



Calais, Worcester school closure votes set Feb. 10

by **Raymonda Parchment**

CALAIS, WORCESTER – The Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD) configuration committee, the school board and district leadership have recommended the consolidation and closure of two elementary schools, Calais Elementary School and Doty Elementary School, citing low enrollment as a contributing factor. An election to vote on whether or not to close Calais Elementary School and send Calais students to what is now East Montpelier Elementary will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 10, at the Calais Town Hall from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

An informational meeting will be held Wednesday, Feb. 4, from 5 to 6 p.m. at Doty Elementary, and Saturday, Feb. 7, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at Calais Elementary.

There are currently 89 students enrolled at Calais Elementary, with the district's

enrollment declining by 14 percent in the last decade. WCUUSD serves the five towns surrounding Montpelier, Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex and Worcester, with U-32 as the middle school and high school.

The district has developed a plan to move from five elementary schools to three sustainable campuses for the 2026-2027 school year. Doty Elementary School, with an enrollment of 57 students, and Calais Elementary School, would be consolidated with the remaining elementary schools. According to the mailer made available to Worcester and Calais voters, the district aims to keep commutes below 45 minutes, and finalize staff assignments by late March or early April.

The recommendation to close the schools was met with objections and confusion from the present students and residents at the December 17 WCUUSD board meeting, with 169 online

attendees and many community members making their voice heard in person.

Some school board members were in favor of the proposal, whereas others voiced their opposition. According to the minutes, many spoke against the idea of moving ahead with reconfiguration in the form of small school consolidation. Some students delivered presentations, others made impassioned pleas to keep the school open. U-32 parents and staff spoke about the impact of reducing positions at the school.

The board approved an amendment to say they would honor a town against closing its school and not work to circumvent the town's vote. Superintendent Steve Dellinger-Pate clarified that no school in the district meets the "small by necessity" criteria made available in draft documents from the state Agency of Education in early December, further compounding the district's financial constraints.

Voters to weigh in on town forest acquisition

by **Paul Fixx**

HARDWICK - A presentation and discussion of a Hardwick Conservation Commission (HCC) proposal to create a town forest on Buffalo Mountain was the subject of a well-attended gathering, Sunday, January 24, in the Jeudvine Library's Parker Ladd Community Room.

Rachel Kane, one of the commission's co-chairs, shared an overview of the project that would create a 329 acre Hardwick Town Forest that includes the summit of Buffalo Mountain and its flank facing the town.

The David family has given the town an option on the property and the Hardwick Select Board has given preliminary approval for the project and will ask voters to weigh in contributing \$25,000 to the project via Australian

ballot at town meeting, March 3.

The purchase involves collaboration between commission members, the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) and Northern Rivers Land Trust (NRLT), with public and private funds contributing roughly \$700,000, that will include funding a town account with \$25,000 to cover maintain of the property, essentially returning the \$25,000 voters are being asked to commit.

This proposal is not an outright purchase by the town, but one in which grants, facilitated by the Trust for Public Land and the Northern Rivers Land Trust, will cover over 95% of the cost involved with purchasing the three Davis family parcels.

"It's an extraordinary and rare opportunity for Hardwick," said Kane.

See FOREST, 4



The view from a scenic overlook on the flanks of Buffalo Mountain overlooking downtown Hardwick that members of the Hardwick Conservation Commission are working to incorporate into a town forest shows a view to the northeast with South Main Street entering from the lower right.

photo by Joe Nudell



Left, Rose Friedman, founder and executive director of The Civic Standard, helps out at the organization's Bingo & Burgers fundraiser. Right, Civic Standard Board Vice President Kent Osborne works at the oven, January 31, at Greensboro's Fellowship Hall kitchen for the fundraising event.

photo by Hal Gray

Familiar faces petition for municipal positions

by **Raymonda Parchment**

GREENSBORO – In preparation for town meeting day, area communities are holding informational meetings and forums for those interested in running for town offices. As of last Thursday's meeting, the town of Greensboro had received several petitions, some for select board seats, others for municipal positions. The meeting began with introductions, before moving to a questions and answers session.

Town clerk Kim Greaves announced she will be running once again. Greaves has a long history with the town, initially hired as an election official in 2004. She worked as assistant town clerk for a time, and was hired as town clerk in 2017. Before entering the municipal profession, Greaves was a legal secretary for several attorneys, as well as a bookkeeper and parts manager for her own business for thirty-odd years.

"I think the town clerk's office is the front face for the town, we're a customer service operation. We keep the books of our land records, which are the crown jewels of Greensboro. That's where I am and I want to continue," Greaves said.

See FAMILIAR, 5

POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Police Department Burglary, cocaine possession, criminal suspension

HARDWICK – On January 20, Hardwick Police were notified that Cassandra Rich, 32, 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, February 23, 8:30 a.m. for Burglary.

On January 21, Hardwick Police conducted a traffic stop for a motor vehicle violation on South Main Street. The operator, Craig Devenger, was found to be criminally suspended and was also found to be in possession of cocaine.

Devenger was taken into custody without incident and processed at the Hardwick Police Department. Devenger was released on a citation to appear in Caledonia Superior Court, March 9, 8:30 a.m.

On January 30, Hardwick Police Department conducted a traffic stop for a motor vehicle violation on Route 16. The operator, Breana Keough, was found to be criminally suspended. Keough was taken into custody without incident and processed at Hardwick Police Department. Keough was released on a citation to appear in Caledonia Superior Court, March 9, 8:30 a.m.

Greensboro Fire Department New pumper



The Greensboro Fire Department received its new Deep South International Pumper from Brindlee Mountain Fire Apparatus, Saturday, January 31, after 3 years of planning. It is expected to enter service as Engine 2 in February, replacing two of the department's aging engines after hose, equipment and tools are inventoried, cataloged and mounted on the new truck.

Greensboro Fire Department social media photo



February 4 - February 10

Food Club Homestyle or Italian Meatballs \$4.99 26 oz.		Wholly Guacamole \$2.99 7.5 oz.	
TGIF Appetizers \$4.49 8-11 oz.	Nabisco Snack Crackers 2/\$5 8-13.7 oz.	G.M. Assorted Cereals \$2.99 8.9-12 oz.	
Post Honey Bunches of Oats Cereal 2/\$5 12 oz.	Newman's Pasta Sauce 2/\$6 24 oz.	Old El Paso Taco Dinner Kits \$3.99 8.8-12.5 oz.	
Newman's Salsa 2/\$6 16 oz.	Progresso Classic Vegetable Soups 2/\$5 18-19 oz.	Rotel Tomatoes 2/\$3 10 oz.	
Newman's Salad Dressings \$3.99 16 oz.	Hellmann's Mayonnaise \$5.49 15-30 oz.	Sweet Baby Ray's BBQ Sauce 2/\$4 18 oz.	
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Cabot Butter \$3.99 16 oz.	Newman's Frozen Pizza \$6.49 15.1-17 oz.	Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream \$4.49 16 oz.	

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WEATHER WATCH

One word: Brrrr...

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – Another week with cold temperatures is in the books as highs remained mostly in the single numbers to low teens. Temperatures wrapped up well below zero on Monday morning. This was due to clearing skies from an area of high pressure that allowed for strong radiational cooling from the snow-covered ground. Wind chills reached close to 20 below zero. That high-pressure system won the battle against a developing coastal low, so we dodged the threat of heavy snowfall.

In the coming forecast period, we continue to tap into the Arctic airmass, which promises more days with temperatures well below normal. Highs this time of year generally run in the upper 20s, with lows in the single numbers above zero.

A series of weak cold fronts will cross the region, starting first thing this morning with some very light snow showers, followed by another front on Thursday with even less moisture. A stronger clipper system then approaches from the Great Lakes Region for the second half of Friday and lingers into

early Saturday.

This front will bring steady snow showers with heavier bursts of snow, so travel later Friday may come with sudden changes in road conditions and visibility. Behind that front, breezy conditions and a larger rush of cold air enter the northeast. Highs will struggle to reach zero both Saturday and Sunday, with lows in the teens below zero and wind chill values even colder. No significant precipitation is expected as high pressure begins to influence the weather this weekend, although dangerous wind chills will bring an increased risk for frostbite and hypothermia for anyone pursuing outdoor activities. Here's how the forecast shapes up:

Wednesday: Partly sunny. Scattered snow showers. High: 21. Low: 5. West wind around 5 mph.

Thursday: Partly sunny. Scattered snow showers. High: 16. Low: -2. Light wind.

Friday: Mostly cloudy. Snow showers likely with possible snow squalls in the afternoon and evening. Snow accumulation of 1-3 inches. High: 23. Low: -4. Light wind; becoming south around 5 mph in the afternoon.

Saturday: Mostly cloudy. Cold. High: 1. Low: -17. Northwest



The full Snow Moon appears in early morning on Montgomery Road, East Hardwick. photo by Dawn Gustafson

wind 10-15 mph with gusts to 25 mph. Wind chill values as low as -15 during the day; -30 overnight.

High: 0. Low: -13. Northwest wind 5-10 mph. Wind chill values as low as -10 during the day; -30 overnight.

Sunday: Mostly sunny. Cold.

POLICE REPORT

Cabot Volunteer Fire Department Vehicle stuck on trail

CABOT – Friday, January 30, at 2:30 a.m., Cabot Fire Department and Cabot Emergency Ambulance Service were dispatched to an automated disabled vehicle notification with unknown injuries and unknown hazards. At the time of the call the air temperature was -3° F.

An individual unfamiliar with Cabot was following GPS directions that took him up Houghton Road, past the point of winter maintenance and onto the VAST trail. The vehicle was stuck in snow approximately 100 yards beyond the end of the maintained road. Despite the best efforts of firefighters and EMS the vehicle could not be moved, requiring a wrecker service to be called.

Signs clearly identifying the end of the maintained portion of Houghton Road didn't prevent a driver following GPS directions from driving onto a VAST trail and becoming stuck, Friday, January 30, at 2:30 a.m., when the air temperature was -3° F. Cabot Fire Department courtesy photo



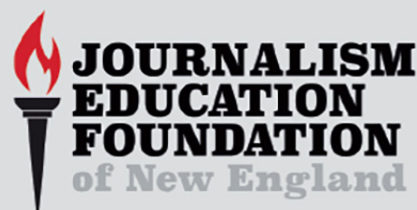
AWARE Report

HARDWICK – Seventeen people used AWARE services between January 18 and February 1. The AWARE 24-hour hotline is (802) 472-6463.

A non-profit established in 1984, AWARE serves Hardwick and the greater Hardwick area in preventing and healing the trauma of domestic and sexual violence.

AWARE provides help during immediate crises, as well as advocating for on-going emotional and legal support for people of all ages and gender.

For more information about AWARE, including educational resources, programming and how to get involved as a volunteer visit awarevt.org.



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POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Police Department Media Log

HARDWICK – January 17: Traffic Stop, Mill St.; Property Watch, Vt. Route 16 West; Snowmobile, Hardwick; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Mackville Rd.; Theft, Vt. Route 14 S.; Traffic stop, Vt. Route 14 S.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14; Snowmobile, High St.; Snowmobile, High St.; Snowmobile, High St.; Snowmobile, High St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15.

January 18: Snowmobile, High St.; Suspicious Event, Putnam Ave; Traffic Stop, Elm St.; Snowmobile, High St.; DUI, Putnam Ave; Traffic Stop, Elm St.

January 19: Assault, Hopkins Hill Rd.; Accident - Property Damage Only, Nichols Pond Rd.; Theft, Vt. Route 15 W.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 15; 911 Hangup, Prospect St.

January 20: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Medical, Elm St.; Theft, S.

Main St.; Overdose, Highland Ave.

January 21: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; VIN verification, S. Main St.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Dr; Information, Hazen Union Dr.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Parking Problem, S. Main St.

January 22: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Medical, Hazen Union Dr.; VIN verification, Craftsbury Rd.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Dr.; VIN verification, High St.; Noise Disturbance, S. Main St.

January 23: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Assist - Motorist, Wolcott St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Parking Problems, Vt. Route 14 S.; Assist - Public, Church St.

January 24: Assist - Public, S. Main St.

January 25: Assist - Motorist, Vt. Route 15; Suspicious Event, Vt. Route 14 S.; Parking Problem, Main St.; Assist - Motorist, Wolcott St.; Welfare Check, Mill St.; Motor

Vehicle Complaint, Marshall St.; Suspicious Event, Vt. Route 14 S.; Parking Problem, Main St.; Assist - Motorist, Wolcott St.; Welfare Check, Mill St.

January 26: Welfare Check, Hardwick Farms Rd.; Fire Alarm, S. Main St.; Fire Alarm, S. Main St.

January 27: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Theft, Spring St.; VIN verification, Winter St.; Accident - TCNR, Mill St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 15 E.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Dr.; Fingerprints, High St.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Nichols Pond Rd.; Medical, Spruce Dr.

January 28: Suspicious Event, Church St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Animal Problem, S. Main St.; Assist - Agency, Baker Hill Dr; Assist - Other, Wolcott St.; Assist - Other, Wolcott St.

January 29: Directed Patrol,

S. Main St.; Suspicious Event, High St.; Fingerprints, High St.

January 30: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; School Event, Hazen Union Dr.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Wolcott St.; School Event, S. Main St.; 911 Hangup, Hazen Union Dr.; Welfare Check, S. Main St.; Welfare Check, Central St.; VIN verification, Central St.; Traffic Stop, Mackville Rd.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 16; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14.

January 31: Motor Vehicle Complaint, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.

February 1: Property Watch, Vt. Route 16; Snowmobile, LVRT; Snowmobile, LVRT; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 16; Assist - Motorist, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Medical, Pine Dr.; Assist - Agency, High St.; Suspicious Event, S. Main St.

Forest

Continued From Page One

After commission member Leesa Cathcart noted a few house-keeping items, and thanked member Peter Moskowitz for providing refreshments, Lucy Zendzian introduced speakers Hannah Redman with TPL Hardwick's Paul Cillo, an NRLT founding member, and NRLT Board Chair Jack Travelstead of Wolcott. All of them were involved in creation of the successful Wolcott Town Forest, which now hosts five miles of multi-use trails. The steering committee in Wolcott is now looking for funding to address erosion issues in previously logged areas, Travelstead said later.

Other HCC members Norma Wiesen, Kathy Hemmens and Joe Nudell were introduced before Redman explained how TPL works to provide project management, engaging landowners and helping to gather public input in the process that leads to town ownership.

"Local input leads to more robust benefits," she said.

Purchase of this pretty will bring together 3 properties, preserving the mountain from future development and habitat fragmentation.

TPL will help guide a steering committee of local citizens now being formed to develop management plans with NRLT. That committee may continue to guide the town's use of the property following its acquisition.

While conserved from

outright development (for which it is largely unsuitable due to the terrain) there would be many possibilities for use of the forest once it is transferred to town ownership. The land contains significant ecosystems and species worthy of protection. Existing uses, such as snowmobile and ATV trails, will continue, as will hunting, if the town so wishes.

Joe Nudell led what he referred to as "A tour of the forest." He pointed out a 2018 Town Forest Recreation Plan that "laid out a vision " to include "pause places to look at a waterfall or a beautiful view," "improve access to Buffalo Mountain," "linking trail networks to town center," and creating rugged multi-use paths on Buffalo Mountain," all of which this proposal accomplishes.

Nudell's virtual tour identified spots with views of Hardwick's downtown, trails connecting the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail to the village via Atkins Field and the West End, with easy connections to Hardwick Elementary School, the Hazen Union School campus, Green Mountain Tech and Career Centers campus, Hardwick Trails, the Woodbury rail trail and VAST, VASA and bike trails to Woodbury Mountain.

"My favorite spots are the lookouts," he said, sharing a photo of Hardwick Village framed by the branches of trees.

Questions from the audience about costs of the land and other fees were answered by a

slide detailing the anticipated \$530,000 purchase price and various fees for the acquisition with \$471,000 of the funding coming from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, \$100,000 for The Nature Conservancy Biodiversity Protection Fund, \$25,000 coming from each of the town and local fundraising, with \$189,000 being contributed from private foundations and individuals.

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

Ideas already generated by HCC for use of the town forest include mountain biking, back country ski trails, educational nature trails for children, a picnic spot overlooking the village, rock climbing, and an accessible-trail so that everyone could enjoy some refreshing moments in a forest?

They ask if there could be overnight camping sites, to allow through-riders on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail to spend a night and have dinner in town and some areas could be logged, or sugared, to create income.

Residents of Hardwick will be the ones to decide what happens there, said commission members. "In addition to the recreational enjoyment, conservation of the land will enhance flood resiliency and protect an important wildlife corridor and habitat."

Ken Davis, who attended as a community member, but took the opportunity to chat with Redman afterward, said he'd made

the investment in long-term ownership and is now looking to divest from the property offering tax benefits and cash out.

His concern for the future is primarily to maintain the property's historical activities that include ATV and snowmobile uses, in addition to quieter activities.

He added that he'd posted to property so that its users needed to contact him for permission, which helped to identify users, and he installed a gate to prevent larger motorized vehicles to prevent the property from becoming an unauthorized dump.

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

Another public meeting about the proposal is planned for Thursday, Feb. 19, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., again in the Jeudevine Memorial Library's Parker Ladd room..

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

For further information, contact Rachel Kane, HCC Co-chair at (802) 472-5512.

Familiar

Continued From Page One

Select board member Ellen Celnik is also running for re-election, for a two year term. Celnik provided some background on herself for those unfamiliar. Introduced to the Greensboro community in the late 1990s by Hansell Patterson, Celnik was initially looking for a place to vacation for herself and her partner. “We fell in love with Greensboro the first day we went to Willey’s, and then looked for a place to rent in the summer every year, which we did for thirteen years. I did take the time to be here during the winter: You really need to be here in the winter, it’s a big investment, it’s a big commitment. I loved it in the winter, actually more than the summer.”

Celnik and her partner purchased their Greensboro residence in 2011. In 2015, after a workplace injury left Celnik disabled with a serious concussion, the pair made their move permanent with Celnik’s retirement. Celnik says she and her wife made a point to become involved with organizations like the historical society and planning commission,

“I thought it was a good opportunity, when we were putting the town plan together, to really be involved and get to know the town in a very different way. I did choose to become a full time resident.”

After her time on the planning commission, Celnik was asked by other residents to join the select board, which she did. “My background is in affordable housing, and that’s something I did focus on. What’s important to me, is that there be a select board that focuses on productive debate. In these times, it’s so easy to slide into divisive debate, and I think it becomes too important that we maintain constructive debate, and prioritize the needs of the community, and I certainly hope to serve that purpose.”

Peter Romans, former select board member who served on many town committees, is vying for the same seat as Celnik. For those unfamiliar, Romans has been a

Greensboro resident for twenty five years. He previously served on the board for eight years, with five as chair. “I have more experience than anyone here, except probably Mike. I have invested a lot of hours, anybody who was on the board or any office staff knows that I put in a lot of time.” Romans said he’s looking to help out and solve problems.

Board member Tim Brennan jokingly asked what inspired Roman’s return, saying “You haven’t had enough? I’m curious, what’s your motivation to come back? Got tired of being a private citizen?”

Romans said, “It’s ingrained in me, to help my friends and neighbors, and yeah, that’s basically what it is, public service.”

Current select board member Judy Carpenter is also running again, for a three-year term.

Carpenter has previously served on the board in the past, her return this last year coinciding with the once-contentious Rural Edge debate.

“It’s been a challenging time for the town, and I think part of the job of the select board has been to try to get past the upheavals of the past couple of years and develop a civil conversation and working together with lots of different people. I think that’s something I’m pretty good at. As a retired special educator, I had to work with lots of different people.”

Carpenter said over the course of the fall, with budget meetings and such, the group has worked very well together, something she’d like to see continue.

Michael Cloutier is running for his second term as collector of delinquent taxes. Cloutier took over when his predecessor, Janet Long, retired. “I am your current collector of delinquent taxes. This is my second year. I am devoted to the job. I am keeping up with all the state statutes, which are constantly changing. I’m very good at customer relations, dealing with people. I’ve been a resident of Greensboro since 1987. That’s 40 years going on. I grew up in East Hardwick, and I’d appreciate it if you vote for me, and want to let you know I am

dedicated to doing the job.”

Resident Mavis MacNeil announced her bid for moderator, for a term of one year. “In the last few years I have really enjoyed watching Tim [Nisbet] be moderator, and sometimes I thought, wow, that seems like a very cool thing to do, that I’d like to try someday. I think that my skill set and my teaching experience makes me a good candidate for this role, and I’m comfortable with public speaking and comfortable with facilitating conversations, even when tensions run high, because I do that every day with thirteen year olds,” MacNeil said.

Carol Reynolds and Jan Terwiesch are running for library trustee, each for terms of three years.

Terwiesch was present, speaking for himself and Reynolds. “Carol has served for quite some time, and I’m the newbie on the board. The library is essential to the town. Greensboro is a literary community, books have played an outsized role, the professors, the artists, the writers that have added so much to our town. I’d love to continue being a part of that.”

Greensboro Free Library trustee Jennifer Lucas spoke to Reynolds’ long-time dedication to the library and its endeavors, “Carol’s been there many more years

than I in various capacities, she’s been not only a trustee, but an alternate, she takes care of the book sale area. She does so many things, and she has agreed to step up to be the secretary, but also to be a full-time trustee, which I heartily endorse. She gets my full support.”

Lucas spoke up again to commend Terwiesch as well, “Jan’s been there for just one year, but his contribution has been wonderful. The building, as you know, belongs to the town, and Jan’s been instrumental in helping with the maintenance and all the construction and any issues related to the building. So I think he’s been terrific, and I would hope you all support him.”

Select board Chair MacNeil is running for cemetery commissioner, for a term of three years. MacNeil spoke briefly, saying “I have been on the cemetery commission for about six years, and have submitted a petition to serve another three year term. I think I’ve been on almost every commission and committee in town, sometimes multiple times. I would have to say that of any of the committees or commissions that I’ve been on, I appreciate the cemetery commission in a special way. Our constituents do not complain,” MacNeil concluded with a joke.

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 \$3.69 Smoked Oysters <small>Crown Prince, 3 oz</small>	 \$6.99 Potsticker Varieties <small>Feel Good Goods, varieties, 10 oz</small>	 \$4.99 Tonic Water <small>Fever Tree, varieties, 4 pack</small>	 \$3.29 Polenta <small>Ancient Harvest, varieties, 18 oz</small>
 \$5.99 Soy Free Veganaise <small>Follow Your Heart, 16 oz</small>	 2/\$2 Seaweed Snacks <small>Gimme, varieties, 14 oz</small>	 \$5.69 Lactose Free Yogurt <small>Green Valley Creamery, 24 oz</small>	 \$6.39 Dill Pickle Spears <small>Grillo's, 32 oz</small>
 \$4.99 Dark Chocolate Almond Butter Cups <small>Justin's, varieties, 4.2 oz</small>	 \$4.98 Organic Yogurt <small>Storyfield, varieties, 32 oz</small>	 \$1.20 Ramen <small>Koyo, varieties, 2.1 oz</small>	 \$4.69 Tortilla Chips <small>Mi Nina, varieties, 12 oz</small>

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

 \$3.25 Breath Mints <small>Vermints, varieties, 1.41 oz</small>	 10% off Sapi Yaki <small>Higgins, varieties, 5 oz</small>	 10% off Chocolate Bars <small>Champlain Chocolates, varieties</small>	 25% off Botanical Tea <small>Sprouting Soul, varieties, 16 oz</small>
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Memorial Hall rehabilitation earns award for architect

by American Institute of Architects, Vermont Chapter

CALAIS – The American Institute of Architects, Vermont Chapter (AIAVT) announced the recipients of its 2025 Excellence in Architecture Design Awards at its annual meeting, December 4, 2025. Seven projects were chosen by a jury for demonstrating “excellence in design” from thirty entries submitted by AIA member architects. Two projects also won “Peers Choice Awards,” as voted on by AIAVT members at the annual meeting.

The merit Award in the Historic Preservation / Adaptive Re-Use / Rehabilitation category went to R. Edwards & Co. of Montpelier for Memorial Hall in North Calais.

The project involved the full historic rehabilitation of the previously condemned 3,400-square-foot two-story assembly use building from 1885. A contributing structure in the National Register-listed North Calais Village Historic District, the building, built as a Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) meeting hall in 1885, sits on

a promontory overlooking Mirror Lake in north-central Vermont.

The project team was tasked with fully rehabilitating the seasonal use building, while also providing much-needed accessibility upgrades (especially important for the second-floor assembly space), to provide new restrooms, modernize the kitchen, and, most especially, replicate and reconstruct the old two-story covered porch which was taken down in the 1980s.

The existing foundation was repaired and partially replaced, and the first-floor structure, falling apart and covered in mold, was replaced entirely, which involved lifting the entire building approximately six feet in the air, where it sat on cribbing for months while the foundation and first-floor structural work were completed.

Funding for the work was provided by both state and federal historic preservation funding sources, so care was needed to comply with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

The jury wrote, “This project stood out as the most compelling example among the historic



Rehabilitation of the North Calais Memorial Hall seen here, earned R. Edwards & Co. of Montpelier the American Institute of Architects Vermont Chapter 2025 Merit Award in the Historic Preservation / Adaptive Re-Use / Rehabilitation category, during its annual meeting, December 4, 2026. The architect is Ryan Edwards, AIA; general contractor is Spates Construction, Inc.; structural engineering is by Engineering Ventures, PC.

photo by Curtis B. Johnson

preservation entries.” They noted its thoughtful response to challenging constraints, saying, “The design skillfully balances restoration and adaptive reuse, remaining faithful to the building’s original architectural character while

introducing new life and purpose.”

The jurors, all members of AIA Savannah, included Greg Skinner, AIA, Hannah Brown, AIA, Lavontae Decius, Associate AIA, Sophia Rodriguez, Associate AIA, and Steven G. Stowers, AIA.

New data shows local counties closing child care gap

by Erin Roche, director First Children’s Finance Vermont

MONTPELIER – An analysis released by First Children’s Finance shows measurable progress in expanding access to full-day, full-year child care across Vermont, while making clear that ongoing shortfalls continue to constrain workforce participation and business growth.

The new analysis finds Vermont closed the gap between supply and demand by 1,992 full-time spaces between 2024 and 2026. That progress comes amid modest demographic shifts.

Demand for child care declined by about 8 percent over the same period, driven by a smaller population of young children, not by reduced

workforce participation among parents. Statewide, access now meets the needs of approximately 40 percent of infants, 70 percent of toddlers, and 69 percent of preschoolers likely to require full-time care, underscoring both meaningful progress and ongoing challenges.

The analysis also shows that child care access varies widely across Vermont, reinforcing the importance of local and regional planning. Six counties, Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, Chittenden, Lamoille, and Windsor, now have enough capacity to serve at least 75 percent of toddlers and preschoolers needing care. Of these, Bennington, Caledonia, and Chittenden also meet the needs of at least half of infants, highlighting progress that spans multiple age groups.

For employers, regional gaps directly impact workforce participation. Some regions demonstrate how strategic alignment between child care investment and economic development goals can ease these pressures. In Caledonia County, access has improved across age groups, including for infants, offering a model for other Vermont communities.

Annie McLean of the Northeastern Vermont Development Association said, “Caledonia County’s experience demonstrates that meaningful progress on child care supply is possible. By supporting child care as economic infrastructure, communities can reduce workforce barriers and create the conditions needed for local businesses to thrive and grow.”

Nearly half of the remaining

unmet need is for infant care (birth to 24 months), the most labor-intensive and expensive child care to provide. Access has improved since 2024, but infant care remains the single largest driver of Vermont’s supply-demand gap, with direct implications for when and whether parents can return to work.

“When child care doesn’t work for families, it doesn’t work for employers,” said Erin Roche, Vermont Director for First Children’s Finance. “Understanding where families need child care will inform future investments – that’s why I’m so proud of the county and municipal level analysis we were able to do this year.”

The full Vermont Supply and Demand Gap Analysis and several supplemental briefs are available at firstchildrensfinance.org/vermont.

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

Warning signed, garage move inches forward

by Paul Fixx

CABOT – The signing of a warning for town meeting, Tuesday, March 3, was postponed to a special meeting scheduled for January 22 and flood mitigation work at the Cabot Garage site took center stage at the Cabot Select Board’s January 20 meeting.

Mike Hogan wanted to check on the wording of an item allowing listers to increase the exemption for business personal property from \$5,000 to \$25,000. That item appears as Article 11 to be voted by Australian ballot.

Other Australian ballot items cover election of select persons for one two-year and one three-year term in addition to a three-year term for a town clerk.

Binding articles in the ballot include \$773,398 in local taxes toward the general budget of \$968,191 and raise \$970,766 in additional taxes for the highway budget of \$1,130,766.

Additional binding articles on the ballot cover approval of a \$125,000 bond for the fire department to replace obsolete radios with new ones and \$10,000 for the Cabot Conservation Commission to remove as many as 1,500 used tires from a stream and wetland in lower Cabot.

A final, non-binding advisory vote on construction of a new Cabot Volunteer Fire Department

building at 2466 Main Street (between 2506 and 2454 Main, the old Gochey-Marcotte property).

The full warning is at cabotvt.us/town-meeting-warning-2026/.

Mike Hogan was given select board approval to sign a contract for flood mitigation work by Dubois & King expected soon after the January 20 select board meeting without waiting for the next board meeting. That work related to Cabot Garage will increase the size of a culvert under Cabot Garage after the garage is removed.

One of two sites the garage is considering for its new home is on Whittier Hill and owned by Cabot Creamery. The other is a town-owned property on Elm Street. There will not be any cost to the town for the flood mitigation work it will allow, said Gary Gulka in his report to the select board.

A contract for an environmental review of the north tributary bridge replacement project is slated to be signed soon, with an archaeological review expected for approval at the February meeting. The total \$7,500 cost of the two contracts would be covered by the town and later reimbursed, said Gulka.

Conversations continue about future plans and funding to take the pressure off the West Hill Pond Dam, with no resolution, but plans for Hogan to meet with the USDA to discuss possible funding.

Discussion about the lack of



This view of Cabot Garage at 3102 Main Street may soon be replaced by an empty lot under which enlarged culverts will be constructed to flow under Main Street.

photo from December 12 draft, “Cabot garage relocation site assessment.”

cellular phone service continued with discussion of possible tower sites to provide coverage from town to Vt. Rte. 2, but no specific plans were made for resolution. After routine business the meeting adjourned after 92 minutes.



A photo from the December 12 draft, “Cabot garage relocation site assessment,” shows culverts at the rear of the current Cabot Garage, which is planned for removal with a contract expected to be signed soon for flood mitigation work by Dubois & King.

photo from December 12 draft, “Cabot garage relocation site assessment.”



On a day when national media reported tens of thousands of people turned out for a nationwide strike on the streets of Minneapolis, about 50 people showed up along Hardwick’s South Main Street near the Peace Park. On a frigid, near zero day Friday, they joined thousands of others across the country for a general strike to demand an end to President Trump’s sweeping immigration crackdown following the killings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti, and advocating “no work, no school, no shopping.”

photo by Terry Allen



A protester looks at a memorial with candles and flowers, set up in a snowbank at the Hardwick Peace Park by organizers of a Hardwick rally last Friday, which displays photos of people killed by ICE agents.

photo by Terry Allen



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COOPERATIVELY OWNED

EDITORIAL

How is human life being valued?

While I spend most of my time looking for local news, it's impossible to ignore national events and their effect on local Vermonters. The importance of paying attention to all of it was nowhere more evident than this past Friday at Hardwick's Peace Park where roughly 50 people stood in freezing cold weather to express solidarity with Americans elsewhere in the country who have been putting their lives on the line to document federal overreach.

Civil unrest in Minneapolis has grabbed the attention of media and citizens alike since the fatal shootings of Alex Pretti, on January 24, at the hands of border patrol officers there, and before that Renee Nicole Good on January 7.

A report in The New York Times, January 12, that in other times might have drawn much attention, has barely been noticed, as has a subsequent update, January 21.

The second report, headlined, "Trump's E.P.A. Has Put a Value on Human Life: Zero Dollars," seemed to me a reflection of the U.S. Border Patrol's valuation of those human lives needlessly ended in Minneapolis recently, and elsewhere earlier in the Trump Presidency.

The first report noted, "In a reversal, the agency plans to calculate only the cost to industry when setting pollution limits, and not the monetary value of saving human lives."

"For the past 30 years, the E.P.A. has pegged the value of a statistical life at around \$11.7 million. Although experts have recommended increasing the value, the agency has updated the metric only to account for inflation and wage growth," wrote Maxine Joselow in The New York Times.

"Other federal agencies have used the metric to justify regulations affecting everything from safety features on cars to cancer warning labels on cigarette packs."

Curiously, "Brigit Hirsch, an E.P.A. spokeswoman, said in an email that the agency was still considering the health effects of fine particulate matter and ozone, but was no longer assigning them a dollar value in cost-benefit analyses. 'We're not putting a dollar value on those impacts right now,' she said. 'That does not mean E.P.A. is ignoring or undervaluing them.'"

"Some critics have raised moral objections to using the tool at all, saying a human life is priceless. But supporters say its use has helped prevent hundreds of thousands of premature deaths from air pollution, which kills more Americans each year than vehicle crashes."

The report continues, quoting Susan Dudley . . . as saying the E.P.A. makes valid points that setting a value on human life suggests a false precision.

"On the other hand," she said, "the way to rectify that is not to stop quantifying the health effects altogether."

Meanwhile, on January 21, "Federal immigration officers are asserting sweeping power to forcibly enter people's homes without a judge's warrant, according to an internal Immigration and Customs Enforcement memo obtained by The Associated Press, marking a sharp reversal of longstanding guidance meant to respect constitutional limits

on government searches."

The devaluation of human life and rejection of Constitutional protections for not just citizens, but anyone in the U.S., is of a piece with other actions by the second Trump administration since it came into office just over one year ago, January 20, 2025.

That contempt for human life is reflected in the recent removal of slavery exhibits on display since 2010 at the President's House historical site in Old Philadelphia under an executive order by President Trump called "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History."

"Mayor Chelle Parker said the city's agreement with the federal government dates back to 2006 and 'requires parties to meet and confer if there are to be any changes made to an exhibit,' A CBS News story reported.

A judge has now required the 30 panels removed from the site to be preserved while a lawsuit filed by the city proceeds.

Tempers elsewhere in Philadelphia have escalated as Democratic Prosecutor Larry Krasner is facing criticism for inflammatory remarks he made denouncing ICE agents as "a small bunch of wannabe Nazis," adding, "if we have to hunt you down the way they hunted down Nazis for decades, we will find your identities."

House Intelligence Committee member Greg Steube, R-Fla., then called out Krasner and recommended Attorney General Pam Bondi take a closer look at his ever-escalating remarks on the issue, citing federal code categorizing threatening a federal officer as a felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

Krasner earlier vowed to prosecute federal officers who break state laws in response to the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti, joining a coalition of prosecutors dubbed "Fight Against Federal Overreach," or F.A.F.O., a cheeky reference to the acronym for "f*** around and find out," which is said to have become a favorite phrase of Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and other members of the Trump administration, wrote Marco Margaritoff on huffpost.com January 30.

Krasner had earlier supported Philadelphia Sheriff Rochelle Bilal who issued a stark warning to ICE agents and President Donald Trump following Good's killing in Minneapolis by an ICE agent.

"No law enforcement professional wears a mask, none, none," she said, as she went on to call anyone committing a crime while masked, a criminal who would be stopped before they could whisk anyone away.

The tensions clearly seem based on how human life is valued, with much of it along thinly-veiled racial lines.

The U.S. prepares to mark its 250th anniversary this July 4, and most every president before this one can be found making statements about the unique strength of the U.S. being in our population of immigrants. (And maybe all, but I didn't have time to fully research that.)

It's only recently some have come to see this country is founded on stolen land and those people it was stolen from must also be valued equally.

It's hard to imagine where these escalating tensions might end, though I'd bet it depends more on accepting the inherent value of us all rather than on exclusion and violent rhetoric, or worse, violent action.

Paul Fixx, editor

THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

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

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

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YANKEE NOTEBOOK

Ranks up there with the stupidest

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – The week just passed in Minneapolis, Minn., has been one of the most watched in perhaps all of American history. Aware that massive protests against the invasion of ICE were likely to occur, every news organization that could afford plane tickets for a film crew sent whatever they could spare. As a result almost no foul deeds went unrecorded. This surveillance must have driven the masked, cosplaying goons crazy.

In addition, protestors were encouraged by local leaders to keep their cell phones charged as much as possible in the bitter cold, and to film interactions between the agents and the citizenry. Thus, in addition to being denied service in some fast-food establishments and the use of gas station washrooms (I'd like to know how they solved that one. You can always skip a meal or two, but when you've got to go . . .), the camouflage-clad hard cases were serenaded most of each night by noisy pot-wallopers outside their hotels and shouted at most days by crowds of outraged Minnesotans holding up big signs and various iterations of cell phone cameras.

Rarely does xenophobia get so openly expressed, except, perhaps, by the architects of the deportation surge sitting snugly in the White House.

Third, it's been cold! The polar vortex kindly lent us a huge dollop of super-cooled air, which has lingered near our northern border even as another, warmer chunk has been dousing the South with snow, sleet, freezing rain and ice. Those poor federal agents, wherever they're from, have been finding the second half of a northern January quite a bit cooler than what a number of them experienced on their last outing, to hang the vice-president during the first week of January, 2021.

Every so often you come across a program, an agenda or an idea so stupid and tin-eared that you can't help but wonder what the hell they were thinking of. This surge into American houses, cars and sidewalks has to rank up there with the stupidest. I suspect that the lack of significant physical pushback against administration policies by the mass of American citizenry and a supine Congress led some well-insulated policymakers to conclude that a sort of reverse Underground Railroad, carried out in a rush with the consequences to be sorted out later, might be a brilliant idea. It's easy, I suppose, when you're surrounded by white men and women who agree with you and, whether they express it or not, fear the Great Replacement, to assume

that the rest of us white folks feel the same way.

Wrong.

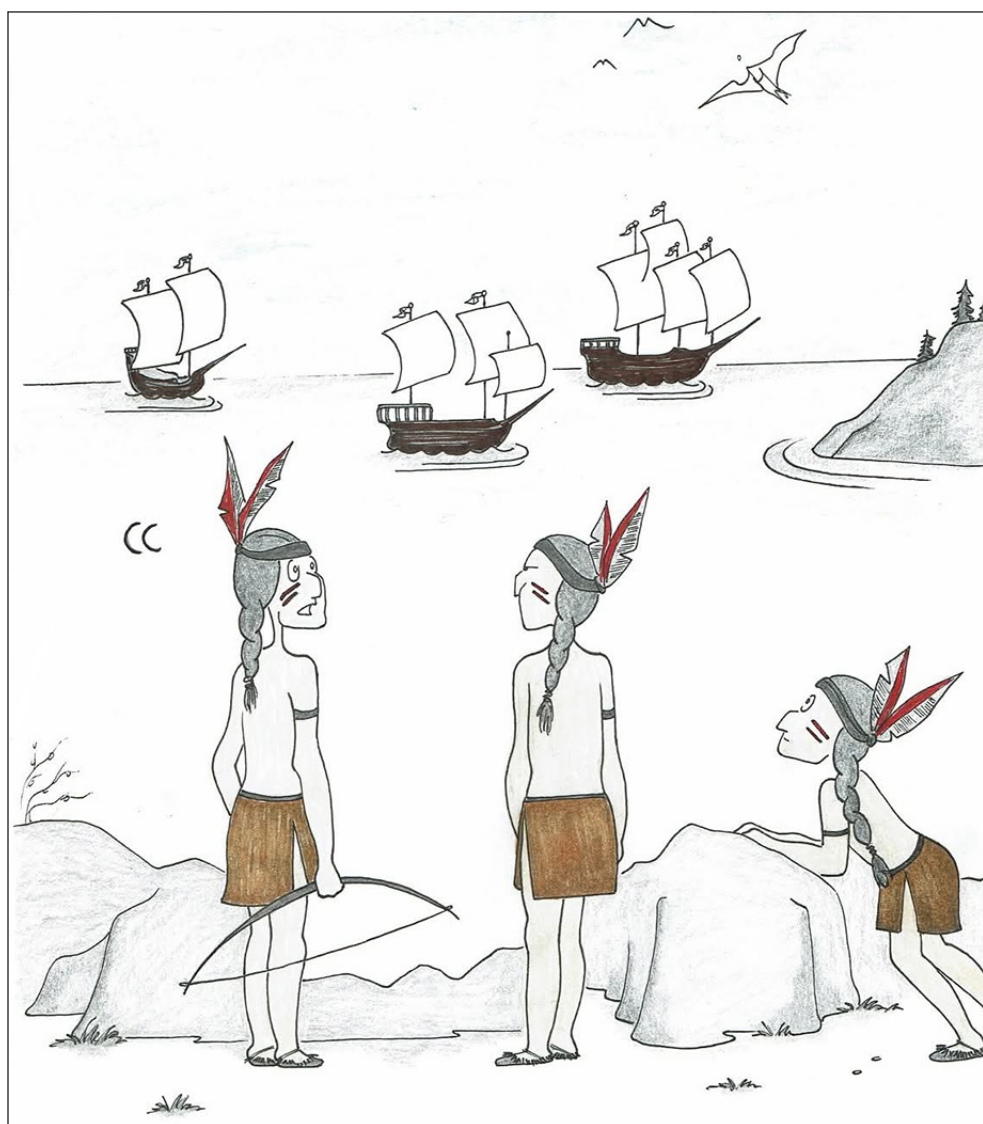
So you start out with a propaganda campaign that labels immigrants, documented or otherwise, as trash and claim their ranks are riddled with felons, active or would-be. Then you advertise that you are getting rid of the "worst of the worst," assuming we all know of some of them (actually, most of us don't). And then you send your agents into blue-state communities with fewer undocumented immigrants than others in red states: ones that need "punishment" for voting against you in the last election.

It's where the rubber meets the road that the administration has really screwed up. With money apparently not an object (witness how many jets they have flying all over the place, conveying, in one recent "arrest," a five-year-old and his father to Texas), they advertise very generous bonuses and salaries and manage to scrape the bottom of the social and economic barrel. We've seen them, masked and unidentifiable, standing in ranks with their weapons at the ready, staring at yelling protesters across the street. Their frustration is almost palpable. How do these civilians dare to berate them, and tell them in simple language to beat it?

If they've had training, as allegedly they have, it no doubt went a bit easy on the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees all of us, even those of us who can't prove citizenship, to be secure in our homes without a warrant signed by a judge. This last item has seemed to be but an inconvenience for many door-busting goons. But if you give a legal illiterate a battering ram, what's he to do? We shouldn't be surprised. The same is true of firearms.

But there's some good news mixed in with the calamitous. The administration, sensing that its campaign is not going well, has threatened to send in more agents, even less qualified than the first. But the Minnesota National Guard, which has been activated by Governor Walz, is handing out hot coffee, cocoa and donuts. And tonight's news has Commander Bovino being underbussed (I've waited weeks to use that verb! Editor's note: aka thrown under the bus.) and replaced. I can see him starting a band called Greg and the Bovines.

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



"MAYBE WE SHOULD BUILD A WALL!"

MEETING MEMO

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.

Monday, February 9

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

Wednesday, February 11

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

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

Thursday, February 12

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

Tuesday, February 17

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

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

Hazen Union School Board, third Tuesday, 6 - 8 p.m., Hazen Union School Library.

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

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

Wednesday, February 18

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

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

Tuesday, February 24

Mountain View Union Elementary School District, 6 p.m. Annual school district meeting, 6:30 p.m., public informational hearing on the FY 27 Budget.

Wednesday, February 25

Hazen Union School District, 7 p.m., public informational hearing on the FY 27 Budget, 7:30 p.m. annual school district meeting.

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

ANOTHER OPINION

Local Option Tax: weighing the option

by Joe Nudell

Voters at Hardwick's town meeting will be asked to decide on Article 6, a 1% local option tax on meals, alcohol and rooms.

So far, I have seen very little information about this tax or why we should vote one way or the other. I am sharing my own research and analysis in case it helps others make up their mind about it.

The state of Vermont gives towns the option to impose a 1% tax on sales, meals, alcohol and rooms. Towns can choose to tax all, some or none of those categories. Places with larger economies like Burlington and Stowe have chosen to tax all of them, while small towns with lots of rentals and few other businesses, like Elmore, tax only rooms. Most towns do not impose any local option tax (LOT).

The Hardwick Select Board has proposed to adopt a LOT on meals, alcohol and rooms, but not sales.

If the LOT passes, Hardwick will receive 75% of money collected from the LOT, minus some administrative fees; the rest of the money will go to the state.

The select board has not given a specific estimate of how much money the LOT will raise, though they have mentioned figures from \$50,000 up to \$177,000. The higher number is extremely unlikely: Hardwick would have to sell over \$23 million in meals, alcohol and rooms to raise that much revenue. That's more than either St. Johnsbury or Morrisville, which have at least twice as many such establishments as Hardwick.

I estimate Hardwick could receive between \$40,000 and \$75,000 per year from the LOT.

State data shows Hardwick restaurants sold \$5 million in meals over the last fiscal year, which would have brought less than \$37,500 to Hardwick.

The state does not publish data on alcohol and rooms for Hardwick since there are so few proprietors, but we can estimate a figure.

For other towns, apart from prominent resort destinations like Stowe and Killington, meals sales amount to much more than alcohol and rooms combined. So we can assume alcohol and rooms together will be less than \$5 million. Let's assume a reasonable lower bound is one tenth of that, \$500,000.

That puts the taxable sales in Hardwick in the range of \$5.5 million to \$10 million. Taxed at 1%, the LOT would raise between \$55,000 and \$100,000. After the state's 25% share, we arrive at

the Hardwick estimate of between \$40,000 and \$75,000.

We can look at the town of Londonderry, which has had a rooms, meals and alcohol LOT for a couple years to check that estimate. Londonderry has a slightly smaller population than Hardwick, but is also more of a tourist destination, with a small ski resort. They have a similar number of restaurants which do a similar amount of meals sales as Hardwick. In the last fiscal year, Londonderry brought in \$41,085 from their LOT and are budgeting for \$50,000 next year.

Tapping into a new source of revenue could help make the town finances more stable and resilient. The more sources of revenue we have, the less pressure we put on property taxes. This makes property taxes less susceptible to dramatic year over year increases, such as we have seen recently.

The LOT also helps capture revenue from visitors, who rely on town resources like roads, sidewalks and emergency services, but do not directly pay for any of them.

Lastly, the tax is small and revocable. For many people, 1% is affordable, and the tax can be repealed with a town vote in the future.

Local option taxes apply to everyone the same. Even if the goal is to target wealthy tourists, in practice it's impossible to tax so precisely. The cost of a pizza and a beer, which are already taxed highly at 9% and 10% respectively, will incur an additional 1% tax for all of us. It doesn't matter if you live in Hardwick or not; whether you have \$100 to your name or \$1 million. For the wealthy, the extra tax is hardly noticeable. For those who have less, every dollar counts.

Towns that impose LOTs usually have a plan for how to use the revenue. The Hardwick Select Board has not offered any specific plan, though they have discussed a couple ideas, such as purchasing a new dump truck, or offsetting property taxes.

If the new tax revenue is used to offset property taxes, owners of the most valuable properties will receive the largest benefits. Concretely, if the town raises \$75,000 a year, owners of the highest valued properties will see their property tax bills reduced by hundreds of dollars. This includes multiple second home owners who live out of state. In contrast, most property owners who live in Hardwick will see a benefit of less than \$50.

Hundreds of Hardwick residents are renters, not owners. Many of them will pay the LOT

going out to eat and see little direct benefit. In effect, they would be further subsidizing their landlords' property taxes, on top of the rent they already pay. At the same time, nearly a quarter of properties on the grand list have owners who live outside of Hardwick. These owners will receive a property tax break, despite many of them never paying into the pot.

There are several other downsides. For one, it creates additional work for local businesses to collect this tax. It's also likely that the revenue will not be very stable, as its fate is tied to forces outside the town's control. For example, according to the state tourism agency, Canadian tourist spending in Vermont dropped 44% last year, which would directly reduce revenue from the new tax.

If the measure does pass, or if we consider it again in the future,

we need a clearer plan.

To start, the town should put in writing how the money is intended to be used.

Any new policy should maximize the benefit to Hardwick residents and minimize impacts.

For example, we could use LOT revenue to establish a fund to help residents afford fuel, utilities or home repairs. The town should also monitor and review the tax annually to ensure it's meeting its goals, and ask voters to re-approve it periodically.

I plan to vote "no" on Article 6. While I agree the town needs new revenue sources, I don't support a regressive tax with marginal benefit and no clear vision. I hope to hear from supporters of the measure about why they think it's a good idea.

Joe Nudell is running for Hardwick Select Board.



Andrew Koehler provided music at the January 31 Bingo & Burgers fundraiser for The Civic Standard's new building on Main Street in Hardwick..

photo by Hal Gray

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ANOTHER OPINION

School board spending questioned

by Doreen Cota

HARDWICK – After receiving the information I requested from the superintendent, Mountainview Elementary School District Board, director of operations and the director of finance, I thought I would share what everyone should know. Sorry for the length but it’s worth reading, in my opinion.

Woodbury Elementary [School] is projected to serve just 41 students, yet operates with an adopted budget of \$1,122,983.21. At the same time, the building faces at least \$699,139.74 in necessary safety, code and infrastructure repairs, and none of these repair costs are included in the adopted budget. This raises

serious concerns about student safety, code compliance and the long-term viability of continuing to use a facility the district does not own.

Among the most urgent issues: The fire escape must be removed and rebuilt to meet fire code, and basement window wells must be installed for the building to legally continue housing students (\$395,896.00). The school’s drinking water is not currently safe to drink (estimated \$75,000). It is unclear whether a forgivable loan would be approved, and the district has not determined whether the solution would be installing a treatment system or drilling a new well.

The elevator and control system

are at the end of their useful life, are considered obsolete, and replacement parts are no longer manufactured (\$113,875.00).

Additional concerns include a failing hot water heater (\$4,000), aging carpeting (no estimate), and deteriorating non-commercial exterior doors in the community room that need replacement (\$10,368.74).

The nurse’s office does not have a sink, creating a hygiene and sanitation issue. Installing one may require significant plumbing work, though no cost estimate is available.

Playground equipment at Woodbury is near the end of its useful life and requires a replacement plan (\$100,000). By contrast, Hardwick Elementary recently replaced its playground, meaning consolidation would allow all students access to updated equipment rather than investing in another separate playground at a second facility.

While these serious facility needs remain unfunded, all requested new positions for FY27 were removed from the budget: a full-time guidance counselor, literacy interventionist, three instructional assistants, a part-time library position and a Pre-K teacher. These cuts directly affect student academic, social-emotional and early learning support.

At the same time, Hardwick Elementary [School] has the capacity to serve all students in the district. If consolidation were seriously considered, the substantial

funds that would be required to address Woodbury’s unresolved building issues could instead be invested in direct instruction, intervention services and student supports that benefit all children. This situation also raises broader concerns about equitable learning opportunities. Continuing to operate a school with significant unresolved facility and safety issues, while eliminating student support positions district-wide, risks creating disparities in both learning conditions and access to services. Students deserve safe, healthy environments and equal access to the academic and support resources they need to succeed.

At this time, there is no known or publicly communicated plan for how or when these necessary repairs would be completed. There is also a growing lack of public understanding about why consolidation is not being more seriously considered as a solution that could improve safety, equity and educational opportunities for all students in the district.

Community members are encouraged to attend the annual Mountain View Elementary School Board Meeting on February 24, to ask for clarity on these issues. The proposed school budget will ultimately be voted on by constituents on Town Meeting Day, making public understanding and engagement especially important.

Doreen Cota is a Hardwick resident.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Correction, additional information

To the editor:

In the opinion piece I wrote titled “The monetary value of volunteer communities” which was published by the Gazette on January 28, I gave examples of volunteer organizations working with the town to provide community services. I wrote that Neighbor-to-Neighbor “put together an extensive disaster recovery plan, a municipal responsibility.” This statement should have read that “Neighbor-to-Neighbor helped to implement the town’s local emergency and management plan.”

Neighbor-to-Neighbor worked with Kristen Leahy (the town’s zoning and floodplain administrator, resilience and adaptation coordinator) whose office has responsibility for disaster recovery and emergency planning, to offer

insights and to implement the local emergency and management plan. Neighbor-to-Neighbor put together and manages, in partnership with the town, the Emergency Supply and Support Center (ESSC), the Emergency Communication Center and disaster-related clean up.

The work to create the planning document was led by the Town of Hardwick and continues to be updated by the town. Leahy worked closely with Hardwick Neighbor-to-Neighbor and other volunteer partners to implement this plan. That collaboration, according to Leahy, is an important part of how the plan moves from paper into practice, and the volunteer role in that process is significant and valued.

**Cheryl Michaels
East Hardwick**

Heller’s World by Joe Heller



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Two weeks have been busy

by Rep. Michael Southworth

MONTPELIER – The past two weeks have been busy. New bills are introduced daily on a myriad of topics. To date, the House of Representatives have voted on and passed 13 bills. These are now onto the Senate.

The education committee seems to be inundated with bills addressing education reform in some fashion or another. A lot of their time has been spent on the bills being introduced into their committee by the bill sponsors. I am checking in with a member of the education committee this week to see where things are at. Hopefully I can share some information in my next update.

My assigned committee, Energy and Digital Infrastructure, spent a lot of time hearing annual updates from various state entities as well as bill introductions to the committee. We are finalizing the verbiage in proposed legislation

related to Consolidated Communications discontinuing the copper lines. Our ability to oversee Consolidated is limited as they fall under the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) oversight. The committee is looking to strengthen the notification process which is required to customers.

We heard more testimony on H.527, known as the cell tower siting bill. We will be finalizing the language and voting on it in committee this coming week. Bill introductions and testimony was taken on a couple of bills related to energy and building codes. I am very concerned about these as we are currently needing housing and this may increase the cost to build homes and increase regulation on contractors. If you are interested in looking at these bills, they are H.717 and H.718.

Michael Southworth is a state representative for Caledonia-2 House District, including the towns of Hardwick, Stannard and Walden.

ANOTHER OPINION

Planning for emergencies in Hardwick

by Kristen Leahy

HARDWICK – Hardwick is in the process of updating its Local Emergency Management Plan, known locally as The Hardwick Plan. It is updated regularly, typically each year, to reflect changing conditions, lessons learned and local capacity. It serves as the town's working framework for emergencies and outlines how preparation, response, and recovery efforts are coordinated among town staff, volunteers, community partners and local organizations, such as Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor.

Looking ahead, the town hopes to take a more coordinated approach to sharing updates and discussing emergency preparedness more broadly with the regional community.

The Hardwick Plan reflects how emergency management works in small towns. It establishes clear roles and decision-making authority for municipal staff and officials, and describes how volunteers and community organizations fit into an organized response. The pieces are designed to work together so help can be mobilized efficiently and responsibly when it is needed.

At a practical level, the plan answers basic questions: How and where is the Emergency Operations Center activated? How are calls and requests for assistance handled? When does an emergency shelter open, and who supports it? How does the town coordinate with neighboring communities, state agencies and trusted local partners? The plan is hazard-agnostic, meaning it is designed to function across a wide range of situations, from flooding and severe weather to extended power outages.

The current update focuses less on adding new layers and more on matching the plan to real-world capacity. This includes clarifying responsibilities, strengthening coordination between staff, volunteers and community partners, and making sure procedures are realistic and usable during an actual emergency. The goal is not to expand roles, but to ensure that everyone involved understands where they fit within a larger system.

Training is an important part of putting the plan into practice. As part of this work, the town is hosting an in-person Emergency Shelter Fundamentals training in partnership with the American Red Cross on February 26, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Jeudevine Memorial Library. The regional training covers how emergency shelters are set up and operated, including staffing, coordination, and support functions, so that systems work as intended when they are needed.

A muck-and-gut training will be scheduled in March, focused on safe and coordinated post-flood response. It will cover basic safety practices, documentation, and role clarity for residents and volunteers assisting with clean-out efforts after flooding.

Within The Hardwick Plan, muck-and-gut work is treated as a structured support function that complements municipal response and recovery efforts, often in coordination with organizations such as Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor and Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO).

Emergency communications are another key focus of the plan. During emergencies, accurate information and clear routing of requests are essential. The plan outlines how calls and messages are handled, logged, and shared,

and how trained communications volunteers support town staff during periods of high demand, while maintaining clear boundaries and accountability.

The Hardwick Plan is not only about what happens during an emergency. It guides preparedness and recovery by identifying gaps, shaping training priorities, and building shared understanding across the community and the region. Over time, this reduces confusion, supports faster response, and allows our towns to rely less on improvisation during

high-stress situations.

Most residents will never read The Hardwick Plan directly, but they experience its effects when emergencies are handled calmly, information is consistent and support is coordinated.

The current update reflects ongoing municipal work to ensure Hardwick's emergency systems are practical, integrated and ready to function when they are needed.

Kristen Leahy is the zoning and floodplain administrator and the resilience and adaptation coordinator for the Town of Hardwick.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Fliegelman announces select board candidacy

To the editor:

I'm Larry Fliegelman, and I am excited to introduce myself to you all as a candidate for a one-year seat on the Hardwick Select Board.

I want to serve on the select board to help Hardwick maintain momentum, foster positive growth and hold on to what makes us special.

When the moving trucks pulled away from my home in East Hardwick, on June 1, 2011, it wasn't long before a neighbor showed up with a plate of muffins to welcome my family. For the next eleven years I kept super-busy balancing work as a school principal with being a family man. These last few years, as my kids have grown and my career downshifted, I've had more time for Hardwick.

My Hardwick life includes new interests and old passions. I've been on stage for a number of Civic Standard productions, and I represented the community when OSSU created a new Portrait of a Graduate in 2023. That same year, I helped run the Neighbor to Neighbor (NtN) Emergency Supply and Support Center, a role I reprised in 2024. Since then, I have stayed active in NtN helping to write an appendix

to the town's Local Emergency Management Plan. Also in 2023, I was appointed to the Hardwick Planning Commission where we've worked on modernizing the zoning bylaws. The new by-laws make it easier to increase our housing stock while maintaining the character of our town. The planning commission recently began work on Hardwick's next seven-year town plan, which will shape the future of our community.

I can continue to serve my community and see this work through on the select board. Hardwick, like so many small towns, is having to make tough decisions about its future. But we have seen incredible growth because of the commitment and grit of our neighbors. I look forward to continuing to give back to my community, from muffins to flood recovery to the select board.

Improving our planning, climate and emergency resiliency, housing affordability/equity, and civic life are the mainstays of the work of the Hardwick Select Board.

On March 3, Town Meeting Day, please vote for me for the Hardwick Select Board.

Larry Fliegelman
East Hardwick

Heller's World by Joe Heller





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OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Laggis family farm innovates with the times

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – John Laggis has been dairy farming for over 45 years, most of that time with his brother Chris, who retired from their East Hardwick business three years ago and moved to Burke to pursue other interests.

Now the independent, family farm is owned and actively managed by four family members who share in all of the decision-making: John, his wife Johanna, their son Dan and Dan's wife Marissa.

Ten other full- and part-time employees help staff the farm, which employs more than a dozen people when the family is counted. That increases to as many as 15 or 20 people when planting and harvesting crops, said John.

"We could not begin to do all of the work that has to be done on a daily basis without our incredibly talented, dedicated and loyal employees."

Small dairy farms have been struggling to make ends meet for years. As milk prices have risen little and the costs of dairy farming have increased, farmers have had to become creative to continue in business, said John.

Some farms have turned to value-added products like the ice-cream producing Michaud farm in East Hardwick or Jasper Hill Farm in Greensboro.

"Change sometimes isn't easy," said John.

The Laggises have stuck with producing Jersey milk. Its value-add is its high protein and fat content that brings in more income per hundredweight; the measure by which wholesale milk is bought and sold.

The farm produces maple syrup too, which brings in income when there's little work to do in the fields, as has been the case

with Vermont dairy farms as long as there have been dairy farms in Vermont.

They began with 28 cows, said John. There are roughly 1,000 cows on the farm now, when 30 years ago there were just 400 or so. The farm now milks about 500 of the cows and has another 500 or so that aren't milking, or are calves, too young to milk. Farmers have no control over the price of milk, notes a video created by Monument Farms and shared on its web site at monumentfarms.com.

John Laggis, pointed to the video, which indicated the only way for dairy farmers to generate more income to keep up with the increasing cost of equipment, supplies and other things needed to run a dairy farm, on top of the increases in the overall cost of living that everyone faces, is to become larger and milk more cows.

John says the dairy business must continually innovate to do that, becoming more efficient as costs increase and milk prices remain flat.

The cows are now milked three times each day instead of two as they were when the brothers started farming.

Laggis Farm is a Dairy Farmers of America member. Three days a week their milk goes to Cabot, the rest goes to a Hood milk plant, where it's quickly processed, coming back to stores in just a few days.

Tractors are larger than they were decades ago. They get more work done, but they cost as much as \$400,000. That's 20 or more times as much as they did when the Laggis brothers started farming over 45 years ago, said John.

In 1983, the first tractor they bought cost \$12,000, he said. "A harvester can cost \$1 million."

Decades ago small farms had a large impact on the community. Then, locally-owned stores sold farm equipment, feed, fertilizer, parts for equipment and there were skilled mechanics nearby.

Now the farm turns to companies farther away; in Franklin, Addison and Orleans counties, or sometimes out of state. Often they are part of larger organizations.

The farm still has a local impact: children from area schools visit the farm on field trips, they have an adopt-a-cow program, teaching respect for animals and the circle of life and death that feeds us, said Johanna.

Neighbors look forward to the sign late each summer indicating sweet corn is available for sale.



Cows look out from stalls in the main barn of the Laggis farm on Hardwick Farms Road in East Hardwick. *courtesy photo*

VAST trails run through farm properties and over the years neighbors have turned to the Laggises for help when equipment is needed for a household chore or to get pulled out of a ditch.

As environmental regulations have become stricter, the farm has adopted them and recognizes the importance of being a good neighbor, said both John and Johanna.

John and Chris Laggis were the children of a cobbler. In the 1970s they became interested in farming.

In 1980 they started helping dairy farmer Ralph Stewart, on Ward Hill in East Hardwick.

Stewart had a heart attack and his doctor told him to sell his cows, said Johanna. "He didn't want to, so he owner-financed John and Chris," when John was a sophomore in high school. The boys leased the farm, said John. "At the end of two years they owned 50 cows," said Johanna.

While dairy farming is a business, all of the Laggises know that taking care of employees is critical to the success of it, said John. That goes for the cows as much as for the human employees.

"Animal health is critical.

Now vaccines have virtually eliminated the use of antibiotics," John said.

Johanna has been taking care of the farm's calves for decades. "Living in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, our calf barn is already well-prepared for the cold," she said.

"When I heard about the extreme cold front coming through, I found a crochet pattern for calf ear warmers and got to work."

"John and Johanna have served on ag boards, they donated milk to food banks during COVID.

. . . In addition, Johanna hosted a virtual tour of their farm for 2024's Breakfast on the Farm (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFic24rYfT-w&authuser=1>) to invite the public to learn more about dairy farming," said Sam Lavelle with New England Dairy that works to be a catalyst for a vibrant New England dairy community, championing New England dairy farm families and the nutritious foods they produce, indicates the organization's website at newenglanddairy.com.

With the next generation of Dan and Marissa involved with the farm, it's likely to remain in the family for a while, said John and Johanna.



"Living in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, our calf barn is already well-prepared for the cold," said Johanna Laggis. When she heard about an extreme cold front coming through, she found a crochet pattern for calf ear warmers and got to work.

courtesy photo

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WEEKS GONE BY

Walter P. Slayton (1831–1903)



“Walter Slayton was the last Slayton to own this farm. In 1899 he sold it to John and Ann Martin. They lived at the farm with him and were his hired hand and housekeeper. Part of the agreement, written into the deed, stated that they would care for him for the rest of his life and provide a headstone for him. In the 1900 census John Martin is listed as head of household and Walter Slayton is listed as a boarder,” wrote Juanita Nunn in a comment on the original post. courtesy photo

by Ted Wheelock

Walter P. Slayton was born on July 1, 1831, in Calais, the son of Capt. Jera Slayton and Betsey (Kendall) Slayton. At the time of his birth, his father was twenty-seven years old and his mother twenty-six. Walter was born on the Slayton homestead — land first settled by his grandfather around 1790 — the same farm where his father had been born and would later die. Few Vermonters of his generation could claim such uninterrupted ties to a single property across three generations.

Walter grew up in Calais as one of five children, with two

brothers and two sisters, in a farming household long rooted in the town. In 1850, at age eighteen, he was living at home with his parents. By 1860, he was working as a farmer, still in his parents’ household, reflecting the common practice of family-based agriculture in rural Vermont. In 1861, he appears independently in local land records, executing a mortgage deed, signaling his transition into greater economic responsibility and personal engagement with property ownership.

After reaching his twentieth year, Walter also pursued education, teaching school for six seasons. Like many rural Vermonters of education and ambition, he taught during the winters while farming in the summers, balancing intellectual work with agricultural labor.

Farming, however, remained his lifelong vocation.

By 1870, Walter had established himself as head of his own household, a status he maintained in subsequent censuses. He continued to be recorded as a farmer in 1880, holding both real and personal property, and remained steadily employed in agriculture throughout his adult life. Over a farming career spanning roughly forty years, Walter developed a substantial and diversified operation. His farm comprised approximately 175 acres, including a sugar orchard of about 800 maple trees, reflecting the importance of maple



Walter Palmer Slayton

courtesy photo

production in central Vermont. He kept twenty cows, produced hay annually, and regularly sold cheese, butter and hogs, indicating a farm run for sustained commercial output rather than subsistence alone.

Walter was also deeply involved in the civic life of Calais. Over the course of his adult years, he held nearly every town office, with the exceptions of town clerk and commissioner. During the Civil War era, he served as constable, a position of trust involving local law enforcement and order during a period of national uncertainty. He continued in that role for ten years, both during and after the war.

His public service extended beyond the town when he was elected to the Vermont Legislature in 1872, representing his community at the state level and joining the ranks of Vermont’s citizen-legislators in the postwar period.

To sustain the scale of his agricultural operation, Walter employed hired labor. He employed John Martin by the year, and Martin’s wife kept house for the Slayton family. By the time this account was recorded, they had been in his employ for fifteen years, reflecting long-standing working relationships and the stability of Walter’s household and farm management.

The 1900 federal census confirms Walter’s birth in July 1831 and records him at age sixty-eight as a land-owning farmer in Calais, still living independently near the close of his life. Unlike many Vermonters of his generation who migrated westward, Walter remained in the town of his birth, continuing the Slayton family’s enduring connection to land and community.

Walter Palmer Slayton died of tuberculosis on December 3, 1903, in Calais, at the age of seventy-two. He was buried in Short Cemetery, Calais. His life reflects continuity, stewardship, and public service—rooted in the same soil settled by his grandfather, shaped by the example of his father, and sustained by decades of productive labor and civic responsibility.

This account originally appeared in the Settlers of Calais Facebook Group on January 30.

Ted Wheelock lives in California and has ancestors from Calais, where he periodically visits with distant cousins and the historical society.

100 Years ago in The Hardwick Gazette Thursday, February 4, 1926

O.W.L. Hike

O-w-l spells owl, but that is not exactly what the above letters signify. However, it is the name of the club at the Academy, or composed of students at the Academy, which held a very successful and well-attended hike last Saturday afternoon. The route taken was from in the vicinity of the railroad station, up over the hills through what was formerly known as the Wakefield woodlot and up to the half-way point above the reservoir, where lunch was served. On the way up appeared many signs, some directing one way and some another, one in particular; which said something about “turn to the right on the straight and narrow way”; another “turn to the left, to the road to sin,” and we leave it to your own imagination which road the majority turned to. The path taken by them was the right one and led to the camp.

Following the feed, the route was down through the Bridgman woods to what is known as the “big slide” and where a merry time was had. There were many spills, but what was missing in thrills as the various

members shot down the slide, was made up in laughter and enjoyment on the part of those watching the fun.

It was one of the most successful winter hikes of the season, and we understand that plans are being made for a moonlight hike later on.

100 Years ago in The Hardwick Gazette Thursday, February 4, 1926

Liberation Notice!

This will certify that I have given my son, Michael Robertson, his time during his minority. On and after this date, I shall pay no bills of his contracting; nor claim any of his wages, or property earned or acquired, after this date.

Woodbury, Vt., William Robertson
Jan. 15, 1926

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THE OUTSIDE STORY

What three decades of monitoring birds reveal about changing forests



Blackburnian Warbler
photo by Atticus Soehren

by **Atticus Soehren,**
Vermont Center for Ecos-
tudies

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION – Deep in the Vermont forests, the flute-like call of the Hermit Thrush drifts through the understory and the Blackburnian Warbler’s song carries from the canopy, both reminders of the diversity and complexity woven into Vermont’s forest ecosystems. But this dawn chorus of breeding birds is shifting.

For decades, volunteers, part of the Forest Bird Monitoring Program, have been up early and counted these species across the state. Little did they know that over the last few decades, they’ve witnessed a subtle change in voices across the landscape. Now, as Vermont warms and winters shorten, we asked,

“How are Vermont’s forest songbird species responding to ongoing climatic changes, and what might those patterns mean for the forests they depend on?”

Using more than 30 years of bird survey data, we examined how warming springtime tempera-

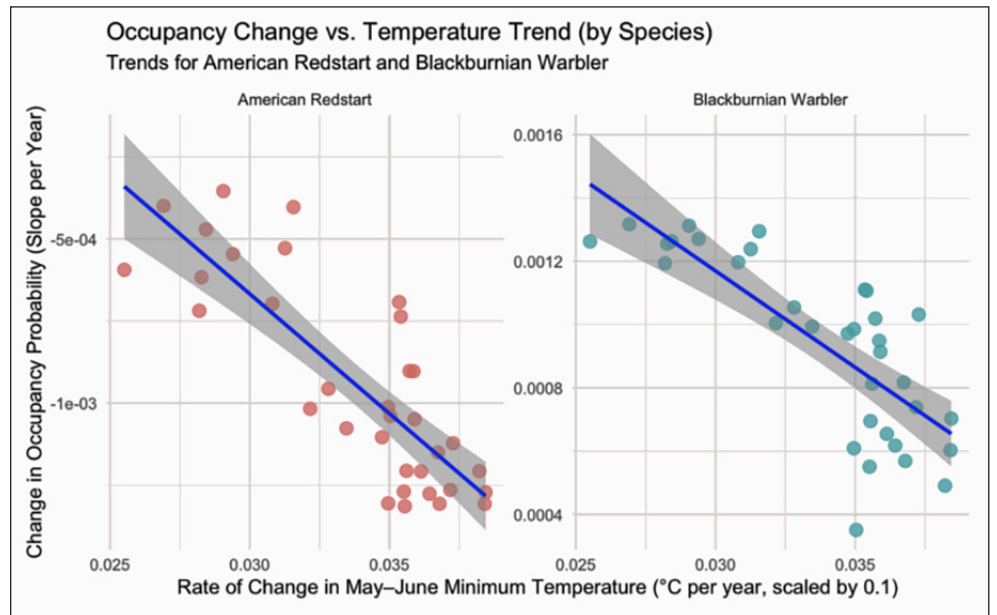
tures affect the probability that Catharus thrush and several warbler species occupy interior forest patches across Vermont. We now have preliminary results of how these species have responded to a changing climate over the past several decades across the state.

Since 1989, the Forest Bird Monitoring Program (FBMP) has surveyed Vermont’s birds that breed in interior forests. The surveys, which occur annually, provide a clear window into how the state’s forests, and the birds that depend on them, are changing. Long-term datasets like these are rare, and their value continues to increase, as the past three decades have seen the fastest rate of climate change on record, and especially in New England



Ovenbird
photo by Atticus Soehren

In Vermont, ongoing climate change will undoubtedly reshape forests from the canopy down to the soil. The species groups we focused on, thrushes and warblers, include closely-related species that often share habitats and compete with one another



Change in site occupancy in response to the rate of springtime temperature for American Redstart and Blackburnian Warbler between 1989–2024. Each point represents a survey site, with the blue line showing the relationship between local temperature change and the annual rate of occupancy change.

for resources. Because they live and breed in similar forest conditions, even subtle shifts in temperature, precipitation, or habitat structure could influence where each species occurs, making them powerful indicators of ecological change.

By comparing their occupancy patterns through time, we can begin to answer urgent questions: how has a changing climate affected the distribution of Vermont’s forest interior birds and do closely-related species respond similarly to climate change?

Counting animals is hard and we rarely detect everything. We often identify and tally bird species at a survey location by sight or sound. But during a 10-minute point-count, some species might not sing, or may be busy feeding nestlings instead of singing from their favorite perch. They may be missed during the count even though they were present at the time of the survey.

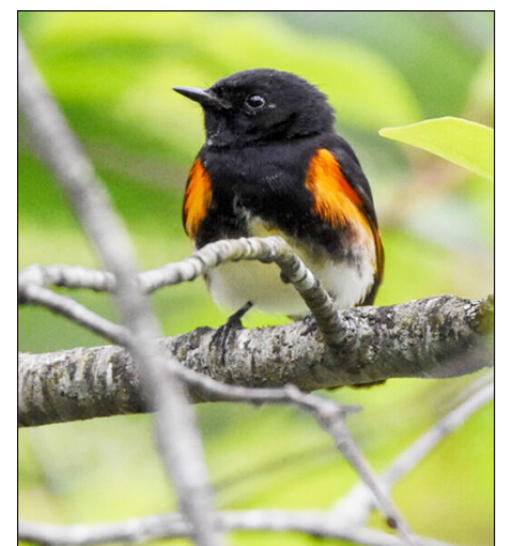
To account for this imperfect detection, we used occupancy models: statistical tools that separate true changes in where bird species occur from the natural variability in the detection process. We won’t get into the nitty-gritty details of the analysis itself, but suffice to say, using this method, we get a more accurate view of how species’ distributions have shifted over time.

For our analysis, we focused on two groups of species, thrushes and warblers, across 34 survey locations throughout Vermont. For each species, we estimated the trend in site occupancy over the last three decades. We used those trends, along with rates of climate and precipitation change, to better understand how these birds’ relationships with Vermont’s forests have changed over time and how

species may respond to continued environmental change.

Our analysis revealed that the thrushes are responding to warming in distinct ways. The Wood Thrush, for example, showed the steepest declines, with occupancy decreasing in areas with warmer springtime temperatures. Similarly, both the Hermit Thrush and the Veery occupancy probabilities tended to decline as the minimum springtime temperatures rose, though their trends were weaker and more variable across the state.

In contrast, the Swainson’s

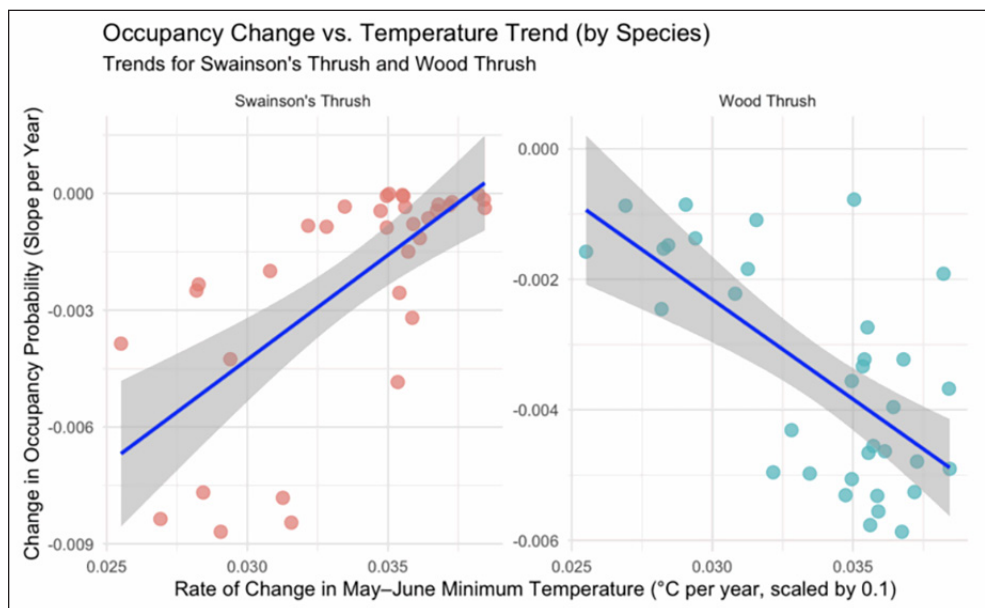


American Redstart
photo by Atticus Soehren

Thrush, typically associated with higher elevation and cooler forests, showed the opposite pattern. Its probability of site occupancy increased with warming spring temperatures, suggesting that this species is expanding into areas that are becoming more suitable as conditions shift upslope.

The warbler response to a changing climate was equally variable and complex. Species such as the Black-and-white Warbler and Yellow-rumped Warbler showed increased occupancy in areas with greater rates of change

See MONITORING, Next Page



Occupancy change vs. temperature trend for Wood Thrush and Swainson’s Thrush. Each point represents a survey site, with the blue line showing the relationship between local temperature change and the annual rate of occupancy change. These mixed results highlight that even closely related species, occupying similar habitats, may respond to climate change in very different ways, depending on where they live along Vermont’s elevational gradients.

Monitoring

Continued From Previous Page



Black-throated Blue Warbler
photo by Atticus Soehren

in spring temperatures, suggesting that species inhabiting cool-temperate forests may benefit from warmer springtime conditions or shifts in forest composition.

Other species, however, showed a decline in site occupancy in areas with higher rates of change in springtime temperatures. The American Redstart and Blackburnian Warbler both exhibited negative relationships between occupancy and increasing spring temperatures. Interestingly, the Ovenbird, a ground-nesting species that forages on the ground and lower vegetation, also showed a similar pattern as the American Redstart and Blackburnian Warbler, which nest and forage in the canopy. These species are typically associated with cooler, more mature forests, so the patterns we observed may reflect subtle habitat changes tied to a changing climate and forest succession. More research is needed to disentangle the drivers of change we highlight here.

The warbler response to a changing climate was equally variable and complex. Species such as the Black-and-white Warbler

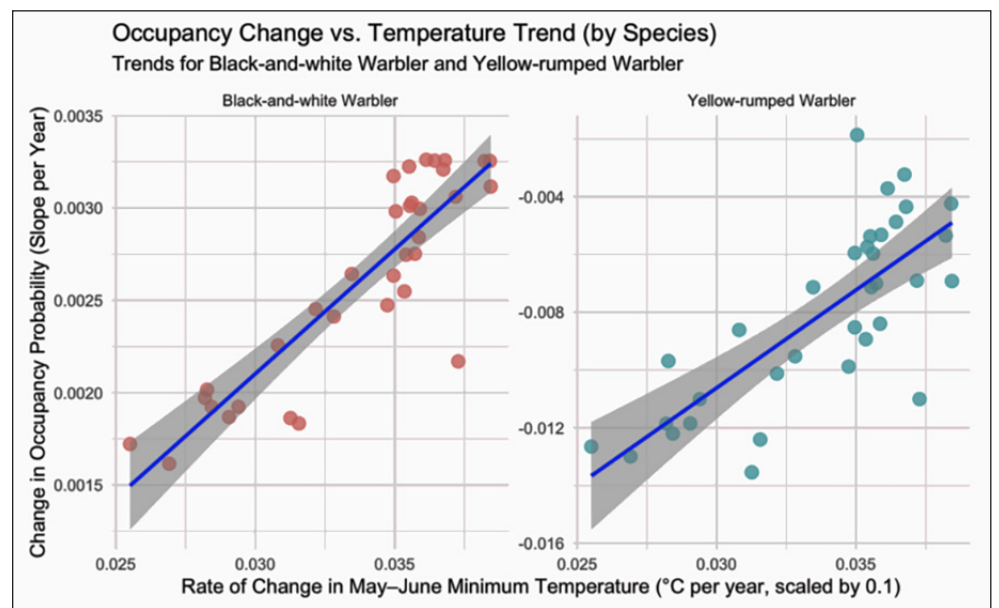
and Yellow-rumped Warbler showed increased occupancy in areas with greater rates of change in spring temperatures, suggesting that species inhabiting cool-temperate forests may benefit from warmer springtime conditions or shifts in forest composition.

Other species, however, showed a decline in site occupancy in areas with higher rates of change in springtime temperatures. The American Redstart and Blackburnian Warbler both exhibited negative relationships between occupancy and increasing spring temperatures. Interestingly, the Ovenbird, a ground-nesting species that forages on the ground and lower vegetation, also showed a similar pattern as the American Redstart and Blackburnian Warbler, which nest and forage in the canopy. These species are typically associated with cooler, more mature forests, so the patterns we observed may reflect subtle habitat changes tied to a changing climate and forest succession. More research is needed to disentangle the drivers of change we highlight here.

Not all warblers showed significant responses, however. Four of the nine warbler species, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Northern Waterthrush, had no significant association between site occupancy and change in springtime temperature between 1989 and 2024.

These contrasting patterns, along with the species that showed no significant responses, point to a gradual reshaping of Vermont's bird community. Some species are responding to a warmer, more mixed landscape, while others are potentially losing ground as their preferred climate and/or habitats shift northward or upslope.

Taken together, the results suggest a consistent ecological signal: Vermont's iconic bird species are responding to our changing climate. We found in our preliminary analysis

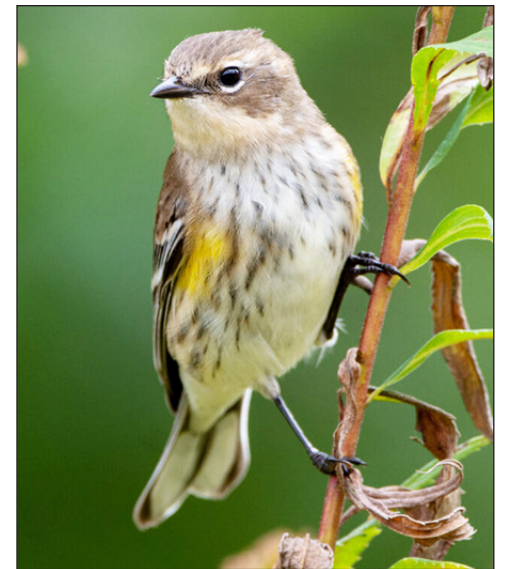


Change in site occupancy in response to the rate of springtime temperature for Black-and-white Warbler and Yellow-rumped Warbler between 1989-2024. Each point represents a survey site, with the blue line showing the relationship between local temperature change and the annual rate of occupancy change.

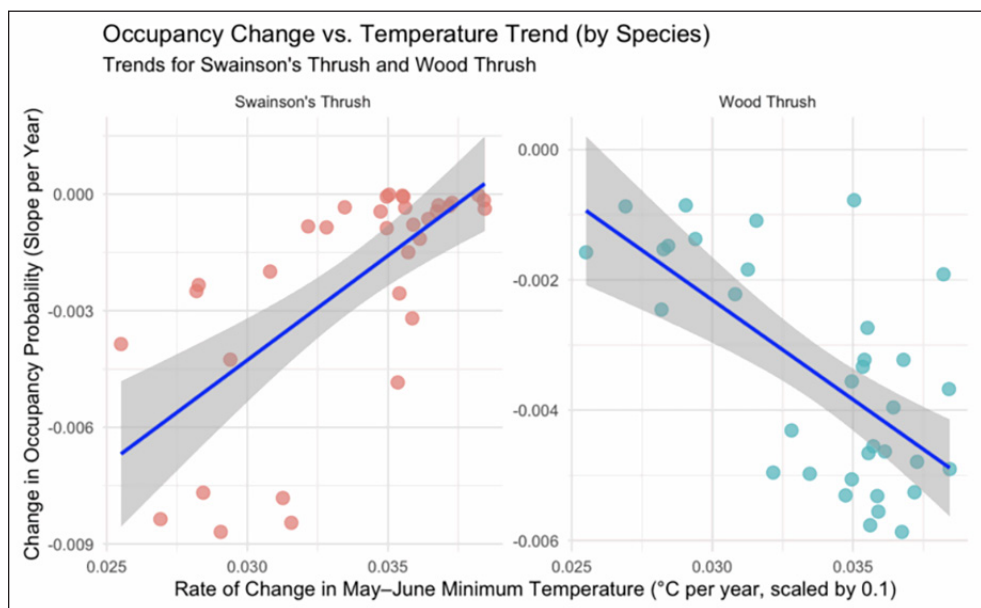
that the site occupancy of species associated with cooler forests is changing most where the change in spring temperatures has been greatest. This pattern mirrors trends seen elsewhere in the Northeast and highlights how Vermont's long-term bird data can reveal early indicators of climate-driven changes long before physical changes are visible in the forest itself.

Results like these show why long-term monitoring is so important. The Forest Bird Monitoring Program gives us a rare opportunity to evaluate how Vermont's forests and the wildlife within them are changing over time. As challenges like climate change and habitat loss continue to shape the landscape, these data help scientists and land managers make informed conservation decisions, with each year of careful observation adding another piece to the puzzle.

Atticus Soehren is a senior at the University of Pennsylvania,



Yellow-rumped Warbler
photo by Atticus Soehren
majoring in Biology and minoring in Data Science and Analytics. He has always had a passion for birds, climate, and the outdoors. Here he shares the results of his internship this summer under staff biologist Michael Hallworth analyzing data from the Vermont Forest Bird Monitoring Program.



Occupancy change vs. temperature trend for Wood Thrush and Swainson's Thrush. Each point represents a survey site, with the blue line showing the relationship between local temperature change and the annual rate of occupancy change. These mixed results highlight that even closely related species, occupying similar habitats, may respond to climate change in very different ways, depending on where they live along Vermont's elevational gradients.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Hardwick Town Forest expansion proposal is an asset for all

To the editor:

I attended the informational meeting, January 24, regarding the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest expansion. It was impressive to hear how the Hardwick Conservation Committee is collaborating with the Trust For Public Lands, the Northern Rivers Land Trust (NRLT), and Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) to gather funds to purchase and preserve a 329 acre forest property, for the benefit of present and future residents.

I learned the history of the project and how the town will be able to own this land for a contribution of \$25,000, a small fraction of what the total project cost is estimated to be (\$800,000). The partners involved have all pledged support recognizing the lasting benefits of a town forest to the Hardwick community.

As a taxpayer, I realize this land will be pulled from the grand list resulting in a tax loss of roughly \$5,000, yet the recreational, environmental and economic benefits will more than make up for this. A steering committee, composed of residents, will have the opportunity to decide what the permitted uses will be now and into the future.

As we sit here today in 2026, I believe subsequent generations will look back with gratitude on the foresight the current residents had to make this land available to all. If you have further questions I encourage you to read the proposal on the website of the Hardwick Conservation Committee. In closing, I hope you will show up for town meeting and vote in support of this project.

Janet Bellavance
Hardwick

I HEARD IT THROUGH THE JEDEVINE

Library serves community in many ways

by **Brendan Buckley**

HARDWICK – Our shortest month of the year will be a busy one at the Jeudevine. The event calendar features a variety of presentations, ranging from author discussions to income tax seminars. As I have noted before, a library serves its community in so many different ways.

This week, on Thursday night at 6:30 p.m., in the Parker Ladd Community Room, local novelist Jodi Lew-Smith will host a discussion about her recently released novel “Asa James.” All are welcome, even those who have yet to read the book. Last month Lew-Smith held a presentation that focused on her writing process: the highs and lows of creating a story, and the strategies that ultimately have proven most helpful to her. This week she will explore the actual story, one that covers about three years in the life of a mid nineteenth-century foundling from northern Vermont.

Skein and Sketch, a recurring monthly event during the winter, will take place next Monday, February 9, from 6 to 8 p.m. The evening is built around handcrafts, from fabric arts, to drawing, to wood. The expansive new children’s space will have both chairs and

tables where attendees can tackle their projects. If you have time, consider bringing a snack to share.

An event centered around this year’s Vermont Reads selection, “The Light Pirate,” will be held on Thursday, Feb. 12, at 6 p.m. Shawna Trader, an organizer from Barre, will present “Facing a Flooded World; Why Relationship is the Sweetest Way.” The novel, which depicts a young woman dealing with rising seas in Florida, serves as a mirror to our Vermont experiences with flooding in the last few years. As I know many of our neighbors would attest, the strength of our community and our relationships has been central to our recovery efforts. Copies of “The Light Pirate” are available at the Jeudevine.

On the following evening, Friday, Feb. 13, Rick Winston, who co-owned the Savoy Theater in Montpelier and has served as programming director of the Green Mountain Film Festival, will host “Whodunits and Whydunits.” This will be the perfect event for lovers of the crime and mystery genres. Winston will explore the use of murder mysteries by authors and screenwriters as they seek to comment on wider social issues. Among the films he will discuss are “In the Heat of the Night,” “Lone

Star” and “Gosford Park”. “In the Heat of the Night,” starring Rod Steiger and Sidney Poitier, is one of my all-time favorites (including the classic line “They call me Mr. Tibbs”).

Beginning on February 14, the Jeudevine will host Zarina Castro on several Saturdays between now and April 15. She is an authorized tax e-file provider and is offering free tax clinics which will run from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. It is important that you sign up at the library. You will be given an appointment time and a list of items to bring with you at your appointment. The four Saturdays are February 14, March 14 and 28 and April 11.

On Saturday, Feb. 21, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., the Jeudevine will host an opportunity for Hardwick Select Board candidates to introduce themselves to and answer questions from voters. You can submit questions in advance at jeudevinelibrary@hardwickvt.gov. For those unable to attend in person the event will be broadcast later on HCTV.

Later in this very busy month, the Jeudevine will present a short documentary, “From Earth to Earth: the Lost Art of Dying in America.” It provides information on natural burial, through the eyes of both those who worked to legalize the process, and those who see it as

a path to healing from the loss of a loved one. Jim Hogle, the communications and outreach coordinator of the Vermont Forest Cemetery, will moderate a discussion session following the documentary.

Numerous events are on tap for children in February. For the youngest, ages 5 and under, story time is held on Thursdays at 10:30. The Jeudevine Players (for ages 6 and up), preparing an original play, will meet on two Mondays, the February 9 and February 23, at 3 p.m. A teen Minecraft competition will be offered on Thursday, Feb. 12, at 3 p.m., those aged 12-18. You can use a library desktop computer or bring your own device. The Cooking Club, for ages 10 and up, will meet on Wednesday, February 18, at 3 p.m., to prepare hot chocolate from scratch, perfect for a Vermont winter day. Lastly, for those aged 7-10 who are itching to sing their favorite tunes, Kids’ Karaoke will be held on Tuesday, February 24, at 1 p.m.

Wow! What a fabulous menu of offerings, aimed to hit everyone’s sweet spot, whether that be a great read, a murder mystery on the silver screen, a forum of candidates running for local office, the answer to a gnarly tax question or information on natural burial. Yes, our Jeudevine Memorial Library is about books and so much more.

IN THE GARDEN

Can old seeds still grow?

by **Deborah J. Benoit**

NORTH ADAMS, Mass. – It’s that time of year: seed packet displays are appearing everywhere, from grocery stores to farm and garden supply centers. Garden catalogs arrive in mailboxes daily, featuring common and exotic vegetable and flower seeds. There’s so much temptation.

Most gardeners likely already have a collection of seed packets from previous years. Before purchasing new seeds, take the time to go through a collection and determine which are likely still usable and which will be replaced.

Seeds contain everything needed to produce a new plant. As they age, their viability, how likely a seed is to germinate, lessens. How old is too old depends on the type of seed and the conditions under which they’ve been stored.

Check seed packets for a packed-for date. That’s the year the seeds were intended to be planted. Seeds purchased this year will be dated for 2026, but that doesn’t mean any leftover seeds at the end of the season should be disposed of. Most seeds are

viable for an additional year or two, some more, depending on the type of seed. For example, tomato and kale seeds are usually viable for four years, while corn and peppers only two, though that can vary. The older a seed is, the lower the germination rate, the percentage that will successfully sprout.

Just as important, perhaps more so, is how seeds are stored. The best way to store seeds is in a cool, dark, and dry location. A sealed glass jar or metal storage container will keep out moisture and help keep seeds safe from mice and other hungry rodents. Temperatures around 40 degrees Fahrenheit are optimal for storage. If storing seeds in the refrigerator, keep them in an airtight container to avoid humidity.

Testing the viability of seeds is easy to do. With around 10 seeds, a half sheet of paper towel, and a sealable plastic bag, wet the paper towel thoroughly, then ring out excess moisture. Lay it on a flat surface. Place the seeds in a line about an inch away from the long edge of the paper towel. Fold the paper towel over the seeds, and fold it over again to enclose the seeds. Place the folded



Seed packet displays are popping up at area garden centers and other retailers.

photo by Debra Heleba

paper towel in the plastic bag and seal it. Make a note on the bag of the date the test began, the type of seed, and the expected date for germination. The anticipated number of days to germination can be found on the seed packet. Add that number to the start date to get the expected germination date.

Place the plastic bag in a warm place (such as the top of the refrigerator). Check the bag every few days to be sure the paper towel hasn’t dried out. On or after the expected germination date, carefully open the folded paper towel to check how many seeds have germinated. If less than half, consider purchasing new seed.

If ready to plant, seeds that have germinated can be transferred to a seed starting tray. There’s no need to remove the paper if the sprouted seed is attached to it. Just carefully cut around the seed and gently plant the paper with the sprouted seed.

Winter is an opportune time to sort through old seeds and order new varieties for the coming growing season.

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

OUR COMMUNITIES

Book lovers social, Feb. 4

CRAFTSBURY – A book-lovers social will be held on February 4, and every first Wednesday morning after that, from 10:30 a.m. to noon, at the Craftsbury Public Library. Valerie Morrison and Susan O’Connell will facilitate this book

group, with no assigned reading. The group will share books, authors, or books that are new to the library collection. Tea and coffee will be available with occasional snacks. Knitting or handwork projects are welcome.

Pesticide-free landscapes webinar, Feb. 5

by Pollinator Pathway staff

ONLINE – A free webinar “Pesticide-Free Landscapes for Pollinators and People: How We Can Help,” to hear about actions to take at the state and local levels to challenge the use of pollinator-toxic pesticides, is offered February 5, 6:30 p.m.

Three experts, Pollinator Pathway advisory board members, will be panelists for the discussion.

Agricultural Conservation Lead Emily May, with the Xerces Society’s pesticide reduction program, will provide an overview of pesticide toxicity to pollinators and how that has been increasing since the 1990s. She will discuss some of the most harmful common lawn and garden pesticides, including neonicotinoids and diamides, and the science linking them to dramatic declines in pollinators and birds worldwide.

Director of the Pollinators & Pesticides Initiative, Dan Raichel,

Poetry event, Feb. 6

WOODBURY – Friday, Feb. 6, the Woodbury Community Library will host a poetry event. This bimonthly event welcomes writers and people interested in poetry to

share a light meal at 5:30 p.m., and have three poems ready to share between 6 to 7:30 p.m.. Attendees may share poems or short prose by other writers.

Book group discussion, Feb. 26

CABOT – Thursday, Feb. 26, members of the Cabot book group will meet from 2 to 3 p.m. to discuss February’s book selection, “All About Me! My Remarkable Life in Show Business” by Mel Brooks.

The book offers insight into the inspiration behind the ideas for his collection of boundary-breaking work, and offers details about

the many close friendships and collaborations Brooks had, including those with Sid Caesar, Carl Reiner, Gene Wilder, Madeleine Kahn, Alfred Hitchcock, and Anne Bancroft. Copies of this book will be available in the library to borrow. Email cabotlibrary@yahoo.com for more info and to be added to the book group email list.

Zentangle drawing class, March 1

by Craftsbury Public Library

CRAFTSBURY – Zentangle Certified Teacher Katy Abbot will offer a free introduction to this drawing technique in a program at the Craftsbury Public Library, with an option to join from home over Zoom, March 1 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Zentangle is an easy-to-learn drawing technique using repeating patterns to create art. Videos demonstrating the technique for adults and kids can be found at youtube.com/user/zentangle. Abbot has led several classes for local libraries from her home in Ohio. She will teach over the Zoom

platform to participants wishing to Zentangle together at the library (watching on a big screen) and also those who prefer to join from their home computer.

Pre-registration for this program is required by Friday, Feb. 13, so the library can order individual materials kits. The library requests that interested parties email childrenslibrarian@craftsburypubliclibrary.org with the number of materials kits needed. Pre-registration is also available by visiting the library or calling (802) 586-9683. The program is designed for adults and kids ages 8-plus.

Vermont Electric Co-op seeks candidates for board of directors

JOHNSON – Vermont Electric Co-op (VEC) is seeking candidates for the three board of directors’ seats that are up for election this year. VEC’s 12 board members represent towns across the co-op’s service territory and serve four-year terms.

Directors receive a stipend and mileage reimbursement for attending monthly committee and board meetings and have additional training opportunities including conferences to learn more about energy issues and the cooperative utility model. To be eligible to run, candidates must be a VEC member whose principal residence is within VEC’s service territory and within the specific district or zone they wish to represent. Candidates must also collect at least 15 signatures from VEC members from their district.

The board generally meets in the afternoon on the last Tuesday

of each month at VEC’s headquarters in Johnson.

The deadline for candidate applications is March 11. The election opens on April 14, closes on May 7, and results are announced at the annual meeting of the membership, May 9.

Seats up for election in 2026 and the towns they represent include District 3: Albany, Craftsbury, Glover, Greensboro, Irasburg, Jay, Lowell, Newport Town, Troy, Westfield; District 4: Bakersfield, Belvidere, Cambridge, Eden, Fairfax, Fairfield, Fletcher, Hyde Park, Johnson, Morristown, Stowe, Waterville; District 5: Bolton, Essex, Hinesburg, Huntington, Jericho, Milton, Richmond, Shelburne, Starksboro, St. George, Underhill, Westford, Williston

To learn more or request application materials, visit vermontelectric.coop/about/vec-board-of-directors-election.

VEC’s incentives continue for 2026

JOHNSON – Vermont Electric Co-op’s (VEC) incentives for electric technologies are available for customers in Caledonia, Lamoille and Orleans Counties.

VEC offers credits on members’ electric bills for the purchase of plug-in electric vehicles, \$250; all-electric vehicles, \$500. For both types, there is an additional \$500 for income-qualified members. (vehicles may be new or used, purchased or leased); free Level 2 EV charger. If members have purchased a charger, VEC offers a \$250 bill credit. In both cases, members agree to not charge during high demand times; public/workplace/multi-family charging stations: \$500 per connection; ductless, ducted, air-to-water, and ground-source heat pumps as well as heat pump water heaters, an incentive is available either at the point-of-purchase or as a rebate through Efficiency Vermont. A \$150 per unit thermal efficiency credit is available if the system was installed in a building that meets thermal efficiency criteria; incentive is available for pellet stoves at

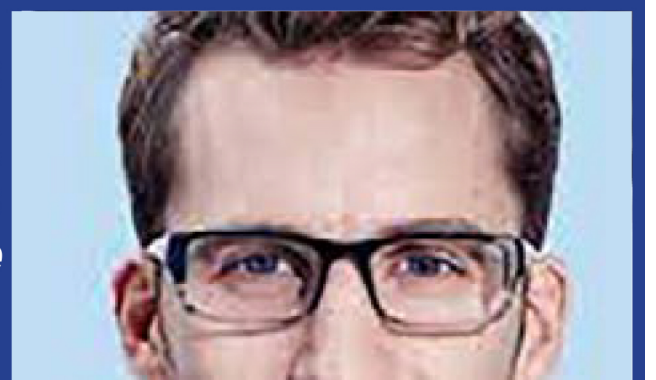
the point-of-purchase through participating dealers; residential lawn mowers, \$50; commercial mowers and electric forklifts, \$1,000; heat pump pool heaters: \$600 for units that meet efficiency criteria; and induction cooktops, \$100 (Not available for portable induction cooktops.)

VEC also offers custom incentive opportunities for members who want to replace fossil fuel equipment and reduce carbon emissions, through electric service upgrades or line extensions. These projects often serve commercial facilities like sawmills or sugaring operations, for instance.

Learn more about these opportunities at vermontelectric.coop/energytransformation-programs or by calling (800) 832-2667.

Almost 7,000 VEC members have taken advantage of incentives since the co-op began offering them in 2017. Since the program began, VEC’s incentives have eliminated the consumption of almost 24 million gallons of fossil fuel: the equivalent of taking over 42,000 cars off the road for a year.

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OUR COMMUNITIES

Curds & Curling rescheduled to Feb. 21

GREENSBORO – Curds & Curling at Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro has been rescheduled from this Saturday, to Saturday, Feb 21, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Warming fires and live music set the stage for the winter competition with a wheel of Jasper Hill cheddar as the curling stone. Players will throw their wheels and sweep their brushes as they aim

toward the target in Vermont's new version of the traditional sport. Watch the challenges or try curling, sample cheese tasting, mac-n-cheese, raclette and beverages featuring Barr Hill gin.

The event is sponsored by Jasper Hill Farm and Highland Center for the Arts. Register at highlandartsvt.org/events/curds-curling-2/

Skein and Sketch at the library, Feb. 9

HARDWICK – Bring knitting, embroidery, carving, drawing, felting, beading, painting, crocheting, spinning, quilting or other handwork to the Jeudevine Memorial Library, Monday, Feb. 9, from 6 to 8 p.m. for Skein and Sketch, meeting in the teen area of the library,

where there is seating and tables to work on. There will be tea, books and conversation. The library is located at 93 N. Main Street, Hardwick.

The event is free and open to the public. For information, call the library at (802) 472-5948.

Community-building projects, Feb. 12

HARDWICK – Thursday, Feb. 12, at 6 p.m., Shawna Trader will present “Facing A Flooded World: Why Relationship is the Sweetest Way,” at the Jeudevine Memorial Library. Central Vermont endured flooding in 2023 and 2024. This presentation will explore several examples of community-building projects that are

proving to be pathways towards resilience. Attendees will explore “The Light Pirate” by Lily Brooks-Dalton.

Trader is a caregiver, parent, poet and community organizer.

This talk is free, open to the public and accessible. For more information, call (802) 472-5948 or jeudevinelibrary@hardwickvt.gov.

Nichols pond reed study webinar, Feb. 17

ONLINE – Annie D’Alton will present a webinar February 17, from noon to 1 p.m. about a pilot study at Nichols pond concerning manual phragmites control. She is an amateur botanist, citizen scientist and volunteer with the Lake Champlain Committee Cyanobacteria and Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring programs.

hinder wildlife movement, particularly for turtles, frogs and fish. The reeds grow up to 15 feet and spread by underground rhizomes that are difficult to manage. In this webinar, attendees will learn about non-herbicide hand-harvesting methods which have had some success in the Great Lakes region and are now being tested in a pilot study here in Vermont at Nichols Pond.

This free webinar is a virtual event open to the public but registration is required to receive the link. Registration information can be found on the FOVLAP website at vermontlakes.org/event/manual-phragmites-control-a-pilot-study-at-nichols-pond/

Efficiency rebates available for HED customers

by Matthew Smith, Efficiency Vermont

WINOOSKI – Efficiency Vermont’s 2026 rebates include Hardwick Electric customers.

Bonus rebates include: an extra \$200 toward a qualifying appliance (clothes washer/dryers, fridges, heat pump, water heaters, etc.); an additional \$800 back on a new heat pump system (this is for income-eligible households and is on top of the standard \$200 income bonus from VPPSA utilities,

the \$475 to \$2200 point-of-sale discount on heat pumps and Efficiency Vermont’s \$200 income bonus.); an extra \$500 for income-eligible homes that weatherize (insulate and air seal).

In 2026 businesses that use Hardwick Electric can received an extra \$800 back for landlords who install efficient appliances in each unit of a property (four or more) and low-interest financing through lenders like EastRise Credit Union and Cornerstone Housing Partners.

Free tax preparation

NORTHEAST KINGDOM – AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is open for appointments through April 15. Area AARP Tax Aide sites are in Derby, Greensboro, Hardwick, Danville, West Burke, Derby and Sterling View in Hyde Park. There are also sites in other Vermont towns. AARP counselors are IRS-Certified and can prepare Federal and Vermont tax returns, including Renter Claim, Homestead Declaration and

Property Tax Adjustment Claims. All services are free. Call (802) 441-3220. An appointment is required. Follow the phone instructions and leave a message. Your call will be returned within a few days to set up the appointment.

Tax-Aide welcomes all ages with special focus on those 50-plus and on those with low and moderate income. AARP membership is not required.

EDUCATION

Two local students named to Dean’s List

BRISTOL, R.I. – Lillian O’Donnell of Wolcott and Sakoya Sweeney of Craftsbury have been named to the Fall 2025 Dean’s List at Roger Williams University.

Full-time students who complete 12 or more credits per semester and earn a GPA of 3.4 or higher are placed on the Dean’s List that semester.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OBITUARIES

M. Ann "Annie" Brown

WOODBURY – Mary Ann "Annie" Brown, 92, formerly of Woodbury, died January 30, at the Greensboro Nursing Home, with family at her side.

She was born April 25, 1933, in Hardwick, the daughter of the late Paul Ainsworth Sr. and Arlene (Ross) Ainsworth. She graduated from Montpelier High School in 1952.

She attended hair dressing school in Rochester, N.Y., and operated her own salon in Barre for several years. Later, Annie continued her education receiving her Licensed Practical Nursing training at Fanny Allen School of Nursing in Colchester.

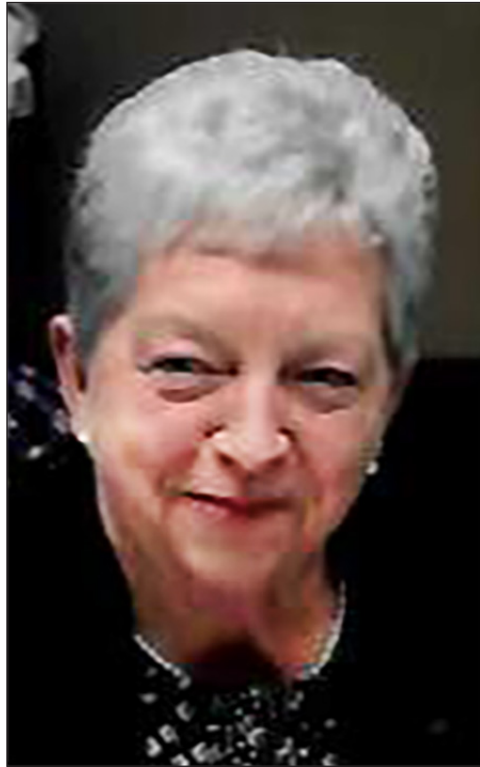
On June 30, 1962, she married Richard P. "Rip" Brown in Woodbury.

Annie was employed by Central Vermont Hospital in Berlin. She worked on the medical-surgical floor for many years. She later completed her nursing career at Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice.

She was a member of the Woodbury Methodist Church. She enjoyed gardening, nature, camping on East Long Pond, and skiing with her husband and her twin sister.

Survivors include many nieces and nephews; a brother-in-law, Thomas Mancini of Barre; sisters-in-law Ann Ainsworth of Hardwick; and Orise Ainsworth of East Hardwick.

In addition to her parents, Annie was predeceased by her husband "Rip" Brown on July 25,



M. Ann "Annie" Brown

2014, and all her siblings, Paul Ainsworth Jr., her twin sister Mary Jean Mancini, Wendell Ainsworth, and Ralph Ainsworth and a nephew Randy P. Ainsworth.

To honor her request, there will be no services.

Thank you to a special niece, Bonnie DeGoosh, for all the care and love given to Annie throughout the years.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in her memory may be made to the Lamoille Area Cancer Network, P.O. Box 828, Morrisville, VT 05661.

Arrangements are in the care of Dian R. Holcomb of Northern Vermont Funeral Service, 60 Elm Street, Hardwick. Online condolences are welcomed at northernvermontfuneralservice.com.

Joan Brown Simmons

CRAFTSBURY – Joan Brown Simmons was born, December 18, 1936, in Brooklyn N.Y., to Edward and Hazel (Stratton) Gearin, and died January 19. She grew up in Beebe Plain, Vt., with her brother Robie Brown and graduated from Derby Academy. She went on to receive a teaching degree from Lyndon Teachers College and continued with a Masters degree in Education from Johnson State College.

On August 8, 1957, she married the love of her life, Clyde Simmons Jr., of Craftsbury (aka Mr. Sunny). They raised three sons Dan, David and Duncan.

Joan and Sunny made their home for the majority of their lives on Craftsbury Common. She had several teaching jobs early but settled at Craftsbury Academy where she taught generations of students. Joan inspired so many throughout the years and loved every minute of being an educator. She also loved the Red Sox, Celtics, spending time at camp in Brunswick, birding, baking and gardening. Walking with her friends Barb and Margaret was also a very important part of her retirement.

Joan was very committed to the United Church of Craftsbury and all the amazing things it



Joan Brown Simmons

provides. The Church sale on Old Home Day was something she enjoyed preparing for all year. She leaves behind Robie Brown and Marilyn Sullivan-Brown; Dan's wife, Patricia Simmons; David Simmons and Michelle Brosseau; Duncan Simmons and Jennifer Montgomery along with five grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Joan will be greatly missed.

Services will be held at the United Church of Craftsbury on Saturday, Feb. 28, at 1 p.m. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the United Church of Craftsbury, Craftsbury Common, Vt., or the Craftsbury Community Care Center, East Craftsbury, Vt.

Northern Vermont Funeral Service

60 Elm St. • Hardwick, VT 05843

802-472-6861

Dian R. Holcomb
Funeral Director

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news@hardwickgazette.org



An overflow crowd gathered for BINGO called by Justin Lander at The Civic Standard, Burgers & Bingo fundraising event in the Greensboro United Church of Christ Fellowship Hall last Saturday. Winners of 18 rounds variously received cash, prizes and pies.

photo by Paul Fixx

Double folk bill at the BOH, Valentine's Day



Members of "The Fretless" from Canada perform February 14 at the Barre Opera House. *courtesy photo*

BARRE – The Barre Opera House (BOH) presents a double folk bill featuring Sweden's "Väsen-Duo" and Canada's "The Fretless" on Valentine's Day, February 14, at 7:30 p.m.

Väsen-Duo, Mikael Marin and Olov Johansson have 37 years of and touring. Their foundation is rooted in the traditional music of Uppland. Marin and Johansson have played together since 1983

Curated story hour featured Feb. 4

MONTPELIER – The third Farmers Night of 2026 will feature "Stories from the Woods, a Curated Story Hour," Wednesday, Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m., presented by the Vermont Departments of Forests, Parks & Recreation and Fish & Wildlife. The evening will include short, personal stories from storytellers who will share experiences and reflections about what can be found among the trees.

This year's offerings kicked-off in mid-January and include a dozen weekly Wednesday performances with the exception of a break for Town Meeting in early March. The series concludes in mid-April.

The Farmers Night Concert Series is a longstanding State House tradition which goes back over 100 years to a time when lawmakers entertained themselves in the House Chamber mid-week while away from home.

For the entire series, see Farmers Night 2026

rowed Nyckelharpa, violoncello da spalla and a blue electric viola.

The Fretless is the Canadian ensemble playing in the emerging movement mainstreaming traditional music. Starting with their debut album in 2012, the band has won Instrumental Album of the Year at the Western Canadian Music Awards and Instrumental Group of the Year at the Canadian Folk Music Awards. In 2016, The Fretless took home a Juno award for Instrumental Album of The Year for their album Bird's Nest.

The Fretless have performed at the Royal Glasgow Concert Hall in Scotland, The Colon Philharmonie in Germany, the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, the Vancouver Island Folk Fest, Winnipeg Folk Fest, Memoirs et Racines. They're joined by singer-songwriter



The Vasen-Duo, Mikael Marin and Olav Johansson bring their traditional folk music to the Barre Opera House on Valentine's Day. *courtesy photo*

Madeleine Roger on this tour.

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

WGDR 91.1 FM
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CENTRAL VERMONT COMMUNITY RADIO

Current 2025 Schedule

as of Nov 2025

Talk/Interview Music

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

Rotating Slots

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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FREEDOM IN OUR HANDS

THE **Hardwick Gazette**

(802) 472-6521

EMAIL: news@hardwickgazette.org



Composers Chopin and Janacek are featured in a concert by pianist Diane Fanning at the Plainfield Opera House on March 8. *courtesy photo*

Pianist Fanning in concert, March 8

PLAINFIELD – PlainfieldArts presents pianist Diana Fanning in concert on Sunday, March 8, at 4 p.m., at the Plainfield Opera House. This recital celebrates Fanning’s fifty years of teaching at Middlebury College, reflecting a career devoted to musical education.

Fanning has curated a program highlighting composers who challenged conventions and reshaped the classical tradition. The recital features Chopin’s “Sonata in B Minor,” a cornerstone of the Romantic piano repertoire, and Janáček’s “On an Overgrown Path,” a personal and autobiographical work. Favorite selections by Beethoven and Debussy complete the program.

Fanning has toured as a solo performer and chamber musician throughout the U.S. and in England, France, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, the Czech Republic, Canada and Germany. In

recent years she has performed at the Schloss Leopoldskron (“Sound of Music” castle) in Salzburg, and in Prague at the invitation of the International Dvorak Society. She has performed as a concerto soloist with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra. She was featured as soloist in a performance of Beethoven’s “Piano Concerto No. 3” in the debut concert of the Champlain Philharmonic Orchestra and was invited back for performances of Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue.”

Fanning’s performances have been featured on Vermont Public Television, Vermont Public Radio, Radio Prague, WGBH Boston, and WNYC New York.

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

Davis, Gwinn perform Feb. 8

ADAMANT – The local duo, D. Davis and Marc Gwinn, will perform at the Adamant Community Club on Sunday, Feb. 8, 3 p.m., as part of the Winter Sunday series. Featuring guitar work by Davis and vocals by Gwinn, the duo’s repertoire includes everything from Rodgers

and Hart standards to “Blackbird” and “Sir Duke.” The two have been members of the Bent Nails House Band.

Admission is free; the series will continue each Sunday through March 1. The series is underwritten by a grant from Vermont AARP.

Visiting artist offers events, open studio in February

ST. JOHNSBURY – 560 Railroad Community Artist and Vermont Studio Center alum J.P. Morrison Lans will host a series of community arts events at Catamount Arts throughout the month of February. Morrison Lans, a Tulsa-based artist who works in a variety of media including paint, pencils, encaustic and sculpture, will host a show-and-tell discussion of power in objects; drop-in explorations of the interplay between color and light; a community art installation and an open studio. All events will take place in February at Catamount Arts, on Eastern Avenue, except for Lans Morrison’s open studio, which will take place March 1, at 560 Railroad Street.

On Sunday, Feb. 15, from 1 to 3 p.m., Morrison Lans will host *The Animistic Object: A Sharing of Powerful Items*, at Catamount Arts. Morrison Lans, who is conducting a research project on the power of everyday objects, describes *The Animistic Object* as a “grown-up show-and-tell.”

Then Morrison Lans will host community members of all ages (children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult) to contribute or enjoy and interact with *Color Frolics with Light: A Community-Curated Art Installation*.

On Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 21 and 22, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on Tuesday, Feb. 24, from 1 to 4 p.m., the public may drop in and join Lans in the Catamount Arts Cabaret Room to explore how color can be manipulated and animated by



J.P. Morrison Lans

lights. Participants will contribute to a mural that dances and changes hues under a rainbow of LED light.

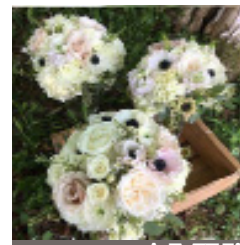
The Color Frolics with Light: Community Arts Installation will be open to the public for viewing on Thursday, Feb., 26, from 1 to 9 p.m.; Friday, Feb. 27, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Saturday, Feb. 28, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m..

On March 1, from 1 to 3 p.m., J.P. Morrison Lans will be at her studio space on 560 Railroad Street, and learn about her personal artwork as well as the art projects created during her winter residency in St. Johnsbury.

To learn more about J.P. Morrison Lans’ February residency in St. Johnsbury or about the 560 Railroad Community Artists program, including the full roster of visiting artists, see catamountarts.org.

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Wedding Policy

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

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

Photographs supplied will be returned when accompanied by a SASE.

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

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

EVENTS

Wednesday, Feb. 4

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union junior varsity girls vs. Lyndon, at Hazen Union.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union varsity girls vs. Lyndon, at Hazen Union.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield varsity girls at Danville.

Thursday, Feb. 5

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union junior varsity boys at Thetford.

Book discussion, 6:30 p.m., Parker Ladd Community Room, Jeudevine Memorial Library, Hardwick. Author Jodie Lew-Smith leads a discussion of her book, "Asa James." Information, (802) 472-5948.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union varsity boys at Thetford.

Friday, Feb. 6

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union junior varsity girls at Lamoille.

Poetry event, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Woodbury Community Library. Share a light meal and bring three poems ready to share.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union varsity girls at Lamoille.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield girls varsity vs. Stowe at Twinfield.

Saturday, Feb. 7

Bowling, 1 p.m., Craftsbury Academy at Missisquoi Lanes, Lowell.

Bluegrass, Gallatin & Stillwater, 7 p.m., Vermont State University Lyndon's Alexander Twilight Theater. Information, catamountarts.org.

Monday, Feb. 9

Jeudevine Players, 3 p.m., Jeudevine Memorial Library, Hardwick. Be part of an original play to perform at the library. Information: jeudevineyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union junior varsity girls at Montpelier.

Skein and Sketch, 6 to 8 p.m., Jeudevine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main St., Hardwick. Bring knitting, embroidery, drawing, painting, or other handwork. Information: (802) 472-5948.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union varsity girls at Montpelier.

Tuesday, Feb. 10

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

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union junior varsity boys vs. Montpelier at Hazen Union.

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Twinfield junior varsity boys at Richford.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union varsity boys vs. Montpelier at Hazen Union.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield varsity boys at Richford.

Wednesday, Feb. 11

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield girls varsity vs. Rivendell at Twinfield.

Thursday, Feb. 12

Teen Minecraft Competition, 3 p.m. Use one of the library's desktop computers or bring your own device. For ages 12-18. Information: jeudevineyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union junior varsity boys at North Country.

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Twinfield junior varsity boys at BFA-Fairfax.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union varsity boys at North Country.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield varsity boys at BFA-Fairfax.

Contra dance, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Cabot Town Hall, 3084 Main St. Calling by Jennifer McHone Villalobos, live music by local musicians, all dances taught, no partner needed, families and beginners welcome, Bring dry shoes to dance in. Information cabotdance@aroundvt.org

Friday, Feb. 13

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

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield girls varsity vs. Richford at Twinfield.

Saturday, Feb. 14

Cabot Turkey Pie Supper, 5 to 6:30 p.m., Cabot United Church, Main St. Eat in or take-out. Donation.

Sunday, Feb. 15

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

Tuesday, Feb. 17

Tech literacy, 10:30 a.m. to noon, Cabot Public Library, with Seth O'Brien. Mastering video calls with Facetime, Google Meet and Zoom.

See EVENTS, Next Page

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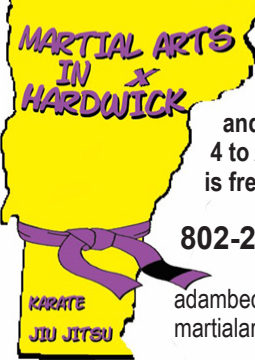
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EVENTS

Bring digital devices. Information, cabotlibrary.com/.

Webinar, noon, Nichols Pond reed study, with Annie D'Alton, registration, vermontlakes.org/event/manual-phragmites-control-a-pilot-study-at-nichols-pond/

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union junior varsity boys vs. Randolph at Hazen Union.

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Twinfield junior varsity boys vs. Stowe at Twinfield.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union varsity boys vs. Randolph at Hazen Union.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield varsity boys vs. Stowe at Twinfield.

Wednesday, Feb. 18

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

Cooking Club, 3 p.m., Make hot chocolate from scratch. For ages 10 and up. Information: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Twinfield girls varsity at Blue Mountain.

Saturday, Feb. 21

Comedian, Paula Poundstone, 7:30 p.m., Barre Opera House. Tickets and information: barreoperahouse.org or call (802) 476-8188.

Monday, Feb. 23

Jeudvine Players, 3 p.m. Be part of an original play to perform at the library. Information: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Tuesday, Feb. 24

Kids' Karaoke, 1 p.m. Sing your heart out to your favorite songs. For ages 7 and up. Information: jeudevinyouthlibrarian@hardwickvt.gov or (802) 472-5948.

Wednesday, Feb. 25

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

Ongoing Wednesdays

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

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

Office hours, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. John The Baptist Episcopal Church, 39 W. Church St., Hardwick. Information, (802) 472-5979.

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.

Book-lovers social, 10:30 a.m. to noon, every first Wednesday morning, Craftsbury Public Library. Share books, authors or books, no assigned reading. Tea and coffee available with occasional snacks, or handwork projects welcome.

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 tyoungman@vcil.org.

Quilters, 1-4 p.m, Jeudvine 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.

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.

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

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.

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

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

Office hours, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Norbert Church, a part of Mary

Queen of All Saints Parish, 193 S. Main St., Hardwick, Father Raj Madri. Information, mary_queenofallsaints@comcast.net (802) 472-5544.

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. Jeudvine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main St., Hardwick. Books, songs, art activities and more for ages 5 and under. Information, jeudevinyouthlibrarian@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 Vava 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., Morris-

ville. 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.

Prayer Service, 5:30 p.m., Touch of Grace Assembly of God, corner of Rtes. 15 and 16, E. Hardwick. Information, touchofgraceagvt@gmail.com

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.

Services, 6:30 p.m., Hardwick Bible Baptist Church, 296 S. Main St. For transportation or information, (802) 472-5294.

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

See EVENTS, Next Page

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EVENTS

off the Common, Craftsbury Common.

Story time, 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.

Meet-up, 10 a.m., The Hardwick Gazette at Front Seat Coffee, 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 to 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.

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.

Writing group, 2 to 4 p.m., first and third Saturdays of the month, Albany Public Library, 830 Main St. Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

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

Vigil Mass, 4 p.m., St. Norbert Church, a part of Mary Queen of All Saints Parish, 193 S. Main St., Hardwick, Father Raj Madri. Confessions before Mass, Information, mary_queenofallsaints@comcast.net (802) 472-5544.

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

Ongoing Sundays

Service, 8:30 a.m., United Church of Marshfield, U.S. Rte. 2, worship service and Sunday school, Pastor Carlyle Pierce. Information, (802) 684-2114.

Mass, 8:30 a.m., St. Norbert Church, a part of Mary Queen of All Saints Parish, 193 S. Main St., Hardwick, Father Raj Madri. Confessions before Mass, Information, mary_queenofallsaints@comcast.net (802) 472-5544.

Service, Danville United Methodist Church, Danville Green, Rev. Henry Cheney. Information, (802) 684-3389.

Sunday School, and prayer, 9 a.m., adults, Touch of Grace Assembly of God, corner of Rtes. 15 and 16, E. Hardwick. Information: touchofgraceagvt@gmail.com

Sunday School, 9 a.m., The Wolcott Mennonite Church, Rte. 15 between Morrisville and Wolcott, for all ages. Information, (802) 888-5277, (802) 888-9113.

Children's story time, 9:30 a.m., The Christian Community, Heartbeat Lifesharing, 218 Town Farm Road, Hardwick. Information, thechristiancommunityvt@gmail.com.

Service, 9:30 a.m., West Danville United Methodist Church, Vt. Rte. 15, across from Joe's Pond, Pastor Pam Smith. Information, (802) 684-1201.

Service, 9:30 a.m., Hardwick Bible Baptist Church, 296 S. Main St. For transportation or information. (802) 472-5294.

Bible study, 10 a.m., East Craftsbury Presbyterian Church, 1773 East Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury, VT 05856. Information, (802) 586-7707, ecpcvt@gmail.com, eastcraftsburypresbyterian.org.

Service, 10 a.m., United Church of Hardwick, 216 South Main Street. In person, Zoom or livestreaming. Communion Service, first Sunday of month. Rev. Avril Cochran, Pastor. Jean Hackett, music director, an Open and Affirming Congregation. Information, (802) 472-6800 for information.

Service, 10 a.m., United Church of Cabot, 2 Common Way, refreshments following. Information, (802) 563-2278.

Service, 10 a.m., Touch of Grace Assembly of God, corner of Rtes. 15 and 16, E. Hardwick. Information, touchofgraceagvt@gmail.com

Children's service, 10 a.m., The Christian Community, Heartbeat Lifesharing, 218 Town Farm Road, Hardwick. Information, thechristiancommunityvt@gmail.com.

Service, 10 a.m., St. John The Baptist Episcopal Church, 39 W. Church St., Hardwick. Rite II Service with music and coffee hour following service. Information, (802) 472-5979.

Service, 10 a.m., the Wolcott Mennonite Church, Rte. 15 between Morrisville and Wolcott, Pastors, : Marlin Wadel and Stephen Groff. Information, (802) 888-9113, (802) 888-5277.

Service, Sunday School, 10:15 a.m., Calais-Woodbury United Church, Rte. 14, South Woodbury. Communion, first Sunday of month. Church phone, (802) 232-1013, information, (802) 456-1557.

Mass, 10:30 a.m., St. Michael's Church, 270 Bend Road, Greensboro Bend, a part of Mary Queen of All Saints Parish, confessions before Mass, Father Raj Madri. Information, (802) 472-5544.

Service, 10:30 a.m., The Act of Consecration of the Human Being, The Christian Community, Heartbeat Lifesharing, 218 Town Farm Road, Hardwick. Information, thechristiancommunityvt@gmail.com.

communityvt@gmail.com.

Service, 10:30 a.m., Hardwick Bible Baptist Church, 296 S. Main St. For transportation or information, (802) 472-5294.

Service, 11 a.m., East Craftsbury Presbyterian Church, 1773 East Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury, VT 05856. Sunday Service, 11 a.m., handicapped accessible. Rev. Joe Welker, Pastor. Information, (802) 586-7707, ecpcvt@gmail.com, eastcraftsburypresbyterian.org.

Service, 11 a.m., First Congregational Church (NACCC), 123 E. Church St., East Hardwick, worship led by Jim Casavant, interim Pastor. Closed in winter. Information, (414) 856-1620.

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

Service, noon, Hardwick Bible Baptist Church, 296 S. Main St. For transportation or information, (802) 472-5294.

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.

See EVENTS, Next Page

HIGHLAND Center for the Arts



FEB 21 | Curds & Curling | 11 AM - 3 PM

Grab your friends for a cheesy winter competition with a wheel of Jasper Hill cheddar as a curling stone in Vermont's new version of this traditional sport.

New Date!

FEB 13 & 14 | La bohème | 7 PM

Opera Vermont and Highland Center for the Arts present an electrifying new production of Puccini's beloved La bohème, a timeless tale of love and heartbreak.

HIGHLANDARTSVT.ORG

EVENTS



Rose Friedman (standing) and Justin Lander manage the bingo game at a fundraising event to benefit The Civic Standard's new building, January 31, in Greensboro's Fellowship Hall, with the lighted bingo tracking board on the right. photo by Hal Gray

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

Evening Service, 7:30 p.m., The Wolcott Mennonite Church, Rte. 15 between Morrisville and Wolcott. Information, (802) 888-5277, (802) 888-9113.

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 Ox-bow 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. Informa-

tion, (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.

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

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.

Exercise, 11 a.m., Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St., Greensboro, lead by certified AFEP instructor Alice Perron. Information esanderson@nekouncil.org, (802) 751-0431.

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 Cen-

tral 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.

Poundstone at BOH, February 21

BARRE – The Barre Opera House's "BOH Presents" series continues on Saturday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m., with comedian Paula Poundstone.

Poundstone is known for her humor and wit. She regularly plays theaters across the country, hosts a weekly comedy podcast, "Nobody Listens to Paula Poundstone," and is a regular panelist on NPR's "Wait, Wait... Don't Tell Me." She also voiced the character, Forgetter Paula, in the feature films, "Inside Out" and "Inside Out 2." Poundstone has starred in several HBO specials, including "Cats, Cops and Stuff," which received a cable ACE award for Best Comedy Special. She was the first female comic to host the White House Correspondents Dinner. She filed live coverage of the 1992 Democratic and Republican National Conventions and the Presidential Inaugural for "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno" and at the 93rd Emmy Awards. Paula's second book, "The Totally Unscientific Study of the Search for Human Happiness," was one of eight semi-finalists for the Thurber Prize For American Humor; the audio book was one of five finalists for the AUDIE award for Audio-book of the Year. She has released



Comedian Paula Poundstone appears at the Barre Opera House on February 21. courtesy photo

five albums and is featured in several documentaries and compendiums noting influential comedians of our time.

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



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Barnes paintings reflect life in Northeast Kingdom

REVIEW

by David Rodgers

WEST GLOVER – An exhibition of twelve recent paintings by Ben Barnes can be seen until March 10 at Parker Pie Restaurant in West Glover.

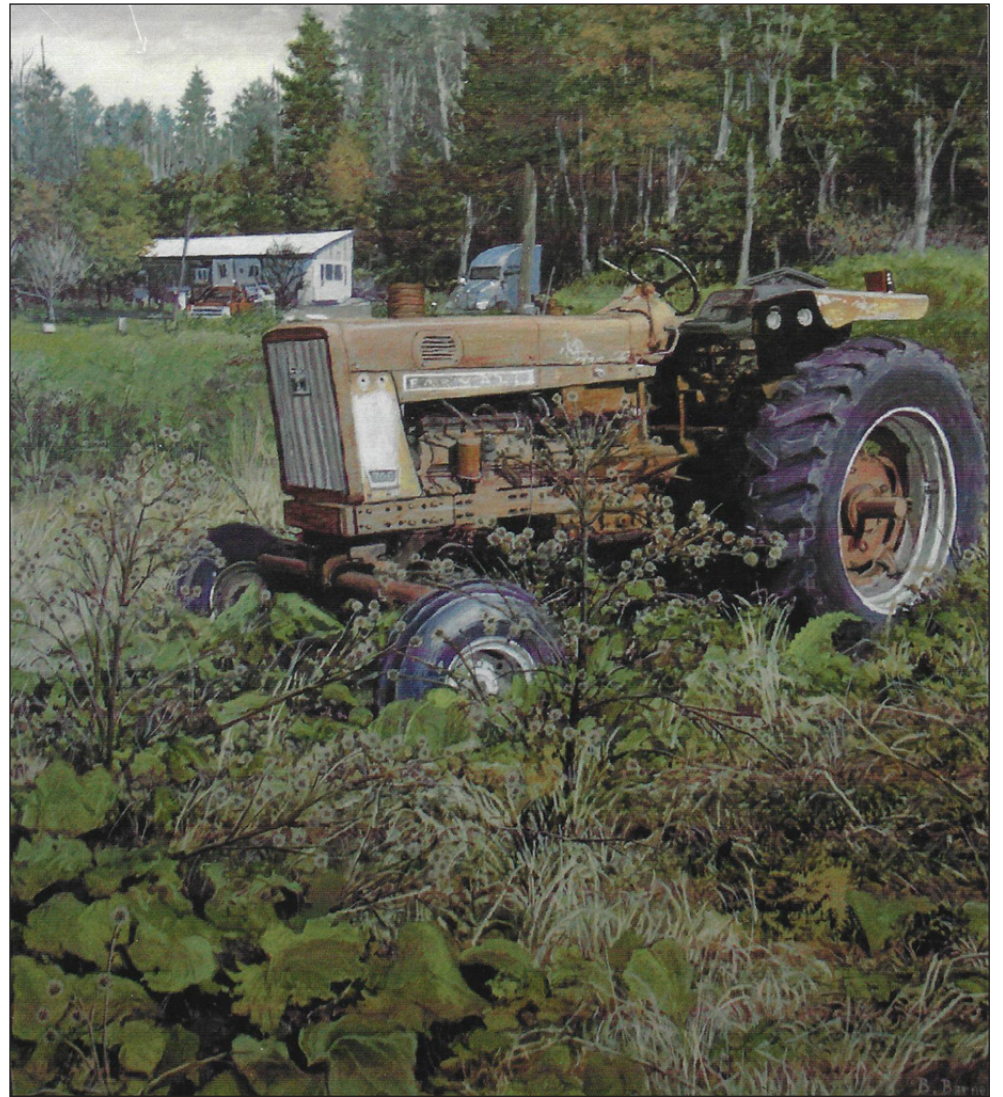
Formerly a resident of the area, Barnes now lives in St. Johnsbury, and his subject matter ranges from landscapes to still lifes and urban scenes. His ability to capture the floating effects of natural light, to make dynamic and perfectly balanced compositions, to use color harmoniously and to render the exquisite detail and texture of plant foliage is consistently astonishing. These are paintings that would be a delight to live with everyday.

“Cranberry Relish” is a still life that depicts the element that go into preparing that condiment, with fresh red berries in a glass bowl, lemons and oranges and large grey metal grinder dominating the center of the work, all on a white table with a red edge to it, bathed in light from a

window to the left. The curve of the grinder handle contrasts well with the diagonal angle by which the table top is seen. Cone flowers and holyhocks show a bouquet in a dark glass vase on a table, with an upholstered chair and a window having smaller colored panes on the contour on the right. The purple flowers are carefully painted and the whole composition is coherent.

The light of an overcast autumn day is beautifully painted in “Maquam,” with our eyes first drawn to the center of the piece where the sky and the tree limbs are reflected in the water, with the tangle of barren branches masterfully handled. An incredible number of small brush strokes build up this effect in muted colors of grey, brown and blue, creating a work with remarkable presence. “Shades of Red” plays with two red pickup trucks on the left foreground juxtaposed to a red clapboard building with white trim behind to the right in a bold composition, everything exactly in place for a harmonious balance.

“Baker Pond” has dark and light areas between green



“Always the Burdock” by Ben Barnes, acrylic on canvas, 26”x28”, 2025

conifer on the right and a distant tree line across an expanse of light grey water, while the sun attempts to bore through the clouds, everything having an end of the summer ambience.

“South Beach Haze” almost looks like an ocean scene, with a cliffy shore line above the waves of water meeting the rocks of the land’s edge, in a somewhat moody atmosphere.

“Highgate Bay Bonzai” focuses on a convoluted piece of driftwood on the beach, the rounded rocks and vegetation rendered in minute detail that is quite starting in its visual immediacy. “Scrap Metal Dump” is a large landscape of an old flat bed truck in the woods surrounded by overgrown summer plants, in particular some flowering Queen Anne’s Lace, again painted with immense patience to convey the beauty of the leaves, bringing to mind the magnificent watercolor of Albrecht Durer (1471 - 1528), the “Great Piece of Turf” of 1503. The reflected light off the black rear lines and the wooden bed of the truck centers the whole work effectively.

“Sutton” has a beautifully proportioned structure with a red barn on the left and white house on the right, separated by an area of trees in the shade, the kind of painting we can enjoy looking at from a distance as well as very close up.

“River Rocks” is a small landscape that is a real tour de force in painting one of the most

difficult elements, namely flowing water. Water is always moving, reflecting the world around it, but being transparent we can see through it to other things, a tremendous visual challenge. Here a stream flows over rounded rocks, the large ones above, the smaller ones underwater, very convincingly painted with innumerable brush strokes while white sparkling explosions of sunlight on the water are scattered across the canvas, with an altogether riveting effect.

“Pumpkin Hill Hedgerow” is an autumn landscape of a cluster of white bricks in the foreground with orange leaves on the ground below and a lovely blue sky through the trees behind, perfectly capturing the light of that season. How a painter can get just the right tone in all the colors to convey the sunlight of a certain moment is a marvel genuinely intense seeing. This work has an inner light that is breathtaking.

“Last Few Leaves” is a large rectangular painting of the ending of fall, where a leafless pair of maples on the left has a burst of grey branches balanced by red barns to the right, creating an exacting sense of proposition, combined with rich detail and entrancing light, everything you would ever want in a significant work of art.

For more information, call (802) 673 - 9771 or go online to @benbarnesart on Instagram or Benjamin Barnes on Facebook.



The bluegrass group, Gallatin & Stillwater, including (from left) Roger Williams, Bob Dick, Amy Gallatin and J.D. Williams, perform February 7.

courtesy photo

Gallatin and Stillwaters begin new bluegrass season

LYNDON – Catamount Arts Bluegrass Night kicks off a new season of bluegrass, Americana and traditional country concerts, Saturday, Feb. 7, at Vermont State University Lyndon’s Alexander Twilight Theater. Saturday’s headliner is the southern New England band Amy Gallatin & Stillwaters. Showtime is 7 p.m.

The live music series is hosted by Bob and Sarah Amos. Their current album reached No. 1 on the national FolkDJ-L chart, and their

song “The Hills that I Call Home” hit No. 1 on the Folk Alliance International chart.

Amy Gallatin & Stillwaters features bluegrass vocalist and guitarist Gallatin leading a New England band including resophonic guitarist Roger Williams, mandolinist J.D. Williams and bassist Bob Dick.

Admission is by donation. To learn more about this and other live music events in the Northeast Kingdom, visit catamountarts.org.



Hazen Union junior Lady Cat Kelsie Rivard aims for the basket defended by Lydia Thrombly of U-32 January 28 during play in Hardwick. Rivard needed eight points to reach her 1,000th and by the end of the game she was the team's high scorer with 21 points. Hazen topped U-32, 55-30.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Mya Lumsden of Hazen Union breaks away for a lay-up against U-32 January 28. She was the second top scorer in the game for Hazen with 16 points. Hazen outscored U-32, 55-30.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Rivard reaches 1,000, joins elite group as Lady Cats roll

by Ken Brown

HARDWICK – Hazen Union's Kelsie Rivard became the first underclassmen to join the 1,000 career points club since Isaiah Baker, last week as the Lady Cats stormed past U-32 and Peoples Academy to improve to 12-1 on the season.

Rivard netted a team-high

21 points last Wednesday to power Hazen to a 55-30 home win over U-32. Julia des Groseilliers secured a defensive rebound early in the second quarter and handed off to Rivard who went coast-to-coast, finishing off the glass with her right hand to give her nine points on the night and 1,000 for her career. Rivard became only the second underclassmen in Lady

Cat history to reach the milestone, with the other, of course, being Jenn des Groseilliers, the school's all-time leading scorer with over 1,900 career points. The game was stopped and Rivard was recognized at center court by Hazen athletic director Aaron Hill in front of a packed Cat Den.

She was brought to tears when it was announced that two all-time Hazen Union greats (Caitylyn Davison and brother Tyler Rivard)

made the trip from Tennessee to witness the historic event in person. The junior forward has now filled out an impressive family tree of elite athletes in her family. Tyler is the only player in school history with 1,000 career points and rebounds and her mother Sue (Lady Cat assistant coach) was the all-time scoring leader at North Country for 29 years.

Kelsie is on pace to join her brother in the 1,000 career

See RIVARD, next page



Hazen Union junior Kelsie Rivard (center) scored her 1,000th point, January 28, during a home game against U-32. The two most recent Hazen students to reach that milestone were Caitlyn Davison (left) in 2024 and Tyler Rivard (right) in 2023. They traveled from Johnson City, Tenn., to surprise Kelsie and present her with the game ball. The only other time a junior girl has reached the 1,000-point mark at Hazen was Jennifer des Groseilliers in 1991.

photo by Vanessa Fournier




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Jameson Lamarre of Hazen Union pulls down a rebound as Peoples Academy defenders Jake Brink (left) and Rupeni Mara (right) try to steal during action in Hardwick, January 29. In the back at right, following the play, are Wildcat Morgan Michaud and Blair Whitney of the Wolves. Hazen outscored Peoples 67-53.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Hazen Union junior Lincoln Hill looks to pass the ball to a teammate during play in the Cat Den, January 29, as Peoples Academy's Blair Whitney (left) eyes to swipe it. At right Rupeni Mara of Peoples and Sully Laflam of Hazen follow the action. The hosts defeated their guests 67-53.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Hazen Union boys basketball roll past Vikings and Wolves

by Ken Brown

LYNDON CENTER – Lincoln Hill continued to have the hot hand from long distance last week to lead the Hazen Union boys basketball team in decisive wins over Lyndon Institute and Peoples Academy (PA).

Hill rained down 20 points, including five three-pointers on the Vikings last Tuesday as Hazen rolled to a 67-45 win on the road. Senior Sully Laflam added 15 points, seven rebounds and seven assists. Fellow senior Morgan Michaud did the dirty work inside with 14 points and seven rebounds. The Wildcats secured their first win in three tries over the Vikes, putting the game out of reach with a 20-7 run to start the second half. Josh Gaskin led Lyndon with 14 points, including a trio of threes as they fell to 2-10.

Hill and fellow junior Jameson Lamarre have broken out this

season for the Wildcats. Lamarre has led the offense averaging just under 20 points per game this season and Hill is averaging over 13 points per game, while emerging as a much-needed deep threat. Former Wildcat great and longtime assistant coach Travis Hill has played a big role as well as having a front row seat in Lamarre's and his youngest son's development since they were old enough to dribble a basketball.

"Linc and James really started to raise their games last season in the playoffs. I found myself on the bench just becoming a fan because I still think of the two of them playing on a little tyke's hoop in Lincoln's bedroom. Then in AAU and summer league, I watched them grow into young men who could help carry the team along with our seniors. Now Jeter Demers, Kobe Smith and Chayse Newell have grown immensely and become vital parts of what we do as

a program. We are all proud of this junior class as a whole," said Hill.

Lamarre (26 points) and Hill (18) were at it again on Thursday night, leading the Wildcats to a three game season series sweep of PA, while celebrating Hardwick Academy Night with a 69-53 win at the Cat Den. Lamarre added eight rebounds and Hill connected from long range four more times, giving him 17 threes in Hazen's last four games. Laflam added 10 points and four assists and Michaud did a little of everything, scoring seven points, grabbing nine boards and dishing out eight assists. Jack Lafayette led the Wolves with 27 points as they fell to 4-7 on the season.

"Linc battled through an injury on his shooting hand early in the season, but he really started to get going and build some confidence against Randolph a few weeks ago. Mostly, I'm just grateful he gets to be part of this great

family of boys basketball here at Hazen. He fits right in with the hundreds of others that don't seek personal recognition and just play to make the community and all the former Wildcats proud. This year's team is doing that," said Hill.

The Wildcats (9-3) have vaulted up the Division III standings and are currently ranked second behind Randolph after winning six of their last seven. They got another crack at a red-hot Lamoille (11-1) team on Tuesday that is currently riding a nine-game winning streak. The Lancers edged Hazen 61-54 back in December to capture their first Dave Morse Classic title. The Wildcats wrap up a challenging week on Thursday with a road trip to defending Division III champion Thetford Academy. They return to the Cat Den next Tuesday to take on Montpelier. All home games can be streamed live on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

Rivard

Continued from previous page
rebounds club and set the single game scoring record earlier this season with 43 against Randolph.

"It has been surreal watching this unfold. I think Kelsie has always kind of felt like Tyler's little sister at Hazen and it has pushed her to work incredibly hard on her game both mentally and physically. I think she probably feels like she's finally proven herself and that kind of growth doesn't happen without tremendous support from family, friends, coaches and teammates. Randy Lumsden (Lady Cat head coach) has been instrumental in this journey, knowing how to push her, never letting her settle and believing

in her when she doubts herself. Watching Kelsie and the team play at North Country a couple weeks ago was a full circle moment for me. North Country was so gracious and welcoming and many people who watched me play showed up that night to watch Kelsie. I can't put into words how much that meant to me. I feel so grateful that my whole family was able to be part of her big night and are part of the Hazen Sports Community. Kelsie's surrounded by such a talented group of teammates who have truly put the work in. Now that we're past the milestone, I think everyone can refocus on the bigger goal of bringing more championship banners back to Hardwick," said Sue Rivard.

Junior teammate Mya Lumsden complemented Rivard's big night with 18 points of her own, with Autumn Dailey chipping in with six. Paige Parker and Payten Pecor led U-32 with nine points apiece in the loss.

The Lady Cats refocused quickly on Friday night, steamrolling Peoples Academy (PA) for a second time this season 63-33 at home. Mya Lumsden poured in a team-high 20 points and Rivard added 18 in the win. Taylor Thompson (13 points) and Autumn Dailey (10) combined to drain four three-pointers on the night for Hazen. Daisy Berg (24 points) was on an island for Lady Wolves as they have now been outscored 117-57 in their two games

against Hazen this season. The loss dropped PA to 6-6 on the season and they now have their work cut out for them if they are to equal last season's Final Four success in a loaded Division III bracket.

The Lady Cats remain atop the current Division III standings but will get a stiff test against Division II powerhouse, Lamoille (14-0), this week. Hazen welcomes Lyndon Institute to town on Wednesday before making the short trip to Hyde Park on Friday night to take on the Lady Lancers. They'll stay on the road for a Capital League clash with Montpelier next Monday. All home games can be live-streamed on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).

ERIC HANSON'S SKI REPORT

BFA Fairfax hosts ski race at the Outdoor Center

CRAFTSBURY – It takes a lot of hours and equipment to maintain ski trails. High school cross country ski teams often have a few volunteers and/or a dedicated coach who will drag some packer with a snowmobile around the soccer fields and school grounds to create a place for students to ski after school, but to make those trails good for 100 plus racers is challenging. Thus, many northern Vermont schools have opted to hold their races at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center for both the trails and the event timing.

This week was BFA-Fairfax's turn to host a classic race. In the 3 km middle school event, Bowman Suddaby (Peoples Academy - PA) 13:05 placed first followed by 2 Silas Stratman (PA), and 3 Sidney Kelly (PA) for the boys. The first female was Pippa Abbene (PA) with 2 Molly Palmer (BFA Fairfax), and 3 Silvia Earlandt (PA). For the varsity boys 5 km race, Magnus Hayden (PA) 17:27 led the way with 2 Gage Magnuson (BFA Fairfax), and 3 Graham Moriarty (St. J). In the girls varsity event, Anya Moriarty (St. J) placed first 20:18, 2 Hadley Abbene (PA), 3) Lilly Suddaby (PA), 4 Kate Mackenzie (St. J), and 15 Stella Cusack (St. J).

Skiers brave the cold for Marathon Weekend

CRAFTSBURY - A diverse mix of athletes braved the 0-degree start



Alyssa Krebs of Craftsbury (137) heads out for a cold marathon.

photo by Eric Hanson

lines for two days of skiing action with over 500 middle schoolers, ski veterans in their 80s, new racers and Olympic veterans having their day. In the 46 km classic race, Finn Sweet, a Craftsbury Academy and recent UVM graduate, led a group of six through the halfway mark (23 km) in 1:13:45 with two other recent college graduates, Colin Free (Mansfield Nordic Pro Team) and James Kitch (Harvard alum). In the mix were two veterans, Kris and Justin Freeman. Kris is a former standout on the U.S. Ski team from back in the early 2000s. The pack stayed together through much of second lap, before Sweet, Freed and Kris Freeman broke away. Colin Freed toed the line in 2:27:31, five seconds ahead of Sweet, with Freeman another 5 seconds back. Former GRPer Akeo Maifield-Carucci was 7th.

On the women's side, Ida Sargent, a former GRP skier and U.S. Ski team member, was dueling it out at the halfway mark with Isabel Caldwell. Craftsbury Ski Club (CSC) coach, Audrey Mangan, was close behind in third. Sargent (Victory, VT) took control on the 2nd lap for the win (2:57:33) with Caldwell 2, Britta Clark (GRP-run) 3, and Mangan 6.

In the men's classic 23 km race, Neel Dums (Team Birkie), an Under 20 (U20) skier, had the fastest time in 1:17:04 with Abram Weil-Cooley (Sandwich, NH) in 2nd. CSC coach Tom Strasser was 21, Jim Fredericks 25, Jeff Fellingner 50.

Youngsters ruled the day In the women's 23 km event, with U20 skier Annelies Hanna (Ford Sayre) first (1:29:15) followed by U18 Olivia Hanna in 2nd. Local skiers included Marika Massy-Bierman 6, JoAnn Hanowski 8, Emily Dreissigacker 11, Molly Sease 12, Eloise Girard 18, Margie Prevot 24, Lindy Sargent 34, Linda Ramsdell 35, and Hallie Grossman 41.

On day two of marathon weekend, despite a warmer forecast, the air was just as cold, there was less sun and a slight wind made it feel colder. That did not stop the GRP crew from dominating the race in a warm-up for their next Super Tour series coming up in the Midwest. GRP's Brian Bushey (Montpelier) skied solo most of the race winning in 1:01:23. Francis Izquierdo-Bernier (St. Jerome, Quebec) placed 2nd followed by GRPers Jack Christner (Ripton) 3, Keelan Durham (Corinth) 4, Finn Sweet (Burlington) 5, and Joe Lynch (Minneapolis) 8. Other local skiers included Alex Howe 20,



Craftsbury Ski Club (CSC) skiers Eleanor Hammond (17), Scarlett Podolin (35), Emerson McCarthy, Bea Johnson (20), and Ruthie Podolin (34) before the start of the BKL marathon.

photo by Eric Hanson

Tim Cobb 21, Ethan Dreissigacker 39, and Damian Bolduc 116. There were 162 racers in the field.

Michaela Keller-Miller (GRP) led the women's field in 1:09:16. Hallie Grossman (Albany) was 6th followed by Callie Young (Derby Line) 11. Young is a former CSC member and Dartmouth skier, and is the sister of Olympic bound Jack Young (Jay). Jessica Bolduc placed 36.

Nearly 50 BKL youth skiers and parents skied in the approximate 15 km division. Finishers included Hollis Allen, Bea Johnson, Asher Jacobs, Finn Nunnery, Eleanor Hammond, Scarlett Podolin, Ruthie Podolin, Eliza Bakeman, Hazel Morton-Lynch (and some of their parents).

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Bakeman, Hazel Morton-Lynch (and some of their parents).

Olympic update

CRAFTSBURY – Green Racing Project (GRP) biathlete, Jake Brown, will be on the U.S. Biathlon squad in Italy as an alternate, joining fellow GRP skiers Margie Freed and Jack Young.

Dartmouth College ski carnival

HANOVER, N.H. – In college ski racing, two skiers with local ties had a good weekend with Greta Kilburn (Greensboro/UVM) 8 and Ruth Krebs (Craftsbury/Bowdoin) 23 in the women's 15 km mass start. On the previous day in the 7.5 km classic race, Kilburn was 19 and Krebs 39. College racing resumes this coming weekend as Craftsbury will host the UVM Carnival on Friday (classic sprints) and Saturday (10 km freestyle) with Eastern Cup Racing on Saturday and Sunday.



Craftsbury Green Racing (GRP) skier, Brian Bushey (236) led from start to finish. On either side of him are Finn Sweet (357), Jack Christner (240), Francis Izquierdo-Bernier (208), and Keelan Durham (263).

photo by Eric Hanson



Hardwick Academy Night

The Hazen Union varsity team held their annual Hardwick Academy Night, January 29, against Peoples Academy. Hardwick won 67-53. Managers in the front are Blair Demers (left), Andruw Smith (third from right) and Zander Dimick (right). Players (from left) front, Jeter Demers, Dawson Michaud, Noah Foster, Kobe Smith and Ari Jurkiewicz; back, Sullivan Laflam, Lucian Jurkiewicz, Chayse Newell, Ethan Gann, Jameson Lamarre, Lincoln Hill and Morgan Michaud.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Twinfield-Cabot Trojans down Bears in gritty performance

by Ken Brown

MARSHFIELD – A short-handed Twinfield-Cabot boys basketball team used all resources last week to gut out a heavy weight divisional win over crosstown rival Danville, improving to 11-1 on the season.

The Trojans poured in 11 three-pointers, with the biggest coming from Sam McLane in overtime to outlast Danville at home last Thursday 66-65. McLane atoned for missing a pair of free throws late in regulation with his team up three and the chance to ice the game. Danville instead grabbed the rebound and raced down court, resulting in frenetic scrum that ended in a desperation heave from Khol Guinard at the buzzer that touched nothing but net. It was the same Guinard who broke the hearts of the Twinfield-Cabot faithful with a last second floater last March in an instant classic at the Barre Auditorium on their way

to the Division IV state title. The script was flipped on Thursday as the Trojans survived three free throws from Jackson Giroux with 1.1 ticks on the clock in overtime to even the season series at 1-1. Twinfield-Cabot won despite having their senior leader Tej Stewart in street clothes with a leg injury and head coach Kris Bador loved how his team responded from suffering their only loss of the season to the Bears five weeks ago.

“We had a great practice going into this matchup and the boys used the humbling we all took from the December 23 loss as fuel. We are going through some key injuries right now and we knew we would have to make some adjustments with Tej not being able to be out there. The read that Eli made in overtime as he kicked it out to Sam in the corner gave us our first lead in OT and it just shows how unselfish we are as a group. As a coach, you watch one of your senior leaders miss a pair of free throws

with 10 seconds play and then watch Guinard do it to your team again at the buzzer. To see Sam’s teammates pick him up in the huddle and then watch him drain the biggest shot of the game in OT makes you see what these kids are all about and makes you proud to have the opportunity to coach them,” said Bador.

Sophomore Omar Miksic-Knibb led the way for the Trojans with 16 points, Eli Russell complimented with 14, Zepherin Hebert added 13 and Azeem Stewart (nine points) drained a trio of big threes on the night. Sebastian Eldred led all scorers with 25 points for the Bears and Guinard (five triples) finished with 22. Despite having some bigtime wins on their resume this season, Danville fell to 6-6 and out of the top eight in the current divisional rankings. The Trojans currently sit in the No. 2 spot behind undefeated West Rutland, with Twin Valley and Williamstown rounding out the top four. Bador

and Trojan Nation are keeping their fingers crossed their star senior will be able to return before the end of the regular season.

“Tej is such a hard-working young man, and we are hoping for the best. This is something this group has been through before and we’ll continue to approach things one game at a time. These kids are special and trust me when I say we are not done!! This team has the heart of a true Trojan, and they’ll be ready to battle every time they lace them up. They are going to get the same effort from me. I’m going to do everything in my power to continue to improve this team as a coach and a teacher to get this team back to Barre,” said Bador.

Twinfield-Cabot traveled to Blue Mountain on Tuesday and will make the long trip to Bennington the very next night to take on Grace Christian. They’ll stay on the road for a Mountain League match-up with Richford next Tuesday.

KEN BROWN'S SPORT NUGGETS

High school bowling update

RANDOLPH – After a week off from competition, the Craftsbury Academy (CA) bowling team was back in action at the Valley Bowl last week.

Senior Tucker Holcomb led the way for the Chargers over the weekend in Randolph, rolling his best game of the season with a team-high 144. Juniors Raz Mille (133), Theo Alexander (126) and Arwen Alexander (119) also enjoyed personal bests on Saturday for CA. Eva Small didn’t quite beat her personal best at the Valley Bowl but

was a model of consistency, reaching triple digits in both of her games.

White River Valley senior Roxie Sherwin bowled the high game of the week statewide, rolling a 232. Sherwin’s big week vaulted her into the top ten individual standings with a 173.4 average. Fair Haven junior George Stamp was solid once again, rolling a 217 and 216 to maintain the top spot in the state with a 204.4 average. St. Johnsbury Academy (SJA) senior Jacob Marquis remained in the top ten (184.1) despite having an off week. Fair Haven, Randolph and SJA held on to the top three spots in the Vermont high school bowling rankings.

The Chargers will be back in action this Thursday at Sparetime in Colchester before wrapping up a busy week at Missisquoi Lanes on Saturday.

Twinfield-Cabot girls fall to Lady Bullets

MARSHFIELD – Division III BFA-Fairfax remained red-hot last week, racing past the Twinfield-Cabot girls basketball team on the road, dropping them to 0-13 on the season.

Adi See recorded a rare triple-double (26 points, 12 rebounds and 11 steals) to power BFA-Fairfax

to a 48-23 road win over the Lady Trojans last Wednesday. Ella Arel added 14 points and seven assists as the Lady Bullets started the game on a 16-3 run and never looked back. Chloe North continued to lead the Twinfield-Cabot offense with a team-high 10 points in the loss. After starting the season 1-7, Fairfax reeled off their fourth straight win, improving to 7-9.

Twinfield-Cabot was scheduled to host Winooski on Monday before wrapping up a jam-packed week with a short trip to Danville on Wednesday and home tilt against Stowe on Friday.

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