



Funding awarded to prioritize high-speed internet in local area

by Paul Fixx

NORTHEAST KINGDOM, CENTRAL VERMONT – Last week Vermont Governor Phil Scott thanked the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for approving Vermont's \$100 million proposal to use Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funding to extend access to reliable, high speed and affordable broadband services to areas in Vermont where it currently does not exist.

In St. Johnsbury, NEK Community Broadband, that does business as NEKCV, combining NEK Broadband and CVFiber, announced it will receive a portion of those funds, a milestone

made possible through sustained community engagement and strong support from state and federal legislators, its announcement said.

“The award will accelerate NEKCV's mission to deliver reliable, affordable, publicly owned high-speed internet to some of Vermont's most rural and least connected communities. BEAD funding will extend coverage to addresses along more than 1,400 miles of roadway, ultimately helping NEKCV reach 7,441 unserved and underserved addresses. Upon completion of the four-year BEAD project, NEKCV will have leveraged dozens of grant funding sources to achieve universal service for the 24,000 addresses without high-speed connectivity in its 72-town district.”

While the amount of the NEKCV award are not immediately available, Christa Shute, NEKCV Executive Director said, “We had 50% of the unserved addresses in this BEAD project,” calling the funds “absolutely critical.”

“This is a generational opportunity to achieve universal broadband access,” she said

“We began laying the strategic groundwork for BEAD in 2021, when the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was passed. We are so grateful for the support of the Vermont Legislature, the Governor, our delegation, our strategic partners, the NEK Broadband / CVFiber merger, the work of Vermont Communication Union District Association (VCUDA), and over

See INTERNET, 6

Garage raccoons, Swenson Granite expansion discussed

by Paul Fixx

WOODBURY – In a wide-ranging meeting that lasted over three hours, February 9, the Woodbury Select Board took up repairs at Woodbury Elementary School to meet state fire and safety codes, a pending zoning application by Swenson Granite for its Woodbury Quarry, raccoons falling from a leaky town garage ceiling and roof, and repairs to the Vt. Rte. 14 spring in the Woodbury Gulf that has stopped flowing, were all discussed, in addition to the usual reports.

Road Commissioner Alfred

Larabee said two raccoons recently dropped through the sheet rock ceiling into the garage, revealing the lack of ceiling insulation and the need for roofing repairs. Ice has been building up on the roof and snow melt has begun to run into the building. He said he worries about the poor retention of heat in the building and the fuel expense from the lack of insulation. Larabee suggested the need for a new roof or, perhaps a new building.

Larabee later said the raccoons were full-sized adults that survived their fall and scurried away afterward. “One's still up there as

See RACCOONS, 7



Woodbury resident Manual O'Neill (standing) speaks at a Woodbury Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) meeting, February 12, in the Town Hall convened to review a September 9, 2025 application by Swenson Granite Company for a non-conforming use of its property at 1127 Cabot Road, while (from left) Quarry Manager Randy Cleveland, engineering consultant Colen Johnson and the audience listen to him. photo courtesy HCTV

Calais, Worcester residents vote against shuttering schools



Doty Memorial School in Worcester.

photo courtesy of Christina Pollard, The Bridge

by Corey McDonald, VTDigger

CALAIS – Calais and Worcester residents on Tuesday voted against shuttering two community elementary schools in the Washington Central Unified Union School District.

In Worcester, 212 residents voted against shuttering the Doty Memorial School, while 114 approved of plans to close. In neighboring Calais, 398 residents voted against closing the Calais Elementary School, with 249 in favor.

Tuesday's results marked a rejection of

plans to consolidate five schools into three by merging operations at the district's three pre-K-6 and K-6 schools in Berlin, East Montpelier and Middlesex.

Washington Central has seen a 14% decline in students over the last decade, a trend officials expect to continue in the coming years. Each of the two schools educates fewer than 100 students, and one school's kindergarten class had only seven students.

While Act 73, Vermont's latest education reform law, has not mandated school closures, fears abound that broader district consolidation efforts will inevitably result in small, rural schools closing their doors.

District officials pitched consolidation as a way to expand academic and extracurricular opportunities for the student body. But parents and residents in informational meetings questioned what effect the plan would have on the two small towns.

Andrea Tucker and Anthony Houser, Calais residents with two kids in the town's elementary school, were among those who voted against closure.

The couple moved to Vermont from Texas specifically for “the small state feel, the small school down the street feel,” Houser said. Closing schools, he said, would be a “momentum killer” for other families with school-age children

See CALAIS, 5



Elfi Goldenrose (left), Drift Sacco-Cohen (center) and Juniper Bandit (right) play ukuleles during Homeschool Ukulele Class for Beginners in the Parker Ladd community room in the Jeudevine Memorial Library, February 11.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Fire Department January calls

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Fire Department responded to 11 calls in January, including three odor investigations, three Medical Assists, three Fire Alarms, one Mutual Aid Structure Fire and one Police Department Assist.

AWARE Report

HARDWICK – Six people used AWARE services between February 8 and February 15. 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.

Greensboro Volunteer Fire Department Snowmobile accident

GREENSBORO – On February 15 at 3:02 p.m., Greensboro Fire Department was dispatched along with Hardwick Emergency Rescue Squad to the area of Norway Road in Stannard for a snowmobile accident.

Initial reports indicated the accident was approximately one mile up the VAST trail. Hardwick Fire Department was requested for their all terrain vehicle to assist with transport of equipment and personnel to the scene. Arriving units were also assisted by bystanders who transported personnel up on their snowmobiles. Emergency crews provided assistance on scene and were able to assist everyone off the trail and get the snowmobile down to the roadway.

The cause and details of the accident are under investigation.

Hardwick Police Department Stolen beer

HARDWICK – On February 7 at 10 a.m., Hardwick Police was notified that Casandra Rich had stolen a 12-pack of beer from the Hardwick Quick Mart on February 6. Rich will be cited in Caledonia County Court to answer the charges of retail theft.



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WEATHER WATCH

Multiple rounds of light snow; seasonable temperatures this week

by Tyler Molleur

EAST HARDWICK – Last week’s warming temperatures during the day still gave way to some cooler nights with lows on either side of zero. The boundary between some cooler polar air and warmer southern air did set us up for a few waves of snow showers, adding up to several inches of snow throughout the week. With the storm system lasting into Wednesday, several observer reports ranged from two to four inches of accumulation, with West Woodbury reporting six inches from the storm. Additional light accumulations arrived to start off the weekend.

That boundary continues to be draped from the upper Midwest into the Ohio Valley, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. One wave of energy is expected to progress eastward later tonight. Today starts with a mix of sun and clouds, before clouds overrun most of the region by this evening. Light snow could develop overnight, with

accumulations of up to an inch possible. The snow consistency will likely be dense as some warm air infiltrates the mid-levels.

Another low deepens as it moves northeast for Friday evening and transfers some energy to the coast by Saturday morning, with the potential for light to moderate snow accumulations. Another low may then approach the mid-Atlantic by later Sunday. Considerable uncertainty remains with how far north this low will go and whether the potential for significant snow exists. The idea is that any precipitation will likely hold off until Sunday night. Temperatures during this time will be mostly in the 30s during the day, with lows in the teens to 20s; cooler on the nights with more clearing. Here are the forecast details:

Wednesday: Partly cloudy. Increasing clouds in the afternoon. Light snow possible by evening. High: 33. Low: 10. Calm wind.

Thursday: Partly cloudy, becoming mostly clear in the afternoon.



An icicle hangs from the roof over the front entrance to the Greensboro Town Hall, Tuesday morning, Feb 10. photo by Paul Fixx

High: 31. Low: 6. Calm wind.

Friday: Partly cloudy in the morning, becoming mostly cloudy. Light snow in the evening. High: 30. Low: 15. Northeast wind around 5 mph.

Saturday: Mostly cloudy.

Light snow in the morning. High: 28. Low: 12. Northwest wind around 5 mph.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy. A chance of light snow in the evening. High: 30. Low: 12. Light and variable wind.

POLICE REPORT

Vermont State Police

Assault, armed robbery, family fight

MARSHFIELD – On February 5 at 2:26 p.m., Vermont State Police, Berlin Barracks responded to a report of an assault at 1913 Peacham Pond Road in the



The Vermont State Police is seeking information on this person of interest in the robbery of Maplefields in Plainfield. courtesy photo

town of Peacham. Further investigation revealed Patrick Gomez of Marshfield committed the offense of Simple Assault during an altercation with Matilda Adelaide, of Peacham. On February 11, Gomez was issued a citation to appear in the Caledonia County Superior Court, Criminal Division at a later date and time.

PLAINFIELD – On February 9 at 10:51 p.m., the Vermont State Police responded to the Plainfield Maplefields, for report of a robbery. An armed male, wearing a mask, entered the store and demanded that the store employee open the register. The suspect left the store on foot with an unknown number of cigarettes. The suspect is approximately six feet tall and slender. The Vermont State Police are continuing to investigate the incident. To provide information, please call the Vermont State Police Berlin Barracks at 802-229-9191 (option 3) or submit a tip anonymously by visiting vsp.vermont.gov/tipsubmit.

CRAFTSBURY – On February 14, the Vermont State Police received a report of a family fight that occurred throughout the evening of February 13 and the morning of February 14 from a residence



Robert Reil

located on Creek Road in the town of Craftsbury.

Investigation revealed Robert Reil of Craftsbury to have caused serious bodily injury to a family member.

Reil was shortly after located and taken into custody without incident. Reil was transported to the Vermont State Police, Derby Barracks, for processing.

Reil was later ordered to be held at Northern State Correction Facility without bail and will be arraigned in the Orleans County Criminal Court on February 17, at 12:30 p.m.

CALAIS – On February 15 at 8:51 p.m., Vermont State Police

- Berlin Barracks received a report of a slide-off crash in the town of Calais. The operator was identified as Jennifer Foley of South Burlington. Investigation revealed that Foley was operating a motor vehicle while impaired. Foley was subsequently taken into custody and transported to the Berlin Barracks for processing. She was released with a citation to appear in Vermont Superior Court - Washington Criminal Division on March 5 at 8:30 a.m.

STANNARD – On February 15 at 3:12 p.m., the Vermont State Police was notified of a fatal snowmobile crash on VAST Trail 513 in the town of Stannard. Investigation revealed the operator, Kevin Smith of Chester, CT, was traveling west when he drifted slightly off the north side trail and struck a stump. Smith momentarily lost control of the snowmobile before and it tipped over and ejected him in several trees. Life saving measures were attempted. Speed nor alcohol appear to be a factor.

The Vermont State Police were assisted by Hardwick Rescue, the Hardwick Fire Department and the Greensboro Fire Department.

POLICE REPORT



Caledonia County Sheriff Brandon Thraikill (left) awards Peggy Cochran a plaque upon her promotion to Chief of Operations, February 1. Cochran has been employed by the department for 19 years. *courtesy photo*



Caledonia County Sheriff Brandon Thraikill congratulates Tyler Deos with a plaque commemorating his promotion to Director of Finance. *courtesy photo*

Caledonia County Sheriff announces new training officers, promotions

by Paul Fixx

ST. JOHNSBURY – Caledonia County Sheriff Brandon Thraikill announced accreditations and promotions that have recently occurred within the department.

On January 23 Lieutenant Brian Tallmadge, Deputy Doug Morrill and Deputy Bobbie Roy completed Field Training Officer (FTO) School.

“This is a great accomplishment and addition within the department as we now have four total field training officers available to train new and incoming staff,” said Sheriff Thraikill.

Roy, who has been a sheriff’s deputy for two and a half years, said the FTO training will allow her to train others for the department.

She went into the U.S. Army right out of high school, where she served as a military police officer,

then worked in corrections. Now as a sheriff’s deputy, she said she “wants to be an asset to the department and community.”

Deputy Doug Morrill was promoted to sergeant on February 1. He’s been with the Caledonia County department since August, when he transferred from the Orleans County Sheriff’s Department.

Morrill said Sheriff Thraikill has been very supportive of the department’s staff. “Coverage of Caledonia County towns [contracting with the department] has improved through this rebuilding phase,” he said.

“Visibility seems to be a lot greater now, we’ve been able to make connections with people in the communities we serve.”

In addition to Morrill’s appointment, Tyler Deos was promoted to director of finance and Peggy Cochran

to chief of operations.

Deos started as a part-time deputy in 2018. He has an associates degree in business administration. “A lot of good things are happening and a lot of good people are coming through the door,” he said.

“It’s a really good place to work.”

Cochran’s promotion has her “in charge of scheduling deputies, contract operations and overseeing everything with dispatch.”

She started working in the sheriff’s department in 2007, 19 years ago. The sheriff is open with staff and working to build the department and patrol division,” she said, “and he’s great with people.”

With more staff in place, Cochran said the department is

“providing more coverage in places like Walden and getting part timers through the academy.”

Roy said she hopes to start level-three training next and has been collecting signatures on a petition to run for election to Caledonia County High Bailiff. If elected, she would be able to act as sheriff until the governor appoints someone.

She said, “this is something that I am willing and able to take on, should it be needed.”

Sheriff Thraikill said, “The year 2026 has started off great with these accomplishments being a large piece of it. We are excited to continue growing and serving our communities. Feel free to contact me for further information or questions.”



On January 15, at 7:28 a.m., Hardwick Fire Department (HFD) was toned mutual aid to Morrisville for a structure fire. The tower truck was specifically requested with manpower. HFD responded with 12 members between E2 and L1. HFD spent most of the day assisting partners and all units were back in quarters by 2 p.m. HFD auxiliary provided snacks and lunch upon members return. *Social Media Photo*



In January (from left) Lt. Brian Tallmadge, Sgt. Doug Morrill and Deputy Bobbie Roy completed training to become Field Training Officers (FTOs) for the Caledonia County Sheriff’s Department on January 23. Morrill was promoted to Seargent on February 1. *courtesy photo*

POLICE REPORT



Marshfield Fire responded late Tuesday night, January 10, to a single vehicle crash in the village. Plainfield Fast Squad and East Montpelier Ambulance assisted at the scene. Cabot and Plainfield Fire were canceled en route.

Social Media Photo

Hardwick Police Department Media Log

HARDWICK – February 8: Medical, Bunker Hill Rd; VIN verification, High St.; Welfare Check, S. Main St.

February 9: Suspicious Event, Craftsbury Rd; Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Assist - Agency, S. Main St.; Traffic Hazard, Mackville Rd.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14 S.; VIN verification, Montgomery Rd.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Lost Property, Mill St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15.

February 10: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Fingerprints, High St.; Assist - Motorist, Hardwick St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15; Fire Alarm, Highland Ave; Citizen Dispute, W. Hill Road.

February 11: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Assist - Other, Wolcott St.; Assist - Other, Wolcott St.

February 12: Directed Patrol, High St.; Assist - Public, S. Main

St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Fingerprints x11, S. Main St.

February 13: Directed Patrol, S. Main St.; Snowmobile, LVRT; Assist - Public, Mini Mart Dr.; Fingerprints, High St.; Directed Patrol, Hazen Union Dr.; Assist - Motorist, Kate Brook Rd.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Suspicious Event, Wolcott St.; Accident - Property Damage Only, S. Main St.

February 14: Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Snowmobile, LVRT; Assist - Agency, Creek Rd.; Assist - Agency, South Craftsbury Rd.; Suspicious Event, Dutton Rd.; Accident - TCNR, Center Rd.; Traffic Stop 10x.

February 15: Snowmobile, LVRT; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 14; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15 West; Traffic Stop, S. Main St.; Assist - Agency, Hazen Union Dr.; Assist - Public, Hardwick Farms Rd; Traffic Stop, Vt. Route 15 E.; Theft, Vt. Route 14 S.

Plainfield man sentenced for Social Security Disability fraud

BURLINGTON – The United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Vermont stated that on February 10, John Cozza, 64, of Plainfield, was sentenced by Chief United States District Judge Christina Reiss to a two-year term of probation and ordered to pay \$68,323.20 in restitution to the United States Social Security Administration. Cozza previously pleaded guilty to submitting false information in his application for Social Security Disability Insurance (“SSDI”) benefits.

According to court records, Cozza stated in a March 2021

application for SSDI benefits that he had not been self-employed in 2020 or in 2021, through the date of his application. When Cozza submitted the application, he knew that information was false. Cozza had been working as a handyman through his businesses, J.C. Handy Man Services and Black Bear Building Services from 2019 through the date of his application. As a result of his false statements to the Social Security Administration, Cozza obtained \$68,323.20 in SSDI benefits to which he was not entitled.

Calais

Continued From Page One

hoping to move to the small town.

Tucker said she hopes “our state representatives are paying attention to what rural Vermonters are communicating with these recent elections.”

“Our small schools are an asset to invest in and leverage in response to a declining population,” she said.

Flor Diaz Smith, the Washington Central Unified Union School District’s board chair, said in an interview Wednesday that officials “might not have achieved what we hoped for,” but said she was nonetheless “really proud of all the work” that went into it.

“I’m not going to sugarcoat it, you know, it was tough. It was tough to hear the results yesterday,” she said. “But this was not about winning, this is about a shared future for our kids.”

Tuesday’s special election was closely watched by lawmakers and public education officials. Some argued it served as a temperature check on the ongoing education reform being discussed in the Vermont Statehouse. Washington Central’s plans mirrored those broader efforts being vetted in the Statehouse. But those plans have stirred anxiety in the state’s more rural communities, where residents argue that shuttering rural schools will further exacerbate demographic decline.

Gov. Phil Scott during his weekly press conference Wednesday said the results out of Calais and Worcester were “somewhat unfortunate” but “not surprising in some respects.”

He noted the low number of kindergarten students at both schools, something he said was “indicative of the future” of the state’s public education system. With consolidated school districts, those decisions would be “much less difficult.”

“Nobody wants to close down their own school,” he said. “Everyone wants to save money. Everyone thinks that we need to consolidate schools. We need to close schools. But they don’t want to close their

own, and I think that’s going to be the case throughout the state.”

Student population decline will continue, he said, “so we have to deal with it in some way, and I believe Act 73 has a way to deal with it.”

Lawmakers on Friday reviewed the first concrete proposal put forward this legislative session to consolidate the state’s 119 school districts. State officials meanwhile are working on guidelines to distinguish between schools considered small or spare by necessity, and schools that are small by choice.

Washington Central’s superintendent, Steven Dellinger-Pate, in an interview said the results showed how “intimately tied” small schools are to their local communities.

“A small town and a small school are, they’re very special to each other,” he said. “And so when we start talking about declining enrollments or changing demographics, or creating more robust school environments, I think our definitions can certainly differ at times.”

While disappointed in the results, Diaz Smith said they “showcase how difficult it is to make these decisions at the local level, and at the same time how important that local voice is.”

Now, with Town Meeting Day just weeks away, Dellinger-Pate said the district’s total budget amount remains the same at about \$43 million. But officials will have to tinker their expenditures to spread resources across the five schools.

Plans to have full-time nurses and librarians at schools will have to be cut, and current employees will have to split time among the five schools, Dellinger-Pate said.

The district will also have to merge grades at certain schools, and will look for savings in food service and transportation programs, he said.

“We now have to be resourceful and resilient,” Diaz Smith said. “We have a fixed amount of money. It’s the same budget that we’re going to have to spread a little thinner.”



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Internet

Continued From Page One

130 volunteers who serve on our board for the contributions they made to make this happen over the last four years.”

“Though NEKCV operates [the] two brands of NEK Broadband and CVFiber, we function as one united Communications Union District of 72 towns,” said Shute.

“Our team uses objective criteria to determine the order of construction. The primary criteria is the density of unserved and underserved addresses, therefore for BEAD the top priority will be Plainfield, Marshfield, Cabot, Woodbury, Wolcott and Hardwick.

“It’s exciting because much of this area already has pole licenses and permits, so as soon as we have an actual contract and we can get through the National Environmental Protection Act process we will be able to start construction. Our fingers are crossed that we can begin construction by the end of this year.”

NEKCV also credited strong leadership from the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) and state and federal legislators for championing broadband expansion and ensuring that rural communities and communications union districts were well positioned to compete successfully for BEAD funding.

The NEKCV announcement said, “Residents across the Northeast Kingdom and Central Vermont played a vital role by sharing their experiences with limited or nonexistent broadband access and by supporting local and state efforts to prioritize connectivity as essential infrastructure. Their voices helped shape a compelling case for investment that highlighted how improved connectivity will support education, healthcare, economic development and quality of life.”

“The impact of this award is nothing short of transformative, enabling universal service in the most neglected corners of Vermont. It will create local jobs, valuable public infrastructure, and sustainably support first-class internet service into the future,” said Nicolas Anzalone, NEKCV Executive Committee Chair.

Senate Minority Leader Scott Beck (R-Caledonia) released a statement from members of the Vermont Legislature representing communities in the Northeast Kingdom that said, “This award is a major step forward for many communities in our region. Universal broadband internet access for rural Americans is long overdue.

“This is a major milestone for many of our rural towns and a once-in-a-generation opportunity to strengthen and revitalize communities.”

“BEAD funding will allow us to provide essential connectivity to the parts of the state that need it, and will benefit from it, the most.

“We want to thank Vermont’s congressional delegation, the Trump administration, the Vermont Community Broadband Board, as well as Governor Scott. It was truly a team effort. And, because of good collaboration, our communities will benefit tremendously when we finally deliver on the promise of universal access to affordable broadband services. This is the type of cooperation, and bipartisan effort that we need across the board to handle the serious challenges we face as a nation.”

In addition to Sen. Beck, other legislators from the region signing on to the statement include: Sen. Ingalls (R- Essex District), Rep. Burt (R-Caledonia-Washington), Rep. Scott Campbell (D-Caledonia-Essex), Rep. Dolgin (R-Caledonia-Essex), Rep. Felton (R-Caledonia 3), Rep. Harple (D-Orleans 4), Rep. Higley (R-Orleans-Lamoille), Rep. Kascenska (R-Essex-Caledonia), Rep. Labor (R-Essex-Orleans), Rep. Marcotte (R-Orleans-Lamoille), Rep. Page (R-Orleans 2), Rep. Parsons (I-Orange-Caledonia), Rep. Debra Powers (R-Caledonia 1), Rep. Quimby (R-Caledonia 3) and Rep. Southworth (R-Caledonia 2).

With BEAD funding, NEKCV is now on track to deploy more than 3,000 miles of fiber-optic cable by 2029, delivering long-term broadband access and significant economic, educational, healthcare and civic benefits, they said.

In preparation for the project, NEKCV has maximized grant funding by investing directly in its district, hiring predominantly in-district employees and supporting a workforce development training program that creates jobs and strengthens the local economy. The network will be fully owned and controlled by NEKCV, a municipal communications union district, ensuring that any profits from this public investment will be reinvested in the district for

the public good.

“We have staffed up and focused on local workforce development to prepare for BEAD,” said Shute.

“We have a predominantly local workforce of 30 employees with three construction contractors so we will continue to construct in multiple locations across the district.”

BEAD, a \$42.45 billion federal grant program authorized by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, sets the goal of connecting every American to high-speed internet by funding partnerships within states to build infrastructure.

The Vermont proposal, which has now been approved by the NTIA, will result in more than 99 percent of households having access to affordable, high-speed internet services.

“This is a major milestone for many of our rural towns and a once-in-a-generation opportunity to strengthen and revitalize communities,” said Governor Phil Scott. “I want to thank Assistant Secretary of Commerce Arielle Roth and her team at NTIA for their leadership of this complex federal initiative, Vermont’s congressional delegation for their support of this important program, and the Vermont Community Broadband Board for developing

and administering Vermont’s approved plan.”

“Congratulations to Vermont on the approval of its BEAD Final Proposal,” said Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Arielle Roth. “Subject to effective oversight, the Green Mountain State is positioned to deliver universal connectivity throughout the state. I look forward to monitoring Vermont’s progress as we work to deliver on the promise of connecting Vermont and the country.”

Projects funded through BEAD will deliver broadband that meets or exceeds the federal performance standard of 100 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 20 Mbps upload. The program provides funding to all U.S. states, territories and the District of Columbia to deploy or upgrade broadband infrastructure and ensure access to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet service. States were required to submit initial and final proposals to NTIA describing how they will use BEAD funds to serve all eligible locations. BEAD requires recipients to finish the work within four years of the grant award.

Paul Fixx serves on the board and executive committee of NEK Community Broadband.

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Weekly Highlights

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 Toilet Bowl Cleaner Ecos, 24 oz \$3.99	 Organic Soups Amy's, varieties, 14.5 oz \$3.99	 Ice Cream Pints Ben & Jerry's, varieties, 16 oz \$5.99	 Organic Pasta Bionature, varieties, 16 oz 2/\$6
 Stir-fry Vegetables Cascadian Farm, varieties, 10 oz 2/\$6	 Vegan Bouillon Cubes Edward & Sons, varieties, 25 oz \$2.29	 Fair Trade Organic Coffee Equal Exchange, varieties, 12 oz 27% off	 Organic Potato Chips Humble, varieties, 5 oz \$3.79
 Protein Pancake Mix Kodiak Cakes, 20 oz \$5.79	 Avocado Oil La Taurangelle, 16.9 oz 25% off	 Tortilla Chips Late July, 11 oz \$3.99	 Salsa Green Mountain Gringo, 16 oz \$4.49
 Sour Cream Food Club, 16 oz \$1.49	 Spicy Brown Mustard Primal Kitchen, 12 oz \$3.79	 Pasta Sauce Rao's Homemade, varieties, 24 oz \$6.49	 Butter Food club, 16 oz \$2.99

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

 Breath Mints Vermints, varieties, 1.41 oz \$2.69	 Sapi Yaki Higgins, varieties, 5 oz 10% off	 Chocolate Bars Champlain Chocolates, varieties 10% off	 Botanical Tea Sporouting Soul, varieties, 16 oz 25% off
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Raccoons

Continued From Page One

far as we know, so we'll have to find a new home for it."

The road crew will patch the hole with plywood for a temporary fix and the board agreed to bring up the issue at its future meetings.

Larrabee said the road crew expects to have two part-time road crew members soon, with Dana Huoppi having agreed to fill in for a few weeks and another person awaiting results of the required drug test.

Larabee said he expects to finally step aside from daily plowing duties, while he continues to train his replacement to take on more road commissioner duties.

Woodbury Resident Lisa Flood made a public comment following approval of the previous meeting's minutes to say she has been looking into the possibility of historic preservation grant money that could help finance needed repairs on the fire escape and elevator at Woodbury Elementary School.

She noted many unanswered questions about the school and wondered what complications there might be in talking with Preservation Trust of Vermont about the availability of grants for the building, which is already on the National Register of Historic Places. She said she's written to the Mountainview Union School Board to discuss the options with them too. Board member Lilly Higgins said she will provide Flood with a copy of the town lease with MVUESD.

Representatives of Swenson Granite Company came to the meeting to discuss a municipal impact statement requested by the company to accompany its Act 250 application for a proposed expansion of operations at the company's Woodbury quarry.

Colen Johnson and Nicole Centerbar, with civil engineering firm Bowman Consulting of Burlington, have been retained by Swenson and attended the meeting with Swenson's Director of Quarry Operations Randy Cleveland to answer questions from the board for the project that requires permits from the town and the District Environmental Commission.

If approved, the permits will cover footprint expansion and the production of aggregate from tailings at the quarry that would involve the use of a crusher there for 45 working days per year. Sale of the aggregate products would involve increased truck traffic to and from the quarry with a maximum of 50 loaded truck trips per day for all products.

Johnson said his impression

following an initial Woodbury Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) hearing in the fall is that the town's major concern is the increase in truck traffic and the wear and tear on Cabot Road. Board member Chris Casey said in addition, noise and Cabot Road public safety are concerns.

Johnson said changes made since the earlier ZBA hearing are that dump trucks carrying the crushed aggregate will use the old quarry entrance, a private road off Cabot Road, which will mean no increase in trucks approved over the section of Cabot Road between the new and old exits. All truck traffic including the blocks, will use the old entrance in the winter. In the summer, the block trucks will go back to using the new entrance.

To address noise produced by the crusher, Johnson explained that a new support area is being prepared at the northern-most corner of the site and alternative sites are available within the quarry walls, which he said would limit the crusher noise.

In the amendment request, the aggregate extraction limit is 20,000 cubic yards. The creating and selling of aggregate is a new aspect of the quarry's business that is being explored, said Johnson. Dust from the road with the truck traffic is expected to be controlled by the town road crew, he said.

Road Commissioner Alfred Larrabee expressed his concern that some of the trucks are not properly equipped, especially with the tires they run on. He suggested the use of chains in winter to travel Cabot Road, recommending the quarry have a requirement that trucks be properly equipped in this regard to avoid the problems they have had.

Director of Quarry Operations for Swenson Granite Randy Cleveland responded, saying he believes the use of chains would tear up the pavement. He and Larabee discussed a project to widen the road at the steep curve just downhill from the new entrance, with Swenson providing fill material.

An issue with financial payments to the town was raised. Swenson has been paying 6.5 cents per usable square foot of granite hauled from the quarry to assist with the additional road maintenance required. Hauling of the aggregate might be expected to add to the total tonnage and increase the reimbursement to the town, suggested select board members. Both Johnson and Cleveland said they are open to more money coming to the town but neither are authorized to make a new arrangement, saying the town should initiate a request to the company.

Town Treasurer Lillian Baron said she will be meeting with the PACIF insurance providers to get a better sense of why insurance costs have increased and ask about possible ways to lower them.

The conversation ended with Peduzzi saying she still needs to contact the Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department and Hardwick Rescue, to get their input for the requested impact statement.

In her report, Town Clerk Robin Durkee said she's been focused on preparations for town meeting and that she's seen a good response to the WOOF contest to inspire more residents to license their dogs.

Town Treasurer Lillian Baron said she will be meeting with the PACIF insurance providers to get a better sense of why insurance costs have increased and ask about possible ways to lower them.

In her mid-year review of town finances, Baron said expenses will slightly exceed revenues by the end of the fiscal year, resulting in a modest budget deficit of \$383,403 across the combined general and highway funds.

The primary financial risk for the remainder of the year is unbudgeted or under-budgeted expenses, including unanticipated truck repairs, post-budget wage increases and higher-than-expected insurance and technology costs impacting both of the town's major funds, she said.

She suggested the town's best practice will be to maintain approximately two months of operating expenditures in both the General Fund and the Highway Fund at year-end.

Based on the current FY27 budget, which she said reflects more realistic expenditure levels, that target equates to roughly \$125,000 in the main highway and general funds. Maintaining that level will help bridge cash flow needs before tax revenues are received and provide capacity to absorb unbudgeted or unexpected expenses during the fiscal year.

A crew who recently visited the roadside spring beside Route 14 in the gulf discovered several reasons it has not been running. While the spring is under the purview of VTrans, Dana Huoppi, who

used to work for VTrans, has recently maintained it as a volunteer.

That water source is important for many homeowners said Higgins, and Huopi, along with Larabee, Michael Gray and Peter Dailley who made the recent visit with Huopi, said they will continue to volunteer to make the repairs, this time after the spring thaw.

In his update on town highway grant projects Gray said an RFP for the Valley Lake Road culvert replacement project funded by a VTrans structures grant, has been sent out to 14 contractors, with bids expected soon. They will be opened at the February 23 board meeting. Nate Sicard, engineer and project manager for the culvert replacement, will attend that meeting.

Work on bank stabilization of Buck Lake Brook as it enters Woodbury Village is critical to stabilize Cabot Road as the road enters the village, said Gray and an RFP for design work is now being finalized because many state engineers who could have done the work, have been laid off due to federal budget cuts.

Gray recommended the technical assistance portion of the grant, for \$3,377, be awarded to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to serve as project manager, but no decision on that was made.

The town was awarded a grant of \$7,856 from Better Roads for the mandated updating of its Road Erosion Inventory, originally done in 2017. Gray said he plans to purchase an iPad at roughly \$400 for the work he and the road crew will be doing over the next two summers to meet an October 31, 2027, deadline for completion of the inventory.

Recovery Officer Skip Lindsay reported on what appears to be progress about difficulties with a federal request for the return of leftover funds from the TH23 and TH24 bridge replacements.

Lindsay reported he'd received a positive response from the VEM/Public Safety representative after Chris Casey had contacted Peter Welch's office about heated rhetoric Lindsay had reported in his interaction with the representative.

Lindsay and Casey plan to meet with FEMA and VEM reps to discuss the two projects, the balance of the leftover funds and the funds used from the original leftover funds for other town mitigation projects, previously approved by FEMA.

A 50-minute executive session ended the business of the meeting with Baron and Auditor John Reid invited to join the select board. Minutes of the meeting report no action taken.

Local Option Tax, wastewater, pedestrian bridge get attention

by **Raymonda Parchment**

HARDWICK - The first regular select board meeting of February began with communication from the audience, primarily about the location of this year's town meeting, before proceeding to regular business.

With just one select board meeting before Hardwick Town Meeting Day, March 3, Tim Ricciardello shared comments in response to community feedback about the town budget and the proposed local option tax to be voted on by Australian ballot, then he acknowledged concerns that a local option tax could disproportionately affect some businesses, but noted that it could serve as an additional revenue source for the town.

Ceilidh Galloway-Kane suggested that a hand-out at town meeting may be helpful to provide clear information. It was noted that the revenue estimates included in the town report are based on actual Hardwick data.

Ricciardello encouraged residents to participate throughout the

entire budget development process, noting that multiple meetings are held during the budget season and provide ample opportunity for public input.

Town Manager David Upson said the temporary bridge currently in place across the Lamoille River for the pedestrian bridge project is for construction use only and not open to the public. The original bridge has been removed and contractors are expected to return in early March to begin work on the retaining wall in preparation for installation of the new bridge later this year.

The board voted to approve a contract addendum with S.W. Cole for engineering services in the construction phase for the retaining wall, not to exceed \$30,000. According to the board, the retaining wall repair is classified as a large FEMA project, and most costs will be reimbursed. Upson reported the town rejected FEMA's initial funding offer for the wastewater treatment facility, as it was significantly below projected costs. FEMA will conduct a cost-analysis review, with a revised

offer expected by April 15. He said the town is hopeful the new offer will better align with actual project needs.

Galloway-Kane reported the Equity Committee has completed the Hardwick Equity Project, which was funded through the Vermont Community Foundation (VCF). The committee plans to return with a report summarizing the work completed and how those involved have applied the project within their organizations. Galloway-Kane thanked VCF, the individuals who contributed and the participating organizations for their support of the project.

A second collective bargaining meeting has been held with the public works crew and their union representatives, said Upson. The current contract expires June 30, and negotiations are underway for a new three-year agreement. Tim Ricciardello has been representing the board in discussions.

Casey Rowell said a regional salt shortage may be developing. While the town has not yet run

out, deliveries have been delayed and some neighboring communities have reported running out of salt in recent weeks.

Upson was authorized to work with Verdantas, an engineering firm, to figure out the most durable and cost effective option for bridge alternatives on Tucker Brook and Carey Road.

The board noted a public survey is being circulated regarding Bridge No. 31, neighboring Greensboro Bend, and its impacts on the town and surrounding communities in relation to potential replacement options. The deadline to complete the survey is February 27.

In other business, the board voted to acknowledge completion of the public engagement process for the Mill Street and Main Street Scoping Study, authorizing VHB (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.) and staff to finalize the study.

A current expense line of credit increase for Hardwick Electric issued through Union Bank from \$300,000, to \$575,000 was approved by the board.

H.385 creates remedies for coerced debt seen locally

by **Raymonda Parchment**

MONTPELIER, HARDWICK – Rep. Edey Graning, vice chair of the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, joined advocates and survivors at the statehouse this week to highlight H.385, a bill that would create remedies and protections for Vermonters facing “coerced debt,” debt incurred through abuse, manipulation or exploitation. Supporters say the bill would help survivors avoid long-term financial harm from debts they did not willingly take on.

Graning emphasized the bill's focus on economic stability and consumer protection, noting that financial abuse can undermine a person's ability to secure housing, employment and independence.

Executive Director Miranda Elkins of Hardwick's AWARE attested to the frequency of financial abuse and coerced debt seen in their work in the surrounding communities, “Financial abuse and coerced debt are things we see at AWARE more often than people might think. We've worked with survivors in our area who found out a credit card was opened in their name, were pressured to co-sign loans they didn't control, or ended up responsible for utility bills or

vehicle debt that wasn't truly theirs,” she said.

“In a small rural community, the ripple effects are big,” Elkins continued.

“If your credit is damaged, it can be really hard to find housing, turn on utilities, finance a vehicle or rebuild your independence.

“We regularly support people who are no longer in immediate danger but are still stuck trying to untangle debt that was part of the abuse.

“National research from the National Network to End Domestic Violence shows that economic abuse is present in up to 99% of domestic violence cases,” said Elkins.

“From what we see locally, that tracks. Financial control is often one of the quiet ways abuse continues long after a relationship ends.”

Elkins says legislation like H.385 could give survivors clearer options to address coerced debt and start repairing their credit.

“In communities like ours, where resources and housing are limited, that can make a real difference,” she concluded.

Grace B. Pazdan of Vermont Legal Aid said coerced debt often leaves survivors with ruined credit and limited options.

She noted that many Vermonters facing debt collection lack legal representation and that clearer statutory protections could provide more accessible relief.

Charlie Parker Gliserman of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence added that financial abuse is a common barrier for survivors seeking safety. “Coerced debt is not just a financial issue, it's

a safety and economic justice issue,” Gliserman said, urging lawmakers to advance a strong bill.

As introduced, H.385 creates a mechanism for victims of coerced debt to notify creditors with sufficient information to stop any debt collection process and requires creditors to advise consumer credit reporting agencies that the debt is disputed.

Pharmacy funding confirmed for Caledonia County

by **Paul Fixx**

ST. JOHNSBURY – Senator Welch's recent announcement of \$1,400,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) awarded to Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (NVRH) for the development of one or two Caledonia County pharmacies came as a surprise to the organization, which had requested the funding for 2024, but wasn't selected.

“We have long recognized the retail pharmacy desert in Caledonia County and anticipate working in partnership with Northern Counties Health Care, the local Federally Qualified Health Center, to explore renovation and launch of retail pharmacy location(s),” said NVRH Vice-President of Community Health Improvement Diana

Gibbs. “Specific sites have not yet been determined, and additional details will be shared as planning moves forward.”

Hardwick has not had a pharmacy for more than a year, since Walgreens closed its temporary store in a trailer on September 30, 2024. The former store on Wolcott Street, had been closed since July 11, 2024, when Lamoille River flood waters rushed in, leaving it wet and muddy. The store never reopened and remains empty.

Hardwick residents must now use mail order pharmacies, or travel to Morrisville, St. Johnsbury, Newport or the Barre/Montpelier area to fill prescriptions.

“We look forward to leveraging this funding to strengthen access to retail pharmacy services for Northeast Kingdom residents,” said Gibbs.

Journalism awards, report announced at Statehouse

by Paul Fixx

MONTPELIER – Leaders from the newly formed Vermont Journalism Coalition (VJC) and the Vermont Community Foundation (VCF), as well as Senator Andrew Perchlik and Vermont Secretary Copeland Hanzas held a press conference February 4, sharing a new report on the state of Vermont's news media landscape and celebrating the local and regional media outlets that received this year's inaugural Local Civic Journalism Awards.

VJC's new coordinator Kristen Fountain and VCF's President and CEO Dan Smith outlined key findings from the newly released Vermont News & Information Ecosystem Report. Commissioned by VCF's Press Forward initiative, the report assesses the current state of local news in Vermont, identifying opportunities to strengthen news access, newsroom sustainability and local media coordination statewide.

"In Vermont, local news helps people stay connected to their communities and to one another" said VCF's Dan Smith. "We're excited to share the findings of our Press Forward Vermont: News & Information Ecosystem Report (vermontcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Vermont-News-Information-Ecosystem_Feb-2.pdf), which highlights the strengths of our news ecosystem and the challenges it faces. Sharing these findings alongside public and private partners reflects a shared commitment to sustaining local journalism as a vital part of civic life across the state."

Key findings from the report include: With over 60 news and information providers statewide, and 80% of those locally owned and operated, Vermont has a strong foundation for local reporting that is serving the information needs of most communities.

Newsrooms are operating with limited staff and capacity while adjusting to rapidly changing models for news distribution and consumption. This is challenging the long-term sustainability of local newsrooms and making their future uncertain.

A strong majority (92%) of Vermonters who participated in surveys, interviews and focus groups agree that local news should be available to everyone and (70%) believe a well-informed community benefits everyone.

Access barriers for many Vermonters persist, including cost, format and language access. And youth, LGBTQ+, immigrants and refugees, do not consistently see their experiences or the things that matter to them reflected in local coverage.

The path to a strong local news

ecosystem includes mobilizing public and private funding, deepening collaboration among news outlets and empowering communities to work with and support their local news providers.

"This report accurately reflects the vibrancy and precarity of Vermont's local news producers, including the ones being honored for their work with a Local Civic Journalism Award today," said VJC's Kristen Fountain.

"It's remarkable that so many small local news outlets continue to operate in our state. That's because the people who work there share a deep commitment to continue being part of the fabric of their communities. More than 40 organizations have joined the Vermont Journalism Coalition because we know that collaboration makes us stronger as we face the challenges ahead."

Senator Perchlik and Secretary Copeland Hanzas gave remarks about the recent Local Civic Journalism Awards (vermontcf.org/news/local-civic-journalism-awards/), a program designed to steer public support and interest toward fact-based media outlets that focus primarily on local news. Senator Perchlik secured \$50,000 in funding for the inaugural Local Civic Journalism Awards program in the state's Fiscal Year 2026 budget, which was matched with an additional \$50,000 by VCF's Press Forward initiative. Secretary Copeland Hanzas' office administered the awards.

Sixteen Vermont news organizations were honored in the inaugural round of awards. They

Represent a broad cross-section of local and regional news organizations, including newspapers that have served their communities for well over a century and digital-only enterprises that have sprung up in recent years to fill a void. They include nonprofit and for-profit entities and are mostly locally controlled. Many of the recipients are based in regions of the state that are otherwise underserved, including the Northeast Kingdom, southern Vermont and the Upper Valley.

The panelists opted to award \$10,000 to four news organizations that have particularly distinguished themselves in recent years by reimagining the way they foster civic engagement in their respective communities and sustain themselves for the future. They include: The Bridge, Montpelier; Vermont Independent Media (The Commons, Deerfield Valley News), Brattleboro; Waterbury Roundabout, Waterbury and White River Valley Herald, Randolph

The panel also chose to award \$5,000 to a dozen news organizations that provide essential coverage



Vermont Senator Andrew Perchlik (D/P, Washington) speaks at a press conference in the Vermont Statehouse's Cedar Creek Room, February 4, to announce the inaugural round of Vermont Civic Journalism Awards and the release of a Vermont News & Information Ecosystem Report. Behind him at (from left) Vermont Journalism Coalition Coordinator Kristen Fountain; Paul Fixx, *The Hardwick Gazette*; Myers Mermel, *Radio Vermont Group (WDEV)*; Vermont Community Foundation President and CEO Dan Smith; Maryellen Apelquist, *The White River Valley Herald*; Dana Gray, *Caledonian Record*; Perchlik; Lisa Loomis, *The Valley Reporter*, Cassandra Hemingway, *The Bridge*; Alex Nuti-de Biasi, *The Journal Opinion*; Tommy Gardner, *Vermont Community Newspaper Group* and Lisa Scagliotti, *Waterbury Roundabout*.

photo by Gordon Miller/Waterbury Roundabout

to their communities. They include: Addison County Independent, Middlebury; Barton Chronicle, Barton; Caledonian-Record, St. Johnsbury; Chester Telegraph, Chester; *Hardwick Gazette*, Hardwick; *Hinesburg Record*, Hinesburg; *Journal-Opinion*, Bradford; *North Star Monthly*, Danville; *Valley News*, West Lebanon, N.H.; *Valley Reporter*, Waitsfield; *Vermont Community Newspaper Group* (*Stowe Reporter*, *News & Citizen*, *The Other Paper*, *The Citizen*, *Shelburne News*), Stowe and *Radio Vermont Group (WDEV)*, Waterbury

In making its selections, the panel evaluated how nominees serve their audiences, contribute to civic engagement, produce reliable and ethical journalism and plan for long-term sustainability. The panel chose not to recognize statewide outlets this year, focusing instead on local and regional newsrooms.

"These awards recognize the incredible dedication and innovation found in our local newsrooms," said Holly Morehouse, the Vermont Community Foundation's Vice President for Community Impact.

"Local news is a public good that keeps our communities connected. Vibrant communities and robust local news go hand in hand."

More than 30 different news outlets were nominated.

"We are seeing across our nation and world the collapse of decency, democracy and dedication to facts that follows the loss of local, professional and independent journalism," said Senator Perchlik. "We can't let that happen here. Vermont needs to cherish and support our strong civic connections, and building a thriving, local fact-based network of news outlets is the best way to do so.

"Bolstering Vermonters' civic engagement is one of the top priorities of my office, and a robust network of independent local journalism is crucial to that effort," said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. "In order to get involved, we need access to information about what's going on in our communities and the actions of our leaders. The local and regional media outlets we recognized today with these local civic journalism awards are essential to Vermont's civic health, and we need to ensure their sustained vitality."

Paul Heintz, a senior adviser to the Center for Community News, convened the selection panel.

"The quality and quantity of nominations we received reinforced to me how much excellent community journalism is taking place throughout Vermont," Heintz said. "But many of these nominees are struggling to stay afloat in an ever-changing news environment. I hope these awards inspire other Vermonters to subscribe to, advertise in and donate to the essential news outlets that keep us all informed."

To ensure the selection process remained free from political interference, the statute authorizing the Local Civic Journalism Awards called for an independent panel to make all funding decisions. That panel included current and former journalists, as well as academics, none of whom could be employed by award nominees.

The event was livestreamed by ORCA Media and can be viewed at youtube.com/watch?v=wnF6N6Z1jf.

Paul Fixx is editor of *The Hardwick Gazette* and vice-chair of its publisher, *Northeast Kingdom Public Journalism*.



Hardwick Town Clerk Tonia Chase stands in the doorway of the vault on the Memorial Building's first floor, where a new, wider door has just been installed, Thursday, February 11. The space was once filled with boxes piled on the floor that made use of the space difficult, she said. photo by Paul Fixx



With a new door installed on the first floor vault in the Hardwick Memorial Building Town Clerk Tonia Chase is ready to begin reorganizing to move little-used records there. photo by Paul Fixx

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Measles detected in Washington County wastewater

by Olivia Gieger, VTDigger

WASHINGTON COUNTY – Vermont health officials have detected measles in Washington County wastewater.

The finding triggered an alert to area health care providers, specifically those at Central Vermont Medical Center, in Berlin, to be on the lookout for the disease if patients come in with measles symptoms, which can include a blotchy rash, a high fever, dry cough and runny nose. Measles can be deadly, especially in children, when it leads to brain swelling or severe respiratory issues.

The detection spurs more frequent testing from the state, according to Rick Hildebrant, Vermont's health commissioner. The state health department wants to see if the case is isolated to one county or whether the disease is detected throughout the state, he said. The state's wastewater detection system collects and tests samples one to three times a week at six sites in Vermont.

The wastewater testing system is able to show the concentration of virus appearing in sewage, Hildebrant said. And though many variables can dilute what appears in wastewater, the relatively low concentration detected seems to suggest that this positive finding is probably a single case, he said.

Given the prevalence of measles around the U.S. and the world right now, Hildebrant said he and the state's epidemiologists are not surprised that the disease has been detected in Vermont.

More than 870 people have been infected with measles since October in a South Carolina outbreak. Across the border, Canada has seen a resurgence in measles cases so severe that it lost its official status as measles-free late last year.

The rise of the disease in the U.S. is correlated with a drop in vaccination against the measles.

The U.S. has seen an increase in vaccine skepticism and a

loosening of immunization guidelines at the highest levels of the federal government under the leadership of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who co-founded the vaccine-averse group Children's Health Defense.

However, on Sunday, Mehmet Oz, the Kennedy-aligned head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, urged people to "please" get the measles vaccine. "That's an example of an ailment that you should get vaccinated against," he told CNN.

Vermont has relatively high vaccination rates against measles, Hildebrant told VTDigger, but the rate is not at a level the state would like to see. About 94% of children in Vermont's schools are vaccinated against measles before entering kindergarten, according to the Department of Health's website, but to reach true, protective herd immunity, the state says that figure should be 95%.

"Measles is probably the most contagious illness mankind has ever known," Hildebrant said. That means the threshold for herd immunity is higher for measles than other infectious diseases.

Hildebrant said that lower vaccination rate is "concerning" to the health department, especially since it may be an indicator of the choices younger parents are making.

Still, he said that the most recent detection is not something people should "freak out" over.

The wastewater finding is yet another reason for parents to vaccinate their children against the disease and, if they can, breast-feed their babies too young to be eligible for the vaccine, since breast milk can convey some immunity, according to Hildebrant.

The state's wastewater testing for measles started in the summer, Hildebrant said, making this alert the first time that the testing has yielded a positive result.

"It means our early warning systems are working," Hildebrant told VTDigger.

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Act 250 overhaul takes shape, but questions remain

by Carly Berlin, VTDigger

MONTPELIER – When Act 181 passed, its supporters framed it as a “grand bargain” between housing proponents and environmentalists that would rebalance Vermont’s land-use regulations for the 21st century.

The act sought to lift Act 250 regulations in areas that are already developed to spur more housing during a crushing home shortage, while bolstering protections for sensitive ecosystems.

As new maps that will dictate development begin to materialize, a growing chorus of critics are questioning whether the promise of the two-year-old reform effort will be realized. Many argue that on balance, current draft maps skew too heavily toward preserving land and will hinder homebuilding. And they are calling on legislators to reopen a thorny land-use debate that some leaders are hesitant to revisit.

“We’re at the point now where we’re grappling with: are we actually going to seize (the) opportunity and actually increase housing opportunity, or are we going to squander it and end up with areas that are much smaller and weaker than they should be?” said Miro Weinberger, executive chair of Let’s Build Homes, a pro-housing advocacy group.

Those who want to amend Act 181 join its loudest and longest-standing detractor, Republican Gov. Phil Scott, who throughout the 2024 legislative session called the legislation “a conservation bill” that didn’t go far enough to promote housing development, especially in rural areas. Scott vetoed the bill but Democrats, who at the time enjoyed a supermajority in the Legislature, overrode the veto.

This year, Scott’s messaging remains largely the same. He is asking lawmakers to make it easier for towns to achieve exemptions to Act 250, including by making that status the default in areas that planners deem eligible rather than requiring that municipalities opt in. In Chittenden County, Vermont’s population center, a third of the towns the regional planning commission designated as potential “Tier 1B” exemption areas have so far chosen not to get the status.

Scott is also calling on legislators to repeal the “road rule,” which would mandate Act 250 review any time a private entity seeks to build a road longer than 800 feet. The rule is expected to apply to most land in the state and is intended to prevent the fragmentation of

forests. When asked why he wants to roll back the rule, which is set to kick in this summer, Scott said he doesn’t buy its stated purpose.

“I have a driveway that’s 800 feet,” Scott told reporters at a press conference on Wednesday. “I’ve seen an increase in the number of wildlife . . . crossing my property, from deer, and bear, and porcupines, and turkey, and snapping turtles, and painted turtles, and osprey. It’s like a nature preserve there.”

Other reform proposals circling around the Statehouse don’t go as far as repealing pieces of the landmark 2024 act. A bill advanced by members of the House’s rural caucus would instead slow down its implementation and launch a public information campaign to impacted landowners.

The bill, H.730, would require the state to send out notices to property owners who might be impacted by beefed-up environmental protections in Act 181. That’s something Rep. Laura Sibilia, I-Dover, the bill’s primary sponsor, views as necessary since the legislation will alter what many landowners will be able to do with their land, and many aren’t aware, she said.

“If you have enough money and enough patience and the ability to get good legal representation, you can build just about wherever you want in this state,” Sibilia said. “If you are my next door neighbor whose family has lived on the land for 100 years . . . and you want to give your kid a piece of that land and allow them to build a road, you may not be able to afford the engineering that’s necessary, the permitting that’s necessary. You may not even know that it’s necessary.”

In the meantime, rural landowners and municipal officials are registering their concerns about preliminary maps and rules for “Tier 3,” the areas where the Land Use Review Board, the body that oversees Act 250, has suggested strengthened protections for rare and fragile ecosystems.

“We hear concerns like, ‘We will be frozen in amber,’” said Samantha Sheehan, a lobbyist for the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Land Use Review Board members have said they are taking concerns like these seriously as they prepare the map’s next revision.

Heading into this year’s legislative session, some leaders signaled that they would prefer to watch the reforms of the last few years play out.

“(Act 250) has been, I think, demonized to a certain extent over the last 10 or 15 years,” said Senate President Pro Tempore Phil



Sen. Anne Watson, D-Washington, chair of the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee, left, confers with Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Baruth, D-Chittenden Central, at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Feb. 25, 2025.

photo by Glenn Russell, VTDigger

Baruth, D/P-Chittenden Central, in a “Vermont This Week” round table last month. “What we’ve done in the last three years on Act 250 is more reform than anybody thought possible, and it should be given its time to work.”

Others have shown more willingness to return to the conversation to a point. Sen. Anne Watson, D/P-Washington, who chairs the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee, a key way-station for any debates over Act 250, said she would consider lengthening timelines for the road rule and Tier 3 to give the state’s mapping process more time to play out.

Watson would also look at extending temporary exemptions

for housing enacted in Act 181, she said. Those carve-outs quickly bore results, and both the Scott administration and rural lawmakers have vied for them to remain in place longer. Fully repealing the road rule, though, would be a deal-breaker, Watson said.

Watson still holds onto the core vision of the Act 250 reform effort. “I strongly believe that we can both build more housing and protect the environment: that these things do not need to be in conflict with each other,” she said.

This story, by Report for America corps member Carly Berlin, was produced through a partnership between VTDigger and Vermont Public.

Area representatives support extending Act 181 implementation

by Paul Fixx

MONTPELIER - Individual members of the Vermont tri-partisan Rural Caucus met in the Vermont Statehouse Cedar Creek Room to call for passage of H.730, which would extend the implementation timeline for Act 181, aligning local and regional mapping with the Land Use Review Board (LURB) rulemaking process.

“While Act 181 moves forward, rural homeowners, taxpayers, town officials and planners must have the opportunity to engage and to understand the draft rules for Tier 3 and the Road Rule before new Act 250 jurisdiction takes effect,” their announcement said. Speakers planned to emphasize the need for clarity, fairness and timely legislative action.

The gathering emphasized support for a February 6 letter addressed to Speaker Krowinski and Chair Sheldon.

Representatives Greg Burt, Leanne Harple and Dan Noyes in The Gazette’s coverage area

signed in support of the initiative.

“We are writing as individual

members of the Rural Caucus regarding the recently introduced bill H.730 which addresses process, implementation timelines and notice provisions related to Act 181 of 2024,” they wrote.

“As things stand, Vermont risks implementing consequential regulatory changes without the foundational mapping that communities, landowners, and municipalities were told would guide those decisions.”

The letter suggests provisions in H.730 are reasonable, not rolling back or undoing Act 181, but better aligning notice, valuation and implementation timelines with where the process actually is today.

It will ensure affected Vermonters understand what is coming “and that regulatory triggers follow, rather than precede, the completion of the regional planning work the statute relies upon.”

Others signing the letter are Representatives Sibilia, Hango, Priestley, Boyden, Charlton, Felton, Greer, Higley, Lipsky, Lueders, Masland, Morrow, Nelson, North, O’Brien, Olson, Page, Sweeney, Tagliavia and White.

Library awarded \$25k in honor of 1975 Boston Red Sox

by Kristen Fountain

CRAFTSBURY – Library trustees joke that a recent \$25,000 donation “came out of left field.” But really the surprise gift from the Yawkey Foundation was more like a slow, high-arching pitch, a Lee-phas, specifically, 50 years in the making.

The foundation, started by former Boston Red Sox owners Tom and Jean Yawkey, made the gift in honor of longtime Craftsbury resident and famed lefthanded pitcher Bill Lee.

The celebrated 1975 Boston Red Sox team’s southpaw pitcher Bill Lee chose his adopted hometown public library as the beneficiary for the donation.

“It was quite a surprise, probably the happiest surprise the library has had in years,” said Alan Turnbull, president of the Craftsbury Public Library’s governing board.

Usually the foundation targets its tens of millions of dollars in annual donations to nonprofits benefitting eastern Massachusetts and coastal South Carolina. But 2025 was not a normal year.

From April to October, the Red Sox, along with the city of Boston and seemingly all of baseball-loving New England celebrated the golden anniversary of its 1975 American League pennant-winning team. There were museum exhibits, panel discussions and cameos by former players at games.

Lee, whose 14-year professional career began with the Red Sox, attended many of those events. The World Series that year played against the formidable Cincinnati Reds was a frequent topic of his and others’ recollections.

Lee started on the mound for

Boston for both Game-two and -seven. In each one, he pitched deep and left the field with his team in the lead.

“If I win Game-two, there is no Game-seven,” Lee said in a mid-January interview. “Game-six, when Carlton (Fisk) hit that home run of the 13th inning, the bells rang in New England for over 45 minutes, you know, that (next) morning, and we would have been world champs.”

But the Reds won both games, leading to the latest in a string of seventh-game heartbreaks for that era’s Boston fans.

Lee still speaks passionately about the talent of his 1975 teammates, and about the decisions by club management that got in their way.

“The ‘75 team, simple, we were good,” he said, making special note of the team’s two standout rookies that year, Fred Lynn and Jim Rice. “We were a stacked team for a while and we could have dominated the ‘70s,” he said.

His fellow Red Sox players were the first to start calling Lee “Spaceman” because of the non-conformist “out there” views he didn’t hesitate to share. But the nickname stuck with sportswriters in the 1970s and early ‘80s who rarely missed an opportunity to pepper their stories with his quirky quotes.

Lee’s pitching talent, unorthodox approach and lively wit continues to inspire media coverage. He has been the subject of several documentaries, as well as a 2016 full-length feature film starring Josh Duhamel that dramatized his final months with the Montreal Expos. The movie focuses on how his love of the game got him through personal straits and led him into the senior league.

For the 2025 season, at age 78, he was still playing with the Burlington Cardinals, alongside the city’s former mayor Miro Weinberger.

Lee took his own star turn in the 2024 film “Eephus” inspired by the deceptively lolling pitch he made his own. In it, Lee arrives mysteriously on a small town ball field, just like Shoeless Joe Jackson in another baseball classic, Kevin Costner’s “Field of Dreams.”

Still Lee said the Yawkey Foundation choosing to make a donation in his honor was “kind of unexpected, let’s put it that way.”

That’s because the idea came from former Red Sox president and current foundation board chair John Harrington. “He and I kind of had altercations near the



Bill “Spaceman” Lee visits the Craftsbury Public Library in the autumn of 2025. photo by Craftsbury Public Library Director Susan O’Connell

end of my career with the Red Sox,” he explained.

Lee was traded to the Expos in 1978, the same year as a transition in the ownership of the Red Sox franchise. The estate of Tom Yawkey, who bought the team as a brash 30-year old in 1933 and died still an active owner in 1976, sold to a three-way partnership that included Jean Yawkey.

“Tom Yawkey loved me. I loved Tom Yawkey,” Lee said. “We were close.”

Harrington, then Red Sox treasurer, became Jean Yawkey’s representative in team matters and was part of pushing through personnel changes. He went on to consolidate control of the team under a trust set up in her name and served as Red Sox president until the club was sold to its current owners in 2001.

With that history, Lee called Harrington’s decision to back a gift in his name “pretty remarkable.”

The library trustees feel the same. The nonprofit’s board plans to use Lee’s donation to increase its endowment, which now supplements the library’s budget by around \$20,000 annually.

“We certainly don’t expect to spend it all in one place or in one year,” Turnbull said.

The library, which reported more than 14,586 visits and

14,740 physical items checked out in 2025, provides collections and programming much greater than are typical in such a small town, he said. In recent years, a town contribution has covered just around one-third of the organization’s annual \$150,000 budget.

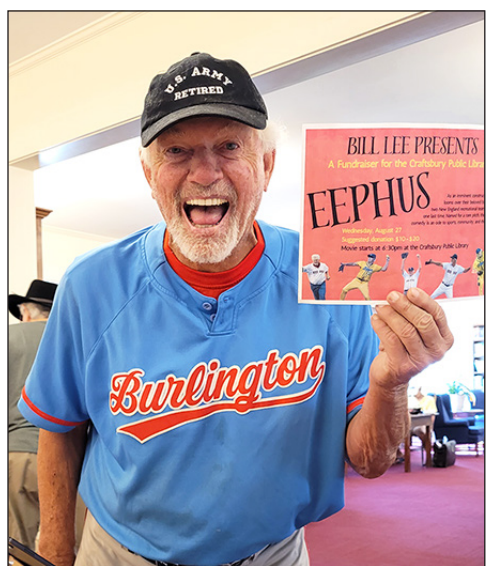
Increasing the size of the endowment will allow the library to continue to be an “outsized presence” in the town for years to come. ““We want to be able to maintain that without burdening the taxpayers,” Turnbull said.

For Lee, the Craftsbury Public Library immediately came to mind when the Yawkey Foundation asked where to send the gift.

The library, then in a much smaller, one-room space, was one of the first places in town he visited after purchasing property in Craftsbury in 1989. These days, he and his wife Diana can be found at the white clapboard building off Craftsbury Common at least several times a week. They use the internet to read and respond to e-mail, look up weather predictions, read the news and, of course, the Red Sox report.

He appreciates libraries in general as a bulwark in a fractious age.

“Libraries are sanctuaries for knowledge and peace,” Lee said. “We should embrace them more, all of us.”



Bill “Spaceman” Lee displays a poster for the film “Eephus,” in which he co-stars playing himself, while he visits the Craftsbury Public Library in the summer of 2025.

photo by Craftsbury Public Library Director Susan O’Connell

EDITORIAL

School PCB testing must continue

The House Committee on Education has discussed and heard testimony on H.542, a bill that proposes to end testing of additional schools for 8 polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

While the bill, introduced by Rep. Conlon of Cornwall, will allow remediation of schools previously identified to have unacceptable levels of PCBs, it will not provide funds for testing additional schools.

While the state has funds available to complete mitigation on public and approved private schools that have already been tested and found to have unacceptably levels of PCBs, there are no funds currently allocated to conduct further testing on schools built before 1980, which are most likely to contain the chemicals.

Conlon said it's an unfunded mandate if the testing requirement remains.

Only two schools have been tested in the 11 towns The Hardwick Gazette reports on. Areas in

Cabot School and Hardwick Elementary School were both tested to have levels too high to allow long-term student occupancy.

The 2022 discovery of PCBs in the Cabot School led to installation of air filtration systems and ongoing monitoring.

Mitigation work at Hardwick Elementary last summer followed the initial report of high PCB levels during air quality testing in 2022.

Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union's Director of Operations Joe Houston said, "The testing protocol devised by the state comes in two stages. Stage one tests the airborne PCB concentration throughout the building. They don't test every room, but break them up by the types of materials present and then taking samples from a percentage of each composition group.

"This first round of testing for Hazen would likely be in the \$20,000-\$25,000 range although there are a lot of factors that could change that number," said Houston.

"If the initial air tests show levels above action levels for the particular age bands, then all potentially PCB containing materials would be investigated and tested again by taking representative samples throughout the building. The cost of this operation would be dependent on the materials identified, but would be expected to be in the \$50,000-\$75,000 range."

"All of these values are based on the cost for Hardwick Elementary and then scaled up for the square footage difference between HES and Hazen."

That's obviously an expensive proposition, especially if the cost of testing the remainder of OSSU schools, including Lakeview School in Greensboro, Woodbury Elementary and Craftsbury Academy are added in.

Beyond the OSSU there's Twinfield, Wolcott Elementary and Calais Elementary.

What's the risk of not testing a school to the health of students there if it might turn out to have PCBs?

How is that risk to be evaluated against an obviously expensive testing process?

Houston's estimates suggest a cost of roughly \$100,000 to test Hazen Union School. If PCBs were discovered at unacceptable levels measures would need to be taken to relocate students until mitigation measures could be taken.

I suspect the liability of discovering there's a problem much later and potential lawsuits that might come from it are significantly higher than the cost of resolving high levels if they are discovered.

And, if high levels aren't discovered everyone's fears about them would be put to rest.

"I would not say that the committee yet has a common opinion on this, said Rep. Leanne Harple a month ago, "I seem to be the squeakiest wheel."

"This week, we heard testimony from Elaine Collins about how difficult it was to move North Country out into tents while mitigation occurred. I am not sure that most of the committee considers it doable to move whole classes out. But yes, the cost of health and life down the road should be strongly considered in this decision.

Harple continued, "One idea I brought up was in the future we could pass legislation that allows teachers to apply for this sort of presumed cause protection that firefighters have, which would essentially make them eligible for workers' comp if they got sick. They passed it for firefighters a few years ago. But then the chair brought up how

it would be impossible to determine if they got sick from school or apartments, or many other possible sources.

Concluding, she said "Everyone agrees that this is very complicated."

While the issue is most certainly complicated, I hope the Vermont Legislatures and schools arrive at a solution that prioritizes testing of chemicals linked to higher rates of cancer in humans over a current lack of funding.

Passing H.542 to avoid the issue because funds are tight is not the right way to handle it.

School PCB testing must continue.

Paul Fixx, editor

LETTERS FROM READERS

I am eager to contribute

To the editor:

My name is Joe Nudell and I'm running for a one-year seat on the Hardwick Select Board.

I grew up here and I'm running first and foremost to serve and give back to the community that raised me. I currently serve the town on the Conservation Commission, as the liaison between the Trails and Recreation committees, and I am eager to contribute in more and broader ways. I'll bring to the board nearly a decade of professional experience in public policy and data analysis, building tools that help local governments make fairer and better-informed decisions.

When I graduated from Hazen in 2007, like a lot of our young people, I moved away for opportunities elsewhere. I'm thankful for how that time away shaped my perspective and showed me what makes life in rural Vermont unique versus what we have in common nationally and globally. Still, I found it difficult to fully throw myself into life elsewhere: my heart stayed here in Hardwick.

As they say, there's no place like home. But coming back these days is harder than just clicking your heels. Housing costs are

high, groceries are expensive. Jobs are few and don't pay enough. Healthcare is hard to access and is some of the most expensive in the country.

Hardwick is an incredible community full of passionate, dedicated people who have worked hard to make it so. We are on a great trajectory with economic opportunities like the Yellow Barn and community investments like the beautifully expanded library. At the same time we're facing some tough questions: How do we keep preparing for future floods, but make sure we're still building more than we're tearing down? How do we get costs and property taxes under control but still provide the services and amenities we need? How do we steward the town so that younger generations not only want to build a life here, but actually can?

I don't promise to know all the answers today, but I do promise to do the homework, listen to all sides, and make fair and reasonable decisions to benefit us all.

Thank you for your time and support,

Joe Nudell
Hardwick

THE Hardwick Gazette Since 1889

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

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

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

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

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YANKEE NOTEBOOK

Would-be Thomas Paines

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – The so-called Founding Fathers of the United States of America were far from perfect. Compromised by various interests as they were, however, they were more aware of the various imperfections of the human character than might have been a band of starry-eyed idealists. Thus their legal productions are more reflective of reality than they might otherwise be: laws and amendments created in the finest moments of consciousness to protect us from ourselves in our worse moments.

In this year of 2026 CE, I give thanks to the fathers of our country, and to whatever other powers may be, for the two-year term of office of congressmen. Members of the House, as they're called, are supposed to represent the interests of their constituents, and the relatively brief term they serve doubtless reminds them of that fact. The recent spate of disruptive town hall meetings held by members of congress facing dissatisfied, agitated and angry constituents has given us a good look into that dynamic. Recalling the old saying, "It depends on whose ox is getting gored," we liberals have been delighted to see that most of the fiery rhetoric has been reserved for our Trumpian brethren.

Still, millions of voters chose him, mainly because he hated or at least disliked those we liked least and promised more than anyone in his position can possibly produce.

There's no doubt that many of us, perhaps even millions, have been looking forward to the mid-term elections, as they're called with that same anticipation reserved for an oasis in the Sahara. If the hammerlock on Congress can be broken in at least one of its houses, the dismantling, or at least the hobbling, of some disastrous policies can begin. The president has stated publicly that he will be impeached if his party loses Congress. The statement reveals exactly what ails his administration: he thinks only of himself. He says nothing about tax policy, or trade and tariffs, or immigration, or ICE, or his designs on Greenland, Gaza, Venezuela or Canada. His concern is simply and totally for his own image and comfort.

He shares that concern to some extent with many members of his own party who'd like to keep their lovely jobs. Sensing his weak-

ening leadership and fearing to be left alone and unsupported in their campaigns, they've found religion (as it were).

There's an old hymn that goes in part, "Like a mighty army moves the Church of God." As smarty-pants teenagers we sang, "Like a mighty tortoise moves, etc." Nowadays I often feel that way about the citizenry of the United States. Way back in Donald Trump's first term, it became clear who and what he was, and what he would be if he could. During his third campaign he was even more explicit about all that. But not enough people feared that more than the threats he described to our country: aliens, drug smugglers, gangs, rapists, murderers, Somalis eating the pets of the good citizens of Springfield. He was back, and feeling entitled and unbound.

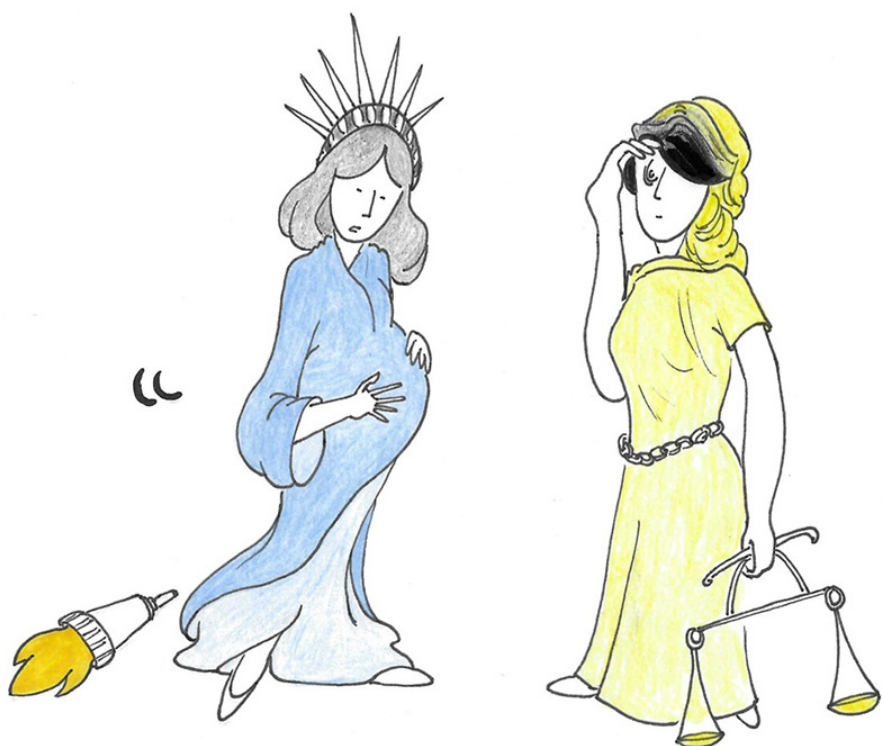
Still, millions of voters chose him, mainly because he hated or at least disliked those we liked least and promised more than anyone in his position can possibly produce. Untrammelled, he tore down a huge chunk of the White House, threatened NATO, plastered his name on the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, imposed tariffs on imported goods like someone playing red-light-green-light, wants Penn Station's name changed to, well, you already know all this, thanks to what's left of the various free media. And during all of this drama, utterly unprecedented in American history, he's seemed to be having increasing difficulty keeping track of his marbles.

This is where the slow-responding mass of American citizenry kicks in. As the media catch every tic, every purple bruise and swollen ankle, every nonsensical attempt at a sentence that ends up instead a tossed salad, every stumble on Air Force One's boarding stairs, awareness grows that something's missing upstairs. It's nothing new in governance; think George III of England, Ludwig II of Bavaria, and Peter III of Russia. But it's now, not long ago, and either hurting or threatening a lot of people (I just got a description of life in Minneapolis, where kids don't dare to go to school or parents to the grocery store. The good news there is that the citizens, with the help of the police department, have put together a support and resistance movement).

Frightened of what the government can do if it's turned against its citizens (even Vermont is getting ready for the arrival of the goons), emboldened by the obvious confusion and chaos at the top, and encouraged by the prospect of the election day now only nine months away, the internet is blooming with would-be Thomas Paines.

Admiral Yamamoto could have said it best: We have awakened a sleeping giant.

Woodsmoke by Julie Atwood



“EVEN THOUGH THE BABY WILL BE BORN HERE, THERE’S NO GUARANTEE THE CHILD WILL HAVE ANY RIGHTS.”

MEETING MEMO

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

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LETTERS FROM READERS

What next?

To the editor:

The Trump Administration wants information on most federal funding for 14 states and Washington, D.C. All 14 voted against the president in 2024. All but Minnesota are controlled by Democratic legislatures. Only Vermont has a Republican governor.

In a January speech, the President said, "Starting Feb. 1, we're not making any payments to sanctuary cities or states having sanctuary cities, because they do everything possible to protect criminals at the expense of American citizens and it breeds fraud and crime and all of the other problems that come. So we're not making any payment to anybody that supports sanctuary cities."

A January memo asks for details about grants, loans and other federal funds to those 14 jurisdictions and their local governments, institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations. The memo says, "This is a data-gathering exercise only. It does not involve withholding funds, and therefore does not violate any court order."

What comes next is unknown. It's the tip of an iceberg of efforts to deep-freeze dissent. Minnesota already shivers from ICE and Border Patrol actions that ended in two US citizen deaths.

Entertainment must conform. After the 2026 Super Bowl halftime show, President Trump slammed Bad Bunny's performance on Truth Social as "absolutely terrible," "one of the worst, EVER," and a "slap in the face" to the US. He criticized the dancing and wrote, "nobody understands a word." His anger seems

Select board supports Gordon

To the editor:

Chris Casey and I are sad to see Lizzy Higgins move on from the Woodbury Select Board after fulfilling her three-year term. She was a valued member of the board, learned well and quickly, and was a thoughtful contributor. However, the time constraints, balancing a busy career and family needs is difficult. We appreciate the time she gave to the board and know she will continue to be involved in the community in the future.

Meanwhile, John Gordon has agreed to step up to run for board seat being vacated by Lizzy. John volunteered to become the town's emergency management director after the 2024 flood events and since then he has worked to facilitate the buy-outs of two flood-damaged buildings in the village. He has

focused on using Spanish and celebrating Puerto Rican culture. Even children get trapped by attempts to erase the unfamiliar. Five-year-old Liam Conejo Ramos and his father, asylum seekers from Ecuador, were detained at the **South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas**, an ICE facility that holds many families with minors.

They were apprehended, in Minneapolis, when Liam arrived home from preschool. Liam wore his bunny hat, while ICE agents used him to try to lure other immigrants out of their homes.

Fred Biery, a federal district judge in Texas, let them go. Part of what the judge wrote is:

"Before the Court is the petition of asylum seeker Adrian Conejo Arias and his five-year-old son for protection of the Great Writ of habeas corpus. They seek nothing more than some modicum of due process and the rule of law.

"The government has responded. The case has its genesis in the ill-conceived and incompetently-implemented government pursuit of daily deportation quotas, apparently even if it requires traumatizing children.

"Apparent also is the government's ignorance of an American historical document called the Declaration of Independence. Thirty-three-year-old Thomas Jefferson enumerated grievances against a would-be authoritarian king over our nascent nation.

"Among others were:

1. "He has sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People.
2. "He has excited domestic Insurrection among us.

lived in Woodbury for 15 years (in two stints) has three school-aged children who are home schooled. His wife Cindy is also active in community affairs. In his day job John is the director of Adult Protective Services for the State of Vermont. When he has spare time he enjoys running, woodworking and construction projects around the house.

Please come to Town Meeting Day on Saturday, Feb. 28, and vote for John, and for Lilly Baron.

Lilly Baron, our new town treasurer, is running for the three year term. She took the job last winter, was elected for a one-year term, did a wonderful job and is now running for the three-year position to continue her valuable service to the town. The select board fully supports her.

Diana Peduzzi
Woodbury Select Board

3. "For quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us.

4. "He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies without the consent

of our Legislatures."

"We the people" are hearing echos of that history.

"And then there is that pesky inconvenience called the Fourth Amendment: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and persons or things to be seized. U.S. CONST. amend. IV.

"Civics lesson to the government: Administrative warrants issued by the executive branch to itself do not pass probable cause muster. That is called the fox guarding the henhouse. The Constitution requires an independent judicial officer.

"Accordingly, the Court finds

that the Constitution of these United States trumps this administration's detention of petitioner Adrian Conejo Arias and his minor son, L.C.R.

"The Great Writ and release from detention are GRANTED pursuant to the attached Judgment. "Observing human behavior confirms that for some among us, the perfidious lust for unbridled power and the imposition of cruelty in its quest know no bounds and are bereft of human decency. And the rule of law be damned"

Judge Biery added a photo of Liam, wearing his bunny hat. He cited two Scripture verses: Matthew 19:14 and John 11:35.

The first is Jesus Christ rebuking disciples: "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." The second verse is the shortest verse in the Bible, "And Jesus wept."

Peter Dannenberg
Cabot



The Hardwick Gazette's staff members Sandy Atkins (left) and Dawn Gustafson hold the \$5,000 Local Civic Journalism Award received in February 11th's mail.

photo by Paul Fixx

I encourage everyone to contribute

To the editor:

Gazette staff and board, congratulations on your award from the Vermont Community Foundation for local journalism. I am so grateful that the Hardwick Gazette continues to produce a

local newspaper.

I contribute regularly. I encourage everyone to do so, though you can access all they do for free. Look at HardwickGazette.org!

Lisa Sammet
Craftsbury

ANOTHER OPINION

A more affordable energy future for Vermont

by Peter Walke, Managing Director, Efficiency Vermont

The cheapest energy is the energy we don't use. This simple fact has guided Efficiency Vermont for over two decades. It remains critical for Vermont's energy future.

As Efficiency Vermont plans for the years ahead, we're listening to feedback from Vermonters. Our latest three-year proposal to the Vermont Public Utility Commission (epuc.vermont.gov/?q=node/64/205079/FV-PFEXAFF-PTL) is informed by surveys of nearly 900 residents and hundreds of businesses. That proposal sharpens our focus on affordability and removes \$3.75 million from our proposed budget.

Half of the Vermonters surveyed told us they believe the state is unaffordable. At the same time, more than 70% said energy efficiency programs make Vermont more affordable. Nearly nine out of 10 agreed that an independent organization like Efficiency Vermont is essential to reducing energy costs.

Vermonters know efficiency is a solution to high costs. Since our work began in 2000, Vermonters will save more than \$3.5 billion over the lifetime of the efficiency investments our state has made. Without these investments, our homes and businesses would be buying 15% more electricity than they do now.

Understanding efficiency reveals why it's one of the most powerful tools we have to keep energy bills affordable.

Almost every home or business in Vermont connects to our shared electric grid. It sends the electricity we need to run a refrigerator, control our thermostats, and connect us to the internet.

Making electricity costs money. Power plants burn fuel to generate electricity. Or they rely on sophisticated equipment like hydroelectric dams, wind turbines, or solar panels. Skilled workers ensure there's safe, reliable power at all hours of the day. Moving that electricity through transmission lines, poles, and wires also costs money. This network requires constant maintenance and investment. As electricity demand rises (utilitydive.com/news/iso-new-england-prepares-11-percent-rise-annual-electricity-consumption/747422/), expanding this system costs money, too.

When we pay our electric bill each month, our bills cover the costs of running the entire elec-

tricity system. Efficiency is key to keeping those costs low—because it's cheaper to use less electricity than it is to make and distribute more of it. Efficiency allows us to get more out of the system we've already paid for.

Efficiency isn't just about lower costs. It's about living better with lower costs.

It means a more comfortable home with more affordable bills through weatherization and efficient appliances. At work, it means lower costs and a stronger bottom line thanks to optimized equipment.

More efficient homes and buildings cost less to keep running. They're more resilient to extreme weather like winter storms or floods. They're better prepared to switch from fossil fuels to cleaner technologies like EVs and heat pumps. Efficiency lowers Vermont's greenhouse gas emissions, and reduces power use when the grid needs it most. That makes electricity cheaper and expands capacity for things we want, like more homes, new business opportunities, and economic development.

Weatherization makes homes and businesses more comfortable while reducing energy costs. That's why weatherization is a major focus in our new proposal. Federal funding has supported this work in recent years, but no longer. Vermont policymakers wisely devote our state's Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) revenues to weatherization. This provides critical, dedicated funding for this work. As other states look to redirect RGGI revenues for short-term initiatives, Vermont's approach ensures we'll continue to support the long-term affordability that weatherization provides. In our proposal, we'll bring the comfort, savings, and climate benefits of a weatherized home to more Vermonters with our rebates and programs. We'll also strengthen our partnerships with Vermont's Weatherization Assistance Programs by directing an additional \$1.5 million each year to support projects for the low-income households and apartments they serve.

The next three years also demand deeper investments in energy efficiency across Vermont's economy. We're updating our heat pump programs to deliver more comprehensive heating solutions. We'll also prioritize business projects with big impacts on our shared energy system, like improved industrial processes, refrigeration systems, and heating,



Efficiency Vermont managing director Peter Walke speaks at the site of a home weatherization project in Burlington alongside (from left) Rose Friedlander with the Energy Co-Op of Vermont; Burlington Electric Department General Manager Darren Springer, Weatherization Program Administrator for the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity Geoff Wilcox and Vermont Governor Phil Scott, October 23, 2025.

photo courtesy Efficiency Vermont

ventilation, and air conditioning upgrades. This will help businesses invest in improvements, while strengthening our shared energy system.

We'll achieve these goals without increasing costs for Vermonters. In fact, we've removed \$3.75 million in spending from our proposal. Streamlining our budget helps us focus on impactful projects while supporting affordability for all Vermonters.

By focusing on these goals in the years ahead, we'll continue to help Vermonters reduce their household energy costs. We'll weatherize more homes and businesses, support more cost-saving projects, and strengthen the investments Vermonters have made in our shared grid over the last 25 years.

But you don't have to wait: efficiency is a solution available today. Call 1-888-921-5990 to speak with our Energy Advisors about your home or business.

Everyone can share the benefits of efficiency—now, and with this new proposal, for years to come.

Peter Walke is the managing director, Efficiency Vermont. Those in The Hardwick Gazette's coverage area receive electric power from Hardwick Electric, Green Mountain Power, Vermont Electric Coop or Washington Electric, all of whom assess a surcharge for the service provided by Efficiency Vermont and in return offer services to residential and business customers of those utilities. Approval of the new Efficiency Vermont three-year plan by the Vermont Public Utility Commission can take a year or more. Those with questions or comments may contact the Vermont Department of Public Service, charged with representing the public interest in matters regarding energy, telecommunications, water and wastewater at publicservice.vermont.gov.

Heller's World by Joe Heller



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Exhilarating, sobering, mind-numbing, humbling

by Rep. David Yacovone

MONTPELIER – Serving on the Appropriations Committee can be exhilarating, sobering, mind-numbing and humbling all at once.

This week alone, close to sixty people paraded through our committee room to pitch their services for funding. Many of the organizations had been recommended for support by the governor, in full or in part, while others were omitted from his list entirely. In addition, thirty-nine organizations have signed up to testify at a public hearing, all

hoping to persuade the committee that their work deserves a place in the final budget.

Unlike recent years, there are far fewer one-time federal funds available to ease difficult choices. That reality sharpens every decision.

If the committee chooses to fund a program not recommended by the governor, it must cut something he did recommend, never an easy or painless exercise.

There is, however, one notable exception. When last year's budget was developed, roughly \$110 million was set aside to soften the blow of anticipated Trump-era

federal budget cuts. About \$75 million of that reserve remains available, and some of it could be used to preserve important services the governor has proposed eliminating to balance the budget. Still, tapping these funds is far from simple. They are strictly one-time dollars, available for only a single year.

Programs that support families at high-risk of infant abuse, which help seniors with complex health needs remain in their homes, or offer assistance for tuition loans for physicians and nurses, among others, would be grateful for temporary relief. Yet one-time funding can become a bridge to nowhere, offering short-term survival with little hope of long-term sustainability. Those are the trade-offs the committee must weigh carefully.

Beyond the hard budget calls, serving on Appropriations provides a comprehensive understanding of the full breadth of state government. And for trivia buffs, there are plenty of memorable factoids along the way, from learning that Vermont ranks as the seventh-highest beer-consuming state in the nation at roughly 35 gallons per adult, to discovering that lottery ticket sales run close to \$100 million a year. Of course, tourists may skew the numbers, but they still make for lively conversation and a reminder that in public policy, as in budgeting, nothing is ever quite as simple as it seems.

David Yacovone represents Lamoille-Washington in the Vermont Legislature, including Elmore, Morristown, Woodbury, Worcester and Stowe.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Fliegelman's thoughtful insight

To the editor:

We are writing to encourage everyone to vote for Larry Fliegelman for Hardwick Select Board on March 3, Town Meeting Day, at the Town House.

We have known Larry and Jennifer Fliegelman since they first moved to East Hardwick and have witnessed their numerous contributions to the village, school, and town communities. They first became engaged with the East Hardwick Children's Parade as parents, and Larry since has become a regular volunteer. As a long-standing member of the

Hardwick Planning Commission, Larry's thoughtful and informed insight has greatly shaped the group's discussions as it worked to improve the economic and social vitality of Hardwick, especially in the areas of increasing housing opportunities and improving pedestrian and traffic safety. If elected to a one-year seat on the Hardwick Select Board, Larry will continue to serve on the planning commission and act as the new liaison between the two groups.

David Gross, Tracy Martin
East Hardwick

ANOTHER OPINION

The Little School in Calais

by Jennifer Bliss

There's a little school in Calais town,
With creaky doors and swings worn down.
Not lots of kids in every class,
Some desks empty as days go past.

They count the numbers — one, two, three.
“Not many students,” they say sadly.
“Maybe it's time to close the doors,
There aren't enough kids anymore.”

Some schools are busy, bright and wide,
With many halls and doors inside.
Lots of children, lots to do,
With some faces every day feeling new.

They learn in groups both big and small,
With charts and plans to guide them all.
Good places too, in their own way,
Just different from Calais each day.

But in this school so small and sweet,
Everybody knows your name and feet.
Best friends share crayons, laughs and glue.
Teachers have time to listen too.

Imagination fills the air,
Recycled paper creations everywhere.
Stories grow bigger than any book,
If you stop and really take a look.

So if one day the lights go dim,
And Calais school must close its hymn,
Remember this, both big and small:
Learning is not numbers after all.

It's friendship, wonder, space to play —
That's what lived in Calais every day.

Jennifer Bliss and her husband and children live in East Calais

Heller's World by Joe Heller



OUR E-MAILS

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ANOTHER OPINION

River corridor mapping to break cycles of repeated damage

by **Kristen Leahy**

HARDWICK, GREENSBORO – Over the past few years, towns in the Lamoille River watershed have spent a great deal of time and money repairing roads, stabilizing riverbanks, replacing culverts and helping residents recover from flood damage.

In many cases, those problems were not caused by water sitting in fields or basements, but by rivers cutting into banks, undermining foundations and changing course. That reality is a big part of why river corridors are receiving more attention now, both in Hardwick and in neighboring towns such as Greensboro.

A river corridor is the space a river needs to move over time. You might think of it as a river's "wobble room," the area it needs to adjust, store sediment and find a more stable path down a valley. The size and shape of river corridors vary depending on valley shape, soil and geology, and a river's slope and width. Rivers are dynamic systems. They do not stay in one place forever, especially during large storms. River corridor maps are intended to show the minimum space a river is likely to need as it naturally adjusts over time.

This is different from floodplain maps, which focus on where water gets deep and spreads during a flood. River corridors focus instead on channel movement and erosion. In recent floods, many of the most serious problems in Hardwick were caused by channel adjustment, not by standing water.

Statewide, roughly 75 percent of flood damage is linked to unstable river channels.

We have seen this locally. Properties such as the Inn by the River and 41 Brush Street in Hardwick were located within the mapped river corridor but outside the FEMA floodplain. These same areas experienced similar damage during the 1973 flood. In both cases, erosion and shifting riverbanks drove the damage. Flood insurance maps did not tell the whole story.

River corridor maps are created by the State of Vermont, not by towns and not by FEMA. They are based on geomorphic studies that look at how rivers behave over time, including slope, sediment, valley shape and historical channel movement. Because those maps affect future planning and permitting, Hardwick has been working with the state to review and refine them using local knowledge and recent flood experience, so they reflect on-the-

ground conditions as accurately as possible.

As part of this work, Hardwick is proposing to adopt river corridor regulations in its zoning bylaws.

One question that arises often is whether the proposed rules mean people will no longer be able to fix or improve their property. In most cases, the answer is no. River corridor regulations are not intended to prevent routine maintenance or reasonable improvements. They are meant to limit new investment in places that are very likely to be damaged repeatedly by channel movement, and to avoid putting people in the position of rebuilding repeatedly in areas that are unlikely to remain stable.

Another concern is where permitting decisions will be made in the future. Under Act 121, the Flood Safety Act, the State will begin issuing permits in mapped river corridors by 2028 unless a town requests delegation authority. Towns that adopt and administer their own regulations can retain more local control. Towns that do not may see more decisions handled at the state level.

River corridor policies are also tied to funding. Towns that adopt certain flood-resilience standards are eligible for higher reimbursement rates through Vermont's Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund, which can reduce the local share of funding after disasters. Many infrastructure grants for bridges, culverts and roads prioritize projects that work with natural river movement rather than against it. Those funding rules affect everyone, whether or not they live near a river.

The purpose of this work is not to punish property owners or take away rights. It is to break a cycle many of us have watched for years: damage, cleanup, temporary fixes, rebuilding and then damage again. That cycle is exhausting, expensive and emotionally draining for the people who live through it.

For Hardwick, river corridor planning connects directly to recent experience. Buyouts, stabilization projects, repeated road repairs and emergency responses have all underscored how important it is to understand what our rivers are doing.

River corridor mapping and regulation are tools to help us make better decisions before the next storm, rather than relearning the same lessons afterward.

It also matters that neighboring towns in the same watershed are working on this at the same time. Rivers do not stop at town lines. What happens upstream

and downstream affects everyone. When communities take similar approaches, it strengthens their ability to protect infrastructure and compete for funding.

None of this is simple. That is why Hardwick and Greensboro are working to be transparent about the process and actively seeking public input.

For those interested in learning more or participating in upcoming discussions, the Greensboro Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on river corridors on March 10, 6:30 p.m. at the Greensboro Public Library. A representative from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation will be present to answer questions.

A public hearing with the Hardwick Select Board is scheduled

for March 19 at 5 p.m. in the Hardwick Memorial Building. It will be an opportunity for property owners to ask questions, raise concerns and better understand how the proposed rules would work in practice.

River corridors may sound technical, but the underlying question is familiar to many people in Hardwick and throughout the watershed: How do we reduce repeated damage while keeping our communities livable and affordable? This ongoing work is one attempt to answer that question honestly, based on what we have seen on the ground.

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

LETTERS FROM READERS

A rare opportunity

To the Editor:

Hardwick has a rare opportunity to conserve Buffalo Mountain, ensuring it is publicly accessible as a Town Forest forever, at little cost to the town.

The 329-acre parcel includes the summit and stretches of the Lamoille River and the rail trail, within ready access of the village.

The Hardwick Conservation Commission (HCC), working with Northern Rivers Land Trust (NRLT) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL), began discussions in June with owners Ken, Chris, and Margaret Davis. TPL now has an Option Agreement with the owners, who have taken the property off the market and agreed to sell it for \$530,000, a value determined by an independent appraisal.

The total project budget is \$810,000, including costs for the appraisal, other due diligence, and project staffing. A \$25,000 town contribution, three percent of the project budget, would be returned to the town as a management fund. The contribution is the subject of

Article 7 at town meeting on March 3. You must be present to vote on this article.

HCC, NRLT and TPL will raise the balance of the funds. Once purchased, likely by the end of 2026, the property would be turned over to the town to own and manage as a town forest.

After town meeting, a steering committee of interested community members will develop a management plan for the proposed town forest with community input about priority uses.

Two information meetings on the project will be held: Thursday, Feb. 19, the first at noon on Zoom, the second in person at 6 p.m., at the Jeudevine Library's Parker Ladd Room.

For more information, including registration for the Zoom meeting, go to the hardwickvt.gov/government/committees-commissions/conservation-commission/

I hope to see you at town meeting.

**Paul Cillo
Hardwick**

Cabot Enjoy upstairs bedroom-half bath in home surrounded by rolling fields. Host seeking guest with some daytime availability to accompany her outdoors as safety presence, lift-carry items, run occasional errands, provide occasional transportation. Rent-free with utility share. No smoking, no pets. Nut-free household.
802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application.
Interview, references, background checks required. EHO.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Hardwick Town Meeting returns to Town House

To the editor:

I would like to thank Ann Gilcris for bringing her concerns about the location of Hardwick's 2026 Town Meeting to the select board on February 5.

As a long-time board member of the Northeast Kingdom Arts Council (NEKarts), the nonprofit organization that manages the restoration, preservation and programming at the town-owned Hardwick Town House, I am very excited to welcome Hardwick residents back into this historic civic hall and beautiful theater. I believe the space will foster engagement and focus at town meeting while also being comfortable, convenient and accessible for everyone. However, the concerns Ann raised are real.

NEKarts and town officials have been in dialogue for years about the feasibility of bringing town meeting back to the Town House and, because of the many logistical challenges, we kept landing on no.

After many years of upgrades to the building, and a whole lot of creative thinking, finally the benefits appear to outweigh the difficulty. NEKarts has managed many full-capacity shows at the Town House and we have learned a lot along the way.

This winter, we met with Hardwick's town clerk and town manager's office and spoke with select board members, HCTV and Hardwick residents to figure out the complex puzzle of hosting Town Meeting Day. Together, we have come up with a solid plan to provide easy access to voting, adequate parking and a good old-fashioned meeting.

Tuesday, March 3, Hardwick's Town Meeting starts at 10 a.m., Australian ballot polling is open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The main parking lot for town meeting is on Creamery Road near the town garage. Additional on-street parking is available on Church Street and Main Street.

Parking spaces reserved for people with limited-mobility and "in and out" voters are at the rear of the Town House, accessible via Depot Street. The new entrance on the back side of the building is wheelchair accessible to the stage and main hall.

While we have a good number of volunteers, we do not yet have tons. If you would like to help on Town Meeting Day or have questions, please reach out to me at events@hardwicktownhouse.org.

With all that said, it's winter, this is our first year



Hardwick's 2026 Town Meeting, March 3 will return to the renovated and now handicap accessible building for the first time since 2006.

photo by Maya McCoy

back, and we may not get everything perfect. So please come, vote, participate and bring a

little patience and good humor.

**Maya McCoy
Greensboro**

FAUX GNUS

Recent executive odors (sic) by President-For-Life Drumpf (in case you missed them)

by David K. Rodgers

WASHINGTON, D.C. – #821,205 - I am officially changing my last name to the original spelling in German, which has an D at the beginning and an f at the end, namely Drumpf

#208,566 - From now on, Federal aid of any kind will only go to Red States, nothing will be given to Blue States that voted against me in the 2024 election.

#413,829 - I can bomb anyone anywhere in the world.

#326,507 - I am hereby covered by the Doctrine of Infallibility and therefore anyone who questions me is a heretic and will be dealt with appropriately by the Grand Inquisitor.

#610,748 - The Attorney General of the United States will be renamed the Grand Inquisitor.

#703,962 - The Moon will become the 57th state, after Israel, El Salvador, North Korea, Russia, Qatar and South Sudan (see previous installments of Faux

Gnus).

#379,095 - No Drumpf companies or properties will have to pay any Federal, State or local taxes.

#230,416 - The rumor that I have heart cancer from excessive hating is fake news.

#903,721 - The Library of Congress will be destroyed and be replaced by the Drumpf Presidential library, which will only consist of books I have written: "Mein Life," "The Art of the Steal and Multiple Bankruptcies for Fun and Profit," plus the Federalist Society's "2025 Project."

#730,981 - I will sue the Pope for 500 billion dollars because he said bad things about me.

#379,180 - Hungary will become the 58th state.

#531,963 - Ban the teaching of history and science in all schools and colleges.

#792,156 - "States Rights" applies only to right wing Red States but not to liberal Blue States.

#127,593 - My son, whatever his name is, will inherit the throne, in the unlikely event that I should ever die.

#991,003 - Kidnapping and disappearances without trial of anyone by Federal agents is now perfectly legal.

#906,85 - The report that I had surgery for foot-in-mouth disease is a hoax and whoever started it will be deported.

#813,270 - Greenland will become the 59th state.

#511,972 - For the Piecemeal (sic) plan between Israel and Hamas, Gaza will be turned into the World's Largest Golf Course, with 20 million holes, run by the Drumpf Corporation. Any people that may be left there will serve (involuntarily) as caddies.

#179,035 - I am establishing a

new religion so people can worship me, called Drumpfianity, and I will tear down the west wing of The White (Only) House in order to build a chapel dedicated to me.

#902,175 - I can arrest anyone who opposes me and charge them with domestic terrorism.

#380,574 - I am giving myself the Ignoble Peace (sic) Prize for having supplied the bombs that killed tens of thousands of people in Gaza.

#513,924 - Venezuela will become the 60th state.

Brought to you by the Cowardly Enablers for Drumpf, Starve the Children Foundation, Cheerleaders for Fascism, Megalomanics for Drumpf and the White Makes Right Foundation.

Remember: Satire is fighting insanity with absurdity.

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

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Glassblower is proud member of community

by Claire Charlow

HARDWICK – For nearly 40 years, Harry Besett has worked as a glassblower in Hardwick, where he makes art that is both utilitarian and unique.

In 1984, Besett and his wife Wendy settled in Hardwick, founding Vermont Glass Workshop where their pieces are commissioned, created and sold.

Vermont Glass Workshop once sold to “probably 150 stores and galleries across the country,” said Besett. Now, the couple’s primary presence is online, as well as at some of their favorite craft fairs.

When asked why glassblowing is important in Hardwick, Besett downplayed what he does.

“So, it’s not. I don’t believe that there needs to be another piece of glass made in the world,” he said. “It happens to be something that I do, that I try to do with the idea that people might appreciate it, enjoy it, like living with it, like giving it, and could use it.”

Besett said he tries to make glass that’s “more on the accessible side, that’s more utilitarian, but I also like to make things that are unique within the glass world, and that people can also appreciate in that way.”

Besett said he didn’t dream of being a glassblower. He was born and grew up in Baltimore, and said that he’s proud of being from Charm City.

Still, he knew from an

early age that he wanted to live in a place like Hardwick, after visiting his family’s property in Starksboro, and working on a farm as a teen.

Besett was introduced to glassblowing during his time at Hamilton College in New York, and began working for a glassblower immediately after graduating.

“When I started to see this whole craft world, you can live wherever you want and as long as UPS can come and take it away, and take it to the galleries you’re selling to,” he said.

“We tripped over our place in Hardwick, so it was random. But also I had some of the tools to appreciate an area like this because I grew up on my father’s and grandparent’s experience of Vermont, which was the Depression, World War II, small farms being driven out of business, subsisting on very little. And yet there was an integrity and I admired the people,” he said.

Besett’s artistic process starts with the raw material, often recycled glass from a factory in West Virginia.

“We start with a crucible of molten glass, it’s kind of like honey in a honey pot, and then you get it up to about 2,200 to 2,300 degrees Fahrenheit. Then you can reach in and gather it, much like honey on a honey gather.”

“We put them in a cooling oven that cools overnight, and then the next day we can come out and see what we’ve accomplished, whether we’ve filled the order that needed to be filled. And if not, we continue on, but that’s the process, using very traditional techniques,” he said.

Besett jokes that his favorite piece is “the last thing I made. And my least favorite piece is the next thing I have to make,” he said.

“Each time I start something, I don’t know how it’s going to turn out. I have a hunch, but sometimes those hunches don’t play out,” said Besett. “It doesn’t matter if it’s the simplest object or the most complicated, it all demands that I’m in focus, that the glass gods are aligning.”

Vermont Glass Workshop is a collaboration between Besett and his wife, Wendy, who has a BFA in ceramics, and works in studio space on the property. He said the most satisfying collaborations they do together involve her skills as an artist, creating landscapes that he incorporates into a blown



Harry Besett in his studio, finishing a glass before it gets set into the annealing oven, where it will cool overnight. photo by Wendy Besett

glass form.

“Somewhere between the two of us, we come up with something neither one of us could make individually,” he said. “They capture some of our sensibilities, in terms of our landscape and our place around here.”

When talking about his own upbringing in Baltimore, and his children’s lives in Hardwick, he said, “There is something fun about being from Hardwick. I’m not from Hardwick, but in the old days, folks would think it would be funny to tell me a Hardwick

joke, variations on a farming joke, you know, kind of a put-down,” he said.

“And I would be like, well my kids are from Hardwick,” he said. “[I’m a] proud member of the Hardwick community, proud parent of two kids that have grown up in Hardwick, and very fortunate and blessed to have been able to be here, and feel a part of this community,” he said.

Claire Charlow writes for the Community News Service, a University of Vermont internship, for The Hardwick Gazette.



Commissioned vase, “Dreams Persuaded, 1993, 12” H., private collection, designed by Wendy Besett and handblown by Harry Besett, co-owners of Vermont Glass Workshop. Their shop is open to the public for specially scheduled open studio events or by appointment, at 482 Mackville Road, Hardwick, learn more at vtglass.com, or email info@vtglass.com.

photo by Wendy Besett

Heller’s World by Joe Heller



THE OUTSIDE STORY

Phantoms of the North: Great Gray Owls

by Catherine Wessel

BURLINGTON – The great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*) is a northern raptor that only occasionally graces our northeastern states. Also called the phantom of the north, these owls have large facial discs with alternating areas of light and dark gray, creating a concentric ring pattern around their yellow eyes. Beneath their face is a white bowtie. Despite this dapper feature, the owl's luminous eyes, impressive size, and large talons give it a fierce appearance.

Great gray owls are the largest owls in the world, with females averaging around 28 inches long from head to tail feathers, and males around 26 inches long. Their wingspan can reach over five feet.

Despite their stature, these owls weigh only about 2½ pounds on average, less than both great horned and snowy owls. Great gray owls' hulking appearance is a trick of dense plumage which helps them endure cold winters farther north.

This circumboreal species lives in northern forests in Canada and the United States, as well as in Russia, Mongolia and the Scandinavian countries. Great grays breed in dense conifer forests and hunt in open meadows and snow-covered bogs. Their large facial discs help focus and funnel sound (much like cupping a hand over your ear), while the asymmetrical placement of their ears allows them to precisely locate the sound's origin. With this highly sensitive hearing, they can track

the movement of rodents tunneling beneath snow. Great gray owls hunt both by flying low over open fields and by sitting and listening in low branches or on road signs, before snow plunging; bursting through the top layer of snow to catch rodents in the subnivean zone.

Great grays can plunge through nearly 18 inches of snow, at times requiring the strength to break through a top crust that can support the weight of a 175-pound person.

The feat doesn't just require physical strength, but also a recalibration of where the prey actually is: the snowpack refracts sound, creating what researchers call an "acoustic mirage." A 2022 study published on this phenomenon in "Proceedings of the Royal Society B," found that the sound of scurrying rodent feet can be displaced up to five degrees from the actual location of the prey. The least distortion occurs directly above the source of the sound, which is why great grays tend to hover in place low to the ground before striking.

Their preferred diet consists of voles and lemmings. When these small mammals undergo population crashes, generally every three to five years, great grays may venture south en masse in search of food. One of the most notable irruption years was in the winter of 1978, when 154 owls were documented in New England and New York.

When great grays do grace our northeastern woods, they usually



Great Gray Owl

illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol

head back north in February and March. Males begin calling for mates in January and February. Great grays don't build nests, instead using tree cavities or nests abandoned by other raptors. Because of these nesting preferences, coupled with their size, great grays tend to thrive in forests with large diameter living and dead trees. In April, a female will lay two to five eggs, depending on the availability of prey, and owlets hatch a month later. Both parents hunt to support the young, though males do most of it during incubation and when the owlets are young. Black bears and great horned owls will sometimes prey on young great gray owls, but adults have no natural predators in North America. (In Europe, the Eurasian eagle-owl is the only

known predator of adult great gray owls.)

Adult deaths are often the result of vehicle collisions or of consuming prey that has been poisoned by rodenticides.

I have yet to see this graceful giant, and due to its elusive nature, I may never get to. For me, part of the magic is simply knowing that this phantom of the north visits our winter woods from time to time.

Maybe one winter, without realizing it, I'll pass beneath a great gray owl perched on a branch above me, its watchful eyes and powerful ears noticing everything before it takes to the air on silent wings.

Catherine Wessel lives in Burlington and is the assistant editor at "Northern Woodlands."

Twinkletaters by Diana Marie Clarke



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THE OUTSIDE STORY

Life beneath ice, snow: turtles in winter

by Loren Merrill

NEW ENGLAND – For hundreds of years, people believed that, come autumn, barn swallows would dive under the surface of ponds and lakes, swim to the bottom, and bury themselves in the mud for the winter. We now know better. Swallows, along with thousands of other avian species across the globe, undergo seasonal migrations and the idea of birds spending the winter buried in mud at the bottom of a pond seems laughable. But there are other vertebrate organisms that do exactly this: some water turtles, such as painted turtles and common snapping turtles, search out the soft substrate at the bottom of ponds, rivers, and lakes, and burrow down into the mud. They survive by dramatically reducing their metabolic rates, in some cases as much as 99 percent, which allows them to survive for months in low oxygen (hypoxic) and no oxygen (anoxic) conditions. This form of reduced metabolic activity in winter is known as “brumation” in reptiles and amphibians.

Other water turtles, however,

are unable to survive anoxic conditions and thus cannot bury themselves in the mud. Northern map turtles, for example, winter below the ice but do not shut down metabolic activity entirely. Recent research has shown they will congregate at shallow locations (one to two meters depth) near the bottom, where they spend months alternating between low levels of activity and standby mode. Northern map turtles, like most other northern water turtles, perform all necessary gas exchange through highly vascularized regions of their skin during the winter. However, if they are wintering in non-moving water, they can deplete the oxygen from the water surrounding their bodies, necessitating some movement. Smooth soft-shell turtles, for example, do push-ups when overwintering under the ice, and scientists speculate that this action breaks up the oxygen-depleted layer around the turtles. Similarly, northern map turtles occasionally move around, presumably to disturb the hypoxic water layer. Researchers also theorize the turtles may be congregating in areas with rela-



Overwintering turtles

tively higher dissolved oxygen levels, which helps them meet their oxygen needs.

Unlike their water-inhabiting cousins, eastern box turtles spend the winter on land in shallow burrows. These burrows provide some degree of protection against the cold, but researchers have found that the turtles may still experience subfreezing conditions.

Eastern box turtles have a few tricks tucked up their shells for coping with this challenge; they can supercool their bodies to approximately 30 degrees Fahrenheit for short periods of time, and when temperatures drop sufficiently low, they can withstand having their bodies freeze, like wood frogs. In both species, this feat is accomplished by shunting much of the water in their bodies into extracellular spaces and flooding their cells with glucose. These actions protect the cells from freezing, which would lead to the death of the animal. Wood frogs can freeze solid for an entire winter, all organs going into a state of suspended animation, including the heart. The freeze-tolerance capabilities of wild box turtles are not well known at this point, but a laboratory study published in the “Journal of Experimental Zoology” in 1990 found that they can handle freezing for at least 73 hours, and that up to 58 percent of the water in their bodies can freeze. Come spring,

these turtles begin making short trips out of their burrows to look for food, and to catch some rays.

Adult box turtles aren’t the only turtles to overwinter on land: in many northern species, late-hatched young remain in the nest through winter. Freeze-tolerance appears to be rare among turtles, so how do hatchling turtles that overwinter in the nest survive? The data are sparse, but many of these species appear to use one or more of the following strategies: they depend on conditions within the nest chamber to remain above freezing; they can supercool their bodies to temperatures below freezing (but only if there is nothing touching the hatchlings’ skin, which would induce the formation of ice crystals); or they have some ability to tolerate freezing for short periods (baby painted turtles can do this). Not all late-hatching turtles that overwinter in the nest survive – some do succumb to the cold – but it appears to be a strategy many species use at least on occasion.

It is easy to forget about the shelled members of the ecological community when we wander the winter landscape, but they are here, some enduring conditions as extreme as those of the imagined mud-bound aquatic winter swallows.

Loren Merrill is a science writer and photographer with a PhD in ecology. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol.

TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 33 WARNING FOR ANNUAL MEETING

The legal voters of the Twinfield Union School District No. 33, a municipal corporation consisting of the member towns of Marshfield and Plainfield, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Twinfield Union School in the town of Marshfield, Vermont on Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 6 pm in the Twinfield Union School Library, to transact any business not involving Australian ballot. Australian ballot voting will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, with the polls open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Plainfield Town Opera House, 18 High Street Plainfield, for Plainfield residents, and at the Marshfield Town Office, 122 School Street, Marshfield, for Marshfield residents.

- Article 1.** To elect a Moderator.
- Article 2.** To elect a Clerk.
- Article 3.** To elect a Treasurer.
- Article 4.** To hear reports of the Union School District Officers and act on same:
 - a. Clerk; b. Treasurer; c. School Board
- Article 5.** Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend \$8,756,753, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The Twinfield Union School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$14,941, which is 8.16% higher/lower than per pupil education spending for the current year. **(To be voted on by Australian Ballot)**
- Article 6.** Shall the voters of the Twinfield Union School District No. 33 authorize the Board of School Directors to hold any audited fund balance as of June 30, 2026, in a reserve fund to be expended under the control and direction of the Board of School Directors for the purpose of operating the school? **(To be voted on by Australian ballot)**
- Article 7.** Shall the voters of the Twinfield Union School District No. 33 authorize its Board of Directors to borrow money to pay its lawful debts and expenses for the fiscal year which ends June 30, 2027, in an amount not to exceed 90% of the anticipated collection of taxes and receipts of other funds to be used for those purposes?
- Article 8.** To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.
- Article 9.** To adjourn.

Patrick Healy, Chair
Reta Bezak
Kendra Padilla

Patrick Healy
Reta Bezak
Kendra Padilla

Erin Barry, Vice Chair/Clerk
Janna Osman
Sara Andrews

Erin Barry
Janna Osman
Sara Andrews

Received and recorded by the Clerk of the Union School District before being posted.

Erin Barry, District Clerk

Erin Barry Date 1/20/26

IN THE GARDEN

Gardening journal is a simple tool that pays off

by Andrea Knepper

FAYSTON – Many home gardeners rely on memory and tradition to guide the timing and layout of their gardens. People remember when lilacs bloom, know where to put peppers so they get enough sun, and estimate the optimal timing for fertilizing.

However, we don't have to rely exclusively on memory to get the best garden results. Even the most experienced gardeners can benefit from the simple habit of keeping a gardening journal.

A gardening journal can be simple or fancy. Use a notebook, a wall calendar or scraps of paper kept in a binder, or a simple composition notebook. The important thing is to record what happens in the garden throughout the season. Over time, gardeners notice patterns and trends that can help maximize time, efforts and yields.

A good place to get started with a garden journal is by recording plant varieties, planting dates and garden layout. This information can be especially helpful in future years when remembering the tomato variety a family liked best or where to rotate different crop families. Keeping track of weather can also help a gardener understand why a garden struggled or thrived. Over time, these notes can even help predict a garden's frost dates.

Starting plants from seed was new to me a few years ago. I kept track of my successes and problems and recorded new information I learned about seed starting in my journal. That level of detail, along with my personal observations, helped me refine my system and improve my outcomes.

A journal is also a great place to record harvest times and yields. The information on seed packets provides helpful guidelines, but dates to maturity can vary depending on the conditions of a garden. Using a journal can support planning for future years, especially if a garden in a small space and rotate plantings.

After a few years of recording the appearance of pests and diseases, I noticed that tomato hornworms usually appeared during the last week of July or first week of August. With that information, I began checking my tomatoes more carefully during that time and prevented much of the damage I had seen in previous years. Knowing what pests and diseases might show up, and when, can help plan ahead, or, at the very least, when to be on the offensive.

General observations are another valuable idea to record. Gardeners may notice that one variety of flower attracts more pollinators than another or that water pools in a certain part of a



A gardening journal can take many forms, including a lined notebook, calendar, your notes slipped into a binder, and even a computer spreadsheet. Select the option that will best help record gardening information throughout the season.

photo by Debra Heleba

garden. These notes can help plan for garden goals and make adjustments to avoid potential problems.

Keeping a gardening journal is more than a planning tool. It becomes a record of a garden over time, documenting the growth of both a garden and a gardener. During the off-season, reviewing

notes, sketching new layouts, organizing favorable varieties and remembering gardens past is a relaxing and worthwhile way to stay connected to a garden and the growing season.

Andrea Knepper is a UVM Extension Master Gardener volunteer from Fayston.

**WARNING
TOWN OF DANVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Annual School District Meeting

The legal voters of the town of Danville are hereby warned to meet at the Danville School in Danville, VT, on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. to transact the following school meeting business:
Vote for the budget will be by Australian ballot. The polls will be open from 10:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.
Absentee ballots for voting for the budget may be requested until 4:00 p.m. Monday, March 2, 2026.

ARTICLE 1 To elect a School Moderator.

ARTICLE 2 To elect one School Director for a term of three years.

ARTICLE 3 To elect two School Directors for a term of one year each.

ARTICLE 4 Shall the voters of the Danville school district approve (Australian Ballot) the school board to expend \$ 9,118,457, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year (FY27) The Danville School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$16,471, which is 9.4% higher than per pupil education spending for the current year.



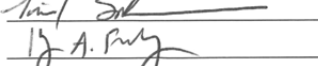


ARTICLE 5 Shall the voters of the Danville School District authorize its Board of Directors to borrow money to pay its lawful debts and expenses for the fiscal year that ends June 30, 2027, in an amount not to exceed 90% of the anticipated collection of taxes and receipts of other funds to be used for those purposes?

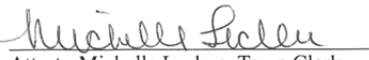
ARTICLE 6 Shall the voters of the Danville School District authorize the Board of School Directors to hold any audited fund balance as of June 30, 2026, in a reserve fund to be expended under the control and direction of the Board of School Directors for the purpose of operating the school?

ARTICLE 7 To transact any other non-binding business that may legally come before the meeting.

Dated at DANVILLE this 21st day of January 2026.

DANVILLE School Board of Directors

Clayton Cargill, Chair 
David Towle, Vice-Chair 
Eric Hewitt, Clerk 
Tim Sanborn 
Kay Freedy 


Attest: Michelle Leclerc, Town Clerk



Four 90 year olds (from left) John Elwell and Tom Twetten of Craftsbury; Nat Smith and Janet Lyles are gathered to play bridge in Greensboro. They all turned 90 in the last year and gather to play twice a week.

courtesy photo

OUR COMMUNITIES

Committee hears from residents, Feb. 19

by Michael Cerulli Billingsley

PLAINFIELD — The town has the resources to study the Great Brook with SLR Consulting who will be at the Plainfield Hazard Mitigation Committee meeting Thursday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m., in the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House.

Questions SLR can help to answer for the town and committee are: Can a flash-flooding brook and a town road with bridges co-exist in the same narrow valley? Will the Great Brook (or Naismith Brook,

for that matter) stay in place, or will it continue to tear out roads? SLR Consulting wants to hear from residents to bring questions, observations and ideas.

The meeting is sponsored by the Plainfield Hazard Mitigation Committee and Plainfield Emergency Management, and will be held in person or via a Zoom link to be announced Tuesday, Feb. 17, at plainfieldvt.gov.

Michael Cerulli Billingsley is the Plainfield Emergency Management Director

Knit mending workshop, Feb. 21

MARSHFIELD — February 21, from noon to 2 p.m., Sarah Graves will host a knit mending workshop at the Jaquith Public Library. Bring worn sweaters and knitwear to learn how to repair

holes and bring new life to winter clothes. Reserve a spot by email or telephone. For information call (802) 426-3581, email jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com or visit the website jaquithpubliclibrary.org

Fiber arts club, Feb. 21

WOODBURY — On Saturday Feb. 21, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., the fiber arts club, the Loose Ends, will meet and host a hands-on presentation on punch needle hooking from 11 a.m. to

noon with Alfredo Ratinoff, a ceramic, textile and printmaking artist.

This is a free event. Please contact the Woodbury Community Library to reserve a space.

Woodard performs, Feb. 21

GREENSBORO — The Greensboro Free Library will host George Woodard for a talk, "Farming: The Greatest Adventure Nobody Knows About," Saturday, Feb. 21, at 4 p.m..

Woodard is an organic dairy farmer, filmmaker and storyteller

from Waterbury Center. Drawing from a lifetime on a Vermont farm, he will share stories that blend humor, family history, photographs and reflections on rural life. Audience members may bring copies of works for an author signing following the program.

Craft swap, Feb. 21

CRAFTSBURY — The Craftsbury Public Library will host a Craft Swap on Saturday, Feb. 21, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.. People donate unused and unwanted craft supplies for others to enjoy. Craft supplies of all sorts in clean and usable condition are accepted: yarn, fabric, paper, paints, colored pencils, rubber stamps, stickers, basket reed, candle-making supplies and embroidery kits are just

some of the items that have been donated in the past. Donations can be dropped off at the library from February 14 to 20.

On February 21, all items will be sorted and set out for perusing. Everything is free, and people do not have to donate items in order to pick up items. For more information, contact the library at director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org or (802) 586-9683.

Games fundraiser, Feb. 21

JOHNSON — Healthy Lamoille Valley (HLV) will hold a fundraising event February 21 from 5:30 to 8 p.m., at Jenna's House in Johnson. The first games gala fundraising event will be an evening of games for all ages.

Entry fee is a suggested donation. The entry fee covers game play, a costume contest, door prizes and snacks. A raffle of new and unopened board games and a used game sale will be held.

Volunteers are still needed to help before or during the event. If interested contact Coalition Coordinator Jessica Bickford at jessica@healthylamoillevalley.org.

HLV is looking for donations of games in good condition for the used game sale. Donations will be accepted at the Lamoille Family Center front office until February 13. Message Jessica at jessica@healthylamoillevalley.org to arrange drop off or pickup of donations.

Town government talk, Feb. 26

WOODBURY — A talk on town government for current and former town officials, volunteers and members of the public is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 26, 5 to 5:45 p.m., at Woodbury Elementary School and hosted by Woodbury Community

Library. A free meal will be provided, starting at 4:45 p.m.

The event will precede The Woodbury Pre-Town Meeting Forum, which begins at 6 p.m. Attendees may ask, answer and discuss questions.

Monthly book group, fourth Mondays

MARSHFIELD — The Fourth Monday of each month at 7 p.m., the Jaquith Public Library hosts a book group for adult readers. For

copies of the book, stop by the library. This month's meeting will take place February 23, with "These Days" by Lucy Caldwell.

Blood drive, March 3

HARDWICK — The American Red Cross will be in Hardwick on Tuesday, March 3 at Hazen Union High School for their next blood drive. Appointment times are from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.. Members

of the Hardwick Kiwanis Club will assist with registration and the canteen. To make an appointment, call 800-RED CROSS, (800) 733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: Hardwick.

CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT WARNING FOR ANNUAL MEETING

The legal voters of the Cabot School District, Cabot, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Cabot School Performing Arts Center, Cabot, Vermont, on Monday, March 2, 2026, at 6:30 pm in the evening to transact the following business not involving Australian Ballot. Australian Ballot voting will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, with the polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Willey Building, 3084 Main St, Cabot, VT 05647.

- Article 1. To elect a School District Moderator for a term of one (1) year.
- Article 2. To elect two School Directors, one for a three-year term, and one for a two-year term. (To be voted on by Australian Ballot)
- Article 3. Shall the voters of the Town School District approve the minutes of the March 3, 2025, Annual School District Meeting?
- Article 4. To hear a report of the School Directors.
- Article 5. Shall the voters of the Cabot School District approve the school board to expend \$4,792,620, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The Cabot School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of, \$14,629, which is 2.1% higher than per pupil education spending for the current year. (To be voted on by Australian Ballot)
- Article 6. Shall the voters of the Cabot School District authorize the Board of School Directors to borrow money to pay its lawful debts and expenses for the fiscal year which ends June 30, 2027, in an amount not to exceed 90% of the anticipated collection of taxes and receipts of other funds to be used for those purposes? (To be voted on by Australian Ballot)
- Article 7. Shall the voters of the Cabot School District authorize the Cabot School Board to hold any audited fund balance as of June 30, 2026, in a reserve fund to be expended under the control and direction of the Board of School Directors for the purpose of operating the school? (To be voted on by Australian Ballot)
- Article 8. To transact any additional business that may legally come before this meeting.
- Article 9. To Adjourn.

Dated at Cabot, Vermont Jan. 20, 2026

Ellen Cairns Ellen Cairns
Alicia Heber
Melissa Pratt
Chris Tormey
Jason Monaco

Attest: Betty Ritter Betty Ritter, Town Clerk
January 22, 2026
Date

Healthy Lamoille Valley

Games Gala

Play our Board & Card Games or bring your own!

New and Unopened Board Game Raffle!

PLUS Used Game Sale, Costume Contest, Door Prizes, Fun Snacks!

SUPPORTING PREVENTION THROUGH PLAY

ALL AGES WELCOME!

FEBRUARY 21 5:30-8:00PM

JENNA'S HOUSE JOHNSON, VT

Pay What You Can
Suggested Donation: \$10/person or \$25/family

THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS!

EDUCATION

Music students represent Hazen Union at regional festivals



Hazen students accepted to the Vermont All-State Music Festival included, back, (from left) Daniel Pougner, Ethan Gann*, Will Helms, Garrett Sisk*, front, Mary Rogerson*, Quinn Molleur*, Zedekiah Cloutier. Not pictured: Ursa Goldenrose. *Also accepted to the New England Music Festival

by Mavis MacNeil

HARDWICK – For Hazen Union senior Quinn Molleur, engaging in music has opened doors to travel and new experiences. Molleur traveled to Connecticut last March for the New England Music Festival, a competitive opportunity for high school students in the region.

“Not only did I get to go to a place I’ve never been to before, I also got to meet people from other states,” Molleur said of the experience.

Singing in a chorus of over 200 high school students “sounded fuller,” he added.

“It’s not like here at Hazen . . . in a bigger chorus, the sound has more potential.”

Music festivals offer students who sing or play an instrument an opportunity to extend their learning by participating in larger ensembles, and often performing more challenging music than in their schools. In addition to strengthening musical skills, students who attend festivals build community among creative youth across Vermont and beyond. Hazen Union School Counselor Dani Smith notes that “developing a musical practice helps students with brain development and executive functioning, so I strongly support our students accessing these programs in any capacity. I am so proud of the work our arts program has put into connecting our students with experiences in the broader arts world.”

The Hazen Union music department will be well-represented this year at festivals across the region.

At the high school level, students spend the fall months preparing for auditions to be considered for festival acceptance. This year has yielded an especially

strong showing of participating students from Hazen.

While Molleur was the only Hazen student at the New England Music Festival last year, he will enjoy the company of three other Wildcats, senior Ethan Gann, freshman Mary Rogerson and freshman Garrett Sisk, at this year’s festival, which will take place in New Hampshire. All Hazen students will sing in the festival chorus.

Those four are also among the eight students accepted to the 99th-annual Vermont All State Music Festival, seven in the chorus, and one in the concert band, which will be held at Missisquoi Valley Union School in May.

All 13 Hazen students who auditioned for the Northeast District Music Festival, which is held annually in Newport, were accepted this year, with nine slated to sing in the chorus and four to play in the concert band. For many students, including freshman Shilo Allen, it was their first audition experience.

“It was a little scary,” said Allen, “but I felt confident auditioning in a quartet, because there were people that I knew singing with me. I’m really excited for the festival. I’m excited for the music.” Allen has participated in chorus since her seventh grade year, and attended the middle school district festivals last spring.

Middle school students are selected by nomination for the two district festivals, and this year Hazen sent 12 students in grades 7-8 to the District Jazz Festival in February, and will send 13 students to the Northeast District Festival in March.

All festival concerts are celebrations of music and community, which are open to the public. For more information, contact Mavis

MacNeil (mmacneil@ossu.org) or school) and Thursday, April 16 Leah Gagnon (lgagnon@ossu.org). (high school), both at 7 p.m., in Hazen’s Spring Concerts will take the Hazen Auditorium, with an art place on Tuesday, April 14 (middle show in the library.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Free movie night, Feb. 21

EAST HARDWICK – On February 21 at 6 p.m., Touch of Grace Church will host a free movie showing of “David” (2025), with popcorn provided. Touch of Grace Church is located 104 Vt. Route 16.

Owl program, Feb. 22

ADAMANT – Ash Kerby-Miller of the North Branch Nature Center will present a program on “Owls in Winter” at the Adamant Community Club at 1161 Martin Road, Sunday, Feb. 22, 3 to 5 p.m., as part of the “Winter Sunday” series. The program is for all ages with free admission. For more information, (802) 454-7103.

“Woodbury Through the Eyes of a Forester,” Feb. 25

WOODBURY – Wednesday, Feb. 25, from 6 to 8 p.m., a presentation by Stephen Slayton will take place at the Woodbury Community Library. Slayton, a former Vermont County Forester, will discuss forest ecology.

“From Earth to Earth” screening, Feb. 26

HARDWICK – A short documentary will be screened at the Jeudevine Memorial Library on Thursday, Feb. 26, at 6 p.m., discussing natural burial in Vermont. Jim Hogle, Communications and Outreach Coordinator of the Vermont Forest Cemetery, will show the film that describes natural burial and its benefits through stories from the people who worked to make it legal in Vermont. A question and answer session with Hogle will follow the documentary.

This event is free and open to the public, accessible, and will take place in the Parker Ladd Community Room at the Jeudevine Memorial Library, 93 N. Main St., in Hardwick. For more information, visit our website at jeudevinememoriallibrary.org or call the library at 802-472-5948.

WARNING Caledonia Cooperative School District

Informational Hearing

The legal voters of the Caledonia Cooperative School District, composed of the voters of the Towns of Barnet, Walden, and Waterford, are hereby notified and warned to meet on **Monday, March 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Waterford School. Electronic access will also be provided** (meeting details to be posted separately) for an informational hearing on the following articles of business.

Australian Ballot Vote

The legal voters of the Caledonia Cooperative School District are hereby notified and warned to vote on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, by Australian Ballot during the hours indicated below, upon the following articles of business at the following locations:

Voters from the town of Barnet: Barnet School, 163 Kid Row, Barnet, VT, from 7 am to 7 pm.

Voters from the town of Walden: Walden School, 135 Cahoon Farm Road, West Danville, VT, from 10 am to 7 pm.

Voters from the town of Waterford: Waterford School, 276 Duck Pond Road, Waterford, VT, from 10 am to 7 pm.

Absentee ballots may be requested until the closing of the Town Clerk’s office on Monday, March 2, 2026. There is no deadline to register to vote. You will be able to register to vote on the day of the election. You can register prior by visiting the town clerk’s office or going online to <https://olvr.vermont.gov/>

Article 1: To elect a School District Moderator for a term of one year.

Article 2: To elect a School Director from Walden for a term of two years.

Article 3: To elect one School Director from Walden for a term of three years.

Article 4: To elect one School Director from Waterford for a term of three years.

Article 5: To elect one School Director from Barnet for a term of three years.

Article 6: To elect a School District Clerk for a term of one year.

Article 7: To elect a School District Treasurer for a term of one year.

Article 8: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend **\$16,854,093**, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The Caledonia Cooperative School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of **\$16,120**, which is **5.9%** higher than per pupil education spending for the current year.

EDUCATION

Helms advances to regional Poetry Out Loud competition



Poetry Out Loud winner Will Helms, who participates in band, chorus and theater at Hazen Union School, and interns for The Hardwick Gazette, rehearses for the Hazen Union Drama Club original play, "1924," produced in 2024.

courtesy photo

by Paul Fixx

HARDWICK – Will Helms, an 11th-grade student at Hazen Union School, has been announced as the school winner of the Poetry Out Loud competition held on December 23.

Helms will advance to the regional Poetry Out Loud contest, coordinated by the Vermont Arts Council and the Flynn, February 12 at the Barre Opera House.

"I actually didn't write the poems, but it was a wonderful exercise to try and bring these very old poems to life in my own way," said Helms.

"Memorizing a work brings on a very unique kind of connection."

Poetry Out Loud, presented in partnership with Flynn Theater Poetry Out Loud and the National Endowment for the Arts, is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great

poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country.

Since the program began in 2005, more than 4.3 million students across the country have participated in Poetry Out Loud.

Over 20 Hazen Union students from Public Speaking and World Literature classes participated in the school-wide contest.

The students recited works selected from a large anthology. Judges evaluated student performances on criteria including voice and articulation, evidence of understanding, and accuracy.

The National Endowment for the Arts has created free, standards-based curriculum materials to support Poetry Out Loud including a teacher's guide, lesson plans, an online anthology, posters, and video and audio on the art of recitation. The resources are available for free at PoetryOutLoud.org.

The Vermont champion will receive \$200 and will advance to the national finals next spring where \$50,000 in awards and school/organizational stipends will be distributed.

The representing school or organization of the state champion will receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials. The first runner-up in each state will receive \$100, with \$200 for their school or organization. The National Endowment for the Arts provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded and travel arrangements for the Poetry Out Loud National Finals. To learn more about the Vermont Poetry Out Loud contest, visit PoetryOutLoud.org.



Noah Peck (9th grade) and Ethan Hanson (8th grade) test the trout tank's water for pH and ammonia as part of their regular monitoring of the Hazen Hatchery.

photo by Lisa Stinson

Hazen Union hatches trout, new learning opportunities

by Hazen Union school staff

HARDWICK – Hazen Union School has launched a new trout hatchery club, led by advisors Chelsea Ross and Jay Modry, through the national Trout in the Classroom initiative. Students received their trout eggs from the Salisbury Fish Hatchery, delivered by volunteers with Trout Unlimited, on January 6.

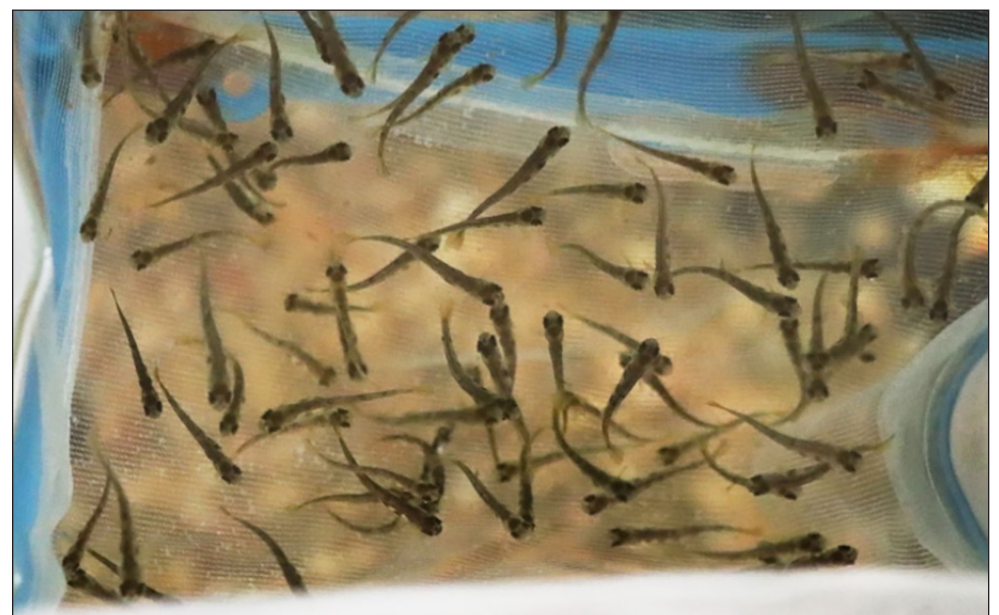
The trout are currently transitioning from the alevin stage to fry. The project was made possible by a \$4,600 grant from the Northeast Kingdom Fund through the Vermont Community Foundation, which funded the school's tank and most equipment. Twelve students in the club handle daily responsibilities such as water testing, feeding, and monitoring tank health.

The club is hoping to expand their work into a broader sustainability and applied science endeavor. They are exploring plans to design and build a hydroponics system that would support food production for Hazen's Recipe for Human Connection class, allowing fresh produce to be grown during colder months when the school's greenhouse is inactive.

Experiential learning opportunities are central to the club. This fall, students toured the Roxbury Fish Culture Station and Ross is currently coordinating with the Lamoille County Conservation District for hands-on water-quality lessons in Eaton Brook behind the school. Club activities reinforce scientific concepts and the ongoing care of the tank, water testing, system checks and feeding routines, develops transferable skills.

While the trout hatchery currently operates as a student club, Ross emphasizes that it offers meaningful opportunities for academic credit. "Students may earn science, public speaking, or elective credits by partnering with content-area teachers and Hazen's Flexible Pathways program to develop an Independent-Based Learning (IBL) plan," said Ross. Long-term plans include expanding the hatchery into a full science IBL course.

The Hazen community looks forward to watching the trout and the program continue to grow in the months ahead, with a trout fingerling release into the Lamoille River watershed to come later this spring.



Around 100 newly hatched trout swim in Hazen's classroom tank as students monitor their transition from alevin to fry.

photo by Lisa Stinson

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OBITUARIES

Beverly B. Shepard

HARDWICK, PORT CHARLOTTE, Fla. – Bev was the daughter of Dave Barcomb, the owner of Barcomb Motors, and Mary Christine (Geanette), a stay-at-home mom. Both she and her husband were natives of Hardwick, and always maintained their home there on Bridgman Hill Road, where they ran a dairy farm.

She was born on Feb 12, 1930, attended school, and graduated from Hardwick Academy in 1948. Bev attended Trinity College in Burlington, and graduated in 1952 with a B.S. in teaching. She took her first job at Craftsbury Academy, where she taught high school math, biology, bookkeeping, typing, and girls' basketball.

She married Wendell Shepard on December 19, 1953, and after two years of teaching, became a full-time mother and farm wife.

Bev and Shep were productive farmers and raised seven children in their little home, which Shep built. They were active in community life and in their church (PTA, home dem, CDA, also Marriage Encounter and square and round dancing for over 25 years).

In the early 1970s, Bev returned to teaching at Marion High School in Barre; however, she soon decided that she was more valuable at home with her family!

After retiring and building a little home (with a big view) on Bridgman Hill Road in 1992, they enjoyed a winter getaway to spend more time in Florida with her parents and Doris (her sister).

As time went on, they extended their visit to Florida, bought a small condo, and shared a second home with a wonderful new family of friends in Port Charlotte. Together, they enjoyed biking, swimming, shuffleboard, playing cards, and making puzzles.

After 63 years of special togetherness, Wendell died in 2017.

Bev continued to be blessed, and in Jan 2020, all seven children (as well as 90+ others) signed the guest book to celebrate her 90th birthday, and again for her 95th birthday in Feb 2025.

Bev has enjoyed many hobbies, including cooking, sewing, gardening, making handmade snowflakes, and her bounty of apples, which were shared and appreciated by many. She was also remembered for her annual family photos and Christmas letters, which included updates on her extended family. Their travels



Beverly B. Shepard

included Australia, Alaska, Bermuda, Hawaii, Italy and many boat rides on Lake Eligo at their beloved camp. She organized reunions (class and family) and loved to keep in touch with her family and many friends. She truly intended to enjoy each day for whatever was offered.

Beverly died after a brief illness, at age 96, on February 13, at home in her condo in Florida surrounded with her loving family.

She is survived by her seven children and spouses: Wendy Shepard, (Baltimore, Md.); Sherry Berard, (Paul Berard, pre-deceased 1994, Dalton, Ga.); Stephen Shepard, (Gainesville, Fla.); David Shepard, (Johna Shepard, Hardwick); Kathy Sauer, (Greg Sauer, North Fort Myers, Fla.); Nancy Shepard, (Al Cockrell, Gainesville, Fla.) and Debra Scholefield, (Eddie Scholefield, Rosebud, Australia) and Baby Tami Shepard (pre-deceased, 1962). Her seven grandchildren and spouses: Rita (Eric), Michelle (Trevor), Christina, Joshua (Kelton), Jordan, May, and Bradley, and her eleven great-grandchildren: Patten, Piper, Logan, Mason, Isabella, Jonathan, Gabriel, Osborne, Finnegan, Colten, and Delaney.

A celebration and service will be held in Port Charlotte and again in Vermont later in 2026. Her family will appreciate notes at 19505 Quesada Ave., Apt LL108, Port Charlotte, FL 33948. Donations can be made to The Catholic Daughters of America (Hardwick Chapter Court St. Veronica #1273, c/o Debbie Brown Regent, P.O. Box 288, Hardwick, VT 05843) in her name.

Arrangements are in the care of Northern Vermont Funeral Service, 60 Elm Street, Hardwick.

Betty J. Dukette

HARDWICK – Betty Jean (Ainsworth) Dukette, 94, of Hardwick, passed away peacefully on February 14, at the Woodridge Nursing Home in Berlin.

Born July 11, 1931, in Greensboro Bend, she was the daughter of the late Howard and Gladys (Bell) Ainsworth.

She attended school in West Danville for eight years and graduated from Danville High School in June 1949, as valedictorian of her class. She attended Lyndon State College for one year and then went to work in the Danville General Store.

She is predeceased by husbands Elwyn John Hovey and Everett Paul Dukette, daughter Mary Jean (Hovey) Jones, and son James Edward Dukette.

Betty was active within the United Church of Hardwick since 1952, serving on the Leah Marshall Committee, the Diaconate Board, Women's Fellowship, Circle No. 8, served in various secretary and treasurer roles, devotional leader and taught Sunday School for more than 39 years.

In addition, Betty was highly active in the Hardwick community, including starting a Girl Scout troop, assisting with a local 4-H Group, member of the American Legion Post No. 7 Auxiliary. She worked at the Hardwick Hospital, the Hardwick Academy as office secretary to the principal, ran a home-based Montgomery Ward sales agency from her home, and at Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union. Betty was assistant town clerk in Hardwick for more than 14 years, until her retirement.

Betty is survived by her son and daughter-in-law Marc and Denise Dukette of Vergennes; a son-in-law Peter Jones of Mesa, Ariz.; step-daughters Nancy Tassej of Calais and Mary Jo Dukette of Montpelier; two grandchildren Robert Benjamin (Ashlee) of Murray,



Betty J. Dukette

Utah, and Bonnie Benjamin of Mesa, Ariz.; a step-granddaughter Kristen Darcy of Montpelier; two step-great granddaughters Ella and Lily Darcy of Montpelier. She is also survived by nine great grandchildren: Aspen, Cy, Hawthorn and Hazel Benjamin of Murray, Utah; Jessica Benjamin, of Mesa, Ariz., Derek Dellarco of Mesa, Ariz., Amanda Benjamin of New York City, Owen Lamb of Mesa, Ariz., and Jayden (Benjamin) Alexander of Maricopa, Ariz.

Visiting hours will be held from 5 to 7 p.m., on Thursday, Feb. 26, at Northern Vermont Funeral Service, 60 Elm Street, Hardwick.

Funeral Services will be held at 11 a.m., Friday, Feb. 27, at the United Church of Hardwick with Pastor Avril Cochran officiating. Burial will be held later in the spring in the Main Street Cemetery in Hardwick.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in her memory may be made to the United Church of Hardwick, Lift Chair Fund, P.O. Box 396, Hardwick, VT 05843.

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

Northern Vermont Funeral Service

60 Elm St. • Hardwick, VT 05843

802-472-6861

Dian R. Holcomb
Funeral Director

PRENEED
PLANNING

Concert features student musicians, March 8



Elizabeth Reid

BARRE – The Vermont Philharmonic’s annual family concert at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 8, will be a journey through dance, with music by J.S. Bach, Offenbach, Prokofiev, Handel, Tchaikovsky and more. Conducted by Lou Kosma, the concert at the Barre Opera House, audiences will recognize Offenbach’s “Can-Can,” Khachaturian’s “Masquerade Waltz” and Angel Villoldo’s “Kiss



Michael Close

SPRING RUMMAGE

SALE

THURS., MARCH 5, 9-4; FRI., MARCH 6, noon - 7; SAT., MARCH 7, 9-4; THUR., MARCH 12, 9-4; FRI., MARCH 13, noon-7; SAT., MARCH 14, 9-4

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of Fire” tango among others.

In addition to the dances, the program features two special new works: Michael Close’s “North Star” was written for virtuoso violist Elizabeth Reid, who will be performing the work at the concert. Close is a cellist and music educator living in Worcester, and the senior composer-mentor at Music-Comp, for students in composing and arranging music. Grayson Eley, a freshman at Harwood Union, has participated in Music-Comp for three years. He wrote “Homecoming” to celebrate a place of physical or mental welcome called “home.”

The Vermont Philharmonic is celebrating its sixty-seventh year of making music in central Vermont. Tickets and information are available at vermontphilharmonic.com or at the door.



Polish musicians Jaroslaw Nadrzycki, Konrad Skolarski and Karol Marianowski perform March 1 at South Church Hall, St. Johnsbury. *courtesy photo*

Artists from Poland perform March 1

ST. JOHNSBURY – The Boarte Piano Trio will perform on Sunday, March 1, 3 p.m., at South Church Hall, St. Johnsbury, presented by the Northeast Kingdom Classical Series.

Arriving from Warsaw for their US tour, the trio, Jaroslaw Nadrzycki, Konrad Skolarski

and Karol Marianowski on piano, violin and cello, presents a varied program, highlighting a work by Polish composer Grzegorz Fitelberg, as well as pieces by Haydn and Debussy.

Ticket and program information is at nekclassicalseries.org or call (802) 748-9309 or (802) 748-7135.

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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 🎵							3 AM	
4 AM	Music Directors							4 AM	
5 AM	Softpower/Fulstories Prison Pipeline	Thom Hartmann Program 🗣️						Oldies Time Machine 🎵	5 AM
6 AM	Counterspin Green St. News	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Project Censored	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Background Briefing w/ Ian Masters	Woodsongs Radio Hour 🎵	6 AM	
7 AM	Curse of the Golden Turnip Alan LePage & Steven Farnham	Maggie in the Morning Delia Gillen 🎵	Eastern Dawn Luke Lampugnale 🎵	Portal Levi 🎵	Writer's Voice	Bike Talk	The Secret Sisters	7 AM	
8 AM	Democracy Now! 🗣️							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		Unshelved J Kramer	Modern Jet Set	The Metal Edge Willis Pratt	12 PM	
1 PM				The Rubber Room Dan Towner 🎵		Now Playing DJ Liu		1 PM	
2 PM	Swivel Radio DJ Effery	David Rogers Music Mix Hour	Straight Up Soul		UpFront Soul		Boxful of Blues John Foster	2 PM	
3 PM			Listen Up! Bill Nowlan 🎵	Adiogo 🎵		Hittin' the Note Bill Hahn		3 PM	
4 PM	ROTATING SLOT #2 (see below)	Trailing Edge David Ferland		Country & Western Sounds in Modern Music Barry Matthews	Law and Disorder		Acoustic Harmony Mark Michaelis	4 PM	
5 PM	Bon Mot Rick Agran	Project Censored	Economic Update Rumble Strip	Techtonic	Big Picture Science	The Friday Drive at 5 Corey Flynn		5 PM	
6 PM	The Good Ways Reggae Kind 🎵	Democracy Now! (rerun) 🗣️		Stranger Deinger	ROTATING SLOT #7 (see below)			6 PM	
7 PM	The Revel Level DJ EhMmAh	ROTATING SLOT #5 (see below)	ROTATING SLOT #6 (see below)	Woodwarbler's JazzGrass Brian Aust	Xav Wax Xav Jimenez	Spiral Galaxy Tom McMurdo	Jagler Katz Worm Hole Jason Hagler	7 PM	
8 PM								8 PM	
9 PM	ROTATING SLOT #3 (see below)	Deep Blues Les Mawson 🎵	Kozie Korner	Music as Art Uku Meri	DJ Eben Flow Eclectic DJ Eben Flow 🎵	The Meltdown KingTone	First Wave	9 PM	
10 PM		Blues Edge Les Mawson					The Beatdown Z-Point	10 PM	
11 PM	Deep Threes 🎵	Train to Skaville	Julian Taylor's Jukebox	Full Moon Hacksaw	Metal Radio DJ Eben Flow 🎵	And You Don't Stop		11 PM	

Rotating Slots

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Compelling opera performance at HCA

REVIEWS

by David K. Rodgers

GREENSBORO – Opera Vermont, from the Manchester area, returned on February 13 and 14 to the Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro for the fourth time to give a compelling performance of “La Boheme” by Giacomo Puccini (1858 -1924), music that combines the composer’s rich melodic gifts with his fine theatrical instincts in a plot full of passionate romantic love that coincided nicely with Valentine’s Day.

One of Puccini’s most popular works, the libretto of “La Boheme” was by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa and was based on the original novel of Henry Murger, “Scène de la via bohème”, written in the 1840s, and the opera was premiered in Turin in 1896, conducted by Auturo Toscanini. Here engaging humor alternates with tragic pathos in depicting the lives of poor artists living the Left Bank in Paris.

In this production, the orchestra was necessarily limited, consisting of eight musicians (piano, two violins, viola, cello, base violin, flute and clarinet), all very ably conducted by Calin Marcel Manson. Props for the act were minimal, but an appropriately visual background was projected onto hanging ships of cloth in varying colorful abstractions created by a local painter, Priscillia Heine of Greensboro Bend (who is currently having a show of her paintings at the HCA gallery), the colors corresponding to the emotions of the characters, with the videography and editing by Maria Maciak. Costume design and props and set design were Elsa Althoff and Sarah Spletzer. The stage manager was Katelyn Geary, the artistic director Joshua Collier and technical director was Matt Payne.

The opera begins without any overture, as Puccini gets us right into the drama, set in the first act as a garrete in the Left Bank of Paris on Christmas Eve, originally intended in the 1830s, but in this conception made contemporary.

Two artists, Marcello the painter and Rodolfo the poet, are complaining about the cold, as they have no wood for the stove, and they lack both food and wine. Brad Noffsinger Morrison as Marcello begins singing with a very commanding baritone voice having

an admirable depth of color and excellent projection, in connection with Brian Mengles as Rodolfo, whose expressive tenor has a fine range. There are delightful comic scenes as they attempt to warm the place up by burning several acts of a love play by Marcello.

Two other friends who share the garret arrive, the musician Schaunard, portrayed with great state presence and a very professional baritone by Darrell J. Jordan, and the philosopher Colline, well acted by bass Brian J. Alvarado with characteristic reserve.

Schaunard brings in bread, fruit, and a bottle of wine, and they all enjoy their temporary good fortune. Quite hilarious is next scene when the landlord Benoit, well sung and interpreted by Alex Karav, knocks on the door and demands the rent, but they drive him away by getting him drunk and bragging about his feats with women, to which the four tenants feign moral outrage as he is a married man.

Then three of them go out to join the Christmas Eve celebrations in the streets, leaving Rodolfo to try and finish one of his poems. He soon has a visitor from another apartment in the building, Mimi, sung with a great beauty and power by soprano Kathleen Echols. She wants to borrow something, but her candle has blown out and she has lost her key, yet it is love at first sight for Rodolfo. They have some particularly lovely duets as their mutual attraction grows. She is a seamstress who sews flowers; however she is already weakened by signs of consumption (tuberculosis). Together, they leave the garret to join their friends in the streets.

In the second act, they all take a table for dinner outside at the Café Momus, but their pleasure is cut short for Marcello when his former lover Musetto appears, a role taken by soprano Erin O’Rourke, with superb musicality in her voice as well as being perfectly in character, accompanied by her current wealthy suitor Alcindoro, skillfully sung by Alex Karav.

After testing Marcello to see if he still loves her, they become a couple again. All the Bohemians leave and Alcindoor is stuck with the bill. Ordinarily this is a crowd scene with a large chorus, including children and soldiers, but it had to be cut judiciously to accommodate this production.

In the third act, set in February in the snow by an inn at one of the gates of Paris, Mimi



The Opera Vermont company takes a bow after its evening performance of Puccini’s La Boheme, Saturday, Valentine’s Day, February 14, at Highland Center for the Arts, Greensboro. From left are Erin O’Rourke, Musetta; Brad Morrison, Marcello; Brian Mengler, Rodolfo; Kathleen Echols; Mimi; Darrell Jordan, Scaunard; Brian Alvarado, Colline; Alex Karav; Benoit and Alcindoro; Music Director Cailin Manson; Pianist, Maria Rabbia and in the front row Director Josh Collier; Visual Artist Priscilla Heine (from Glover) and Videographer Manka Maciak. HCA works on the sets, costumes and props in early winter and Opera Vermont arrives for a residency the week prior to the performances and for that final week the two organizations work collaboratively to finalize the show.

photo by Paul Fixx

and Rodolfo have parted due to his excessive jealousy, yet what is really hiding his deeper fears of her impending death and his helplessness to prevent it. This scene ends with a memorable double duet where Rodolfo and Mimi have reunited, while Marcello and Musetto argue furiously, a brilliant dramatic juxtaposition, well illustrating the old adage that there is no love without pain.

The fourth act is back in the garret with Marcello and Rodolfo, but soon Musetta brings in Mimi, who is extremely weak and failing. She is laid on a couch while

Musetta goes to get medicines and a doctor. Colline sings a moving aria with feeling, where he gives his old coat to Mimi to keep her warm. Her dying scene is deeply poignant, with Marcello expressing his terrible remorse.

The cast got a standing ovation for the appreciative full-house audience. All the singers were clearly enthusiastic in their roles and had wonderful ensemble coordination, which combined with their youthful voices and convincing acting transported us to another world. Let’s hope Opera Vermont continues to come to Greensboro.

AC/DC Tribute at the BOH on 2/28!

BARRE – The AC/DC Experience stops at the Barre Opera House on Saturday, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m. The duo, Dirty Deeds, performs with the energy of AC/DC’s Bon Scott and Brian Johnson era.

The guitar riffs of Angus and Malcolm Young, Dirty Deeds, recreates their stage moves, in a tribute to the rock and roll band. Dirty Deeds seeks to create an immersive, authentic and interactive AC/DC experience.

Tickets may be ordered online at barreoperahouse.org or call the Barre Opera House



Dirty Deeds, perform in an AC/DC tribute at the Barre Opera House, February 28. courtesy photo at (802) 476-8188. The Opera House, at 6 North Main Street in Barre, is handicapped accessible and equipped for the hearing impaired.

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EVENTS

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

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

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

Trail Camera Tips, 7 to 8:15 p.m. Webinar, register at bit.ly/4al9Bul.

Concert, 7:30 p.m., Vermont Youth Orchestra performs, well of the State House Chamber, Montpelier, Part of Farmers Night Series. Open to the public.

Thursday, Feb. 19

Informational Meeting, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Buffalo Mountain Forest proposal, Parker Ladd Room, Jeudevine Memorial Library, Hardwick. Online discussion, noon to 1:30 p.m., with registration information on the town website at hardwickvt.gov.

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union boys junior varsity basketball vs. Lake Region at Hazen Union.

Basketball, 6 p.m., Twinfield varsity boys at Northfield.

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union boys varsity basketball vs. Lake Region at Hazen Union.

Plainfield Hazard Mitigation Committee, 7 p.m., Plainfield Town Hall Opera House. SLR Consulting wants to hear from residents with questions and ideas about the Great Brook. In person or via Zoom at plainfieldvt.gov.

Friday, Feb. 20

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

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

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

Saturday, Feb. 21

Bowling, 9 a.m., Craftsbury Academy bowling team at Bowlerama, Rutland, independent tournament.

Craft Swap, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Craftsbury Public Library. Donate unused and unwanted craft supplies for others to enjoy. Information: director@craftsburypubliclibrary.org or (802) 586-9683.

Fiber arts, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Woodbury Community Library. The Loose Ends will host a hands-on presentation on punch needle hooking from 11 a.m. to noon with Alfredo Ratinoff. Contact the library to reserve a space.

Knit mending, noon to 2 p.m., Jaquith Public Library. Hosted by Sarah Graves. Reservations and information: (802) 426-3581, jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com or jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

Talk, 4 p.m., Greensboro Free Library, George Woodard presents, "Farming: The Greatest adventure Nobody Knows About."

Movie, 6 p.m., Touch of Grace Church, 104 Vt. Rte. 16. The movie "David" (2025), free popcorn provided.

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

Sunday, Feb. 22

Owls, 3 to 5 p.m., Adamant Community Club, 1161 Martin Road, with Ash Kerby-Miller of the North Branch Nature Center. For all ages. Information: (802) 454-7103.

Monday, Feb. 23

Death Cafe, 1:30 to 3 p.m., Hardwick Community Center, 58 High St., in front of the police station.

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

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

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

Karate, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., G.R.A.C.E., 59 Mill St., Hardwick, for adults, beginner- and advanced-friendly, information at (802) 282-8215, adambeckley87@gmail.com

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

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

Book group meets, 7 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, Marshfield. The book is "These Days" by Lucy Caldwell.

Tuesday, Feb. 24

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

EVENTS

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

"Woodbury Through the Eyes of a Forester," 6 to 8 p.m., Woodbury Community Library, presented by Stephen Slayton, former Vermont County Forester.

"From Earth to Earth," a short documentary discussing natural burial in Vermont, 6 p.m., Jeudevine Memorial Library, Parker Ladd Community Room, 93 N. Main St., Hardwick. Information: jeudevinememoriallibrary.org or (802) 472-5948.

Thursday, Feb. 26

Book group, 2 to 3 p.m., Cabot Library, "All About Me! My Remarkable Life in Show Business" by Mel Brooks. Information: cabotlibrary@yahoo.com.

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

Basketball, 5:30 p.m., Hazen Union boys junior varsity basketball at U-32.

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

Basketball, 7 p.m., Hazen Union boys varsity basketball at U-32.

Saturday, Feb. 28

Bowling, 9 a.m., Craftsbury Academy bowling team at Sparetime, Colchester, state tournament.

Saturday, March 7

Bowling, 10 a.m., Craftsbury Academy bowling team at Maple Lanes, Claremont, N.H., Senior Classic.

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 toward babies to 18 months. Siblings invited. Information at jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, (802) 426-3581, jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

Book-lovers Social, every first Wednesday morning, from 10:30 a.m. to noon, at the Craftsbury Public

Library. Sharing books, authors or books new to the library collection, no assigned reading. Tea and coffee, handwork projects welcome.

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

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

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

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. Qigong and Tai Chi, taught by Norma Spaulding and Paul Fixx. Information at (802) 472-8724, nspauld@gmail.com and (802) 441-4599, pfixx@pfixx.net.

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

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

See EVENTS, Next Page

TOWN OF CRAFTSBURY IS HIRING FULL-TIME ROAD CREW

Visit craftsbury.gov/resources/employment-application for an application. Job opening will start in the fall.

Competitive Salary \$25-\$28/hour & Benefits – EOE.

Contact (802) 586-2823 or craftsbury@gmail.com for more information.



The Craftsbury Community Care Center is accepting applications for several positions across departments, which may be combined for the right person:

Cook (Part-Time) \$18.50–\$22/hr.

Prepare nutritious, appealing meals according to established menus and residents' diets. Ideal for someone comfortable adapting recipes, multitasking and supporting coverage as scheduled.

Delegated Medication Technician (Per Diem) \$19.50/hr.

Provide hands-on resident care and administer meds under nursing delegation. Ideal for someone calm, reliable, and detail-oriented who is comfortable with responsibility and flexible scheduling. Potential to grow into part-time.

Housekeeper (Per Diem) \$17–\$19/hr.

Maintain welcoming facility by cleaning resident rooms and common areas, doing laundry and assisting with bathing. Ideal for someone who values resident connection, comfortable providing personal care, enjoys physical work, and prides themselves on being thorough. Potential to grow into part-time.

Learn more and apply: www.craftsburycarecenter.org/employment



Propane • Heating Oil • Diesel Heating Equipment Installations
189 Railroad St., St. Johnsbury, VT
(802) 748-8934 or (800) 222-9276

EVENTS

Community Dinner, noon, United Church of Hardwick, S. Main St., Third and Fourth Thursdays of the month. Call Denise Carr at (802) 472-3134 to reserve a meal. Take-out or eat-in. Donations appreciated.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Film Series, "Glimpses of a Maybe Future," 6:30 p.m., second and fourth Thursdays of the month, Jaquith Public Library, Marshfield. Information: (802) 426-3581, jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com or jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

Ongoing Fridays

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ongoing Saturdays

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

History book group, second Saturdays of the month, 2 p.m., Jaquith Public Library, Marshfield. Informa-

tion: (802) 426-3581, jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com or jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

VigilMass, 4p.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

Albany Library Writing Group, first and third Saturdays of the month, 2 to 4 p.m., Albany Public Library, 830 Main St.

Information: (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org.

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, 9 a.m., 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.

Sacrament Meeting, 9 a.m., The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Rte. 15 W, Johnson. Bishop Erik Worthington, (802) 326-3035, mormon.org.

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.

Worship, 10 a.m., and Sunday School, Albany Methodist Church, Route 14.

Service, 10 a.m., United Church of

See EVENTS, Next Page

Cabot Enjoy upstairs bedroom-half bath in home surrounded by rolling fields. Host seeking guest with some daytime availability to accompany her outdoors as safety presence, lift-carry items, run occasional errands, provide occasional transportation. Rent-free with utility share. No smoking, no pets. Nut-free household.
802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application.
Interview, references, background checks required. EHO.

EVENTS

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 United Church of Craftsbury, an Open and Affirming Congregation; Affiliated with the United Church of Christ. Handicap accessible, (802) 586-8028, unitedchurchofcraftsbury.com, unitedchurchcraftsbury@gmail.com.

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.

Service, 10 a.m., First Universalist Parish of Derby Line, P.O. Box 454, Derby Line, VT 05830, (802) 873-3563, derbylineuu.org, Zoom service.

Service, 10 a.m., United Church of Christ, 165 Wilson St. 802-533-2223, also online. Communion Service first Sunday of the month. Rev. Dr. Ed Sunday-Winters. Coffee hour following service. An Open & Affirming Congregation. guccvt.org.

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.

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.com.

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.

Service, 11 a.m., Trinity Assembly of God, Rte. 15 East, Hyde Park. Pastor Ron Doyle. (802) 888-7326.

Fellowship Service, 11 a.m., The Healling Stream Church of God, Wolcott Town Hall, Pastor Peter LaBonville, Wheelchair accessible.

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

Worship, 11:30 a.m., Wolcott United Methodist Church, Route 15.

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.

Poetry Readings, third Sunday of each month, 2 to 4 p.m., Jaquith Public Library. Each reading will feature two Poetry Society of Vermont poets. Information: (802) 426-3581, jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com, jaquithpubliclibrary.org.

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.



Homeschool Ukulele Class for Beginners attendees (from left) include Drift Sacco-Cohen, 8, of West Wheelock; Lyla Peltz, 9, of Woodbury; teacher Rachel Funk, Jeudevine youth librarian; Juniper Bandit, 10, of Hardwick and Elfi Goldenrose, 9, of Hardwick. The Jeudevine Memorial Library sponsored the class Wednesdays, from January 7 to February 11.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Ongoing Mondays

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Service, 6 p.m. Walden United Methodist Church, 109 Noyestar Road, handicap accessible, (802) 684-1201.

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

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

Ongoing Tuesdays

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

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

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

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

Exercise, 11 a.m., Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St., Greensboro, lead by certified AFE crystal.morrissey@ncvrc.com P instructor Alice Perron. Information esanderson@nekcouncil.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, (802) 635-0084.

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EVENTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Community Services

Aging assistance, Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging, St. Johnsbury, (800) 642-5119.

Aging assistance, Central Vermont Council on Aging, Montpelier, (802) 479-0531.

Community dinners, United Church of Hardwick, noon, third and fourth Thursdays, eat-in or take out. (802) 472-6566 to reserve meal.

Crisis line, 24 hours, involuntary custody screening, Lamoille County Mental Health, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., (802) 888-5026; nights and weekends, (802) 888-8888.

Food pantry, Woodbury-Calais Food Shelf, serving Calais, Woodbury, Cabot, (802) 472-6292..

Food pantry, Hardwick Area Food Pantry, 36 W. Church St., Mon., noon - 2 p.m.; Thurs. and Sat., 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. (802) 472-5940.

Food shelf, [vtfoodbank.org/nuture-](http://vtfoodbank.org/nuture-people/3squaresvt)

people/3squaresvt, (802) 855-6181.

Human services, Northeast Kingdom Human Services, 181 Crawford Road, Derby, (802) 334-6744.

Human services, Northeast Kingdom Human Services, 2225 Portland St., St. Johnsbury, (802) 748-3181, nkhs.org

Meals on Wheels, Greensboro Nursing Home through Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging, (800) 642-5119.

Meals on Wheels, Vermont Center for Independent Living, Montpelier, (802) 224-1825, melissa@vcil.org.

Mental health, Lamoille County Mental Health Services, 72 Harrel St., Morrisville, (802) 888-5026, (802) 228-0591, lamoille.org.

Mental health, Washington County Mental Health Services, 9 Heaton St., Montpelier, (802) 223-6328, wcmhs.org

Recovery center, St. Johnsbury Recovery Center, 297 Summer St., (802) 751-8520, recoveryinfo@stjkr.org, kingdom-recovery-center.com

Thrift store, Angel Outfitters Thrift Store, United Church of Christ, 216 S. Main St., Hardwick, Thurs., 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.; (802) 472-6800.

Veterans' services, Caledonia County, (802) 338-4324.

Veterans' services, Lamoille County, (802) 338-3411.

Veterans' services, Orleans County, (802) 338-4325.

Veterans' services, Washington County, (802) 338-4318.

Libraries

Albany Public Library, 530 Main St., Albany, (802) 755-6107, albanypubliclibraryvt.org. Mon. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Wed. 2 to 6 p.m.; Sat. 1 to 5 p.m. Story time for all ages: Mon., 10 a.m. and Sat., 4 p.m.

Brown Library, Sterling College, Craftsbury Common (802) 586-7711, sterlingcollege.edu/academics/brown-library, Mon. to Fri., 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Open to the public.

Cabot Public Library, 3084 Main St, (802) 563-2721, cabotlibrary.com, Mon., 3 to 6 p.m.; Tues., noon to 6 p.m., Wed., 2 to 6 p.m.; Thurs., 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m. to noon.

Craftsbury Public Library, 149 Common Loop, Craftsbury Common (802) 586-9683, craftsburypubliclibrary.org, Mon. and Thurs., 2 - 6 p.m., Tues., Wed. and Fri. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Story time, Fri., 10 a.m.

Cutler Memorial Public Library, 151 High St, Plainfield (802) 454-8504, cutlerlibrary.org, Tues., 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Wed., 3 - 6 p.m.; Thurs., 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Glee Merritt Kelley Community Library, 320 School Hill Drive, Wolcott, (802) 472-6551, Mon. - Thurs., 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Fri. closed; Sat., 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

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Hazen Union sophomore Kassidy Gann (No. 20) fights for possession of the ball during Cancer Awareness Night held at Hazen, February 11. She is surrounded by Paisley Cota (left), Julia Perron (center) and Braelynn Glodgett (right) of Lake Region. At back (right) is official Chris McFarlane. Hazen won 72-23.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Taylor Thompson of Hazen Union turns the corner on Lake Region's Rylee Knights followed by Ladycat Kelsie Rivard (left) during Cancer Awareness Night action in the Cat Den, February 11. Hazen topped their opponents 72-23.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Lumsden's sharp-shooting powers Lady Cats to three more wins

by Ken Brown

MONTPELIER – After a pair of lopsided victories over Montpelier and Lake Region, the Hazen Union girls basketball team battled to fend off fellow Division III power Oxbow on the road to run their record to 16-2 on the season.

Newly minted 1,000-point scorer Kelsie Rivard poured in 22 points to lead the Lady Cats to a 65-17 home win over Montpelier last Monday. Julia des Groseilliers controlled the paint with 17 strong points and fellow senior Isabelle Gouin added seven. Freshman Marina Smith (three points) buried a three late in the win. The Lady Cats started the game with a 20-0 run and pushed the lead to 32-7 at the break. Montpelier fell to 1-14 on the year.

Rivard pumped in 19 more points on Wednesday, and fellow junior Mya Lumsden buried a trio of threes on her way to a 19-point night as Hazen bludgeoned Lake Region at the Cat Den 72-23. Gouin got to the rim often for Hazen, finishing with a season-high 15 and senior Ari Nichols (three points) connected from long range late. Mya Patenaude paced Lake Region with eight points, who fell to 9-8 on the year.

Lumsden continued to have the hot hand on Friday night, burying three more triples on her way to a team-high 18 points as

the Lady Cats fended off Oxbow on the road 57-42. Coming off a 20-win season and the top seed in the division last March, the Lady Olympians limited Rivard to 11 points with relentless double teams. Autumn Dailey and des Groseilliers answered with nine points apiece and Taylor Thompson (6) was relentless on both ends of the court for Hazen. The Lady Cats took a commanding 42-30 lead into the final period before Oxbow made it a two-possession game late as the visitors struggled from the free throw line (10-21). Abby Longto led Oxbow with 19 points and Braylee Phelps added 12 as they fell to 13-5 and were swept in the season series with the Lady Cats.

"It's been pretty impressive this year watching this team grow and learning to trust each other. Kelsie has been and is going to be the focus of a lot of defensive plans, but that trust in each other has forced teams to pick their poison when they face us. We have plenty of players on this team now that have put in the work and are capable of going for 20 on any given night," said head coach Randy Lumsden.

Hazen remains at the top of the current Division III standings, followed by defending champion Windsor (12-5), Bellows Falls (13-4) and Oxbow. The Lady Cats celebrate Senior Night on Friday as

they welcome Montpelier to town afternoon. All home games can before wrapping up the season at be live streamed on Hardwick home against Harwood Saturday Community Television (hctv.us).



Ladycat senior Isabelle Gouin's shot is blocked by Rylee Knights of Lake Region during Cancer Awareness Night held, February 11, at Hazen Union. Following the play (at right) is Ella Renaud of the Ladycats. Gouin scored a total of 15 points. Hazen outscored the Rangers 72-23.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

ERIC HANSON'S SKI REPORT



Margie Freed of the Craftsbury Green Racing Project skiing at a World Cup Biathlon race earlier this season. Freed placed 21st in the 15 km race at the Olympics last week.

photo by Nordicfocus

Freed 21st in 15 km Olympic Biathlon Race

ANHOLTZ, Italy – Margie Freed of the Craftsbury Green Racing Project (GRP) saved her best biathlon race for the big time at the Cortina/Milan Winter Olympics. Earlier this season, she finished 31st in a World Cup race, but last week she hit 19 of 20 targets (another best) and skied to 21st in the 15 km distance race. After her finish, Freed said: “I have a lot of friends and family here who I know would support me no matter what, but I wanted to

give them a show today!”

Margie grew up in Apple Valley, Minn., but made her way to the northeast to attend UVM. In 2020, Freed was an NCAA all-American skiing for UVM. She then joined the GRP to continue her skiing development. While there, coaches encouraged her to pick up a rifle to see if biathlon might be another avenue to high-level racing. Two years ago, she made the switch and started training for biathlon full time.

Most athletes new to shooting take years to become proficient; Freed pick it up

quickly and last winter raced for the U.S. Biathlon team all winter after just one year. Now in her second year, she reached some dreams by even going to the Olympics. And then she had her best race under the most pressure and biggest audience. She skied in the mixed relay and the sprint race most recently at the Olympics, where she hit seven of 10 placing 64th. Consistency will be a major thing for her to work on in the coming years. On February 18, she'll be racing in the women's 4x6 km relay.

Ben Ogden of Landgrove, Vt., skied to a silver medal in the classic sprint race. Ogden, also a UVM graduate, has skied plenty of races in Craftsbury ever since he was child just getting into ski racing. Ogden is only the second U.S. male skier ever to medal, with Bill Koch taking a silver back in 1976.

Jack Young of the GRP is currently an alternate on the U.S. men's cross country ski team. If the sprint race had been a free-style race (skating), he would have been a starter. This year the race was classic technique where Ogden tends to do really well (and he did). Jake Brown is also in Italy as an alternate for the U.S. Biathlon squad.

Two Craftsbury Junior Skiers Qualify for U.S. Junior Nationals

HANOVER, N.H. – The fourth and final Eastern Cup race weekend took place at Oak Hill Ski Center this past Saturday and Sunday. Craftsbury Ski Club's Isaac Nadzam placed 3rd in the sprint and 4th in the mass start races to solidify his spot on the New England team headed to U.S. Junior National ski races at Cable, Wis., in March. The top six Under 16 (U16) boys all qualified and Nadzam was ranked 3rd after eight races. Claire Serrano also qualified for the team in the U18/U20 age class.



Craftsbury Ski Club's Isaac Nadzam placed 3rd in the sprint and 4th in the mass start races.

courtesy photo
Craftsbury Outdoor Center

Lamarre leads Hazen boys to top spot in division standings

by Ken Brown

NEWPORT – Jameson Lamarre continued his breakout junior campaign, leading the Hazen Union boys basketball team (12-3) to a road thumping of North Country last week, taking over the top seed in the current Division III standings.

Lamarre torched the Falcons for 22 points last Thursday in a 61-33 runaway Capital League win. The junior guard added nine rebounds and four assists to his impressive stat sheet, igniting a 19-5 run to end the first half, giving Hazen a 31-13 lead at the break. North Country played the Wildcats even through the first eight minutes of the second half but Hazen ended the game on a 17-7 run behind 13 points, 12 rebounds and four assists from senior Morgan Michaud. Lamarre leads the Wildcats in scoring this

“Noah has shown consistent development throughout the season and with the unfortunate injury to Jeter Demers, took advantage of the opportunity to really step up for us tonight.”

season with just under 20 points per game and his rise as a leader this winter was something head coach Aaron Hill and his coaching staff saw coming.

“For those of us who watched James throughout his young career, and especially in the off-season, this has not been a surprise. He has worked very hard on developing his game and is now growing into the player we all hoped he would become,” said Hill.

Senior Sully Laflam and junior Lincoln Hill chipped in with six points apiece and freshman Noah Foster knocked down a couple of big threes on his

way to an impressive eight-point night. Scott Kingsley and Jackson Kilborn led North Country with eight points apiece as they fell to 3-13 on the season. Foster has been the leader of Adam Gann's junior varsity team all season long and looked comfortable in the backcourt on a big stage for the Hill's Wildcats.

“Noah has shown consistent development throughout the season and with the unfortunate injury to Jeter Demers, took advantage of the opportunity to really step up for us tonight. His excellent passing, along with his strong three-point shooting, makes

him an important piece to our team as we head into the stretch run,” said Hill.

With seven consecutive wins and nine out of their last 10, Hazen leapfrogged Randolph for the No. 1 spot in the current Division III rankings. The Galloping Ghosts handled the Wildcats with a double-digit win last month in Randolph and made the trip to Hardwick earlier this week for a marquee match-up that could determine the top seed in the upcoming state tournament. Winooski (13-3) and Woodstock (12-3) round out the top four.

Hazen welcomed Randolph to the Cat Den Tuesday night. Lake Region comes to town on Thursday, Montpelier on Saturday afternoon and Hazen finishes off a four-game homestand with Spaulding next Monday on Senior Night. All home games can be live streamed on Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us).



Sarah Austin of Twinfield-Cabot passes to a teammate while she's defended by Richford's Clara Vengert, during a game at Twinfield, February 13. Richford defeated Twinfield-Cabot 62-26.

photo by Vanessa Fournier



Twinfield-Cabot's Chloe North protects the ball from Katelyn Doe of Richford during February 13 action at Twinfield. Official Jordan Blais (in back, center) follows the action. Richford took the victory 62-26.

photo by Vanessa Fournier

KEN BROWN'S SPORT NUGGETS

Momentum stalls for Lady Trojans

MARSHFIELD – Coming off their first win of the season, the Twinfield-Cabot girls basketball team couldn't keep the good vibes going last week, dropping home games to Rivendell Academy and high-powered Richford, falling to 1-17 on the season.

On Wednesday, Rivendell knocked off Twinfield-Cabot 36-17 for their fourth win in five games. The Lady Raptors evened their record at 9-9 on the season and moved up to sixth in the current Division IV rankings. Lone senior Teagan Trader was honored last week on Senior Night.

Richford continued to dominate the division on Friday, racing past the Lady Trojans 62-26 for their fifteenth consecutive win. The 16-1 Lady Rockets remain at the top of the divisional standings with MSJ (16-2), West Rutland (10-8) and

Arlington (11-7) rounding out the top four.

Twinfield-Cabot travelled to Blue Mountain on Wednesday and will finish up the regular season on the road Friday at Vergennes.

Bowling Update

RANDOLPH -The Craftsbury Academy (CA) bowling team wrapped up its regular season over the weekend at Valley Bowl with some personal highs.

Senior Soren Stelma Leonard finished off his individual first season in high school competition for the Chargers with consistent games of 141 and 137. Junior Theo Alexander was right behind his teammate, rolling a 139 and 135. Senior Tucker Holcomb finished off his season with a 139, junior Arwen Alexander rolled a 136 and senior teammate Cyrus Graham came in with a 135. CA's young team didn't qualify any bowlers for the individual state tournament next week but is set to compete

in the state team competition the following weekend at Twin City Lanes in Barre. The Chargers are the tenth seed and will take on No. 7 White River Valley February 28.

White River Valley sophomore Andrew Bradley rolled the high game of the week with an impressive 266. Fair Haven junior George Stamp was a model of consistency, rolling a 247 in back-to-back games and Windsor junior Anthony Sheridan bowled a 211. Stamp locked up top individual honors for the regular season, aver-

aging a state's best 209.2. Enosburg's Sam Curtiss, Jayden Blake, Jordan Tucker and Carson Oliver; St. Johnsbury Academy's Jacob Marquis and Keegan Norrie; Windsor's Sam Russell, Roxie Sherwin and Sydney Walder; and Burlington's Malachi Ogden were the top seniors in the state who qualified to represent the Vermont Twin State team. The top 32 bowlers in the state will be back in action this coming weekend at the Individual State Tournament at Bowlerama in Rutland.



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Trojans overcome injury to top Division IV rankings

by Ken Brown

FAIRFAX – The Twinfield-Cabot boys basketball team just keeps winning no matter what, downing Division III BFA-Fairfax on the road last week in a double overtime thriller for their eleventh straight win to take over the top spot in the current Division IV rankings.

Star senior point guard Eli Russell shook off a rare subpar shooting night to save his best for last, finishing off a drive at the buzzer to lead the Trojans to an 83-82 double overtime thriller against the Bullets last Thursday. With their other star senior Tej Stewart out of the lineup nursing a leg injury, Twinfield-Cabot found themselves in a dogfight with The Bullets after beating them by nearly 30 points in Marshfield just a month ago. Fairfax took a 15-11 lead after eight minutes before the Trojans battled back to even the score at 30-30 heading into the break. It was 47-47 after three quarters, 63-63 after regulation and 70-70 after the first overtime. Azeem Stewart led the way, knocking down four 3-pointers on his way to an 18-point night for the Trojans. Fellow sophomore Omar Miksic-Knibb and Russell each finished with 16.

“I knew Eli would make the correct read if they gave him a lane, he saw it and won the game on a bigtime finish from our senior captain. The two sophomores are playing at an extremely high level right now and Sam Churchill made two clutch free throws for us in overtime. Everyone contributed and played extremely well. Just a great team win and happy to get out of Fairfax with 6 big index points,” said head coach Kris Bador.

Zepherin Hebert added 14 points in the win for Twinfield-Cabot and Sam Mclane and Thomas Gouge chipped in with eight apiece. Kaivon Sitas led the Bullets with a game-high 26, Ben Stevens complimented with 18 and Ryan Muehl added 16. The loss dropped Fairfax to 8-8 on the season.

Just 50 points away from 1,000 career points, Bador and his tight-knit team continue to cross their fingers that



Twinfield-Cabot's Omar Miksic-Knibb watches as (from left) head coach Kris Bador, Ed Berry, Tej Stewart, Jordan Hale and Anthony Golden celebrate Eli Russell's game-winner against BFA-Fairfax. *courtesy photo*

Stewart will end his stellar high school career in uniform to help lead his team to the Barre Auditorium for a second consecutive season.

“We should have a pretty good idea by the end of the week, and it goes without saying, everyone on this team and in this community is hoping for good news for Tej. This team is a family. We love and support each other. We lift each other up and each one of these guys truly plays for the name on the front of their jersey. We have three more big games this week and have a lot of work to do still to tighten some things up, but I like where we're at right now,” said Bador.

Twinfield-Cabot improved to 14-1 and took over the top spot from undefeated West Rutland by percentage points in the current Division IV rankings for the first time this season. MSJ (14-2), Twin Valley (13-3) and Williamstown (13-4) round out the top five.

The Trojans hosted Stowe on Tuesday before hitting the road for match-ups against Northfield on Thursday and Richford on Friday. They return home for a tough Mountain League matchup against Oxbow next Monday.



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