakes where wake-sports can occur within a specific wake-sports zone. The proposed changes to the Use of Public Water Rules and wake-sports regulations include, update the language on how to delegate to municipalities, review and submit petitions, and inspect and decontaminate (or clean) watercraft; increase safety offsets between wake-sports and other recreational users; revise the wake-sports zone definition and require hot water decontamination for wake-boats moving between water bodies.