

THE Hardwick Gazette

INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

Hardwick • Cabot • Calais • Craftsbury • Greensboro • Marshfield • Plainfield • Stannard • Walden • Wolcott • Woodbury

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photo by Vanessa Fournier

Tucker Baker, a Green Mountain Technology & Career Center (GMTCC) student, limbs a tree he just cut down on land owned by Diana and Paul Frederick of Hardwick. The GMTCC students have been working on the selective cutting timber job for about a month. They are gaining experience and learning what it's like to work in a logging operation. They use logging equipment, practice their tree felling skills, and learn about bucking and scaling timber.

Hazen Union Tackles Broadband Disparity

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – Hazen Union is increasing efforts to solve the broadband disparity problems that have plagued remote learning for nearly a year. Hazen Union Principal David Perrigo said that from the outset of the pandemic he knew remote learning would encounter issues because some students do not have good – or in some cases,

any – internet at home.

The immediate issue facing Hazen Union last spring was that access to broadband for remote learning was not widely available in some areas of Vermont. In other cases, the cost of internet was an expense families already financially impacted by the pandemic could not bear.

Perrigo spoke of his “continued

See **BROADBAND, 4**

Cabot Creamery Biodigester Project Clearing Hurdles

by June Pichel Cook

CABOT – The petition of Agri-Mark, Inc./Cabot Creamery for a Certificate of Public Good (CPG), presented to the Public Utilities Commission on November 24, 2020, has been clearing procedural hurdles.

The petition seeks approval for the installation, construction, and operation of a 250kW biodigester and electric generation facility, to be located off Whittier Hill. It would be constructed within the existing facility property.

The anaerobic digester would convert bio-products from milk processing wash water to methane gas, which will provide fuel to a new electric generator. The additional infrastructure to be constructed

See **BIODIGESTER, 2**

Pedestrian Bridge Plans Evolve

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – The pedestrian bridge was discussed at length at the Hardwick Select Board meeting on February 4.

Public interest in the project is high. Representatives from several local businesses claimed the closure of the bridge has affected their revenues.

Current plans involving the bridge include submitting an application for a USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) for the maximum amount of \$250,000, with an equal town match. The town previously received up to \$175,000 from a separate USDA grant for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT), but before funds could be used the

state announced it would take over construction and financing of the LVRT with an eye toward early completion. The USDA funds can be reallocated, but remain tied to the LVRT. Board Chair Eric Remick said demonstrating a link to the project would not be difficult. He said the town's survey and other collected data showed the bridge was a top priority.

“We have a lot of other such [LVRT] projects,” Remick said. “None of them rise to the same level of criticality or access to town, so for me, this seems like a more pressing need.” He listed “the parking area,” and “a rail spur through sawmill to Atkins Field” as examples of “other things we don't have an actual plan for.”

See **BRIDGE, 5**

New Vaccine Program to Begin in Hardwick

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – Northern Counties Health Care (NCHC) is partnering with St. Johnsbury-based Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (NVRH) to begin offering vaccinations on February 24 and 26 at the Hardwick Fire Station, according to NCHC Chief Strategy Officer Christopher Towne.

Towne said the plan is to create a stationary site in St. Johnsbury and having mobile, twice-weekly vaccination clinics throughout the NEK, though the still-difficult supply chain could impact that strategy.

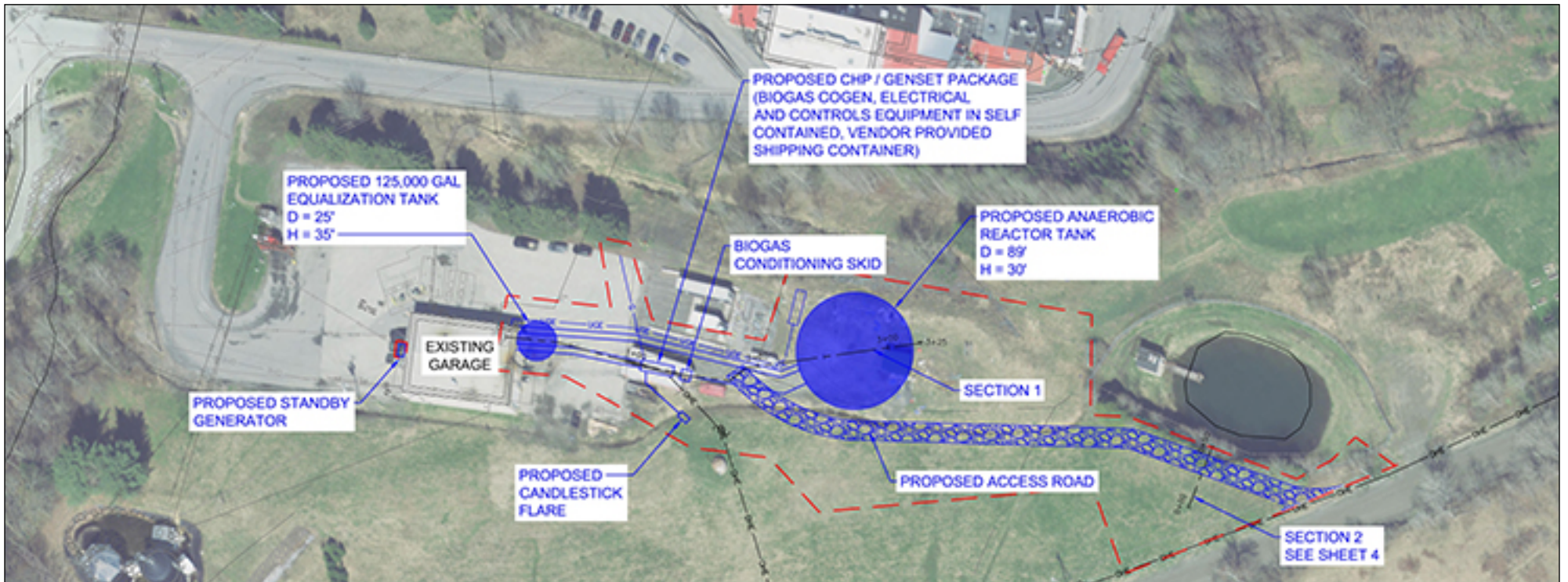
Those eligible for getting a vaccination can register with Vermont Department of Health; appointment availability is subject to state-set eligibility criteria. Appointments can be scheduled at healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-vaccine.

See **VACCINE, 3**



photo by Doug McClure

The snowstorm of February 2 covered South Main Street in Hardwick in six to eight inches of snow and was the largest storm of the season so far.



courtesy photo

Agri-Mark/Cabot Creamery is seeking a Certificate of Public Good from the Vermont Public Utilities Commission for a 250 kw biodigester and electric generation facility located on their property off Whittier Hill in Cabot.

Biodigester

Continued From Page One

includes a 125,000-gallon equalizer tank, pump house, backup generator, underground piping, and new access road.

Agri-Mark, Inc./Cabot Creamery lawyers Andrew N. Raubvogel and Victoria M. Westgate filed the Petition for Certificate of Public Good Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. Sect. 248(j). The project is being developed under Vermont's Standard Offer Program and will occupy approximately 8,000 square feet within a 1.5-acre paved and graveled area at the existing facility.

The project has been explained as converting dairy processing wash water, a byproduct of the Creamery's milk processing operations, into heat (for on-site use) and electricity.

In a phone interview, Cabot Creamery Environmental Engineer Aaron Page explained, "We collect wash water and with the biodigester we are adding a treatment step to the wash water and creating heat and electricity. As such, in addition to heat and electricity, the project will generate an anaerobically treated effluent to include all of the wash water generated at the site."

Currently, the wash water from sanitizing at the plant is sprayed on fields and that process will continue.

In a press release, Ann Sheridan, communications director for Cabot Creamery, described the biodigester project as "phase one of a three-phase process related to the enhanced treatment of our wash water that could eventually eliminate the need for trucking for land spreading."

She indicated a key factor to be considered is financing; however, no estimated costs for the biodigester project have been forthcoming.

The electricity generated would be sold to Green Mountain Power at a rate of \$0.208/kwh, according to Page. He noted, "The agreement is through the Vermont Standard Offer Program, which is a legislated program to encourage small distributed renewable energy projects to enable Vermont to reach its renewable energy goals."

In public documents submitted to the Public Utilities Commission on January 14, 2021, Elm Street resident Theresa Lay-Sleeper first raised concerns about air quality from the methane gas generated, lighting, noise levels from the project. Although her property does not abut the project, it is in direct view. The 125,000 gallon equalizer tank to be installed is 25 feet in diameter and 35 feet high and placed higher on the hillside than the current towers. It is in her direct sight line. She noted that the co-generation plant's location is at the top of the hill, above the tallest silos of the Creamery.

Since her initial comments, however, Lay-Sleeper has indicated her support of the project. Working with neighbors to resolve concerns is ongoing, and Lay-Sleeper acknowledged "management's (Cabot Creamery) willingness to consider the needs of a mixed-use industrial-residential neighborhood." In her letter to the PUC, she noted that "coniferous plantings will alleviate a good deal of light and noise expected, and create a more pleasing hillside view."

"The big bonus is consideration of a new sound curtain and additional conifer plantings to remedy the worst of the current noise problems."

Page noted that "We have been working with neighbors to

address any concerns. We recently submitted a planting plan and memorandum on safety considerations in a February 4 supplemental filing, which we hope adequately addresses concerns voiced by our neighbors."

Attorneys Raubvogel and Westgate on February 4, 2021, filed their Response to Public Comments to address concerns that had been raised. They noted that the Division of Historic Preservation had found the project site was unlikely to have any effect on historic sites listed in or eligible for inclusion in the State Register of Historic Places.

An issue raised by Cabot resident Joanne Garton about the biodigester posing an explosion risk was answered. An Emergency Action Plan, the Creamery now holds, will cover the project, and Raubvogel and Westgate concluded the project "does not pose undue adverse risks to public or worker safety."

They reported that the Department of Public Service has reviewed the petition for the CPG and felt the project "does not raise a substantial issue under Section 248 and will serve the general good of the state."

An issue about permitting review under Section 248 of Vermont statutes remains unresolved with the Agency of Natural Resources.

In their conclusion, Raubvogel and Westgate wrote: "In sum, AMCC (Agri-Mark/Cabot Creamery) respectfully requests that the Commission determine that the project meets the requirements of Section 248(j) and issue a CPG forthwith, or in the alternative, set the proposed schedule for limited additional process for the proceeding."

Cabot Town Clerk Betty Ritter said that "We haven't signed off on anything. We are still listening and haven't made any statements."

Contents

- Police Reports 3
- Wolcott Road Crews Report No Breakdowns 5
- Hidden Costs of Remote Learning..... 6
- Gazette Collaborates with Student Journalists 6
- Resident Asks for 5G Ballot Question 6
- Craftsbury Budget Up, Tax Bite Down 7
- Does 5G Pose Health Risk?..... 7
- Hardwick Food Pantry Joins Craftsbury, Albany 8
- School Budget Line Items Updated..... 9
- Walden Ballots Mailed to Voters..... 9
- Funds Sought for Conservation Fund 10
- Hitting the Hardwick Trails (photos)..... 11
- Our Communities 12-13
- Norcross Gives Peek into Magical Era..... 13
- This Week's Events..... 14
- Hedgerows, Dead Trees and Emerald Ash Borer..... 15
- Yankee Notebook: Neglected Old Skis and Poles..... 16
- Letters from Readers..... 17
- In the Garden: Favorite Trees for Winter 18
- Another Opinion: Something is Way Out of Whack 19
- Business Directory 20
- Basketball Goes Live This Week, Ski Report..... 21

POLICE REPORT

Hardwick Police

Media Log Summary

February 1: Assist – Agency, Wolcott St.; Directed Patrol, Hardwick Farms Rd.

February 2: Threats/Harassment, Hudson Ave.; Theft, Main St., Greensboro; Directed Patrol, Hardwick Farms Rd.; Welfare Check, Vogan Rd., Greensboro; Lost Property, Cherry St.

February 3: Fraud, Center Rd.; Citizen Dispute, Mini Mart Dr., E. Hardwick; Assist-Agency, Cemetery Ridge, Greensboro; Noise Disturbance, Molleur Dr.; Suspicious Event, High St. #3.

February 4: Assist – Other, Wolcott St.; Assist – Other, Wolcott St.; Suspicious Event, Lamoille Ave.; Suspicious Event, Lamoille Ave.; Motor Vehicle Complaint, Rte. 15/West of Rte. 14N; Theft, Vt. Rte. 14; Traffic Stop, Main St.; Assist –

Other, Wolcott St.; Assist – Other, Wolcott St.; Assist – Other, Wolcott St.; Assist – Other, Wolcott St.; 911 Hangup, Chapin Ln.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St.;

February 5: Traffic Stop, Granite St.; Traffic Stop, Wolcott St./Granite St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15; Citizen Dispute, Bunker Hill Rd.; Directed Patrol, Hardwick Farms Rd.; VIN Verification, Vt. Rte. 16.

February 6: Found Property, Mill St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15/Brown Farm Rd.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 16; Assist – Motorist, Vt. Rte. 16; Citizen Dispute, W. Church St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 14S; Traffic Stop, S. Main St./Spring St.; Traffic Stop, Vt. Rte. 15/Vt. Rte. 14.

February 7: Citizen Dispute, Mackville Rd.

Retail Theft, Domestic Assault, No License

On Feb. 2, Hunter Patten, of Hardwick, was cited to appear in Orleans Court on March 30 on the charge of Retail Theft.

On Feb. 4, Dennis Collins of E. Hardwick was cited to appear in Caledonia Court on April 26 on the charge of Retail Theft.

On Feb. 4, Louis Marsh was cited to appear in Caledonia Court for Criminal Operation of a Motor Vehicle. Court date of April 26.

On February 5, Officer Jenness responded to 376 Bunker Hill Rd. Through investigation, it was determined Violet Walbridge slapped Dawn McAllister in the face causing her pain. Walbridge was cited to appear in Caledonia County Court on April 26 to answer charges of Domestic Assault.

On Feb. 5., at 6:40 a.m., John W. Reece of E. Hardwick was stopped in Hardwick. Police issued a \$162 ticket for No License.

On Feb. 6, at 7:55 a.m., Herbert

E. Thayer of S. Walden, was stopped on Vt. Rt. 15 in Hardwick. Police issued a \$105 ticket for No Seat Belt Drivers Side.

On February 6, Officer Jenness conducted a motor vehicle stop on Vt. Rte. 15W for an expired inspection sticker on a 2002 Dodge Van. The operator was identified as Alain J. Fradette, of Hardwick. Fradette's DMV record showed any vehicle he operated needed to be equipped with an interlock device. This vehicle was not equipped with an interlock device. Fradette was cited to appear in Caledonia County Court on May 3 to answer to charges of Criminal DLS.

This report is based on information provided by the Hardwick Police Department but is not a full accounting of police activity. Persons named in this report are presumed to be innocent unless they plead or are found guilty in court.

AWARE Report

HARDWICK – AWARE served nine survivors of domestic and sexual violence from January 21 through January 29. AWARE is a nonprofit organization, established in 1984, dedicated to

resolving the causes and effects of domestic violence and sexual assault in the greater Hardwick area.

The 24-hour hotline is 802-472-6463.

Vermont State Police

Following Too Closely

On February 8, at approximately 12:59 p.m., Troopers with the Vermont State Police Middlesex Barracks responded to a report of a two-vehicle crash on U.S. Route 2 near the intersection with Hollister Hill Rd. in the town of Marshfield. Upon investigation it was determined that Justin Deos, of Lyndonville, was stopped in the roadway waiting for the vehicle in front of them to turn when Isabella McCallum, of Cabot,

was not able to stop in time to avoid rear ending them. McCallum was cited for a violation of Title 23 VSA 1039; Following Too Closely. No injuries were reported and all occupants were seat belted.

This report is based on information provided by the Vermont State Police but is not a full accounting of police activity. Persons named in this report are presumed to be innocent unless they plead or are found guilty in court.

Vaccine

Continued From Page One

Towne said that approximately 250 slots are still open for the two currently scheduled days.

Towne said the clinics are a response to a state Request for Proposal (RFP) for vaccination clinics, which NCHC and NVRH responded to. The state will determine where the mobile clinics go based on factors such as the percentage of population vaccinated and the Governor's stated goal of having availability within thirty minutes of every Vermonter. While Towne said it seemed that supply issues were improving, they continue to be a potential limiting factor in the program's scope and reach. Assuming that situation does continue to improve, he said the clinic in St. Johnsbury could process 1,500 doses a week and the mobile clinic 300. Towne said, "we have some ability to scale that if needed, but that's initially what the proposal was."

The state makes the call as to which vaccine will be deployed; at this time, Towne said that the Moderna vaccine is planned for Hardwick. In the expanded vaccination bid, he said that a "combination of staffing models" is being used, leveraging NVRH to hire "some dedicated staff that were

interested in helping vaccinate the community."

Towne said that a COVID testing program in Hardwick has been very successful and that the town's support had been invaluable.

"Shaun Fielder, the support of the select board in the town, the Fire Department, and Chief Tom Fadden, they have all been super supportive in working behind the scenes to make sure goes smoothly for us. The response of the community has been really great. People are really appreciative of being able to have quick convenient access to testing four days a week in the Hardwick area, in addition to the testing that we are doing at the health center."

Towne said that 1,341 COVID tests had been conducted at the Hardwick Fire Station from the test site's opening day on December 5 through January 31.

Of the 250 available slots for vaccination, 150 are on February 24 and 100 on February 26, and thus far 56 people had signed up.

As of Monday, the state said that 10.7% of Vermonters over 16 had received vaccinations. Caledonia and Orleans counties have vaccinated a slightly lower proportion of their residents, with 2,365 people (9.5%) and 2,072 (9.2%), respectively.

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Broadband

Continued From Page One

frustration that we haven't been able to solve something as basic as getting kids connected" during a time when such lack of connection can result in "a serious disadvantage in terms of their education."

A McKinsey report on COVID's impact on education found students in their sample "learned only 67 percent of the math and 87 percent of the reading that grade-level peers would typically have learned by the fall." Data from instructional software provider Zearn showed "student participation in online math coursework decreased by 11 percent this fall compared with participation prior to the pandemic." That figure rose to 16 percent among low-income families, which the report said was an improvement from last spring's 41 percent decrease.

Almost a year since the pandemic began, Hazen Union's efforts to ensure students are connected has evolved into a pilot program. The program, built with modest grant funding, operates outside of the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) "in order to be a little bit more nimble in terms of how [the school] can take care of things," Perrigo said. Before the Hazen Connectivity Project, the school drew from its own and OSSU's limited resources to address the issue.

The school is working in collaboration with the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE), with funding from the Greensboro United Church of Christ (GUCC)'s Pleasants Fund to chip away at the problem. The GUCC fund was created for "selected projects, causes, agencies, or organizations whose purposes lie within the legitimate concerns of this Church but outside its ordinary operating expense budget."

Hazen Union will first address cases where a student's lack of internet access can be solved with financial assistance. But the Connectivity Project will not scrutinize or judge the student's family finances when deciding if assistance is needed. "We're not putting people through a lot of scrutiny of their economic situations, which sometimes is prohibitive for people," Perrigo said. "They don't want to necessarily have to fill out a lot of red tape and jump through a lot of hoops and expose their

financial vulnerability to the world." The objective, Perrigo said, is to connect as many students "as we possibly can" and remove the "incredible inequity which exists when you don't have access to the Internet."

The problem addresses more than students' basic learning, Perrigo said. While the pandemic created a crisis, Hazen Union responded by creating new opportunities to modernize its approach to education and allow students more control over their learning. But much of the new curriculum Hazen Union created is strictly virtual, such as "Conversations About Growth" aimed at placing students at the center of their educational experience. "We've had a series of these forums about different things throughout the year, and if you don't have Internet at home, you can't participate in them," Perrigo said. "So, it's really a way to try and connect our families and our kids into the workings of the school on multiple levels."

Perrigo said the program is still evolving and currently addresses only situations where money is the issue. "If we learn that there's somebody who doesn't have Internet at all, we look into it to see if they actually have it accessible to them," he said. "And if they have it, and if they're in an area that's not prohibitive because of the infrastructure, we will work with them to get the Internet set up and pick up the bills for them." Some students have internet

service at home, "but it's not adequate enough," Perrigo said.

Perrigo hopes to expand that target and possibly extend the duration of the program. "At this point the project is limited to financial support for folks who live in areas that currently have service in the area," he said. "Addressing infrastructure issues will be the next step in creating equity and access for all." He added that "right now, it's just through the end of the school year. At that point, we'll figure out what the next steps are and if we want to expand the project." In some cases, families and students who could benefit from the Connectivity Project might not even hear about it because they do not have internet access, he said. He encourages those who know someone who could benefit from the program to reach out to them and have them call him directly at 802-472-6511 or email dperrigo@ossu.org.


The school may find additional support from private enterprise. Following scrutiny from lawmakers and advocacy groups, Comcast increased the speed of its Internet Essentials Program for eligible low-income customers. For \$9.95 a month, families can download speeds of 50MBit through the service, an increase from the previous 25MBit speed. Customers can also receive a low-cost laptop or desktop through Comcast's partners. Larger families, though, might find a surprise cost from the newly imposed cap on data usage. But the number of Hazen Union and

OSSU student homes covered by Comcast remains small. Tech Director David Martin said just 36.3% of the students are in areas covered by Comcast, while half are in territory served by Consolidated Communications.

Consolidated offers a comparable program, but in the last year several customers reported service issues, even after the Vermont Public Utilities Commission ordered the company last January to invest in its infrastructure. In several instances, the utility was not able to extend service for months yet reported those addresses as internet served.

"One of the challenges is just how quickly the utility company is going to be able to respond to need," Perrigo said. "We've heard horror stories of people saying they'd like the service, and the response is 'we can do that for you three months down the line.'"

Recently several Northeast Kingdom addresses were notified they might be able to use SpaceX's Starlink to receive service without existing infrastructure. Starlink service, which is based on low-earth-orbit satellites, does not rely on running wires to homes. But with upfront costs of up to \$600 and additional \$99/month fees, Starlink could be out of reach for many families. Perrigo said the school would investigate whether Starlink could be an option for some students.



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Wolcott Road Crew Reports ‘No Major Breakdowns’

by Doug McClure

WOLCOTT – At the Feb. 3 Wolcott Select Board meeting, Road Foreman Dillon Cafferky reported there were “no major breakdowns, no complaints. We’re doing pretty good.”

Cafferky said he followed up on researching iPads the department could use to document roadwork for grants and estimated a \$300 iPad would suffice. The application, which “works with the camera” and “would work really good for grant work” tags photos for date, time and coordinates, he said. The cost of the application is five dollars.

Cafferky suggested funds the town expects to receive as payment for scrap metal taken to All Metals Recycling could offset the cost of the iPad. Town Clerk Belinda Clegg said the town had an iPad in the office he could test out in the meantime.

Roads Commissioner Lucian Gravel updated the board on the status of major repairs lingering from the Halloween Storm and

the status of reimbursements from federal agencies. The reimbursement amount for Brook Road remained unclear. He explained the federal agency must first send the funds to the state, which then pays Wolcott.

Gravel and board member Linda Martin have been working on a process for receiving federal reimbursement for damage to the town’s roads. Martin said Elmore Pond Road exceeded the reimbursement time limit by one day, resulting in a cost of \$3,190 for which the town would not be reimbursed. North Wolcott Road also exceeded the threshold, she said, but in that case the work qualified for reimbursement.

“This never ends for you guys, does it?” Board Chair Kimberly Gravel remarked.

Lucian Gravel said the board should start thinking about the more expensive culvert replacement. The town would need to come up with as much as \$618,000 to get the project rolling and pay contractors, he said. Martin said the lack of specificity

as to federal agency reimbursement amounts is problematic. She did not recommend moving ahead with the work until that amount could be known.

Introduced as a new feature in the meetings was a report from Town Administrator Randall Szott. The board felt updates from Szott on his current projects would be helpful for the board and the public.

Szott described work on the revised personnel policy which he said was “kind of ready in draft form” with many questions still be discussed to “fill out the bones.” Szott said he was working on a “bunch of highway-related stuff” and was coordinating with Cafferky to compile a list of emergency equipment the road crew could order without select board approval in case of a major event like Halloween Storm.

Szott said a Better Roads Grant Application was submitted for Elmore Road and a workplace grant from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns had been awarded. In other work, Szott

attended a Lamoille County Chamber of Commerce legislative update and signed up for a local roads roundtable meeting to be held today. He is also working on the floodplain and wetlands restoration projects currently underway.

The board heard from Zoning Administrator Tom Martin that he reduced permitting fees for subdivided lots to be in line with surrounding towns. He did not see a justification for keeping the fees higher, he said, as Wolcott had few subdivisions to begin with and no recent developments. “It costs a lot of money to subdivide, and the majority of our subdivisions are family members,” Martin explained. He estimated the largest development in Wolcott was nine acres that took place approximately 20 years ago.

Wolcott will host a budget informational meeting to answer residents’ questions on February 24, at 6 p.m. Zoom and phone information for the meeting can be found on the town’s website at wolcottvt.org.

Bridge

Continued From Page One

The town does not intend to solely rely on the RBDG grant for bridge funding. Rough estimates for the project place costs at approximately \$500,000, but that amount may not cover ancillary engineering and design. If the town were to repurpose LVRT funding and combine it with the fund balance, it could meet the USDA requirement for matching funds.

Town Manager Shaun Fielder referred to the possibility of fund-raising directly from the community. How much could be raised is impossible to know. He noted that the application could require a budget proposal from which the town could not substantially deviate once submitted. Cornish did not entirely agree and said the USDA grant, or part of it, combined with money from the fund balance would be sufficient.

Vice chair Elizabeth Dow suggested pulling the entire \$250,000 match from the fund balance. “I was impressed by the thing [Business Manager] Casey [Rowell] sent out today that shows that our fund balance is not only full, it’s fat,” she said. “Rather than use the LVRT money, couldn’t we just pledge the \$250,000 out of the fund balance? Presumably, we won’t use it because there will be other grants. That sets the LVRT money aside for more tightly associated LVRT projects.”

Fielder said regardless of which path they decided to take, “The info at

hand indicates if we can demonstrate on the RBDG application -- we’ve got the financial aspects covered if we go with this replacement strategy.” He cautioned there would be problems if the town undershot the completion cost of the replacement. His USDA contacts told him the town could have the fund balance and USDA grant commitment, he said, but if the full amount does not cover the anticipated costs it “really doesn’t make for a sound application.”

Fielder called for businesses impacted by the bridge closure to contact him with details. He said anyone in a position to provide a letter of support might consider doing so, because it would strengthen the town’s grant application. “If you want to offer anything, reach out to Town Manager’s office,” Fielder said.

The board generally agreed to proceed with the expectation of meeting a \$250,000 match requirement. Cornish is also seeking to revive the town’s efforts for a Downtown Designation, which could expand grant opportunities for village businesses and the bridge by as much as \$100,000. Cornish said with Geoff Sewake now at work as Community Development Coordinator the possibility of the designation increased. If the Downtown Designation is successful, Hardwick could also under state law reduce the speed limit in the designated zone to 15 mph, an issue raised numerous times over years of select board meetings. Downtown Designation could also open the door to

funding projects that the Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Task Force had proposed, but were found to be too expensive.

Rowell supplied updated numbers for budget revenues and expenses, which she described as “literally right on track where we should be.” Property tax revenue was off by an amount largely offset by an expected payment, and water and sewer bills were off by 3-5%, although a bill had just gone out. Almost every item fell within range of the expected 58% for the FY2021 budget.

The equity committee gained two new members. Select board member Lucian Avery has taken interest in the committee for months and said he plans to maintain his commitment to the effort. Resident Rutu Shah expressed interest through the Neighbor-to-Neighbor forum. The select board approved appointing both.

The board heard two property-related issues. The first involved purchase of a property on Depot Street near the top of the Rail Trail which neither property owner Josh Allen nor his attorney realized had no access via right-of-way. The two sought a solution, which Remick said was in the best interests of the town, as Allen intends to revitalize a dilapidated building on the site. A complicating factor is that the only clear access to the property is close to the recently restored Section House property for which VTrans holds the rights for uses and adjustments.

Representatives from the state said they were open to a solution. Dow, who is President of the Hardwick Historical Society, said the HHS had no “philosophical objection,” but was concerned about protecting a newly-restored structure “from the late 1890s, at least” and VTrans shared those concerns. The parties agreed to work toward a solution.

The town also heard from Gail and David O’Brien, an East Hardwick couple, about the 0.12-acre property directly next to the bridge and adjacent two of its own properties. The couple wanted to purchase the small tract for \$500 to merge, with zoning approval, the three contiguous properties that were historic family-owned properties, expand the greenspace the small tract affords, and remove a derelict warehouse, replacing it with a small workshop. The majority of the three properties are in the flood plain and any new work would require significant engineering efforts, which the two residents said they already initiated with DeWolfe Engineering Associates of Montpelier. The O’Briens would continue the current river access the small tract affords, pending attorney advice over liability, they said. Avery and Remick said their understanding was that Vermont law protected property owners in cases of recreational access where no access fee was expected. The board agreed to sell the property to the O’Briens, subject to the standard requirements for public notice.

The Hidden Costs of Remote Learning

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – Hazen Union’s efforts to make sure no students are left behind in terms of technology as schools began remote learning are now formally known as “the Connectivity Program.” While the Connectivity Program aims to address the technical issues of remote learning, Hazen Union Principal Perrigo said there are other, more complex issues continuing to impact students during the pandemic.

Provisions for remote learning were already in place prior to school closings last March, but according to some teachers, the switch to remote learning did not go as well as hoped.

In part, this is because in-person schooling provides more than an education; it also affords students access to meals, social engagement and mental health support.

According to a report by consultancy McKinsey & Company, “the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on families, leaving many children in precarious situations.” The report cites a report from Feeding America that one in four children is at risk of hunger during the pandemic. “The number of children who are housing-insecure has risen as families struggle to pay rent,” the report said. “Parental supervision and support may be

more difficult in families in which both parents need to work outside the home.”

Describing the impact of the situation as “huge,” Perrigo said, “I am more worried about the impact on mental health than I am on lost academics.” He said “in a number of cases” students were doing well but have become “really, really hard to engage” since the schools closed. “And these are not necessarily kids who don’t have Internet service,” he said. “It’s just they can’t make this work for them.”

Hazen Union’s crisis team meets weekly to brainstorm strategies to better support students, he said. But despite the group’s efforts to provide additional resources, “there are kids who have literally fallen through the cracks in terms of their just being around.”

Perrigo predicts students will continue to struggle with mental health issues “for a long time to come” because of losing access to essential activities and interactions. “Imagine you’re an adolescent at your most formative stages of life and you feel like your world has just been taken out from underneath you,” he said. “A lot of the normal things that you would have in your life, your ability to be with your friends, your ability to participate in musical activities, athletics, all the kinds of things that are so important for kids in

their social lives have been turned upside down.” He said the effects of the situation have taken a “tremendous toll” that may not be visible “for some time to come.”

Hazen’s basketball teams saw big successes last year, but for many months school sports programs have been on hold. The state announced sports can resume February 12, but Perrigo said there is no guarantee the programs will proceed without further interruptions and closures due to changes in the pandemic. “It’s just been a wash this year,” he said.

The McKinsey report states that “there are no rigorous studies on the impact of hybrid models -- not just on learning, but also on students’ emotional and mental health, as well as on limiting disease spread. This makes it tough for schools to design effective learning strategies and makes it difficult for researchers to predict the impact of ongoing disruptions.”

The report said learning adaptations implemented by schools likely averted a worst-case scenario, where months of learning were lost, but what happens next depends on the efficacy and durability of the vaccine rollout and the timeline of the virus. In a worst-case scenario, the study estimated five to nine months of lost learning for white students and ten months for Black students.

“And this could be just the beginning -- we also know from studies of natural disasters, such as the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, that learning losses are likely to compound over time,” the report said. “Schools can take action right now to minimize further damage and repair what’s already been done.”

The report recommended taking steps to eliminate the digital divide, reaching out to families individually, doubling down on feedback loops of instruction, learning, and assessment, and “[holding] everyone accountable while celebrating successes.”

The McKinsey report also recommended schools take “a more holistic view of their role in a student’s life,” by reimagining “elements of curriculum, teaching, technology, and supporting infrastructure in ways that go beyond the norm.”

Hazen Union was taking those steps before the pandemic but has accelerated its efforts. Despite the school’s best efforts to address losses caused by COVID-19, Perrigo remains concerned about potential long-term effects on his students’ overall development.

“To have [that time] taken out of your adolescence at your formative stage, you’re not going to get that back,” Perrigo said. “And I don’t know what that’s going to mean for kids.”

Gazette Kicks Off Collaboration with UVM Student Journalists

HARDWICK – This week’s edition features the first submission by a University of Vermont student journalist as part of a collaboration between the Gazette and UVM’s Community News Service. The collaborative effort is expected to grow to include three UVM students this semester.

According to the UVM website,

the Community News Service is a program of the UVM College of Arts and Sciences that offers “Student powered journalism that touches on government reporting, environmental Journalism, police and Crime reporting, election and campaign journalism and reporting writing for a number of Vermont newspapers and media outlets.

“Students provide local and hyperlocal news content; print, audio and video to local community papers in Vermont at no cost, gaining hands-on reporting and story-telling skills and local news outlets get high quality content, in print and digital forms.”

This week’s article is by Anna Kolosky. Her bio notes that

she is “a senior at UVM majoring in English with concentration in writing and minors in biology and RDS [Reporting and Documentary Storytelling]. She is the Assistant Culture Editor at the Vermont Cynic, and enjoys writing about local artists and events. In her free time, she enjoys reading, writing, and hiking throughout Vermont.”

Resident Asks for Ballot Question About 5G Awareness

by Anna Kolosky | Community News Service

HARDWICK – Hardwick resident Emily Lanxner lobbied the Hardwick Select Board to add a question to the town meeting ballot that asks the town to inform its residents when cell phone towers or other sources of 5G radiation are being locally constructed.

Lanxner outlined her concerns in a “Right to Know” petition, stating that she and others want to improve communication between the town government and its citizens whenever telecom companies submit proposals for the construction of new wireless

infrastructure.

“Our town government has the legal right to make decisions about the placement of wireless infrastructure,” Lanxner wrote. “Petitioners want that right to be respected and facilitated by our town officers.”

Lanxner stressed that she and others believe that a citizen has the right to know about and have a say in what goes up in the neighborhood.

“Aesthetic impacts can affect property values,” Lanxner wrote. “With the new small-cell antennas, thousands of studies document severe health impacts to humans ... We don’t need another health

crisis.”

However, the concern over cell phone tower radiation may not be as serious as Lanxner suggests. According to the [American Cancer Society](#), there is no strong evidence that exposure to radio frequency waves from cell towers cause any noticeable health effects. Compared to UV rays, gamma rays, and x-rays, RF waves rank relatively low in the amount of radiation they produce. According to [EMF Explained](#), RF waves do not emit enough energy to break apart chemical bonds and cause cancer.

However, the planned construction of a cell tower in a

natural area still posed a real concern. In December 2020, AT&T gave up on a controversial plan to build a cell tower on Hardwick’s famous Buffalo Mountain, [as reported in the Gazette](#).

While AT&T said its tower would expand cell coverage in the local rural areas, Hardwick residents were resistant to the tower ruining their natural scenery.

Buffalo Mountain is a major part of the town’s iconography. The mountain has also been central in Hardwick’s push to support its outdoor tourism and recreation identity.

While her proposed question

See AWARENESS, 7

Craftsbury Budget Up, Tax Bite Down

by June Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY – Craftsbury’s municipal budget is up by \$10,799, but taxpayers were asked to raise \$105,909.22 less than last year to meet proposed budget expenditures for the coming year. The 2021 budget approved by the select board totaled \$804,331 for operating the town’s offices and road department.

Of the projected increase, \$8,954 is attributed to road department expenses, with a \$640,556 budget proposed.

Select board chair Bruce Urie said the town ended the year with a surplus, resulting in the lower ask from the town.

“It was a nice feeling to end the year with a \$100,000 [surplus, rather] than last year’s being \$78,000 in the red,” he said.

The savings were the result of collections of delinquent taxes, cost savings, and a decrease in spending due to COVID-19.

FEMA reimbursements from 2019 expenses have not been received. Urie said the town faced major expenses in 2019 due to two flooding storms and there were no such expenses this year.

Impact on the municipal tax rate will not be known until the vote after Town Meeting on March 2. The grand list has not significantly changed, Urie said, but more appropriations requests have been made from outside agencies. If all ballot items are approved, an additional \$158,479 would be raised from property tax, along with \$28,000 from the Good Neighbor Fund.

Urie said he expects approximately 300 people to cast Australian ballots this year, almost double the turnout for a typical, in-person town meeting.

“There are five ‘No’ votes on everything at town meeting,” he said, “and I suspect we’ll have the same ‘No’ votes on Australian ballots.”

Awareness

Continued From Page Six

will not appear on the ballot, Lanxner plans to join other citizens together in an effort to make communication more open for any other future plans.

“We are joining many other Vermonters asking our town officials to provide a more reasonable plan to facilitate the notification process,” Lanxner wrote. “We are hopeful that more citizens will join in our request for a town resolution that addresses this concern.”

Urie said he is not looking forward to counting the ballots.

“It’s going to be a nightmare,” he said. “We aren’t going to stay after midnight.”

Those running in a contested election are not permitted to count ballots. Incumbent board member Susie Houston will be challenged for a select board post by Mike Martin, owner of Mike Martin Auto Repair.

“I hope on March 2 everything goes well,” Urie said. “The informational meeting (scheduled for Saturday, February 20, 1 to 3 p.m.) can’t be held at the school.”

Instead, the “very limited, in person meeting” will be held at the town hall “with only 50 percent capacity allowed,” Urie said.

He added that approximately 20 people can be accommodated in-person for the informational meeting.

Urie, who said he is not a fan of Zoom meetings, hopes people will call the board if they have questions about the ballot.

“I hope they (townspeople) get the information they need,” he

said. “I hope people are properly informed before they go to vote.”

Salaries for the road crew increased by two percent. Each year, overtime estimates are calculated into the budget, but in 2020 the total was approximately \$10,000 less than budgeted.

Fuel costs were approximately \$6,000 less than budgeted. Urie attributed the savings to a drop in fuel prices after the budget was created. He said fuel prices are again rising and each year the board tries to estimate what the cost will be.

The board did not spend money for guard rail projects last year and nearly doubled what it planned to spend this coming year, from \$6,000 to \$10,000. In accordance with state mandates, each year the town must perform ditching and stonework on roads hydraulically connected to drainage basins for Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog. Ditching and stonework on Morey Hill Road are planned to be completed with state funds from a Better Roads Grant and Grant-in-Aid from the North-

eastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA).

The roadside mowing budget increased by \$2,500 to accommodate special equipment needed for cutting brush and trees behind guard rails. Urie said the town mows behind the guard rails every few years.

New in the budget is a “Bulky Day” expense of \$1,000. Craftsbury will hold a Bulky Day for disposing of large items such as sofas and agricultural plastic rolls from farms. A collection site will be created at the town garage. Dates for Bulky Day have yet to be announced.

“The road crew and board have done an outstanding job in keeping costs down,” Urie said of the budget. “Last year we were in the hole \$78,000. I feel really good this year with \$100,000 ahead.”

The 2020 Craftsbury town report is available on the town’s website, along with sample Australian ballots for the school district and town. Absentee ballots will be available from the town clerk starting today.

Does 5G Pose Health Risks in the NEK?

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – At recent select board meetings, some residents have spoken out regarding their concerns about adverse health effects of 5G and urged the board to take action. Among the concerns cited by the group are that a 5G tower or antennae in Hardwick would pose a health threat to children, plants, and animals. Assessing the possible threat that 5G may pose, however, is a complicated undertaking. Governmental public health authorities do not currently recognize a danger.

5G Is Not Just One Thing

“5G” is not just one technology. It describes a group of technologies intended to advance cell service to its next generation. The major carriers are all rushing to claim that they offer “Nationwide 5G.” To accomplish that, they are using three different ranges of radio frequencies, depending on the cell site’s location and surrounding population density. Two of three frequency ranges are in use today on 4G networks and in those cases, 5G will simply supersede 4G without changing the frequency or antenna. Effectively, carriers would repurpose the existing 4G frequencies and antennae to 5G in what has been described by AT&T in media reports as a “software upgrade.”

The Vermont House

Committee on Technology and Energy found that one report on 5G’s negative impacts “makes the common mistake that 5G only uses millimeter waves (mmWave). The reality is that 5G employs low-band and mid-band microwaves as well as millimeter waves.”

mmWave

The highest range of frequencies used in 5G cell service is known as millimeter wave or “mmWave” and is the only one truly capable of delivering significantly faster data transmission speeds. It is also a frequency range that some say can be harmful.

Radio waves in the higher frequencies travel a shorter distance than lower-frequency signals and are worse at penetrating obstacles like walls and trees. The higher the frequency, the lower the range and the greater the susceptibility to obstacles. These characteristics make deployment of mmWave services expensive compared to 4G and lower-frequency 5G services.

Are 5G Signals Dangerous?

The quick answer is that there is no evidence that they are, but more study is needed.

In the meanwhile, there are plenty of organizations that argue both sides of the question.

In its “Technology, Media, and Telecommunications Predictions 2021,” the consulting company Deloitte states that “extensive scientific evidence proves that

mobile phone technologies have no adverse health impacts -- not just for 5G but also earlier generations.”

But there is also concern that the lack of scientific evidence of health risks does not mean that increasing exposure to radio frequency (RF) services is safe. Even a brief search of the internet shows that a number of organizations and scientists are highlighting risks that they see arising from some or all RF communications services (not just mmWave).

The official public health authorities are cautious. On a webpage titled “Frequently Asked Questions about Cell Phones and Your Health,” the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) answers the question “Can using a cell phone cause cancer?” by stating that “There is no scientific evidence that provides a definite answer to that question. Some organizations recommend caution in cell phone use. More research is needed before we know if using cell phones causes health effects.”

The World Health Organization (WHO) answers the question “What are the potential health risks from 5G?” as follows:

“To date, and after much research performed, no adverse health effect has been causally linked with exposure to wireless technologies. Health-related conclusions are drawn from studies

See RISKS, 8

Hardwick Food Pantry Takes on Craftsbury, Albany

by Mara Brooks

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Area Food Pantry (HAFFP) joined forces with the Craftsbury and Albany food pantries in January in an effort to share resources and reach more people in need, said HAFFP director LauraLee Sweeney. The HAFFP's speedy response to COVID-19 in recent months included outdoor food service, a home delivery program, Grow Your Own food workshops, and a partnership with the Center for an Agricultural Economy to distribute local grocery vouchers.

“When the pandemic first hit, we were concerned about the safety of volunteers and staff and participants because they really weren't any clear answers at that time,” Sweeney said. “We had to act quickly because we didn't want to close our doors at a time when our services were needed even more.”

HAFFP scrambled to redesign its existing systems while angling to secure new food sources in the midst of the global crisis. “There really wasn't guidance yet from higher places so we had to stay on our toes,” Sweeney said. “It was a relief to find volunteers willing to put safety at risk to help other people.”

HAFFP stabilized its operations by “relying on farmers for food and tapping into some of the other programs out there, as well as community donations,” Sweeney said. “We had to get creative from where we were sourcing food because of disruptions to the food chain.” Farm to Family boxes were another great resource. “We gave a lot of those out over the summer,” Sweeney said.

As the HAFFP stabilized, Sweeney turned her attention to Craftsbury and Albany food pantries which continued to struggle. Sweeney said she already knew there was a “little bit of a gap” in services in the two towns. “It seemed like our agency was in a position where we could

help stabilize the Craftsbury and Albany sites,” Sweeney said. “I felt confident that the need was there, and this would be a good way to spread some of the generosity that the community has brought to the Hardwick food pantry.”

Albany Food Pantry Board Member Hannah Dreissigacker became involved in the food pantry effort “early in the pandemic” through the Neighbors to Neighbors group, she said. “I started by calling everyone in town, reaching out, trying to identify need, just trying to help with food insecurity in Albany.” When the Albany pantry started working with the Craftsbury food share, “they were looking for someone to help coordinate volunteers, so I volunteered for that position, and then it turned into a lot more than that.”

Up until the end of last year, Albany food pantry was “purchasing food wholesale through the Craftsbury General Store and doing it all on our own,” Dreissigacker said. When the idea of a collaboration with HAFFP was raised “it was at a time when we were interested in trying to figure out how to make our pantry sustainable long term, and how to source food more cheaply, and Hardwick was looking to expand their service to this area.”

Sweeney said Craftsbury and Albany were “right in the heart of our service area, but we weren't reaching them.”

Financial donations to each of the three food pantries will now be processed through HAFFP, Sweeney said. But food donations can still be given to each site individually.

For those wishing to donate food items to the pantry, “cheeses would be really helpful,” Sweeney said. “Coffee is always kind of a luxury item we don't get very much.” Gluten free, low sodium or other foods made for dietary restrictions are hard to come by, Sweeney said, as are food items

Risks

Continued From Page Seven

performed across the entire radio spectrum but, so far, only a few studies have been carried out at the frequencies to be used by 5G.”

Based on the statements from the CDC and WHO, the best answer as to whether 5G poses a risk to health is that there is currently no evidence that it does, but that the subject requires further study.

As stated earlier, “5G” is

delivered via three different frequency ranges: two that re-purpose existing 4G spectrum, and a new service that is mmWave-based.

In order to deploy mmWave services, wireless telephony providers would have to invest in large numbers of antennae that are situated close to one another because the signal attenuates (loses strength) in rain and over relatively short distances. Given the expense of installing mmWave equipment and the low concentration of residents – and,



courtesy photo

The Craftsbury Food Pantry, here being stocked, is now a part of the The Hardwick Area Food Pantry.

that “consider people's cultural preferences.” Hygiene items “are always appreciated and not something we can always build into the budget,” Sweeney said.

Dreissigacker said the Craftsbury and Albany food pantries will continue to operate under HAFFP's umbrella even after the pandemic.

“The idea of joining is that we will be able to help our communities with food insecurity long term and not just during COVID,” she said. “The pandemic exacerbated the situation but there's a lot of need regardless of that, and we want to continue to sustainably fill that need.”

Sweeney insisted while she may be HAFFP's director, volunteers in the effort have been

“phenomenal” and made the collaboration between the three pantries possible. “We can't thank them enough,” she said.

HAFFP Director LauraLee Sweeney can be reached at director@hardwickareafodpantry.org.

Craftsbury Food Pantry Coordinator Kris Coville can be reached at Kris@hardwickareafodpantry.org.

Albany Food Pantry Coordinator Hannah Dreissigacker can be reached at hdreissigacker@gmail.com.

The HAFFP website can be found at NourishHardwick.org/pantry.

Current hours are Monday, noon to 2 p.m., Thursday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

therefore, paying customers – in the NEK, it is unlikely that mmWave 5G will be deployed in this area any time soon.

T-Mobile Chief Technology Officer Neville Ray wrote in a blog post that a “mmWave-only 5G plan is only for the few. And it will never reach rural America. Some of this is physics – millimeter wave (mmWave) spectrum has great potential in terms of speed and capacity, but it doesn't travel far from the cell site and doesn't penetrate materials at all. It will never mate-

rially scale beyond small pockets of 5G hotspots in dense urban environments.”

Conclusion

The official public health consensus is that there is no evidence that 5G causes health risks, but that more research is needed. The health risk of 5G deployment to residents in the NEK is likely no different than the deployment of 4G since part of “5G” uses 4G spectrum and the new part, mmWave, is unlikely to be deployed because it would not be commercially feasible.

School Budget Line Items Updated

by June Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY – A study of the Craftsbury School District Budget reflected some wild swings in spending when compared with last year. Changes in accounting categories and impacts caused by COVID-19 were believed to account for the gyrations.

The \$4,059,066 budget voters will be asked to approve on March 2 is an increase of \$44,111 from last year's approved budget. The homestead educational tax rate is impacted by an increase of .0425, representing an additional \$42.47 per \$100.000 assessed property valuation.

The projected carryover is expected to be \$254,508, of which \$127,254 will be applied to the FY22 budget. Voters will be asked to place the remaining \$127,254 into a reserve fund for building maintenance and repair.

On the revenue side, tuition is expected to be lower in FY22. Principal Merri Greenia said tuition students on Craftsbury's rolls may choose to transfer to the technical center in their sophomore year. The student's home district, not Craftsbury, is credited with each student's enrollment. The student transfer occurs after the budget is prepared and shows as a drop in revenue.

Incoming tuition student numbers have risen steadily but are leveling off, Greenia said. The incoming number for seventh grade is expected to be four students.

Food services were altered by COVID-19. When schools shut down, the federal government provided free food for both breakfast and lunches for students. This boosted the revenue stream through a federal grant.

Budgeting for some co-curricular activities was dropped because of COVID-19. Greenia said students were out of school for one-third of the year and field trips, sports events, and professional development activities were canceled.

In the FY 22 budget, legal services increased by nearly 281 percent in anticipation of ongoing discussions with the Hardwick Electric Department and a dispute over charges dating back to 2010. Chief Financial Officer Brittany Currie said in an e-mail that expenditures for electricity and legal services were boosted in advance.

In FY21, the sum of \$2,626.50 was budgeted for legal services, but the FY22 budget

increased that sum to \$10,000. Electricity in FY21 was budgeted at \$12,954; the FY22 budget increased to \$33,500.

Reclassification of accounts explained the significant swings in maintenance of buildings and nontechnology repairs. The maintenance of buildings account dropped 82 percent in FY22 to a budgeted amount of \$4,000, while care and upkeep of grounds doubled over last year to \$13,000.

Non-generalists salaries showed a large increase from \$43,381.77, to \$100,670.76 (132 percent), as a result of budgeting reclassifications. Positions in the Non-generalist category include food service assistant, custodians, and study hall monitors, which Currie said were formerly categorized as technical staff.

The category of other salaries shows a 55 percent decline, as purchased services are now placed in different salary line designations. Employee training/development, other professional services, and tuition reimbursement account gyrations are the result of reclassification of account categories.

Currie explained that when the chart of accounts was converted, classifications previously on one line were broken into two lines.

Unemployment compensation has varied widely from year to year with \$500 in FY19 and \$6,083 in FY20. Last year, \$1,501.61 was budgeted but that number doubled for FY22. Currie said the item was underbudgeted in FY21 and the projection reflects the average of the last two years.

Per the negotiated union contract, employees are paid for unused flex leave time. Over the last two years that number has increased from \$11,000 to \$14,000. In anticipation of incremental increases over the next two years, the budget was raised to \$18,472.38, an increase of 55 percent from last year.

Two line items, assessments and purchased services, are determined by the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) services. Individual school districts within the OSSU are assessed for expenses, such as transportation, based on the student population of the individual school district.

Purchased services are services contracted by the supervisory union and utilized separately by individual school districts.



photo by Vanessa Fournier
Kingdom Construction Inc. foreman Dwayne Bowen works last week on the 14 x 24-foot Leesa Fine Room addition to the Craftsbury Public Library.

Walden Ballots Mailed to Voters

WALDEN – The Walden Select Board met February 1, at the town offices. Present were select board members Brenda Huntoon and Randolph Wilson (in person) and Bob Hatch (via phone).

Ballots have been mailed to all voters. The informational meeting will be held on Monday, Feb. 22, at 6:30 pm.

The flyer sent with the ballots incorrectly says Tuesday.


The road report involved discussion of shop tools and needs and a certificate of highway mileage for the past year. An overweight permit and bills were signed.

The next meeting will be Monday, Feb. 15, at 6:30 p.m.

**Important
Town Meeting information for
Registered Voters of Wolcott**

In response to the concerns posed by COVID-19, the Vermont Legislature passed ACT 162, which allows a legislative body to vote to use Australian ballot for any town meeting (annual or special) in 2021:

All voting in the Town of Wolcott for Town Meeting Day 2021 will be held via Australian Ballot. No floor meeting will be held in 2021 (as voted by the Select Board on 12/30/2020). Information on website: wolcottvt.org


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Brown 'n Serve Sausage, Banquet, 6.4 oz. pkg., selected	98¢
Roast Beef, Triple M, deli sliced, lb.	\$7.98
White Potatoes, Maine, 20 lb. pkg.	\$5.98
Chicken Thighs or Drumsticks, family pack, lb.	89¢
London Broil, USDA Choice Beef, family pack, boneless chuck, lb.	\$3.49

Mon. - Sat. 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. • Sunday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. • effective February 12 - February 18
We accept MasterCard, VISA and EBT Cards

Funding Sought for Craftsbury Conservation Fund

by June Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY – Over four decades ago, Vermont established municipal conservation commissions to give communities responsibility or stewardship over their natural environment and cultural resources.

Craftsbury founded the Craftsbury Conservation Commission (CCC) in 2007. In 2017 the select board, on recommendation of the CCC, established a Craftsbury Conservation Fund to be used for conservation-related projects in Craftsbury. The select board has final approval on all projects; guidelines and protocols were established and are on the town’s website, along with an application and explanation of the process (townofcraftsbury.com).

Last year the town voted \$7,000 to begin growing its Conservation Fund. Article 39 on this year’s Australian Ballot is asking voters to approve the same amount (\$7,000) from the Good Neighbor Fund. The Craftsbury Conservation Fund is held in trust for the citizens of Craftsbury; it is non-lapsing and carries over from year to year. The current balance is \$9,199.63.

The Craftsbury Conservation Fund’s mission “is intended to provide funding in whole or in part, for conservation opportunities serving the public good.” Projects would be in keeping with the Town Plan, which was developed by the Craftsbury Planning Commission and sanctioned by the town.

The Conservation Fund could be used to obtain matching grants, assist in partnerships with other conservation groups, such as Northern Rivers Land Trust and Vermont Land Trust.

Allocations of funds are prioritized to target the most critical threats to the town’s natural heritage, based on the guidelines. It is to be used for projects to protect parcels that are scenic, wildlife corridors, farmland, forest, and wetland.

The Craftsbury Conservation Fund may grow by both public money and private donations. Private donations may be tax deductible for the person making them as a charitable contribution under section 170 (c) (1) of the IRS code.

The Craftsbury Conservation Fund is managed by the Town Treasurer. All expenditures are approved by the select board.

Criteria governing the Craftsbury Conservation Fund were established through reviewing the 2016 Craftsbury Town Plan and via surveys conducted in 2009, 2015, and 2017. Surveys were conducted by the Conservation Commission, Planning

Commission, and Land Protection Task Force. The surveys revealed the community’s strong interests were in “preserving the town’s rural character, agricultural and forest landscapes, protection of wildlife habitat, water resources, scenic vistas, and significant cultural, archaeological or historic resources.

The Good Neighbor Fund (GNF) is not public tax dollars. It was established when the Kingdom Community Wind industrial site was built on the Lowell Mountains. In receiving the Public Utilities Commission’s Certificate of Public Good, the developers, Green Mountain Power, agreed that for ten years, communities within five miles of the project would receive a stipend based on the electricity generated each year. The project was completed in November, 2012. The first payments to communities were made in 2013.

Further information is available from Stephen Moffatt, chair of the Craftsbury Conservation Commission, or its members.



photo by Vanessa Fournier
A scene from Highland Lodge in Greensboro overlooking Caspian Lake, taken February 4.

OUR E-MAILS

news@hardwickgazette.com

ads@hardwickgazette.com



Healthy Lamoille Valley has mini-grants of up to \$500 available to towns, agencies, businesses, organizations, faith-based institutions, colleges and schools to support the Vermont Department of Health’s 3-4-50 Program for community health in physical activity, nutrition and tobacco prevention.

We all play an important role in shaping the health of Vermonters.

Application Deadline: March 1st, 2021

Learn more and apply at www.healthylamoillevalley.org/mini-grants

3-4-50 PARTNER SPOTLIGHT!

NORTH CENTRAL VERMONT RECOVERY CENTER

“We can change the world, and create a better world, through the collective impact of our individual choices and actions if we so choose. We can each make a difference.”

DANIEL FRANKLIN,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NORTH CENTRAL VERMONT RECOVERY CENTER

Read Daniel’s blog post on becoming a 3-4-50 gold partner at www.healthylamoillevalley.org/ncvrc

Hitting The Hardwick Trails



Justin Holbrook (right) helps his son Ryan Holbrook (left) with his ski boots Saturday for the first day of the REACH! Afterschool ski program.



REACH! Afterschool cross country ski program students (from left) Kassidy Gann, Samuel Razionale and leader Ceilidh Galloway-Kane take off for two hours of skiing February 6. REACH! Has partnered with Hardwick Trails and the Recreation Committee to offer a free cross country ski program to 14 students in grades 1-6 on Saturday mornings. Leaders for the program are Erica Baker, Galloway-Kane, Saviah Pitt and Jadon Baker.



Students in the REACH! Afterschool cross country ski program (from left) Matthias Patoine, Nathaniel Leach, Serenity Leach, Ryan Holbrook and leader Erica Baker head for the trails Saturday.



Alden Pougner (left) and his brother Daniel Pougner (right) of Hardwick ski in the REACH! Afterschool cross country program, which began Saturday.

**Photos
by
Vanessa Fournier**

OUR COMMUNITIES

Parent Cafe Series on First Thursdays

MORRISVILLE – Healthy Lamoille Valley has launched a Parent Cafe Series for all parents/caregivers, on the first Thursday of each month from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., on Zoom. These monthly gatherings are designed to highlight a community resource or parenting skill and then encourage conversation

with other parents/caregivers from around the region. Breakout groups will be facilitated by local school and mental counselors arranged by children's ages i.e. elementary, middle, and high school parent discussion rooms. View the full list of sessions and pre-register at healthylamoillevalley.org/parent-cafe-series.

Questions on Reading and Writing Feb. 18

GREENSBORO – The Greensboro Free Library will host a virtual session with two local reading specialists on Thursday Feb. 18, at 6:30 p.m.

The session will give participants the opportunity to ask questions about reading, and is open to parents and educators of children, both in school and home-schooled.

For those who have questions to ask before the session, send to Emily Purdy, Greensboro Free Library Youth Services Librarian, at greensborokids@gmail.com.

The presenters for the session are Judy Carpenter, who was a

special education and early reading intervention teacher at Craftsbury Elementary School, and Barbara Jacobs, who has a master's degree in education and has worked with students for almost 40 years as a classroom teacher, guidance counselor, and reading specialist. The presenters will offer a short presentation about child development and can speak to questions relating to reading, reluctant readers, gifted readers, reading challenges, and possible resources to support reading.

This event is free and open to all.

Seeking Applications for Mini-Grants through March 1

MORRISVILLE – Healthy Lamoille Valley is seeking applications for mini-grants of up to \$500 for towns, agencies, businesses, organizations, faith-based institutions, colleges and schools in the Lamoille Valley to support the Vermont Department of Health's

3-4-50 efforts in physical activity, nutrition and tobacco prevention. Applications will be collected and reviewed through March 1. Awards will be announced by March 15. For more information, please visit our website at healthylamoillevalley.org/mini-grants.

CVSWMD Sustainability Webinar Series to be Held in March

MONTPELIER – The Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) will host a sustainability series made up of free workshops about reducing waste, increasing zero-waste and learning some repair skills. The sustainability series will take place online from March 2 to March 13.

CVSWMD staff will lead some of the webinars, and there will be guest presenters from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, the Mill Market in South Burlington, and, in the case of the global fixit café, from all over the world. This series of skill-based webinars, is intended to help participants to make small changes that will lead to more sustainable living, and to avoid waste wherever possible. The webinars cover a range of topics including backyard composting, recycling, non-toxic cleaning, mending clothing,

reducing food waste, and repair of household items. Participants from the CVSWMD's 19 member towns may win free items at select webinars.

The Sustainability Series webinars are: Backyard Composting, March 2, 2 p.m.; Zero-Waste Shopping and Swapping, March 3, 3 p.m.; Recycle Right! From Blue Bin to Beyond, March 4, 4 p.m.; Re-Cook Café: How to Make the Most of Your Food, March 9, 5:30 p.m.; Visible Mending: Clothes and Textiles, March 10, noon; Safer Cleaning: Reduce and Replace Toxins at Home March 11, 6 p.m.; and International Fix-It Clinic, March 13, 1 p.m.

Prior registration for any of the webinars is required. To register, go to cvswmd.org/workshop-registration.html. This program is made possible by grant funding from a USDA Rural Utilities Service Grant.



courtesy photo

Judy Dales mixes up the batter which will make pancakes for Shrove Tuesday's Grab 'n' Go Pancake Supper on February 16, at Greensboro United Church of Christ.

Pancake Supper Feb. 16

GREENSBORO – The Shrove Tuesday annual pancake supper by the Greensboro United Church of Christ will be a “grab ‘n’ go” event. Shrove Tuesday is the day to use up rich foods such as eggs, milk, and sugar, before the fasting season of Lent, hence

the tradition of pancakes on “Fat” Tuesday.

Individual meals will be prepared for take-out and will consist of pancakes, sausages, maple syrup and butter. The Greensboro Church will offer the free meals from 4 to 6 p.m.

Free Financial Advice Available to Agribusinesses

BURLINGTON – Vermont farm, forest and maple business owners may sign up for a free, individualized coaching session with a University of Vermont (UVM) Extension business expert. One-on-one meetings by phone or videoconferencing will be offered from late February through June.

Appointments are on a first-come, first-served basis and must be reserved no later than Thursday of the week prior to the desired time slot. Appointments are 90 minutes and may be booked with one of the following UVM Extension specialists: Tony Kitsos (farm), Chris Lindgren (forest or maple), Betsy Miller (farm) or Zac Smith (farm or digital marketing).

For a complete list of dates

and to register, go to go.uvm.edu/agbizcoaching. Once registered, individuals will be contacted to make arrangements for their appointment.

Sessions may be used to discuss or revise business goals, develop a balance sheet or budget, update financial statements, review a business plan for an accurate financial analysis or ask for advice on other business-related matters. Help also is available for assessing changes to markets and other financial concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To request a disability-related accommodation to participate, contact Christi Sherlock at (866) 860-1382, ext. 200, three weeks prior to the scheduled session.

Norcross Gives a Peek into a Magical Era

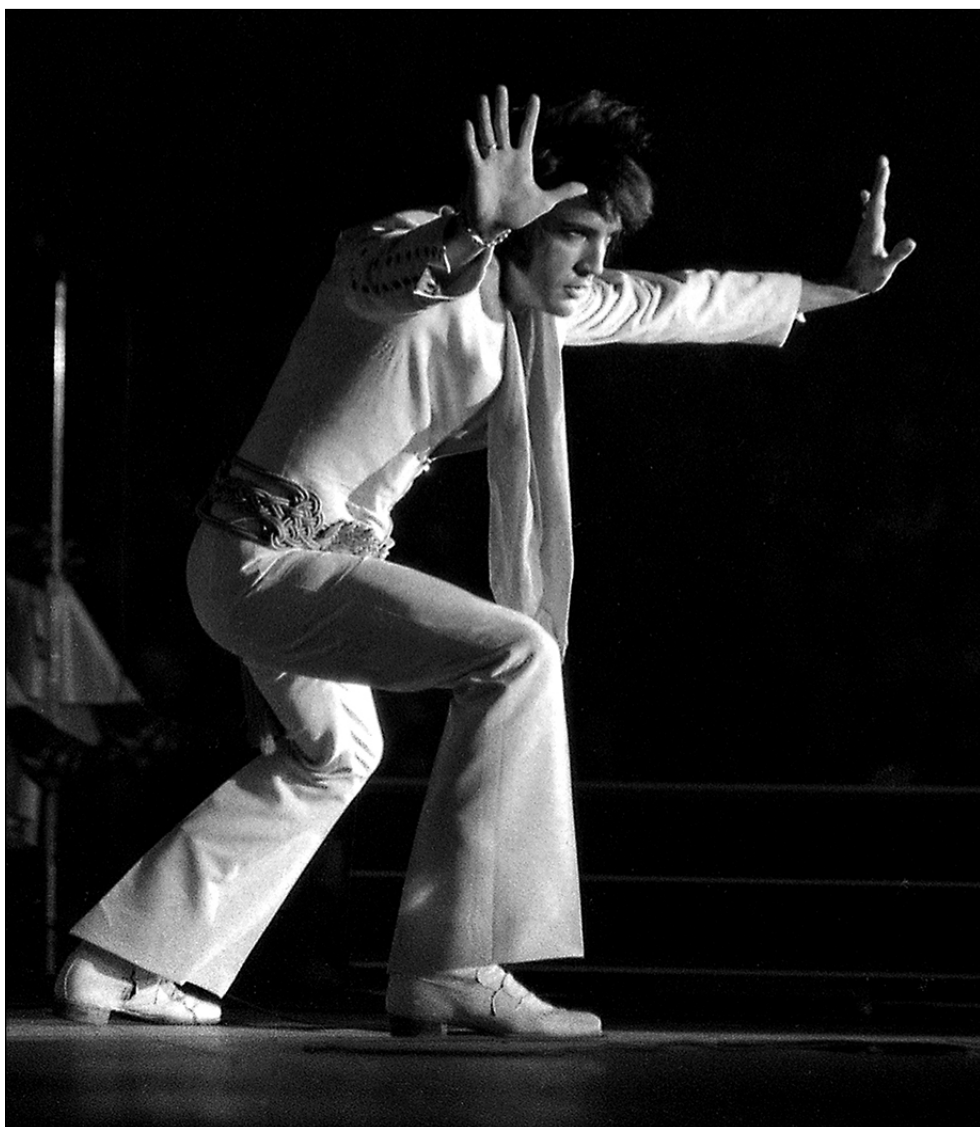
by Sandy Atkins

HARDWICK – Before there was Rick and the Ramblers Western Swing Band, there was Rick Norcross, music writer and reviewer for the Tampa Times. From the golden age of rock and roll, Norcross has resurrected his collection of photos of some of the most famous artists of the Twentieth Century. He's put them on a flash drive and called it all Press Pass.

The spirit of rock and roll is captured in this rare collection of photographs by Norcross, who has roots in the Hardwick community. During his stint at the Tampa Times between 1969 and 1974, Norcross was in a unique position to capture up-close and personal images of rock and roll stars caught at the peak of their careers.

From the front row, on stage and backstage, Norcross covered small clubs, concert halls, stadiums and rock festivals in central Florida and southern Georgia. And what coverage he had: The Allman Brothers, Bo Diddley, Elvis Presley, Elton John, Mick Jagger, Pink Floyd, and so much more.

Browsing through the Press Pass collection, you're flung back to the song track of a youth full of the music of Tina Turner, the Eagles, The Byrds. And country stars too: Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, The Carter Family, Chet Atkins, George Jones and Tammy Wynette, to name a few.



Elvis Presley

These black and white photographs capture the intimacy of backstage and the energy of the performance up front.

Also included on the Press Pass flash drive are the articles and reviews that appeared in the Times under the Rick Norcross byline. These reviews catch the electricity of each performance and are a rare view into the history of a legendary music era.

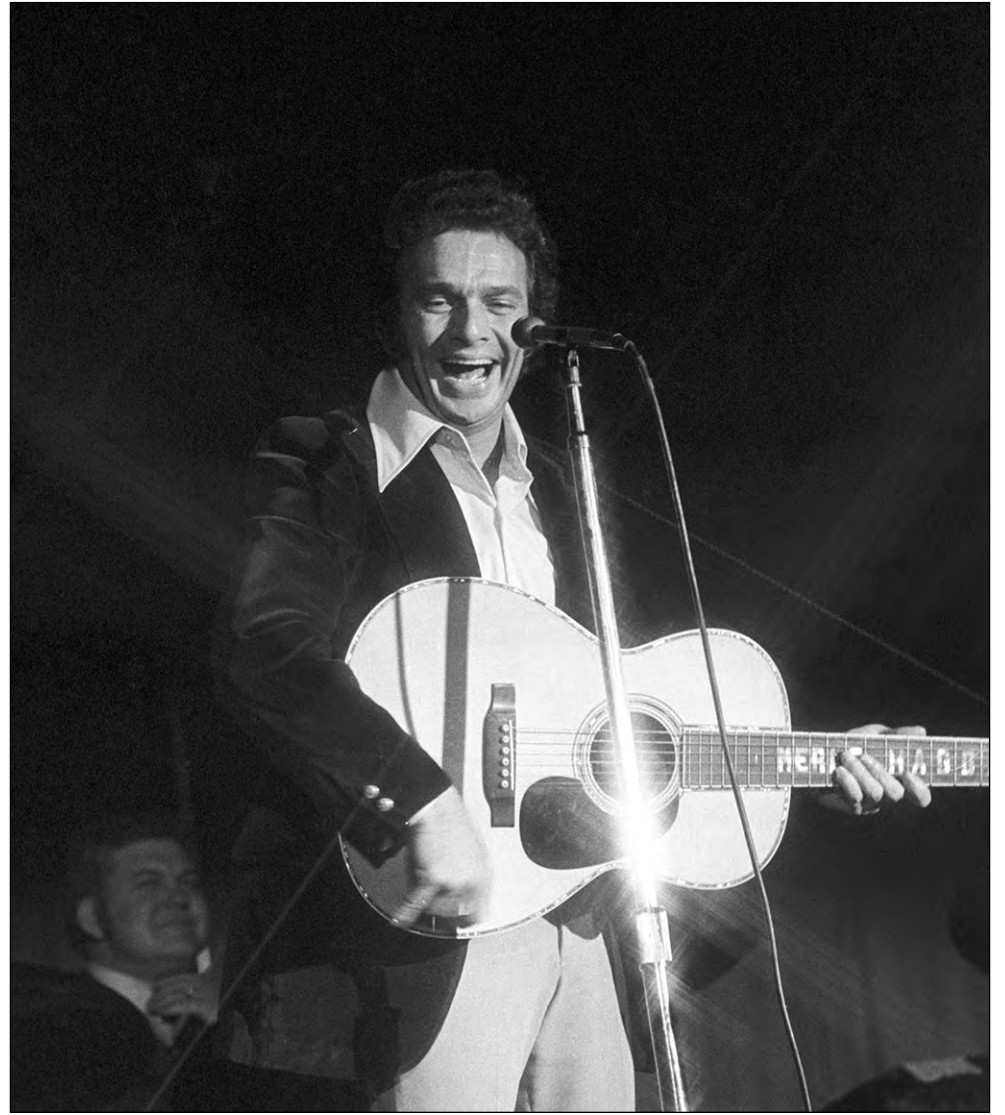
There's a young Bob Dylan and The Band. Look at the Beach Boys adjusting their audio equipment. See Cher silhouetted in the shadows of the bright lights. Norcross has an eye for the interesting angle that will tell a story.

In addition to the rare performance photos and accompanying reviews, the Press Pass drive contains bonus color photos and four MP3 files of Rick's most recent recordings. So much on a tiny piece of data storage. This would be a perfect gift for someone who lived through those turbulent times.

As a touring musician, Norcross admits that bookings have fallen off recently. But he's pulled together these gems from his past, providing an unprecedented and unique peek into a magical, mythical era.

Press Pass photos are also on display at the White Water Gallery in East Hardwick.

Each flash drive costs \$35 and may be ordered from the web site rickandtheallstarramblers.com.



Merle Haggard

OUR COMMUNITIES

Parent Surveys Open through Feb. 28

MORRISVILLE – Healthy Lamoille Valley is seeking feedback from communities and parents in their bi-annual survey. Healthy Lamoille Valley and community partners use the survey information to inform upcoming work around preventing and reducing youth substance misuse in the Lamoille Valley.

Those completing the survey will have the opportunity to enter to win one of four \$25 Hannaford gift cards. One of four \$50 gift cards may be won by a parent/caregiver of a sixth-to-twelfth grader who completes the parent survey. This survey will be open through February 28. The survey is available at surveymonkey.com/r/HLVsurvey2021.

Tangling Virtual Workshop on March 7

GREENSBORO – The Greensboro Free Library, Jeudevine Memorial Library, and Cabot Public Library will co-host a virtual Zentangle workshop with Ohio artist and Certified Zentangle Teacher Katy Abbot on Sunday, March 7, from 2 to 4 p.m.

The workshop is free, but those interested should register early so that supply kits may be ordered. Those who can contribute are asked to contribute \$5 towards the cost of a kit. The libraries will provide the kits for pickup and the Zoom link in early March.

Zentangle® is an easy-to-learn and relaxing method of creating

beautiful images from structured repetitive patterns, called tangles. The method, or art form, is used to increase focus and creativity, and for mindfulness practice and stress reduction. Tangling can be enjoyed by a wide range of skills and ages, and non-artists are welcome and encouraged to participate.

This two-hour workshop is best for ages 12 and up.

To register for the workshop, e-mail or call one of the libraries by Tuesday, March 2: GFL at 533-2531 or greensborofree@gmail.com, Jeudevine at 472-5948 or jeudevinelibrary@hardwickvt.org, or CPL at 563-2721 or cabotlibrary@yahoo.com.

OUR E-MAILS

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THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Thursday, February 11

JAQUITH PUBLIC LIBRARY, 122 School St., Rm. 2., Marshfield, Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. - noon and 3 - 6 p.m. Curbside service only. Home deliveries available for senior citizens within a 10 mile radius. Information: 802-426-3581 or jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com.

GRACE FREE VIRTUAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOP. Free online art class every Thursday, 1 - 3 p.m. Join at <https://meet.jit.si/GRACECommunityWorkshop>. Free materials kit available for pickup or delivery. Information: carol@wonderartst.org or 802-472-6857.

Friday, February 12

BLACK LIVES MATTER/Peace and Justice Vigil, 5 - 6 p.m., Fridays, Peace Park, Hardwick. All welcome.

JAQUITH PUBLIC LIBRARY, 122 School St., Rm. 2., Marshfield, Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. - noon and 3 - 6 p.m. Curbside service only. Home deliveries available for senior citizens within a 10 mile radius. Information: 802-426-3581 or jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com.

EVERYONE EATS PROGRAM, free frozen meal, Fridays, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m., Wolcott United Methodist Church, 4023 Vt. Rt. 15. No pre-registration needed. Information: ereid@capstonevt.org.

Saturday, February 14

BLACK LIVES MATTER/Peace and Justice Vigil, 3 - 5 p.m., Saturdays, South Main at Wolcott Street, Hardwick. All welcome.

Monday, February 15

CELEBRATE RECOVERY, Mondays, 6 p.m., Touch of Grace AG Church, 104 Vt. Rt. 16, E. Hardwick. Men's Addiction Group. Information: 802-279-2185.

GRACE presents free, virtual weekly art prompts. Each week GRACE will post a piece of art from their "Outsider Art" collection for people to use as inspiration for their own original creation. These will be available on Mondays at <https://graceart.org/virtual-art-community/virtual-art-prompts/> with responses due by Sunday evenings. Email responses to AmericorpsVista@WonderArtsVT.org.

Tuesday, February 16

JAQUITH PUBLIC LIBRARY, 122 School St., Rm. 2., Marshfield, Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. - noon and 3 - 6 p.m. Curbside service only. Home deliveries available for senior citizens within a 10 mile radius. Information: 802-426-3581 or jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com.

SHROVE TUESDAY'S Grab 'N' Go Pancake Supper, 2 - 4 p.m., Greensboro United Church of Christ. Individual meals prepared for take-out. Pick up as many free meals as you need. Information: Judy at 533-7733.

THE DADS' GROUP, every Tuesday, 8-9 p.m., on Zoom. A great place to connect with other Dads. Information and link to the Zoom meeting: Rob at rcary@LRCVT.org or 802-730-3000.

THE MOMS IN RECOVERY Support Program, tailored to support pregnant and parenting mothers and their families. In person, every Tuesday, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m., North Central Vermont Recovery Center, 275 Brooklyn St., Suite 2, Morrisville. Information: crystal.morrissey@ncvrc.com, 802-635-0084.

Wednesday, February 17

JAQUITH PUBLIC LIBRARY, 122 School St., Rm. 2., Marshfield, Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. - noon and 3 - 6 p.m. Curbside service only. Home deliveries available for senior citizens within a 10 mile radius. Information: 802-426-3581 or jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com.

EAST HARDWICK GRANGE SUPPER, a free meal for the community, Wednesdays, 5 - 6 p.m. Caledonia Grange #9, 88 East Church St., East Hardwick. A curbside dinner for the whole family to enjoy. Information or delivery: easthardwickgrange@gmail.com or 472-8987.


Exhibits

HIGHLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS, Greensboro, 2875 Hardwick St., outdoor art experience. Ski or snowshoe at your own pace, and on your own time, in and through artwork by Vermont artists. The 1.8-mile trail begins at HCA and loops to the neighboring Wilson Farm. Open daily, weather permitting from dawn to dusk. Social distancing and masks required. Register online at highlandartsvt.org.

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



photo by Vanessa Fournier
Joshua Jaques of Hardwick walks off Caspian Lake in Greensboro Saturday after fishing for two hours.



February 10 - February 16

20% Off Leather Handbags & Wallets Feb. 12 - 15 only While Supplies Last!		Sock Sale 10% Off Feb. 12 - 15 While Supplies Last!
Barilla Pasta 88¢ 12-16 oz.	Betty Crocker Cookie Mixes \$1.48 17.5 oz.	Chocolove Chocolate Bars 2/\$5 3.2 oz.
Rana Tortelloni or Ravioli \$3.99 10 oz.	Green Mt. Coffee 12 K Cup or Ground \$5.99 12 oz.	Mission Fajita or Soft Taco \$1.99 11.5-17.5 oz.
Wishbone Salad Dressing 2/\$3 8 oz.	Hunts Tomatoes \$1.79 28-29 oz.	G.M. Lucky Charms, Cheerios or Cinn. Toast Crunch 2/\$5 10.5-12 oz.
Cheez-it Crackers 2/\$4 7 oz.	G.M. Chex Mix 2/\$4 7-8.75 oz.	Arm & Hammer Laundry Detergent 3/\$10 43.75-50 oz.
Food Club Shredded Cheese 2/\$4 8 oz.	Cabot Dip \$1.79 12 oz.	Almond Breeze Milk Alternative 2/\$6 64 oz.
Breyers Ice Cream \$3.99 48 oz.	Coles Mini Garlic Bread 4/\$5 8 oz.	American Flatbread Pizza \$6.99 13.8-16.8 oz.
Tender Asparagus \$1.68 1 lb.	Garden Fresh Cucumbers 2/\$1	Fresh Express 3 ct. Romaine Hearts 2/\$5

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NATURE NOTES

Hedgerows, Dead Trees, and the Emerald Ash Borer

by Tim McKay

PEACHAM – I grew up with hedgerows full of dead elm trees. Now, we are faced with the prospect of hedgerows full of dead ash trees.

In 2018, I wrote about the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in central Vermont. Since then, EAB has been found in scattered locations all over the state. It is time to talk, practically, about what individual landowners can and should do. Looking at the many hedgerows around fields and villages we see lots and lots of ash trees. What do we do?

All landowners need to be informed and stay informed. Vermont has an excellent portal to all EAB information. Go to vtinvasives.org and you will find lots of information. The first step is to be able to recognize an ash tree so that you can walk your land and see what you have.

The EAB has been found in several places in and around Groton State Forest, affecting all the surrounding towns. In New Hampshire, EAB was detected in Concord six years ago and infested areas are now found from the Massachusetts line to Lake Winnepesaukee, including southeastern Grafton County. To the west, EAB was first discovered in western New York in 2009 and along the Hudson River south of Albany in 2010. Infestations now occur in 30 of New York's 62 counties. EAB is well established in the Montreal area and has been found in Grand Isle, Chittenden, Addison, and Orleans counties. Go to vtinvasives.org to find the latest map of where EAB has been confirmed.

If they are not here already, the first EABs will alight near you within a few years. The insect may not be detected for three or four years after it arrives, while a population becomes established. By Year Five the population will begin to grow exponentially, reaching a killing crescendo in another couple of years. By Year Ten virtually all our ash trees will be dead and the EAB population will crash and reach a low endemic level. Ash seedlings will continue to grow, but will be killed as saplings by the endemic EAB population. With luck, we will be left with a few mature trees that are somehow resistant.

The EAB adults feed on leaves and cause little damage. They lay eggs in crevices in the bark in mid- to late-summer. The larvae then bore inward to the phloem (inner bark where sap is carried from the leaves to other parts of the tree) and the outer

sapwood where the tree is growing. They begin to feed on those tissues until the weather gets too cold. They feed in a serpentine pattern, leaving characteristic S-shaped galleries under the bark which get larger as the larva grows. A fully mature larva is about an inch long. After over-wintering, a mature larva pupates and develops into an adult as the weather warms. In Vermont's climate, the adults begin emerging in June. They bore out through the bark, leaving a telltale D-shaped hole about an eighth of an inch across, and immediately fly to find leaves to eat and other adults to mate with. Then the adult lays about 200 eggs and starts the next cycle of life.

The infestation is not normally noticed until the tree is severely damaged. The early action is usually high in the crown of the tree. Dead branches appear, but many things can cause dead branches in a tree. Woodpeckers move in to drill for the EAB larvae and other delicacies. If an area of trunk is already badly damaged by the insect, a woodpecker will use its beak to break off pieces of bark, revealing the EAB S-shaped galleries on the bare wood underneath.

It takes two or three years for the EAB to kill a tree. Everywhere it has been, the insect has killed virtually all the ash trees. Only about one percent of ash trees appear to be surviving, presumably because of some resistance in that tree's genetics. The best we can hope for is to slow the spread of the insect. We also need to leave some ash in the hope of perpetuating the species. Young, pole sized trees are of little economic value but are producing seed that will germinate. They will still be fine for firewood after they die, so leave them to their fate. Ash seedlings will grow and some will survive long enough to produce seed themselves before the EAB kills them. Thus, the gene pool will be perpetuated.

Ash trees dominate some hedgerows. Hedgerows get a lot of sun and often contain shrubs as well as trees. From a wildlife perspective, they are edge habitat. Flowering can be prolific and important to pollinators. Various mammals use hedgerows as travel corridors. Peacham village is surrounded by open fields, which make hedgerow travel corridors particularly important.

The loss of ash trees could be an opportunity for you to enhance your hedgerow as wildlife habitat. Evaluate the ash trees in your hedgerows first in terms of hazard. Trees that will threaten nearby buildings or driveways should

be taken down before they start dying because cutting dead trees is more unpredictable and therefore dangerous. There are numerous folks in Caledonia County who specialize in taking down trees safely. Put a note on Front Porch Forum and you'll get some recommendations.

Also, evaluate the trees for commercial value. Some hedgerow trees have sizeable, straight trunks that contain valuable lumber. In a hedgerow, the lowest four or five feet must be left because of the likelihood of fence wire being embedded in the wood. But if the tree has a trunk with minimal or no branching that is at least eight feet long and ten inches in diameter at the small end, you have a marketable log.

To attract a small-time logger to cut and buy these logs you will probably have to join with your neighbors to get enough to make it worth the logger's while. Of course, these trees also yield firewood. A forester should be engaged to work with you and your neighbors to evaluate the trees and work with a logger. Ash should be cut between October and April to avoid trucking wood from which adult EABs are emerging. If you're not familiar with logging, one thousand board feet, commonly written as MBF, represents the logs from three or four good ash trees. A standard ten-wheeler log truck holds about 3,000 BF, and a big one with a trailer holds 5,000 to 6,000, so you and your neighbors will need to accumulate 12 to 20 decent trees to get a truckload.

Think about the future hedgerow. Consider planting native trees and shrubs that will be beneficial to wildlife. For nuts, consider oak, beech, hazelnut, or chestnuts from the American Chestnut Foundation. Blueberry, nannyberry, cranberry, raspberry, blackberry and elderberry will provide berries. Apple, cherry, hawthorn and dogwood all are beneficial. Basswood is common in the area and is an excellent tree for honeybees. Do you want tall trees (beech, birch, oak, maple) to grow for the future? Look at what young trees and shrubs are already in the hedgerow that will be released when the ash is removed.

Whether you cut ash in a hedgerow or in the woods, you will let a flood of sunshine hit the ground and seeds will germinate. Invasives will flourish, so be prepared. If you already have honeysuckle, barberry, buckthorn, or any of the other bad guys, consider control work before you cut the ash, and be ready for

years of control work as seeds of invasives germinate.

In the 17 years of research since EAB arrived in Detroit, much has been learned but no effective control of the insect has emerged. Parasitic wasps, both native species and three species imported from Asia, have been tested and show some promise in slowing the EAB killing wave. So far, the wasp population cannot grow fast enough to keep up with the EAB population as it builds in an area, but the wasp has promise as a long-term check on the residual EAB population after the killing wave has passed. A fungus is being tested for its effects on EAB and early results are promising. There is some potential for widespread dispersion of the fungus in the future.

Chemical control is possible using systemic herbicides injected into individual trees. It costs \$200-\$300 per tree and the treatment has to be repeated every two or three years. There is no effective foliar treatment, so widespread chemical control is not possible. Treatment should only be considered for a particularly precious tree.

Work on developing resistant ash is the subject of a lot of research. Ash demonstrates a range of susceptibility to EAB, with a few individuals lingering long after all the rest have died. Scientists are working on the genetics of Asian ash trees and hope to breed some combination that will be resistant. Genetic engineering could speed that process considerably.

EAB larvae are killed by sustained frigid weather, but because they are under the bark, it would need to be colder than 30 below zero for at least 48 hours to have much effect. We are not cold enough to affect EAB.

Woodpeckers are capable of decimating EAB populations. There is not much a homeowner can do in this realm, but research is showing that forest landowners can have significant impact with techniques to encourage woodpeckers.

For the latest updates on EAB in Vermont and links to national information, go to vtinvasives.org, where you will find the latest map of the infestation along with information on EAB and all other invasive plants and insects in Vermont. This is also where you should report possible detections of EAB in your area.

[Editor's note: Tim McKay owns Peacham Woodworks in Barnet, and is a natural resources conservationist, addressing problems such as soil erosion, water quality, wildlife habitat and stream dynamics.]

YANKEE NOTEBOOK

Neglected Old Skis and Poles Cough Discreetly

by Willem Lange

EAST MONTPELIER – My buddy Dudley and I were just past the halfway point of the 207-mile Alaska Marathon. We’d had a good nap and a great meal at the Skwentna Roadhouse and now, at dusk, were headed south on the frozen Skwentna River, with the finish line about one hundred miles ahead. Dudley stopped for a second and looked over his shoulder.

“Wow!” he said. “Look at that!” I turned, too, and together we gazed, rapt, at the incredible rampart of the Alaska Range bathed in alpenglow. Slowly, as we watched, the peach faded to mauve and purple; and then we realized we were getting cold (it went down to -26° F that night). We turned and hustled on down the winding river, bright and smooth between black spruce banks.

That memory came to me today as Kiki and I walked through the park (“walk” is an averaging of my trudge and her canter and gallop). Occasional cross-country skiers slipped past us on the perfect snow, reminding me how much faster we can travel on skis than on foot. I remembered that some of the happiest hours of my life – and some not so happy – were spent over the last seventy years on skinny skis.

We’ve been blessed, these past few weeks, with plenty of stable packed powder snow. In the park, walkers, skiers, and fat bikers can share the trail without marring each other’s pleasure. In a corner of my cellar, meanwhile, a leaning stack of neglected old skis and poles coughs discreetly to attract my attention. They always evoke the question: Could I still...? And for a few years now, my answer has been a consistent probably not, followed by a quiet, nagging urge to try.

The gift of good, skiable snow has been counterbalanced by the curse of COVID-19, which has put the kibosh on the classic, and much anticipated, races in our neck of the woods. The organizers, however, recognizing that the motive behind the races is training and participation, rather than winning, have transformed them into “virtual” events. The popular Craftsbury 50-kilometer race can be skied this year by anyone right in his own back yard. A friend on Facebook just reported his five-hour performance at the popular – and almost unbelievably welcoming and well-groomed – “Greens” wilderness trails in Lyme and Dorchester.

The two-day, 100-mile Canadian Ski Marathon, which my wife and I haunted for about 25 years, has already happened this year – a one-day affair and no overnights. The American Birkebeiner, way up in Cable, Wis., is similarly shackled. You can still sign up and get a bib, but after that you’re on your own:



courtesy photo

My first Canadian Marathon, 1978.

no more fantastic mass starts or après ski camaraderie. Even the Great Labrador Loppet in Labrador City, Newfoundland, where Dudley and I, fresh from our Alaska adventure in 1985, enjoyed more snow than we’d ever seen, is off this year.

So it goes. No matter what happens, the memories of those now-long-ago events – the Fischer logo flashing in front of my eyes hour after hour at every stride – will have to do for now. I remember the constant anxiety of the Canadian Marathon – will I reach the 40-mile checkpoint each day before they close the last ten miles? The irritating icy surface of the Iditarod Trail caused by the local mushers training their dogs with several tires dragging behind their sleds. The cow moose who refused to leave the trail for us to pass, and two weeks later was likely the one that killed two of Susan Butcher’s dogs. The greeting at Skwentna Roadhouse (heated by a Vermont Soapstone stove!): “Welcome! Would you like bacon and eggs or pancakes?” Our answer: “Yes!”

The horrible fifty-mile predawn ride each year in a bouncing school bus jammed with skiers, skis, and poles to the freezing early-morning start of the Canadian Marathon. The jolly Frenchman in a fur-ruffed parka at the feeding station serving minestrone: “It is my own mudder’s reseepy!” And who might his mother be, I asked. “Madame Combell!” Breaking both pairs of glasses within four miles of the start on the coldest marathon ever and skiing the rest of the day, essentially on all fours. And, back in Alaska, after Dudley and I at last crossed little Knik Lake to the finish line not far north of Anchorage, to be awarded a huge trophy as the oldest finisher. That was 35 years ago. I suspect that if I could still finish, I might get that one again. They were good times.

THE Hardwick Gazette

Since 1889

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EDITOR
Ray Small

SPORTS EDITOR EMERITUS
Dave Morse

PHOTOGRAPHER
Vanessa Fournier

CIRCULATION
Dawn Gustafson

PRODUCTION
Sandy Atkins, Dawn Gustafson

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Sandy Atkins, Michael Bielawski,
Ken Brown, June Cook,
Jim Flint, Eric Hanson,
Pat Hussey,
Willem Lange, Doug McClure,
Daniel Métraux,
Joyce Slayton Mitchell

ADVERTISING SALES
Erica Baker

CARTOONIST
Julie Atwood

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MEETING MEMO

Monday, Feb. 15
• **Walden Select Board**, every other Monday, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 16
• **Cabot School District Board of Directors’ Special Board Meeting**, 6 - 8 p.m. <https://ccsu.zoom.us/j/89384477156?pwd=b1BuWXNt-MWtvOEEeXm27vV0ZYSIMwUT09>. Meeting ID: 893 8447 7156. Passcode: 152266. Call 1-646-558-8656.

Town Websites, Town Clerks
Cabot: cabotvt.us
Calais: calaisvermont.gov
Craftsbury: townofcraftsbury.com

Greensboro: greensborovt.org

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: Walden town clerk: (802) 563-2220, open Mon. - Wed., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thurs., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. waldentc@pivot.net

Wolcott: wolcottvt.org

Woodbury: woodburyvt.org

Woodsmoke *by Julie Atwood*



“IT’S PROBABLY FAKE NEWS!”



photo by Vanessa Fournier

Green Mountain Technology & Career Center Forestry instructor Meghan Luther (right) and State of Vermont County Forester Matt Langlais (left) observe and advise as GMTCC students cut timber on the property of Diana and Paul Frederick off Center Road in Hardwick.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Clarifying Australian Ballot Process

To the editor:

Due to Covid-19, many towns have opted to do all of town meeting by Australian ballot. While many people are upset that town meeting is not happening this year, it is NOT because of Australian ballot.

The Australian Ballot is the election process of the United States today; it is how we hold our general election. In future years, if we choose to elect town officials by Australian ballot, it will not prohibit discussions or voting on other issues at town meeting, e.g., the town budget and appropriations. The Australian ballot for elected officials does allow registered voters time to make informed decisions on who they want to represent them in their community for the duration of their term. The

Australian ballot does allow all registered voters an opportunity to vote for their town representatives, not just those who are able to attend town meeting.

The Australian Ballot is the only way for all registered voters to have their voice count in future town official elections by offering a window of time to vote at the polls or to request an absentee ballot. For those of us who are unable to attend town meeting, we should at least have the right to vote for our representation. This is the Democratic way.

Vote “yes” to elect your town officials by Australian ballot (in Greensboro, vote “yes” for Article 3).

**Elizabeth Stabler
Greensboro**

A Few Points of Clarification

To the editor:

Big thanks to Doug McClure for acknowledging concerns of Hardwick citizens in his excellent article (January 27, “5G Petition...”). A few points of clarification:

Firstly, the petition mentioned should be described as a “Right to Know” petition for improving communication between our town government and its citizens whenever telecom industry giants submit proposals for new wireless infrastructure to be deployed in Hardwick. The reason? There is a time factor involved for citizens to have any agency concerning placement of cell towers and small-cell antennas in our community. Our town government has the legal right to make decisions about the placement of wireless infrastructure, and petitioners want that right to be respected and facilitated by our town officers.

Far from being a “special interest” group as characterized by select board member Elizabeth Dow, concern about impacts of wireless infrastructure is a public interest shared by many. In six days, during a week of severe cold weather in a mid-January pandemic, almost 70 registered voters in Hardwick signed our petition. Our belief is that a citizen should have the right to know -- and the right to have a say -- about what goes up in our neighborhoods. Aesthetic impacts can affect property values, and with

the new small-cell antennas, thousands of studies document serious health impacts, to humans as well as birds, bees and trees. We don’t need another health crisis.

What we do need is internet connectivity that follows well thought-out safety standards. Our federal government has ignored any assurance of safety standards -- indeed much of the protocol on a federal level is bought and sold by industry lobbyists. Their push is for the huge profits of wireless roll-out, not for wired fiber-optic internet that is so much faster, more dependable, higher quality, and most of all, safe. With the amount of time spent in front of a computer or other device attempting remote learning and income-related activities, we need our internet connectivity to be as safe as possible. And we want to protect our property values.

This is why we are joining many other Vermonters asking our town officials to provide a more reasonable plan to facilitate the notification process so that we have a say about how broadband infrastructure gets installed in our neighborhoods.

For further information, read the N.H. Commission Report: lasttreelaws.com/11/nhreport/ or search “Burt Wolf...Radiation” on YouTube: [youtube.com/watch?v=mf-Efnk7g4k&ab_channel=BurtWolf](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mf-Efnk7g4k&ab_channel=BurtWolf).

**Emily Lanxner
Hardwick**

IN THE GARDEN

Favorite Trees for Winter

by Henry Homeyer

CORNISH FLAT, N.H. – I recently asked a few readers, garden friends, and tree experts a question: “What is your favorite tree in winter?” It’s not easy to pick just one, any more than most of us would be willing to name a favorite child. I invite you to think about the question, and perhaps, come spring, you will want to plant one, if you haven’t already.

Pamela Kirkpatrick of Swansea, Mass., sent me this: “I love the winter landscape, and, next to my family, trees are my greatest love. American holly, which comes into its own in winter, both for its gleanings and the way it reflects light. Beech of any kind, for showing off its muscular trunk when not in leaf. White pine, troublesome as it is with its brittle limbs, because it is home to an owl who returns there every winter and serenades us with his call.”

Lynn Schadd of Cornish, N.H., e-mailed me saying, “Amur maackia is for me the best four-season tree in the garden. And right now, its



courtesy photo

Amur maackia bark is interesting, especially in winter.

magnificent bark is stealing the show: peeling, curling, showing off plates of designer colors, all of which may be easily seen since the tree has no oak-like aspirations of bigness.”

Lisa Lovelette of Waterbury Center, Vt., wrote, “My favorite winter tree is the pine tree when dressed in white. I am a hobbyist photographer, and nothing is more beautiful than a stately pine dressed in white when placed in front of a beautiful Vermont sunset, sunrise, or majestic sky. A rising bright and bold full moon in the background makes the dressed pine a standout.”

Anne Raver of Providence, R.I., is a former New York Times garden writer. Here’s what she said: “My favorite tree is the scarlet oak, or the white oak, or the red oak, any kind

of oak. They support hundreds of species of insects, whose caterpillars feed on the leaves, and who provide crucial food for birds. Also, the red and scarlet oaks turn beautiful colors.”

Donnamarie Kelly of Salem, N.H., wrote, “By far my favorite winter tree is the hemlock. When snow-laden, the boughs remind me of ballerina hands dipping delicately downward. Hemlocks are full,



courtesy photo

Nyssa sylvatica.

projecting a sense of being in the “woods,” even when in a simple grove of two or three trees. “

Julie Moir Messervy, is a world-renowned garden designer and author of many great garden books. She e-mailed, “Our land in Vermont was an old sheep farm, as were so many. My favorite tree (in winter and also all year long) is a stately White Oak (*Quercus alba*) that may well date from the 1800s. For me, it’s a “Cosmic Tree” that shades and shields our deck and screen porch from the harsh western



courtesy photo

Hop hornbeam branches are delicate and graceful in winter.

sun, while opening its boughs to the cool summer winds. It is home to squirrels, porcupine, and at least 13 types of birds in winter ...”

Christine MacManus of Narra-



courtesy photo

Flower buds on my Merrill magnolia are like pussywillows all winter.

gansett, R.I., e-mailed, “A favorite winter tree of mine is a neighbor’s *Stewartia*, with its wonderful bark of mottled patterns and colors. I’ve kept my eye on this tree for 40 years and sometimes pull mulch away from the trunk flare. And of course, the summer flowers are a bonus too.

My favorite tree authority, Mike

Tom Bacon of Hanover, N.H., emailed, “I love the majesty of the hemlocks in general, but the way they hold the snow is beautiful in the winter and just stunning compared to other evergreens.”

As for me? My favorite is the hybrid Merrill magnolia I planted long ago as a specimen tree in the back of the house. I love its smooth gray bark and the fuzzy buds, like pussywillows on steroids. Those buds remind me that spring is coming, no matter how cold the weather now. Of the native trees, I love the hop hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) in winter. The bare branches are fine and delicate, with tiny buds. The lateral branching patterns are so ornate and beautiful that I hung one on the ceiling above my computer.

One last perspective came from my friend Alicia Jenks of Weathersfield, Vt. She noted that American beech trees produce a lovely rustling sound on breezy winter days. The



courtesy photo

Young Beech Trees hold their leaves, which rustle and whisper on breezy days.

Dirr, author of “Manual of Woody Landscape Plants” could not limit himself to just one or two. He e-mailed, saying, “I love *Nyssa sylvatica* (black tupelo), *Fagus grandifolia* (American beech), *Quercus alba* (white oak), *Liriodendron tulipifera* (Tulip tree) and *Quercus bicolor* (Swamp white oak) for starters.”

I know Professor Dirr is particularly fond of “Majestic trees” – trees that tower over the landscape and last for a hundred years or more, and all of those he mentioned can do so.

J.D. Lavalley of Henniker, N.H., loves blues spruces: “In the winter, I just loved how the snow is caught in their branches forming beautiful white pillows. And light snows simply add a beautiful dusting of their needles.”



courtesy photo

Stewartia bark.

young trees hold their leaves until May and provide a quiet symphony in winter. And pines make such a soothing song on breezy days, too. So, go outside to look – and listen – to the trees. Pay attention, and your trees may surprise and delight you.

ANOTHER OPINION

Something is Way Out of Whack

by **Steven Pappas, publisher and editor of the Times Argus and Rutland Herald**

MONTPELIER -- Isabel Jennifer Seward, a teenage driver, was fined \$220 for her part in a double-fatal vehicle crash that killed an elderly Ferrisburgh couple last fall in Charlotte.

Were it not for a freelance journalist, we never would have known where to place our outrage.

Chet and Connie Hawkins died in the head-on crash, after Seward, who was 16 at the time, crossed the double yellow-line, striking them.

Seward received a civil traffic ticket for an offense listed as “driving on roadways laned for traffic.” She pleaded no contest to the civil traffic ticket and was assessed \$220 by the Vermont Judicial Bureau. Her mother paid the fine.

Sure, you can be angry a fine was issued in light of the death of two individuals. Or you can be angry about the fact many efforts were made to conceal Seward’s identity from the public eye.

The fine was only made public after reporter Michael Donoghue made a public records request, which Vermont State Police ignored for more than a month. Vermont’s records law requires a prompt response — but also allows up to 10 days for delays in special cases.

When State Police finally filed a response, it had redacted several parts of the civil ticket

— including Seward’s name and hometown, Atlanta, Georgia.

And yet, Seward’s fate started with the State Police.

They issued a news release the day of the crash, withholding Seward’s identity. Two days later, the VSP eventually disclosed it. (And much later, the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles provided Seward’s name, hometown and complete crash details in the public accident report filed by State Police.)

Chittenden County State’s Attorney Sarah George was upset with Vermont State Police for releasing Seward’s name as the driver in the fatal crash. George did not want the name public if there was any chance Seward might undergo confidential proceedings in Vermont Family Court for her driving. George could file criminal charges in adult court as well, if warranted. Vermont State Police countered that they had relied on the department’s transparency policy and several legal opinions, the Vermont Constitution, the Vermont Public Records Law and the rules of the Vermont Judiciary — all of them siding with transparency for public records.

Here’s the wrinkle: Since last July, state attorneys, including George, were directed to send cases involving juveniles initially to family court, except for the most serious crimes. Once the case is at family court, the state’s attorney is free to move it to adult criminal court, but needs to indicate the reason for

the move is “in the interest of justice.” Adult proceedings are public.

The day after Seward’s name was released by Vermont State Police, Department of Public Safety Commissioner Michael Schirling directed a gag order on all State Police, preventing them from providing any news releases with names of juveniles, including if they are killed or injured. As written, the order also appears to restrict public release about child abductions, AMBER Alerts, missing skiers, overdue hunters and other cases involving children. Schirling’s gag order remains in effect today.

However, the Vermont Judiciary maintains Seward’s name and information are public. And Vermont Attorney General T.J. Donovan has stated that he sides with public transparency in the Seward case.

State Police noted Seward might face legal action in Vermont Family Court as a juvenile, which would be confidential. Vermont Family Court has few options in juvenile cases. Vermont closed its juvenile jail last year. A judge could impose counseling or community service, according to lawyers and others familiar with family court proceedings. The Vermont Department for Children and Families would be expected to monitor a juvenile long distance for the court.

We concur with the attorney general that you must come down on the side of transparency when it comes to releasing names of teenagers involved in

fatal crashes. Also, they need to be public for serious crimes or providing names of children that have been abducted or lost. Period.

If they are given a license, and the responsibility to drive, minors deserve the rights and responsibilities that come from their actions — especially if those actions lead to death.

Earlier this week, an 18-year-old man fired off a round at the University Mall in South Burlington. His alleged actions caused injury. More than likely, he will face a consequence far more severe than a fine, and his name has been plastered all over the news for two days now.

What we hope is four-fold: We hope that the Seward case will be held up as a transparency issue, especially for cases involving minors and serious crimes (especially with death resulting). We hope Schirling’s gag order will be called out and lifted for being short-sighted. We hope when minors commit serious crimes, they are held responsible. And we hope — beyond all else — that no one’s life is reduced to \$110.

[Editor’s note: This editorial was forwarded to us from Vermont Press Association president Lisa Loomis. The Vermont Legislature is looking to have police, courts, the Department of Motor Vehicles and others withhold the names of anybody involved in fatal crashes, crimes and other police actions going up to possibly age 22. The VPA is contesting the action.]



photo by Vanessa Fournier
Green Mountain Technology & Career Center student Derrek Salls moves logs last week onto a log landing on the property of Diana and Paul Frederick of Hardwick. GMTCC students are doing selective cutting on the Frederick property.



photo by Vanessa Fournier
Wolcott Principal Matt Foster (left) watches as students get on their bus after the school’s 2 p.m. dismissal.

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SPORTS

Basketball Goes Live This Week

by Ken Brown

NORTHEAST KINGDOM – After an additional week of delay and uncertainty, the black cloud that was hovering over the high school basketball season was finally lifted last week and live varsity competition will start this week.

After balking on an anticipated green light a week earlier, Governor Scott gave athletic directors, coaches, and players around the state some much-needed good news last Friday by giving his blessing to get the

season underway. High School basketball begins in earnest this Friday and it will be an 8-10 game sprint for many teams, without guarantees of playoff basketball at the end.

The Vermont Principal's Association has extended the winter sports season to March 27, giving basketball a two-week window to complete the tournament brackets. Snow days and positive tests loom as potential pitfalls to a schedule that already has zero wiggle room due to additional protocols for COVID-19. Teams are required to play no more than

two games in a seven-day period, with three days of rest in between. Teams that experience any type of outbreaks will require a two-week quarantine period that will essentially end their hopes of a season.

Diligence to protocols on and off the court are being stressed and there will also be no fans allowed inside the gymnasiums. All players, coaches, referees, and personnel will be required to wear masks at all times. Teams around the state have been conducting noncontact drills since December 28 and went to full contact practices and scrimmages on January

18. There will be more access to remote viewing this season as one person will be allowed within the gymnasium to livestream the games.

The Hazen Union boys are scheduled to tip-off their season at home this Friday against Northfield and the Lady Cats are scheduled to host Peoples Academy on Monday in their season opener. The Twinfield boys travel to Craftsbury Academy on Friday in what will be the season opener for both squads. The Craftsbury girls will welcome Twinfield to town on Monday in both teams' season opener.

SKI REPORT

by Eric Hanson

Craftsbury Academy Skiers Strong at Opening Race

CRAFTSBURY – With smaller numbers and no team interactions, high school Nordic racing is back in action. Craftsbury Academy (CA) hosted Montpelier and St. Johnsbury at their first ski race of the season. Each team raced at separate times and racers were divided into small waves within each school. Craftsbury Academy coach Eric Hanson noted that even though the skiers are not going head-to-head in a mass start, it is still a lot like an interval start race where skiers go out every 30 seconds. "In this case, you're racing among your teammates." Everyone skied the same course over a two-hour time period and results were compiled.

In the 5 km varsity girls' race, Camille Bolduc finished nearly a minute ahead (15:01) of Margaret Voison of Montpelier. Aine Fannon of St. J. placed third. CA ninth graders Sadie Skorstad and Ava Purdy finished 13th and 14th in their first-ever varsity race. In the 2.5 km JV girls' race, Isidora Dickson from St. Johnsbury led the field. For the middle school girls' 2.5 km race, Craftsbury's Anika Leahy and Ruth Krebs went 1-2 (7:04) with Leahy only a few feet ahead of Krebs. Montpelier's Anya Carlson placed third.

The 5 km boys' varsity race was dominated by CA, whose skiers took the top six spots (Aiden Casey-12:36, Cormac Leahy, Charlie Krebs, Orion Cenkl, Alan Moody,

and Linden Stelma-Leonard). St. J's Luke Chadderdon placed seventh, followed by Montpelier's Sage Grossi. The JV boys were led by Montpelier's Aiden Forsyth. In the 2.5 km middle school boys' race, Hazen's Charlie Kehler (6:41) finished ahead of Montpelier's Sam Brondyke.

Both the Montpelier and St. Johnsbury coaches said that they had a really high turnout of new skiers this year. For many students, this was their first race ever.

Kendall Cup at Craftsbury

In a typical year, college skiers race the Eastern Carnival circuit and the top youth skiers take part in four Eastern Cup weekends. With COVID restrictions, racing action has been focused at the state level to reduce interactions between regions and to have small fields spread over a longer periods of time. In the second Vermont race of the year, both Vermont college and high school skiers convened

for a cold Saturday of racing.

The boys and young men started first, with temperatures around five degrees F. Green Mountain Valley School's Tabor Greenberg led the U16 (under 16) boys' 5 km (13:24), followed by Craftsbury Nordic Ski Club (CNSC) skiers Charlie Krebs and Charlie Kehler, and Mansfield Nordic's Niko Cuneo. In the men's 15 km race, Craftsbury Green Racing Project (GRP) skier Braden Becker topped the strong field in 37:34, with Matias Ovrum in second. Bjorn Westervelt of Stowe led the U20 skiers (38:15), sixth overall. CNSC skier Jack Young was the third U20 skiers, 12th overall. In the U18 age group, GMVS skier Aidan Burt was first, with CNSC skiers going 4, 5, and 6 (Cormac Leahy, Aien Casey, and Tzevi Schwartz, 17-19th overall). Other CNSC finishers (overall place) included Leo Circosta (32), Orion Cenkl (36), and Linden Stelma-Leonard (37). Craftsbury master skier Damian Bolduc placed 40th.

In the U16 girls' 5 km race, Mansfield Nordics Julia Thurston placed first (16:23). CNSC skiers included Amelia Circosta (3), Anika Leahy (4), Ruth Krebs (5), Anna Isselhardt (6), Gabriella Schafer (9), Sara McGill (10), and Phoenix Masten (11). In the women's 10 km race, retired GRP skier Kaitlynn Miller showed the youngster's how it's done, winning in a time of 29:09. UVM's Lina Sutro was second and former CNSC skier Callie Young was third. Young is now at Dartmouth. Craftsbury GRP skiers Margie Fried and Michaela Keller-Miller placed fourth and fifth. CNSC's Camille Bolduc was 12th (first U18 skier) and Adrienne Remick placed 24th.

In the 10 km master's race (for those usually over 30), the only skier under 30, Charlie Cobb, took the win in 28:16. Former top regional skier Eli Enman followed closely behind. Craftsbury's Damian Bolduc placed seventh in his second race of the day and his wife, Jessica, was 15th.

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