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resigns as
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sports roundup.
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the Chronicle

THE WEEKLY JOURNAL OF ORLEANS COUNTY

TWO SECTIONS, 52 PAGES

VOLUME 44, NUMBER 10

MARCH 8, 2017

ONE DOLLAR

Newport City Meeting Roberge defeated, Morrissette, Vincent quit

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT—Although two candidates for the city council were selected in Tuesday's balloting, Newport residents came out of Town Meeting Day down two aldermen.

After city voters turned one-term Alderman Jacques Roberge out of office and returned former Alderman Denis Chenette to the council table, top vote getter, Alderman Steven Vincent, and City Council President Neil Morrissette submitted letters of resignation to Mayor Paul Monette.

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Fire levels Barton barn



Harvey Lyons' big barn across from the Orleans County fairgrounds in Barton burned to the ground early Wednesday morning. "I was going to bed when I saw red embers in the yard of my mobile home," neighbor Hugh Phillips said. "I thought that's not right. It was fully engulfed by the time I came around the corner." He thought that was around 12:30 a.m. The structure was on the ground by 1:30 a.m. The fire was so hot that it melted the siding on Mr. Lyons' house across the street. All of his horses are reported to have escaped. The cause of the fire was unknown as of press time. Several fire departments responded to the blaze.
Photo by Elizabeth Trail

Coventry Town Meeting Board will hire tax collector

by Randi Morse

COVENTRY — Arsenic-heavy water and the power of the select board — those were the main issues during Coventry's Town Meeting on Tuesday.

Over 140 people, including those covering the proceedings from WCAX and PBS, filled the small Coventry Village gym in the town offices building likely anticipating a lot of debate due to the ongoing drama surrounding Town Clerk Cynthia Diaz. Ms. Diaz has been involved in numerous controversies in the past nine years, and recently a forensic audit was done, and it appears a substantial amount of

(Continued on page thirty.)

Jay Town Meeting

Federal receiver fields questions, Morse resigns

by Joseph Gresser

JAY — Residents here heard from the effective owner of Jay Peak Resort before they began their Town Meeting Tuesday morning. Michael Goldberg, the receiver appointed by U.S. District Judge Darrin Gayles to oversee the businesses owned by Ariel Quiros, answered questions from voters about the ski area's future.

The big news was that construction will soon begin on the remaining portion of what is known as the Stateside project. Mr. Quiros, who is facing civil charges of

investment fraud in state and federal court, raised money from foreign investors to build a hotel, a recreation center, a medical center, and around 84 homes at the resort.

Mr. Goldberg said work will begin in the next few months on the medical and recreation centers as well as the homes. The hotel was completed and opened in 2013.

The receiver said it is important to finish all construction at the resort so as to get the best price when it goes on the market. The sale, he said, will probably take place in a year or two.

Mr. Goldberg said the area had

a record winter, and has already booked 60 weddings for the coming summer.

"To book a wedding a year out, you have to have faith the place is going to be there," Mr. Goldberg said.

A year or two more of profitable operation should make sure the resort fetches top dollar when it goes on the block, he said.

He said the resort will be offered to recreation companies from around the world, and he predicted that 50 or so will express interest. Of those, the field will be whittled down to six before a final suitor is

accepted.

Mr. Goldberg said he will make sure the buyer has adequate capital resources before he allows the sale to go through.

The receiver was cagey in announcing another bit of possibly excellent news for the resort. A corporation that is involved with the legal case is in negotiations with Mr. Goldberg and his team and is hoping to make a settlement.

"Read between the lines," he advised the 50 people attending the meeting.

(Continued on page thirty-two.)

Westfield Town Meeting

Lazor unseats Degre for select board

by Connie LaPlume

WESTFIELD —Town Meeting here opened right on time with just under 70 voters present. Among them were four generations of Westfield residents. They were Hilda Daigle, her daughter Kelli Dean, her granddaughter (Ms. Dean's niece) Lara Star, and great-

grandson, Maverick Belisle. This is really keeping the tradition of going to Town Meeting in the family.

Town Clerk LaDonna Dunn outdid herself with her array of local business products. Honey, maple syrup, maple cream, cheese, yogurt, doughnuts and Aussie bites, were donated by the businesses. What a treat.

Town Meeting was pretty low key. Pat Sagui was once again moderator for the school meeting and the town meeting.

The floor was given to Representative Mark Higley to

address those present before the school meeting started.

Mr. Higley said there is a lot going on in Montpelier. He said those who are online can check the status of bills or see what is coming up by going to Vtdigger.org.

He said a lot of work has gone into a new form of farming called milkweed farming. He said they want 25-acre lots to be planted. The silk inside the milkweed pod is used for insulation and oil spill collection. This is still in the planning stage.

According to Representative Higley, 35 percent of the funds for

the state budget come from federal funds. The budget remains a constant chore for the Finance Committee.

The school meeting was held first.

All three school board members needed voter approval to continue for 2017.

Kevin Amyot was actually up for election. He retained his seat with no opposition.

Nicole Dunn is filling a position formerly held by Chad Prue. Ms.

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In Newport Officials hear some rare good news

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT — Ernie Pomerleau, the president of Burlington-based Pomerleau Real Estate, hosted a press conference at the Gateway Center here on March 2 to confirm plans he has talked about since at least October. Nevertheless, city and state officials seemed happy to celebrate rare good news, including the owners of the Vista supermarket agreeing to extend their lease for another ten years and to renovate the inside of the store.

Mr. Pomerleau contributed his own glad tidings. He promised to refresh the supermarket's exterior and to extend the city's pedestrian path along the shore of Lake Memphremagog from Pomerleau Park to the East Side Restaurant.

Sharing the table in front of about 50 city residents, development professionals, and leaders of nonprofit institutions, were Secretary Michael Schirling of the Agency for Commerce and Community Development, state Treasurer Beth Pearce, Gus Seelig, executive director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Newport Mayor Paul Monette, and Paul Bruhn, director of the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

The star of the afternoon, though, was Mr. Pomerleau's father, Tony, the founder of the real estate firm, and a man who, at just under 100

years old, is older than Newport, where he grew up. The city was incorporated in 1918; Mr. Pomerleau was born in 1917.

The elder Mr. Pomerleau produced a large photograph of Newport's Main Street that he said was taken sometime before 1927. Both sides of the street are lined with parked Model T Fords and the sidewalks are crowded with pedestrians.

Mr. Pomerleau recalled getting his start at age 13 when he knocked on the window of the J.J. Newberry store.

The manager, a Mr. Miller, invited the youngster in and asked if he wanted to help dress the window. Mr. Pomerleau pitched in and showed such an aptitude that he was soon hired to work after school and on Saturdays at the princely salary of \$10 a week.

After graduating from school, Mr. Pomerleau said, he took a window-decorating job with another different chain of stores.

"I knew you had to see something to buy it," he said.

That insight led to large increases in sales in the Newport branch of that 59-store chain.

Mr. Pomerleau was sent to another store and produced the same results.

Eventually he was transferred to a store in Connecticut that was due to be shut down

(Continued on page three.)

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Vista and Waterfront Plaza invest in future

(Continued from page two.)

because of poor sales, Mr. Pomerleau said. Within a matter of months it was the best-performing store in the chain.

From then on, Mr. Pomerleau recalled, he was sent from store to store to show managers how to lure customers inside.

Mr. Pomerleau said the city was the most successful in Vermont because it attracted farmers who couldn't take the time to go to Burlington, and because of the railroads.

Easier motor travel and the decline of the railroads hit Newport hard, but Mr. Pomerleau said he is confident that Newport will do well despite its recent difficulties. He compared the city to himself.

"I never take a licking. I get up and start working," he told his audience.

Ernie Pomerleau then turned the microphone over to Tim Merrill, the general manager for Associated Grocers in New England. He said his company bought the store now known as Vista from Bobby George.

"It's been a great store for us," he said. "There's no way we want to leave."

Mr. Merrill said his company is going to put money into the building, installing a new floor, and expanding and improving the prepared food department.

At present, he said, Vista is working toward becoming more energy efficient by installing new motors in coolers around the store and finding other ways to cut down on the use of power.

"I've always said we have a beautiful lake that we don't use as a resource," Mr. Merrill said. He told the gathering that he looks forward to having a lakeside path behind the store and possibly a dock and picnic tables nearby.

Mr. Schirling began his remarks by giving a nod to Tony Pomerleau, noting that he worked for years in a building named after him. He had been Burlington's chief of police, which is housed in the Antonio B. Pomerleau Building.

Mr. Pomerleau served as Burlington Commissioner of Police for years.

Mr. Schirling praised the effort to renovate Newport's downtown saying it represents "the best Vermont has to offer," noting that it represents a public-private partnership of the type embraced by Governor Phil Scott.

He spoke of the hole on Main Street where the former Spates Block once stood.

"The gap on Main Street represents a tremendous opportunity that every main street in the world would like," he said. "Newport has the opportunity to invent itself."

Ms. Pearce praised Newport's restaurants and said the city is "a great community making use of



Burlington based developer Tony Pomerleau shows off a photograph of Newport that he said was more than 100 years old. Mr. Pomerleau, himself only a few days under the century mark, donated the photograph to the city where he grew up. Photo by Joseph Gresser

its resources to make itself greater."

Mr. Bruhn had more than words to contribute. The Preservation Trust was given \$200,000 as part of an agreement with the developers of the Derby Walmart. Of that, \$160,000 will go to improve Newport businesses, including the Pick and Shovel, the Northeast Kingdom Tasting Center, the Newport City Renaissance Corporation, and Vista.

The supermarket will get \$50,000 of that money to help make improvements to its interior, Mr. Bruhn said.

Ernie Pomerleau said his company will pay to renovate the store's exterior and work with Newport to extend the walking path behind the Vista and Waterfront Plaza to the East Side Restaurant's parking lot and from there, to the rest of the city's recreational trail.

Mr. Monette expressed the city's gratitude for the support it has received from Mr. Pomerleau, the state, and Preservation Trust. He noted that the city will celebrate its one hundredth anniversary next year with a week of festivities and invited all to attend.

Tony Pomerleau was quick to accept the invitation and to point out that he will be celebrating his hundredth and first birthday in 2018.

Card of Thanks

We, the family of Joseph (Joe) Queenin, would like to thank: Betty of Curtis-Britch-Converse-Rushford Funeral Home for making all the arrangements smooth and stress free. Scott and Lori Bianchi of Heritage Memorials for getting the etching done on the urn and protecting it. Dad would be very proud of it. Todd and Hilary Wright of Vermont Pie and Pasta Company who did an outstanding job on the meal after Dad's celebration of life. Your gift to us will never be forgotten.

To those who brought in food — Vaughn Webster and family, Gina Alberghini and family, Dick and Shirley Rivard, Winsome Hamilton, and Betsy and Ed Hartman — your meals and desserts were welcome during our fast paced time of need.

For the flowers and plants from Customs and Border Protection Family of Derby Line, Gina Alberghini and family, Columbia Plywood of Newport, Scott and Penny Wheeler, Brad and Gigi Judd and family, the Norton family, Mike and Jeanne Macbeth, the Hartman family, Derby Line Lunch Crew, Dana LaPlante and family, and Chris Hackett and Bebe Bowen, thank you so much. They are all very hearty and beautiful, just like Joe.

Thank you to the North Country girls and boys hockey teams. Joe's recognition at your games meant so much to us. Gramps loved you all and looked forward to your games. We will always have the picture you gave us to remind us of you.

To those who attended the calling hours and celebration of life, thank you for comforting us during our time of sadness.

To those who gave to the Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter, Dad was a great supporter of animal rights and loved all animals.

Fred Barker, thank you for your prayers and your insights during the celebration of life.

But mostly, to Scott Wheeler. What can we say but thank you? Thank you for your posts on Facebook, for all your contacts, for everything and all you did for us. You and Joe were best friends and we will never forget that. Again, thank you and Penny for everything.

Lastly, to those who couldn't make it to Joe's calling hours or celebration of life. We know Joe and we were in your thoughts and prayers. Thank you.

With much appreciation and thanks,
John, Penny, Joe, and Bob Queenin

Looking out the window of the Gateway Center at Lake Memphremagog, turbulent in an early March gale, Mr. Monette said he could see the "winds of change" sweeping over the city.

He called the failed projects sponsored in Newport by the former management of Jay Peak Resort a "blip," and said city officials are getting offers of help from state officials.

"We don't let negative things get us down. We look to the future," Mr. Monette said.

The elder Mr. Pomerleau insisted on being the last to have the floor.

"I always like to be last to speak; people remember what you said," he told the group.

"Right now things are down, but they'll turn around," Mr. Pomerleau assured his audience.

He recalled how Burlington hit a rough patch a number of years ago, but successfully reinvigorated itself.

"Never give up, it's coming back," Mr. Pomerleau said. "Never give up."

Once the press conference ended, members of the crowd mingled and talked about where the city is headed. Ernie Pomerleau circulated, handing out a clue to the next step in Newport's redevelopment to officials in the crowd.

A member of the crowd got a quick peek at the drawing, which showed the old J.J. Newberry's building on Main Street, recently sold by Mr. Pomerleau to Burlington developer Richard Bove. Atop the current one-story storefront, the sketch showed a four-story addition seemingly designed for residential use.

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Letters to the editor

Migrating justice

To the editor,

The organization Migrant Justice was featured in the March 1 *Chronicle* (“Trump policy worries migrant workers,” by Joseph Gresser). Screening Muslims from entering our country tramples the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and will only serve to inflame Muslim extremism abroad (and at home) by fueling anti-American perceptions that our nation discriminates against Muslims. But we are indeed a country of laws, and America has throughout its history imposed restrictions on immigration, including a process by which foreigners visit or become naturalized citizens. Some people would now simply open our borders to all who would seek to enter, in the name of “human rights.” But there is no “human right” to travel the world at will and become a citizen of another nation without abiding by its rules for admission. The group Migrant Justice is advocating for people who are here *illegally*, that is, people who deliberately broke the law to be here.

There is no objection to people from Latin America to apply for visas like everyone else, and then come work here legally. Yet our Governor and Legislature are clapping themselves on the back for protecting those who are here *illegally*, in violation of federal law, and then pronouncing that they are fighting “discrimination.” If there is discrimination, it is against those who come to America legally, and play by the rules.

Vermont applauded itself similarly under

Governor Shumlin when it passed a law to enable illegal aliens to acquire drivers’ licenses in Vermont. As the *Chronicle* article observes, there is “...no information in the privilege card database to show who may or may not be in the U.S. illegally.” But there is gross hypocrisy in our state’s posture. Vermont citizens who fail to pay their child support are subject to having their driver’s license suspended. Because of the shield provided to illegal aliens, they may indeed owe child support but be exempt from this limitation. Indeed, because Vermont proclaims that it will not turn illegals over unless they have a criminal record, Vermont is advertising itself as a safe haven for those in Mexico or elsewhere charged with a crime but not yet convicted. If I were a criminal defense attorney in Mexico, I would be derelict in my job if I didn’t counsel my clients that they can flee to Vermont and evade conviction in Mexico so long as they are not arrested for a *new* crime here.

Our government praises itself not just for preventing a “registry” based on “immigration status” (that is, being here illegally), but has added the categories of “sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, color, religion, national origin, age or disability.” The federal government does not intend to create a registry of divorced people or old folks — the inclusion of this laundry list of potential classes is hype, intended to aggravate our societal divide. We have long had marriage registries — has our Legislature concluded that this is discriminatory, and we

should keep marital status concealed? And shall we refuse to comply with the U.S. census, which tracks gender and race?

Meanwhile, Vermont has already created a *registry of its own citizens*, and then secretly provided the identities of those on the list to the federal government. I am referring here to the Medical Marijuana Registry, which permits ill people (with a doctor’s support) to use cannabis. As reported here in the *Chronicle*, our Department of Public Safety provides details of this registry to the federal Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, which then uses it to deny permission to buy guns to those blacklisted. Whether or not one believes cannabis users should be denied their Second Amendment rights, it is underhanded to promise them confidentiality and then breach it; and it is a denial of due process because these patients have no path to challenge this process.

This is “migrating justice” — our Legislature “migrates” around in left field, without regard to justice, or even common sense. I support legal immigrants in legal jobs; I fail to comprehend why people here illegally have the “right” to demand special treatment, or why our Legislature is so quick to pounce emotionally on an ill-conceived bandwagon that creates more division and unfair treatment than it solves.

John Klar
Westfield

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If you owe back taxes, pay them without fanfare

Dear Coventry Select Board,

We’ve been ailing for a long time and now you’ve brought us a remedy. And when I say “us” that includes the town clerk and the townspeople who are in tax arrears. You know who you are. The forensic accounting document you took so long in delivering is here and we are glad. Hooray and thank you.

Everyone in Coventry should understand that you cannot shield yourselves from town taxes past due. This legal instrument makes that clear. Do not think that you can hide behind or point at Cynthia. People who owe back taxes should pay

them quietly without fanfare. Will there be provisions made for onerous tax burdens? Probably. Are there ways we can incentivize past due taxes? Maybe. Remember, law enforcement is watching us. Remember Al Capone?

Dan Introcaso
Coventry

Corrections

In an article about the race for seats on the Newport City Council, we said the city’s mayor serves a four-year term. In fact, the mayor serves a two-year term.

In the article about the February 27 meeting of the Newport City Council we unaccountably referred to Jessica Booth as Ms. Foster. We regret the errors.

About letters, editorials, and opinions

The Chronicle welcomes letters from our readers from all points on the political spectrum.

The deadline is Monday at noon. Letters may be dropped off, mailed, e-mailed, or faxed. Letters on paper must be signed, and all letters must include a telephone number for confirmation. All letters must include the writer’s town.

We will not publish a letter that has been sent anonymously to this office. In rare and extreme circumstances, we will publish a letter without the writer’s name. If we refuse such a request, the writer has the option of withdrawing the letter.

Please keep your letters brief. We reserve the

right to edit letters for content.

Letters should be about public issues, not personal gripes. We will not run letters that are libelous, racist, or contain personal attacks. We welcome robust debate but won’t print letters which, in our opinion, are merely offensive.

If you have had a letter published lately, we won’t be likely to print a second one for a few months. This is simply to give everyone a turn.

Thanks for your help making these pages thought-provoking, lively, and interesting.

Editorials are initialed by the author and reflect a consensus of the editorial staff of *the Chronicle*. Opinions and letters are the opinion of the author.

February 28-March 6, 2017

		High	Low	Prec.	Snow	Snow on Ground
T	2/28	43	20	0.00"	0.00"	13.00"
W	3/1	40	27	0.00"	0.00"	12.00"
Th	3/2	48	34	0.42"	T	10.00"
F	3/3	34	5	0.04"	0.80"	10.00"
S	3/4	22	-2	0.03"	0.40"	10.40"
S	3/5	3	-5	0.01"	0.20"	10.50"
M	3/6	16	-3	0.00"	0.00"	10.40"

T = Trace

High and low temperatures, precipitation, snowfall, and snow depth are for 24-hour period ending 7 a.m. of the day listed.

Site is in Sutton, elevation 1,500 feet.

Letters to the editor

McKibben has no grasp of the effects of industrial wind on a mountain range

Dear editor:

This is in response to the account of Bill McKibben's recent talk at Sterling College. I was stunned to read of someone often referred to as an "environmental activist" making the outdated, misleading arguments long offered by the energy empire. It is obvious that Mr. McKibben does not know how the ecological systems work. And he also has no grasp of the impact of industrial scale turbine construction and operation on a whole mountain range and watershed areas. Giant oil corporations co-opted environmentalist terms such as "renewable" and "green" as part of a deceptive PR campaign. They did

this, and developed industrial scale wind and solar projects because taxpayer subsidies by the tens of millions of dollars are given them for "renewable" projects. The grim reality is quite easily discovered if one chooses to look.

Contrary to small, homeowner sized projects, industrial scale projects most likely add to global warming. Trees, which absorb carbon and heat, thereby cooling the atmosphere, are clearcut. An impermeable surface, miles of it, reflects heat into the environment. Did you ever stand on pavement on a hot summer day, then walk into a forest?

The damage of clearcutting,

bulldozing, and blasting along mountain ridgelines changes the whole water distribution system. It starts on the mountain, but over years the changed water affects plants, brooks, wetlands, and rivers far beyond. As those change, the birds and wildlife are forced to change or die. Bill McKibben, the state, and most certainly the developers, are notably silent on the impacts in ecological terms.

Huge, throbbing turbines send pulsing noise and vibrations out across the land. These have intense effects on the nervous systems of all life. Birds flying near do not get to the blades; their lungs are destroyed by the change in air pressure and

they drop, uncounted by developers or the state. Animals move away. People living one to two miles from these projects suffer serious health effects, all unacknowledged by developers and regulators.

If Bill McKibben really believes "we should sacrifice," he should go live for four to five months at the abandoned homes of the Nelsons (Lowell), or the Therriens (Sheffield), or at McClains (Georgia Mountain). And the president of Sterling College should join him, so they can discuss ecology during their headachy, sleepless nights under the "renewable" turbines.

Carol Irons
Albany

Old Stone House is in search of an early photo of the Orleans County Grammar School

Dear editor,

We need help from your readers to look for an early photograph, or sketch, of the Orleans County Grammar School made before 1869. That year the bell tower was torn off the building in preparation for the move down into Brownington Village, where it was known as the Brownington Grange Hall until it was moved back to its original site at the base of Prospect Hill last summer, with the help of 23 teams of oxen.

The Orleans County Historical Society has put the building on a full foundation, with the gable end that used to have the tower again facing the road. When the building was in Brownington Village that side was away from the road, and had a two holer privy tacked onto it. We have introduced running water and a flush toilet, and central heat to the building. We are now addressing safety and handicapped code issues. We want to replace the original bell tower, which will make the building historically correct, and also provide a fireproof exit from all floors to meet code.

We need approval from the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation for the design. We have

based our design on mortices in the timber frame of the building, which indicate a tower 11 feet by 11 feet, rising to the peak of the roof, with an open belfry on top. We know there was an open belfry, because of written memories of former students, like James W. Strong:

"...I was sent to toll the bell whenever a death occurred or a funeral procession was passing to the cemetery. I shall never forget the terribly cold and chilling winds that blew through the open belfry where with blue lips and shivering limbs I stood waiting..."

We have also noticed that our design of the bell tower mimics the design of the observatory on Prospect Hill, which was originally built by James Strong's brother William Barstow Strong, also a former student of the school, who made his fortune as the president of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. He came back to Brownington and purchased Prospect Hill and built the first observatory in the 1890s for the future enjoyment of the citizens.

The Orleans County Grammar School also served as the Congregational Meeting House from 1823 until the church was built on

the other end of the common in 1841. Someone may have a picture of the old grammar school, but it may look more like a church, because it was.

If you have any very old photographs of the area, or journals from students of the school that might have a description or sketch of the building, would you please look through them to see if you can find an image of the Orleans County Grammar School? I am including a photo of the building back on its

original site, so you may recognize the profile of Prospect Hill in the background.

It's a long shot, but if we could find an early image of the building we could be historically correct, and also get approval from the state.

Thank you,
Peggy Day Gibson,
director of the Old Stone House
Museum,
Brownington

Third-grader hopes to learn more about Vermont

Dear people of the great state of Vermont,

Hello! I am a third-grade student in northern Virginia. In third grade we do state reports and I have chosen your state. I am very excited to learn more about the great state of Vermont as I work on my report.

Most of the information we get for our reports will be from books and websites. We also like to get information from people who live in the state, too. This is why I am writing to you. I was hoping that you would be willing to send me some items to help me learn more

about the best things in your state. It could be things like postcards, maps, pictures, souvenirs, general information, this newspaper article, or any other items that would be useful. You can mail items to the address below. I really appreciate your help!

Sincerely,
Jessica Smith

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Letter to the editor

Try to see through Trump's chaos

To the editor,

Even while he and his administration issue false statements on everything from inaugural crowd size, voting fraud, fictitious attacks here and abroad (Bowling Green? Sweden?), Trump and cronies denounce the media for "fake news." Meanwhile, chief White House strategist and white supremacist Steve Bannon, unaccountable to the public and unvetted through any "check and balance" channel, has created a place for himself on the National Security Council. Bannon is a self-professed "bomb thrower" (i.e., generator of confusion in order to blow up the system). He has said as much in interviews.

Chaos is effective. While we are dazed and confused, we easily miss the links between the white supremacist movement and the White House. In addition to Bannon, White House senior policy advisor Stephen Miller, as former communications director for Jeff Sessions and in his "warm up the crowd" role at Trump rallies, has carried water for the movement. Accounts differ on how close Miller was at Duke University to Richard Spencer, white supremacist leader who rebranded that movement the "alt right." One thing is sure: Bannon, Miller, and Spencer have in the weeks since the election promoted an all powerful role of Trump, while simultaneously

attacking the press. Earlier this month, Miller stated on Sunday morning news: "...our opponents, the media and the whole world will soon see as we begin to take further actions, that the powers of the President to protect our country are very substantial and will not be questioned." In January Bannon told the media to "keep its mouth shut and just listen for a while."

But first came Spencer at a white supremacist conference in D.C. in November, hailing Trump and invoking the Nazi term for "lying press" to applause and Hitler salutes.

We must resist. And we must cut through the chaos. Call Senators Leahy and Sanders and Congressman Welch with a message to keep unvetted extremist partisans like Bannon off the NSC. This may take an act of Congress. Call the House Oversight Committee and House and Senate Ethics Committees demanding independent investigations of the Trump/Russia connections and that Trump release his tax returns. The number for the Congressional switchboard is (202) 224-3121.

Anne Hanson
Craftsbury

su | do | ku

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All horizontal rows of nine, all vertical columns of nine, and all the heavily outlined boxes of nine squares must contain all the numbers from one to nine.

Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

The answer is on page 2B.



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Opinion

ESSA supports agency's focus on improvement

by secretary of the Agency of Education Rebecca Holcombe

Just over 50 years ago, in response to a national poverty rate of almost 20 percent, President Johnson introduced legislation known as the War on Poverty. His goal was "not only to relieve the symptom of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it." A central piece was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which emphasized equal access to educational opportunity and accountability for meeting equity goals. The act mandated funds to support those goals. As President Johnson stated when he signed the bill into law: "...with your courage and with your compassion and your desire, we will build a great society. It is a society where no child will go unfed, and no youngster will go unschooled."

ESEA has been a powerful tool for advancing equitable education for vulnerable populations, including students who live in poverty, students who are learning English, and students who are members of groups that have experienced historical discrimination. By holding schools and states accountable for the learning of these students, while providing resources for their support, the federal government played a strong role in prodding states to care for these children. This investment, in the words of President Johnson, would provide a "passport from poverty."

The ESEA now has been through several reauthorizations and revisions, but equity has always been its core purpose. As President George W. Bush stated when the ESEA was reborn as the No Child Left Behind Act, the purpose was to ensure that "every single child, regardless of where they live, how they're raised, the income level of their family, every child

receive a first-class education in America."

In December of 2015, President Obama signed the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaced No Child Left Behind. All 50 states have been working to come up with plans for how they will meet the requirements of the new law. With the help of thousands of stakeholders across the state, the Vermont Agency of Education created our Vermont draft plan, rooted in Vermont values and the Vermont Education Quality Standards. The draft is currently posted on the agency website for review.

While this latest reauthorization has numerous important differences from its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) remains a civil rights law. It focuses attention and funds on our most vulnerable children — a goal unequivocally championed by Governor Scott in his inaugural address.

The development of this plan gave Vermonters an opportunity to reflect on how well we serve our most vulnerable students. While Vermont consistently ranks well nationally and internationally, we also have substantial equity gaps and room to grow.. Improving the learning of vulnerable populations, particularly through early intervention and supports, will improve learning for all our students, by reducing disruptions and reducing diversion of resources to remediation. Our future economic and civic well-being hinges upon every student leaving school with the skills, habits, and understandings they need to fully participate in our communities.

We know that funding matters. Our ESSA plan will target federal investments to help all students thrive in school and add to the long-term economic vitality of the state. A pre-kindergarten child of a single parent in an entry-level job may need full-day pre-kindergarten, not just ten hours of care, and perhaps federally funded summer

programming as well. A child who arrives in Vermont speaking limited English and whose education in a refugee camp was inconsistent may need additional supports to learn a new culture and language, so that they can thrive and become a productive adult.

Money helps, but money alone is not sufficient. We have to use dollars well, and in a way that is consistent with our state vision for a robust and well-rounded education. Therefore, Vermont's ESSA plan reflects our state's commitment to personalizing the education of all students, as expressed in the Vermont's Education Quality Standards. We expect our Vermont schools to understand the unique needs and goals of each student and craft an educational experience that prepares all students for their desired career or college outcome. We expect all our graduates to be well-enough educated to contribute economically and civically to an innovative Vermont.

The tools of ESSA help us identify schools struggling to meet these goals for all students, irrespective of background, and provide additional support and resources to those schools that serve the largest proportion of vulnerable children and/or children whose disadvantage has left them performing below their more advantaged peers.

Ultimately, the role of the state is to protect and support our most vulnerable children. Children do not choose their circumstances. ESSA provides us an opportunity to identify schools where students are not performing as well as we would like. The law also provides tools to identify which schools are succeeding in narrowing gaps, so that we can learn from their successes and continuously improve learning across the state. Our focus is on continuous improvement, because we know our schools, like the agency, can always do better.

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Troy Town Meeting

Budget trimmed by taking paved roads back to dirt

by Nathalie Gagnon-Joseph

NORTH TROY — Despite discussion during both the Town Meeting and the school district meeting here on Tuesday, voters approved \$457,231 worth of highway fund expenditures, the general fund budget of \$199,013, and the \$2,950,638 town school budget.

The proposed road budget is \$2,764 lower than the \$460,119 proposed for 2016, but roughly \$19,400 more than what was actually spent.

The road budget was passed after discussing the select board's decision to turn some paved roads back into dirt roads.

"It's not unilateral," said Amanda Taylor, a Bonneau Road resident about the decision.

She is against turning the paved Bonneau Road into a dirt road and feels that more proactive measures should have been taken to maintain the pavement, which was only redone twice in the past 40 years, she said.

Selectman Robert Langlands explained that the board plans to do some grinding, shaping and widening on her road, which is apparently badly in need of repair.

Paving is expensive so the select board decided that a dirt road was a better choice in the long run, considering the heavy truck traffic on that road, Selectman Mark Sanville said.

He estimated that the town would save \$60,000 to \$80,000 with a dirt road instead of pavement.

"We're looking at the long term," he said.

Ms. Taylor thinks residents should be consulted before the select board makes that type of decision.

There are five properties on that road, she said in an interview during the break between the Town Meeting and the school board meeting.

All five pay taxes and have never been delinquent, she said.

The select board isn't considering property value in the event that the road becomes a dirt road, she said. Will it go down?

Three out of the five properties are farms, including hers. They are concerned that the milk truck won't be able to pick up their milk if the road becomes too rutted and muddy.

"I don't believe the town would ever let the road become impassable," she said, however. "I understand their position to save money."

Chris Binal lives on Mill Street, one of the paved streets the select board plans to fix instead of turning into a dirt road. Six years ago, when he bought the house, the board was talking about fixing the road, but they haven't done it yet, he said.

Prep work in anticipation of road repair was done last summer, Selectman Gary Taylor said during the lunch break.

That includes draining, repairs, and work on

the road base, he said.

Voters agreed that \$46,000 of unused 2016 funds be used to fix the roads after more discussion of the town's roadwork priorities.

Roland Mayhew proposed an amendment that the \$46,000 be split in two: Half would go toward road improvement, and the other half toward town equipment upkeep and replacement.

"At this moment, the roads need it more than the equipment," said Bobby Jacobs, a member of the road crew, who agreed that it's still important to keep a fund to maintain the town equipment.

Mr. Sanville reported that the town equipment is currently in relatively good shape and not falling apart.

The amendment was defeated, but ultimately the select board hopes to have a fund for both activities.

"It's hard to ask for that much more money, but that's our goal," Mr. Langlands said.

Now that the funds are approved, the

*"Our area is very reasonable. We have some of the cheapest educational facilities in the state."
— Bobby Starr*

selectmen will vote on repairs during their regularly scheduled meetings, Mr. Taylor said.

In a separate meeting, the school budget passed after much discussion. The 11.77 percent increase in the per equalized pupil rate — from \$12,893 in 2017, to \$14,411 in 2018 — caused some confusion since the total proposed budget of \$2,950,638 is down roughly \$25,200 from last year's \$2,975,840.

School board member Gaston Bathalon explained that the school has lost \$270,423 in outside revenues, which accounts for the per pupil rate increase.

The number of students with special needs is increasing and that increases per pupil spending, Mr. Bathalon said.

That trend is seen throughout the state. Troy's per pupil spending is below the state average.

"Our area is very reasonable," Senator and Moderator Bobby Starr said about education spending in Orleans County. "We have some of the cheapest educational facilities in the state."

In a non-binding show of hands people were unanimously against consolidating the North Country Supervisory Union school districts into a

single district under Act 46 after Mr. Bathalon explained that it would mean losing local control without necessarily saving money.

"It works in heavily populated areas, but in areas where we're scattered it just doesn't work," Senator Starr said.

Voters authorized the school board to borrow \$170,000 over three years at an estimated 1.35 percent interest rate to reduce the general fund deficit from previous years. The school board will better estimate the budgeted amounts of each line item to avoid over-spending in the future, School Director Andre Desautels said.

In an Australian ballot, voters authorized the school board to borrow up to \$292,000 to pay off the cost overruns of two projects, 55 votes to 45.

The project that was approved two years ago to renovate the school building to improve energy efficiency with new siding, boilers, and windows, among other things, cost an estimated \$200,000 more than expected, Principal Chris Young said in a phone interview Tuesday evening.

The pre-kindergarten project to buy the lot next door and install a modular classroom went over the \$76,000 budget by roughly \$60,000, Mr. Young estimated off the top of his head.

The plan to install a gravel pad was changed in favor of a concrete pad in an effort to plan for the future, when the modular classroom might be replaced by something else.

Voters approved the North Country Union High School and North Country Career Center budget of \$14,392,463, 61 votes to 39 by Australian ballot.

The \$14,824 per equalized pupil price tag is a 6.10 percent hike from current year's \$13,972.

North Country Union High School had a \$390,000 surplus, \$280,000 of which voters agreed to put in the capital improvement reserve fund in a 64 to 36 vote by Australian ballot.

The remaining \$110,000 will be put in the technology reserve fund, as approved by voters here, 62 to 38.

During the Town Meeting, the general fund budget of \$199,013 — down about \$8,360 from last year's \$207,378 of actual spending — passed without a hitch.

"Don't all speak at once!" Senator Starr said when the question came up and no one said anything.

Voters re-elected Mr. Langlands to the select board, Gayten Verge as first constable, Jamie Marsh as auditor, John Starr as trustee of public money, Eric McCann as lister, Robert Bishop as grand juror, and Terri Medley as tax collector. Sue Brassett was elected as lister for a one-year term.

Betty Mason urged people to be more involved in school board meetings and select board meetings.

"I thought it was ridiculous that only four of us were there to discuss this amount of money," she said about the last meeting she attended.

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Irasburg Town Meeting

Act 46 generates intense discussion

by Elizabeth Trail

IRASBURG — When the Orleans Central Supervisory Union (OCSU) handed out a new Act 46 survey at Irasburg’s school meeting Tuesday, it became the focus of the most intense discussion of the Town Meeting.

The survey began by asking whether voters supported or didn’t support a merger — a question that was left off OCSU’s first Act 46 survey. Over 1,300 voters filled out that survey in November.

The next 11 questions asked how voters felt about each of the provisions of last year’s defeated OCSU merger plan.

The wording of the survey was confusing to some, but the discussion it ignited was intense.

“The argument of the state is that if we centralize, we’ll be more efficient,” said Matthew Baughman, an Irasburg resident who is also the principal of Coventry Village School.

He recognized possible benefits to a merger, such as a district being able to hold the contract for a school nurse and apportion nursing hours among schools as needed.

But OCSU already shares a central office and staff, he said. And it wouldn’t be that hard to work out shared contracts for nurses or counselors.

“Once you lose control, you’ve lost control,” Mr. Baughman concluded. “It’s permanent.”

Giving up the school and taking on other districts’ debt was a sticking point for many people around the room.

Irasburg has been frugal, and doesn’t have any debt, several people said. And the school is a major town asset.

“When was the last time that the government took over a program and saved money?” one man asked rhetorically, raising laughs and snorts around the room.

Irasburg’s costs are still way below the state average, Mr. Baughman said. And its scores are higher than the state average.

But Irasburg’s taxes are going up this year. And one voter was skeptical.

“How does a school provide quality education for a class of five or six?” he asked.

Vicki Gentler, a retired teacher with 30 years’ experience, said that over the years she’s seen a number of classes go through the elementary school years in very small classes.

In her opinion, those children didn’t suffer. In fact, she believes, children in very small classes in some ways have more opportunities.

“It’s really really hard to equalize what children receive even within a classroom,” Ms. Gentler said. “Bigger classes aren’t going to equalize student opportunity or success.”

And she was even more skeptical about the talk of equalizing opportunity across multiple schools within a district.

“It’s not a realistic outcome,” she said.

“At some point, affordability has to play a part,” someone said.

But Mr. Baughman noted that some of the most expensive schools in the state are in southern Vermont and in Burlington, where districts have already been combined.

“You’re making this into a binary decision when it’s not,” Mr. Baughman said. “We don’t have to approve Act 46 to decide to combine with Albany school, for example. But once we go with Act 46 and join that preferred structure, that decision isn’t ours to make anymore.”

Another speaker pointed out that there are 21 children in the preschool program.

“This is a growing town,” she said. “It’s foolish to make plans on the assumption that we’re going to keep losing students.”

“We have a pretty convincing alternative structure in the form of our supervisory union,” another voter said. “I went to one of the Act 46 committee meetings, and I’m not hearing a lot of recognition of the way we voted last June. We need to go and make our voices heard to be sure that alternatives are being considered.”

Everyone is encouraged to join the Act 46 Study Committee, Mr. Sanville said. We want as many voices as we can get.

“We want to honor the vote,” Michael Sanville said.

Mr. Sanville is a member of the current Act 46 Study Committee and was fielding questions about the new survey.

Everyone is encouraged to join the Act 46 committee, Mr. Sanville said.

“We want as many voices as we can get.”

The next meeting is on Monday, March 13.

During the school meeting, voters approved a school budget of \$1,922,850. That’s less than the anticipated \$2,082,522 spending for the current school year, but revenues are also down, largely due to a declining student population.

The board has no way of knowing whether there will be changes in federal funding for some school programs in the future, board Chair Amy Leroux said.

The costs work out to about \$13,059 per equalized pupil. That’s almost 17 percent higher than last year’s budget.

The tax rate will go up about 14 cents per \$100 of valuation, OCSU Business Manager Heather Wright said.

Ms. Leroux was re-elected to a three-year term on the Irasburg Village School Board.

Mr. Sanville and Jennifer Edlund were re-elected to represent Irasburg on the Lake Region Union High School board of directors.

Voters decided to move the school meeting to 6 p.m. next year, trading places with Town Meeting on the schedule to make it easier for parents to attend.

Several parents expressed appreciation for the childcare that the town provided this year during Town Meeting and the school meeting.

By rough count, there were about 100 voters present.

Town Clerk Danielle Ingalls presented the budget item by item.

The proposed budget came to \$692,927, about \$500 less than last year’s \$693,457 figure.

“I’m a little nervous about this,” Ms. Ingalls said as she went over the changes in detail, “but

we’ll get through this together.”

Last year’s emergency preparedness part of the budget included buying generators for the Town Hall and the town clerk’s office, she said, adding, “That’s done, we don’t expect to need to spend more.”

The rumor is that the state plans to start charging for dispatch services soon, as much as \$40,000, she said.

Irasburg is contracting with Newport for dispatching and has been very happy with that service.

“It’s not quite 24/7, but it’s close,” Ms. Ingalls said. “And it’s local. Our fire department has been happier with the dispatch from Newport than they were with dispatch from the state.”

One jump in the budget was an additional \$7,000 for the library.

That’s to cover the new enrichment programs that Molly Veysey has put in place.

Ms. Veysey handed out a sheet that listed all of the classes that have been offered for children at the library through after school and summer programs.


The cost to taxpayers works out to about \$9.60 for the average home, she said.

“The cost to offer an enrichment program of this caliber is less than the cost of a small pizza with one topping from Village Pizza in Orleans,” she pointed out.

The town clerk’s office also needs an addition. “The vault is completely full,” Ms. Ingalls said.


(Continued on page ten.)

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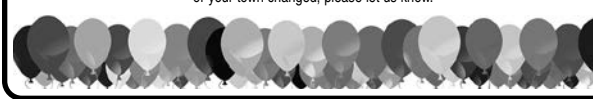


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 Gerard Alix, Newport Center, March 7
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 Joshua Baker Jr., Holland, March 8
 Janet Russell, Charleston, SC, March 9
 Norman LeBlanc, Orleans, March 9
 Rachel Hardy, Orleans, March 10
 Anita Mathews, Glover, March 10
 Scott Brill, Sutton, March 11
 Mary Jenne, Middlebury, March 11
 Diane Peck, Island Pond, March 11
 Tracie Quirion, March 12
 Carol Casey, Westmore, March 13
 Lady Meredith Lackie, Westmore, March 13
 Parker Perron, Barton, March 14
 Jessica Gilman, Sheffield, March 15
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 Caitlyne DeGreenia, Coventry, March 17



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Selectmen asked to reverse school plowing stand

(Continued from page nine.)

She said the town needs more gravel to replace a large stockpile put in several years ago that's almost gone now. That item added \$40,000 to the budget.

And the salt budget went up, after two winters in a row of higher-than-budgeted salt use.

"Why use salt when neighboring towns don't?" a voter asked. "Salt is expensive. Why don't we just use sand like Albany does?"

When people drive roads that run through more than one town, they're having to drive on both types of road surfaces, he said.

"I'm not on the road crew," Ms. Ingalls said.

Another voter wanted to know why the town no longer plows the school yard. It costs more for the school to contract with someone else to plow.

"It's all coming out of the same pocket," several people said in one way or another.

The select board made that

decision, and the select board should be asked to reverse it, several voters said.

"If we're here," quipped Mark Collette, one of the selectmen.

Mr. Collette was referring to the fact that neither of the selectmen at the front table had been on board at last year's Town Meeting. And neither was involved in the decision to change the way the school yard is plowed.

Irasburg has seen a complete changeover in select board members during the past year.

With the budget presentation out of the way, voters clicked through the items on the warning quickly with little additional discussion.

They approved the budget, including raising \$202,923 for general fund expenditures and \$288,420 for highway fund expenditures.

And they voted to spend up to \$69,500 from the reserve fund for the addition to the town clerk's

office.

Ms. Ingalls was re-elected to one-year terms as town clerk and treasurer.

Because Irasburg's two selectmen were both appointed during the past year to fill vacancies left when other selectmen resigned, the town had to vote on three select board positions this year.

Incumbent Dave Lahar was elected to a three-year term, and Mark Collette was elected to a one-year term.

Russ Ingalls was elected to a two-year term to replace Dave Warner, who had resigned effective Town Meeting Day.

"It pained me to see the positions struggling to stay filled," Mr. Ingalls said. "And when you see a position that's not filled, maybe it's time to throw your hat into the ring."

Mr. Warner was elected to a three-year term as auditor. Bill Roy, who has been volunteering to help the listers for the past several months, was elected to a one-year position as lister.

The remaining three-year lister's position was left vacant. Albany resident Sue Richardson has been working for the town as a lister and has done an exemplary job, several people said.

"She's not just good, she's outstanding," someone said.

Because Ms. Richardson is not a resident of Irasburg, she can only be hired if there are no nominations for the post.

Incumbent Gerald Cady was re-elected as first constable. And Alan Butler was elected for another term as delinquent tax collector.

Judith Jackson was re-elected to a three-year term as library trustee. Evelyn Kennison was re-elected to a two-year term as library trustee

Molly Veysey was re-elected to a one-year term.

The library has a five-person board, Ms. Jackson said. And there's a vacancy created by the death of Howard Mosher.

"You'll have to appoint someone to serve until next Town Meeting," Dr. Ron Holland said. "It hasn't been warned."


Vicki Gentler was re-elected to another year as grand juror.

"In ten years I've never done one thing for this job," Ms. Gentler said.

Gordon Chadburn was returned for another one-year term in a similarly low-profile job of town agent. And Brent Kinsley was sent back for another term as trustee of public money.

Town Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. and the school meeting began at 7:40 p.m. The whole thing was over well before 8:30.

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Craftsbury Town Meeting

Town and Legislature honor Randi Calderwood

by Peggy Sapphire

CRAFTSBURY — The first order of business at Town Meeting here Tuesday was devoted to acknowledging and honoring Randi Calderwood, whose tragic death profoundly impacted the Craftsbury community. State Representative Vicki Strong of Albany addressed the meeting and announced the Vermont Legislature’s Resolution 69, sponsored by Representatives Strong and Sam Young and state Senators John Rodgers and Bobby Starr. Mr. Calderwood’s widow, Louise Calderwood, reminded the community of Randi’s guiding ethic: to do justice, observe kindness, to walk humbly with God.

Susan Houston, select board member, further acknowledged and honored all those community volunteers, both appointed and self-appointed whose dedication to the many town committees is so vital.

All town and fire district officers, and all incumbents, were re-elected unanimously, without challenge.

The Craftsbury Select Board’s proposed 2017 budget of \$738,654 was approved. The 2017 budget represents an increase of \$8,227. The budget was passed with 135 yes votes, 8 no votes.

The town voted to approve \$40,050 to pay for operation of the town fire department.

Following discussion of the fire department’s proposed purchase of a new or used truck, it was agreed to allow no more than \$230,000 (plus interest) for that purpose. Jeremiah McCann, lieutenant of the fire department, explained the need for a new truck, preferably a 2017 HME,

which is currently in use in other Vermont towns. The tax rate will be increased by \$20 per \$1,000 worth of property value.

The Good Neighbor Fund (as provided by Green Mountain Power) was approved, by voice vote, to spend up to \$5,000, “contingent upon the availability of said funds.” The select board will disperse these funds at their discretion.

Bruce Urie, select board chair, explained that there are funds carried over from 2016, which will be applied to 2017 projects. So far, the Good Neighbor Fund has been used for town signage, open gym hours at Craftsbury Academy, and to help fund various town committee projects.

By a vote of 126-12, the town voted to approve the purchase of solar panels to be placed on the town’s salt shed roof. It is expected that the \$27,500 cost will be paid off through resulting utility savings, within 17 years. The life span of such panels is 35 years.

Melissa Jacobs, member of the Craftsbury Saplings Children’s Center, reported results of their recent survey. The program is currently sited at the East Craftsbury Church basement, and serves 12 preschool-aged children. Currently Craftsbury’s pre-K program meets only three mornings per week, highlighting the need for the additional care Craftsbury Saplings provides. The town voted to approve the requested \$6,000, which will allow sliding scale options.

By voice vote, the town approved up to \$8,000, with the cost to be split with the fire department, for a fire protection system (sensors) at the town garage. While a sprinkler system is

preferable, it is also unaffordable at this time.

The meeting recessed at 12:10 p.m. for lunch and reconvened at 12:40 p.m. to consider and approve \$1,500 for the annual Block Party.

In addition, \$5,000 in appropriations was approved for various functions, i.e. the Recreation Committee, Village Improvement Society, cemeteries, and Memorial Day.

Town Meeting was again recessed, immediately followed by the school board report.

Anne Morse (two-year term) and John Smith II (three-year term) were unanimously elected to fill the two school board vacancies.

The 2018 fiscal year school district budget of \$3,567,661 was approved, by a vote of 103-15.

Complex issues regarding equalized student counts, special education costs and tuition students were discussed at length. Joanne LeBlanc, Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) Superintendent, explained the various calculations involved. For example, tuition students are not counted as “equalized students,” nor are pre-K students. Busing and special ed costs are calculated at the district level. Any costs beyond \$50,000 for individual special education students will be reimbursed to the OSSU.

School Board Chair Steve Moffatt reassured people that Craftsbury’s per equalized pupil spending, \$17,270, is below Vermont’s “threshold amount” of \$17,386. Thus no penalty will be applied. Mr. Moffatt noted that the projected fiscal year 2018 education spending of \$2,591,562, compared to 2017 spending of \$2,513,310, represents an increase of \$78,252. Governor Phil Scott has indicated he wants zero increase. It is not clear how this will be achieved.

Regarding Act 46, Craftsbury must file its consolidation decision(s) by November 2017. School Director Harry Miller raised the question of whether or not the Craftsbury School District will consider becoming “independent,” which Mr. Miller characterized as “monumentally difficult.”

He also announced the newly organized Craftsbury Outdoor Sports Academy (COSA), for Craftsbury Academy grades 9-12. COSA will offer sports activities at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center twice a day, at no cost.

The school meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m., at which time Town Meeting resumed, to approve a variety of remaining agenda items. Voters approved, 88-5, a \$39,000 appropriation for the Craftsbury Public Library, which very proudly ranks fifth in Vermont for per capita usage.

Finally, Aaron Cornelius, Craftsbury Academy teacher, announced a new Boy Scout Troop #827, has been formed in Craftsbury. Currently there are 12 boys, four of whom did an outstanding job at Tuesday’s Town Meeting, as couriers providing microphones immediately to any attendee wanting to address fellow community members and the moderator.

Clues sought in Maitland disappearance

The Center for the Resolution of Unresolved Crime (CRUC) will be holding a tip campaign on Saturday, March 11, relating to the disappearance of Brianna Maitland.

Ms. Maitland was last seen leaving work at the Black Lantern in Montgomery on March 19 2004. Her car was found abandoned a short distance away. She is believed to have been the victim of foul play.

The campaign, Bring Bri Home, is designed to locate Ms. Maitland’s remains in order to bring some measure of comfort to her family and the community. Members of the public are encouraged to either call in their tips or come in person to deliver their information to the La Quinta Inn and Suites Green Mountain Conference Room, located at 813 Fairfax Road in Saint Albans City from 8 a.m. through 6 p.m. on March 11. Calls may be placed to investigators at (802) 524-3300 (ask for Bring

Bri Home or the Green Mountain room), or (203) 507-6352 or (413) 246-9841 during those same hours. All information is welcome, no matter how trivial it may seem.

Brianna’s father, Bruce Maitland, stated, “The Maitland family thanks the CRUC for their work to help find Brianna. The family reward has been extended for this event and remains at \$10,000 for the exact location of Brianna. In addition, a reward of \$10,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible, is also offered.”

The Vermont State Police have offered an additional \$5,000 reward. The family reward will only be in effect until July 1, 2017.

Mr. Maitland will be in attendance at this event for anyone who wishes to share information directly to him. Information can also be e-mailed to: bringbrihome@gmail.com. — from CRUC

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Greensboro Town Meeting

Town clerk and treasurer positions split up

by Josh Karp

GREENSBORO — Fellowship Hall at the Greensboro United Church was full as Greensboro's Town Meeting began at 10 a.m. sharp, called to order by long-time moderator Tim Nisbet. Dairy farmers, carpenters, teachers, foresters, artists, school bus drivers, retirees, accountants, and mechanics — among many others harder to classify — unanimously installed Mr. Nisbet as moderator for another year. Mr. Nisbet then muttered, "you might want to be thinking about somebody else, one of these years."

Select board Chair Susan Wood thanked outgoing Town Clerk and Treasurer Valdine Hall for her 32 years of service to the town. Her myriad roles (in addition to town clerk) included lister, zoning administrator, assistant town clerk, and planning commission chair. Ms. Wood said that Ms. Hall was a great organizer and doer, running the parking lot at the town's gravel pit during Bread & Puppet's huge circuses, and conceiving of and organizing the 'funky fourth' celebration in July for many years.

Ms. Wood concluded that Ms. Hall was "always ready to help out the select board, as well as keep us in line." After a round of applause, Ms. Hall was presented with a certificate and glass platter hand made by Devin Burgess of Borealis Studios in Greensboro. Ms. Hall thanked her predecessor Bridget Collier for taking her under her wing many years ago, and thanked Greensboro residents for many good years.

Then it was on to the Greensboro Award, an annual tradition where a long-time member of the community is honored. This year's recipient was

Janet Long, who arrived in town in 1946 as an 11-year-old. Ms. Long held positions over the years in many organizations, including the Greensboro Historical Society, Craftsbury Community Care Center, and Greensboro Free Library. The outspoken long-time delinquent tax collector was emotional at the microphone, saying, "suprisingly, I'm speechless" to laughing and applause.

State Representative Vicki Strong of Albany appeared, speaking to the crowd about her legislative priorities, including addressing housing needs of homeless veterans, the mentally ill, and recovering drug addicts. She lamented the slow pace of activity in the Legislature so far this session, and took questions. Many in the room were quite unenthusiastic about Act 46 and school district consolidation.

Assistant Town Clerk Kim Greaves was unanimously elected town clerk with no opposition. Denise Stuart was elected treasurer in a two-way race between herself and Barbara Brooke. With 121 ballots cast, Ms. Stuart received 76 votes to Ms. Brooke's 45. Prior to the vote, both spoke and appeared to be extremely qualified for the job, with years of accounting, auditing and municipal experience.

This is possibly the first time in Greensboro that the offices of town clerk and treasurer are held by two different people — a trend around the state.

The terms of three select board members were up. Vice-chair Peter Romans, Sean Thomson, and Michael Lapierre were unanimously re-elected.

Ms. Brooke, the loser of the treasurer's race, was then nominated for trustee of public funds. Although it became clear that no one in the room

actually knew anything about the responsibilities of the office, Ms. Brooke agreed to take it on, saying simply, "I'll try" to fulfill the mysterious duties.

When three library trustees came up for election, nervous laughs could be heard around the room, as memories of hours-long multiple ballot runoff elections for this office were recalled. There were four residents interested in the three slots, necessitating a ballot vote — but in the sprit of progress one withdrew from the race and the clerk was instructed to efficiently cast one ballot for the slate of three.

Of about 30 appropriation requests, only one was changed; \$2,000 for the Hardwick Area Food Shelf was increased to \$2,500, on a motion from centenarian Jane Sprenger.

A \$1,500 appropriation to the Greensboro Grange restoration project proved to be one of the most controversial topics of the morning. Mark Snyder took the microphone, concerned that the old building "needs everything," there isn't an overall plan for the renovation, and the end uses of the building are unclear. Although a modest Historic Preservation Grant was received a few years ago to get the Grange renovation started, Mr. Snyder and others felt that it makes more sense to put limited resources into renovating the Town Hall, a large, under-utilized building already being used by the school and which houses the town offices. Other residents spoke in favor of the Grange appropriation, speaking about the importance of saving a nineteenth-century town building with a lot of history. The appropriation was narrowly approved on a voice vote.

Article 11 was for discussion only: Should the day and time of Town Meeting be changed? Discussion centered around the fact that many working people can't make it to a weekday Town Meeting that begins at 10 a.m.; perhaps a Saturday morning meeting would give more folks the opportunity to attend. There was also a discussion about voting on more items by Australian ballot. There was a feeling of some resistance to change in the crowd, but overall, a willingness to consider changing things up — a little — to make the meeting more accessible.

To Greensboro residents, it's quite normal to argue over when the Fourth of July should be observed; July 1 was proposed and there was general agreement.

The meeting ended around 12:15, with many staying for a delicious lunch provided by the Four Seasons of Early Learning.

Jacobson photos at Craftsbury care center

A selection of the photography of Karl Jacobson will be on display at the Craftsbury Community Care Center until Friday, March 31. Mr. Jacobson minored in photography while majoring in mechanical engineering at Northeastern University. He has been photographing landscapes and portraits for the past 30 years. It's about the light and capturing a moment that will draw the viewer inward.

Mr. Jacobson lives in Hubbardston, Massachusetts, with his wife and two children. He works at Bose Corporation as a mechanical engineer designing cooling solutions for the electronics. He is a published professional

photographer and has displayed his work in several locations in Vermont. He is a Professional Photographers of America member and recently graduated from an intensive 18-month photography program at Theia Studios in North Andover, Massachusetts.

Most of these images are of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, while the others are New England landscapes.

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Charleston Town Meeting

A quick and harmonious annual meeting

by Peggy Stevens

CHARLESTON — A harmonious spirit prevailed at Charleston's annual Town Meeting on Tuesday, reflected in the dispatch of the warned items in record time — one and a half hours.

Once again, Jean Wilson was unopposed as moderator for both school and town meetings. Her expertise in informing voters of the rules governing the meeting contributed to the clarity and efficiency of the proceedings.

The Charleston School District meeting was first up, resulting in the re-election, unopposed, of Pat Austin for another term as school director and Teri Gray as school district treasurer. Chair Jason Brueck then walked citizens through the \$1,929,588 budget, which reflected a 22.24 percent increase in per pupil spending, totaling education spending of \$14,383 per equalized student. Breaking down the reasons for the startling increase, Mr. Brueck managed to shed light on, and make obvious why, voters were being asked to approve the board's request.

First, \$22,500 for a library-media specialist is inarguable as the Charleston board had requested and been denied a waiver by the state to forgo this expenditure. A 5 percent penalty would be levied if this position was not included in the coming budget.

Similarly, \$30,600 for expanded physical education to include health education in middle school grades, while not a requirement this year, is a mandate that should not be ignored, Mr. Brueck said. All students will be provided health education as a result. About \$22,400 for expanded pre-K will allow for bringing the pre-K paraprofessional to fulltime. Principal Jessica Applegate elaborated, noting that parents are currently being surveyed to determine needs and preferences to assist in determining how that pre-k expansion will occur.

An additional request for \$18,600 to bring music education to full-time was included in response to a petition brought by 80 voters for that purpose. While fund-raising by volunteers and after hours community jam sessions has added to the number and kinds of instruments available to students, this increase will allow for more lessons and practice time for Charleston students.

After explaining that the per pupil increase amounts to a per pupil cost that is lower than 50 percent of Vermont schools, and which would result in a property tax increase of \$80 per \$100,000 evaluation, discussion ensued.

"Where is this going? How long can this school exist?" asked John Kellogg, referencing concerns about school consolidation being pushed by the state.

Mr. Brueck responded: "It's impossible to imagine five years from now. It depends how many babies are born..." He motioned towards the one infant in the room. "Enrollment is up this

year by 30 students, but it's up and down year to year. Our intent is to put forth an alternative proposal to Act 46." He also reminded voters that federal "titles funding is in question under the new administration."

"How about becoming a private school like St. Johnsbury Academy?" called out Tom Jensen, to which Mr. Brueck responded a bit dubiously, "We'll look into it."

A survey is being conducted to assess public opinion, Mr. Brueck said, and the Governor needs data. Complete the survey, he urged.

"Then call the Secretary of Education," quipped Pat Austin.

Willing to give the benefit of any doubt to the board, voters passed the budget by paper ballot, 62 out of 80, more than 75 percent in support.

On a roll, voters next assessed and approved by voice vote a motion to transfer the \$58,882 school budget surplus to be rolled into the school's Asset Replacement Fund. It seemed reasonable to anticipate maintenance and replacement costs that might be required by the school, built in the 1970s. This year, the water system and playground fencing are known priorities.

Moving right along, Mr. Brueck, picking up on the Act 46 question, said, "Act 46 wants to dissolve local school boards," then offered that the town could go on record as to its opinion on that matter, noting that it would be a nonbinding vote.

The motion read, "The town will propose an alternative to Act 46, the state's preferred model."

After Audrey Frizzell spoke eloquently and succinctly about the need to maintain local control over local schools, a voice vote overwhelmingly endorsed maintaining local control in defiance of Act 46.

This expression by Charleston voters echoed opening remarks by Representatives Lynn Batchelor and Brian Smith, who both spoke to the school consolidation plan advocated by the state. Ms. Batchelor stated, "I don't think the restriction of Act 46 is needed," with Mr. Smith following up: "Not in Vermont, not in the Northeast Kingdom."

After the meeting closed, Principal Applegate expressed gratitude to the townspeople for their support and encouraged parents to contact her directly at school or by phone, 895-2915, to provide input about pre-K or other school programming.

Turning to the business of the town, voters continued in the same vein of support for the hard work of their elected officials. All but one sitting town officer were reinstated unopposed. Bob Wilson was voted in without opposition as a new lister, and in a two-way race, Martin Davis was elected as cemetery commissioner.

Introducing the budget for \$603,256 for the town highway and cemetery expenses, Selectman Dean Bennett also clarified line item requests, many of which reflect state mandates for spending. The actual net assessment for taxes is less than last year, thanks to last year's vote applying surpluses from the 2016 town budget to

pay off outstanding loans on equipment. Anticipated expenses this year include \$23,772 to pave the aprons where Dane Hill meets 105.

Mr. Bennett assured, "We will do the best we can do with the money we've got. We'll go for the best quality, not just the best price."

Any remaining funds will go towards the purchase of chloride.

Voters approved by voice vote this item plus \$20,000 for the road equipment fund, most likely going to support replacement of "two aging bucket loaders."

The Charleston Volunteer Fire Department also easily was granted their request for \$38,245, even as Jeanine Bennett pointed out that, "there's more than two times that in the balance" of the fire department budget.

Chief Dan Whipple responded: "Equipment purchases go in fits and spurts." Last year, new gear cost \$30,000 and a \$15,000 snowmobile was purchased to aid in snowmobile rescue, which was used once already this year. And there is a need to begin looking at repair or perhaps replacement of the building, as well as equipment, Mr. Whipple said.

In the final minutes of the meeting, 16 requests by area organizations totaling \$12,449 were bundled and approved without quibbling.

Other business included a suggestion to develop a town communication network to ensure that town residents could be informed of relevant meetings, including but not exclusive to immediate town business. Mr. Whipple proposed a town Facebook page, and Town Clerk Teri Gray reminded folks that in the past tax bills provided a vehicle to gather e-mail addresses and phone numbers of town residents.

Assistant Town Clerk Colleen Kellogg, offered that any resident can e-mail townofcharlestonvt@comcast.net or call in to the town clerk's office to update that information, but cautioned that this information is then public, with no guarantee as to how that may or may not be disclosed.

At that point, Jean Wilson chimed in to say, "We are trying to hold this meeting to 11:30, when lunch will be ready to serve."

One last item at hand was brought to the floor by Selectman Bennett, which is the need to develop an emergency plan to be able to respond in the event of a disaster, perhaps by making the school available as a FEMA site. Various voters said it sound like there needs to be a committee and a plan.

"Sort of..." was the response from the front of the room. In the confusion, what emerged is the need for details about how to come into compliance as an emergency command center.

And with that, the meeting was adjourned at 11:31.

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Holland Town Meeting

Town debates questions of public participation

by Elizabeth Trail

HOLLAND — By a vote of 70 to 42, Holland residents approved the town's school budget set for fiscal year 2017 at \$911,700. That budget was down over \$50,000 from 2016, but with declining enrollment it still marks an increase in per pupil spending.

Town Meeting was a lively affair, even though attendance was about average, with 71 voters present.

Between some prolonged discussions and a break for lunch, Town Meeting and the school meeting together ran until 1:30.

Several things that town officials had expected to hear about — like wind development — hardly came up.

But other items on the agenda that Moderator Ernie Emmerson had expected to see fly through without discussion generated a lot of debate.

Mr. Emmerson, a longtime former moderator, ran the meeting in place of current Moderator Mitch Wonson, who was not at the meeting.

The questions that inspired debate in Holland this year all had to do with what speakers described as opportunity to participate in the democratic process.

Article Six in the warning asked whether, in lieu of mailing copies of the town report to every household, the town could publish a notice in the newspapers, and mail copies of the town report only to people who request them.

Property owners who aren't residents already have to request copies of the report.

"A lot of people get them and never open them," Town Clerk Diane Judd explained. "And it's expensive."

Town reports cost about \$8 each to print. And the town spends about \$1.82 to mail each one. It works out to about \$400 to mail one to each household.

By law, every registered voter is supposed to get a copy of the town report.

But voters were concerned about giving everyone a chance to participate. And some felt that the requirement to call and ask for a report, or to drive to the town clerk's office to pick one up, was burdensome.

"It's well worth \$400 to be sure that everyone has a chance to participate," one voter said.

The article was defeated unanimously.

And Article Six on the school meeting warning would have let Holland voters approve future school budgets on the floor at Town Meeting.

That would rescind a previous year's decision to vote on school budgets by Australian ballot.

One advantage of voting on the budget from the floor is that line items can be modified then and there, Mr. Emmerson explained. With an Australian ballot, it's a yes or no vote.

If the budget is turned down, the entire budget process has to begin again.

Many people offered comments, all in support of keeping the Australian ballot.

It mostly boiled down to whether everyone has an opportunity to come to Town Meeting.

Residents felt strongly that people who can't make it, due to work or health or some other reason may still want the chance to vote on the school budget.

They decided unanimously to keep the Australian ballot.

The question came up again under "other business" at the end of Town Meeting.

A number of people, mostly younger, felt that holding Town Meeting in the middle of the day on Tuesdays makes it hard for young working people to attend.

Evening meetings — or even Saturday meetings — were proposed.

Changing the time or day of next year's Town Meeting would require a special town meeting, Ms. Judd said. Or getting the issue onto the warning for next year.

But a number of people spoke up who said that getting to Town Meeting is just a matter of making it a priority.

"This issue has come up a number of times over the past ten years," Mr. Emmerson said. "Each time we've voted not to change it."

He said it's likely the people who are present at a Tuesday Town Meeting are people who are going to support holding future Town Meetings on the weekday.

And going to Australian ballot in lieu of Town Meeting decreases participation, Mr. Emmerson said.

He recommended a study committee to look for "a better mousetrap." There were no volunteers. But after the close of the meeting, there were still people around the room hotly discussing the issue.

Voters approved a town budget of \$672,568 with almost no discussion.

The only question was what the phrase "less such state aid as is received by the town" means in a budget vote.

"Look in the highway budget," Ms. Judd said. "Under estimated revenues, you see \$95,865 coming in from state aid."

State highway aid usually comes through, but the amount isn't certain until August, Ms. Judd said. Since Town Meeting happens in March, the voters have to approve a budget that doesn't assume that the aid will come through.

That was the only discussion on the budget, which was up only about \$5,000 from last year.

"Let's get at least the most important item on the school agenda done before we break for lunch," Mr. Emmerson said.

He recessed Town Meeting and called the school meeting to order at about 11:30 a.m.

Although the school budget is voted by Australian ballot, there was quite a bit of discussion about it anyway, even with the smell of lunch wafting through the building.

Next year's proposed budget is \$911,700. That comes down to education spending of \$16,601 per equalized pupil—a 19.8 percent increase over last year.

"We're feeling the effect of enrollment that declined two years ago," school board member Lincoln Petell said.

"Holland doesn't have a spending problem," said Holland resident and North Country Supervisory Union Superintendent John Castle. "We have a pupil problem."

The school budget has been going down every year.

The budget for the current year is \$962,987.

But the number of students is going down, too. And fewer students mean less money from the state.

Voters struggled to understand Mr. Castle's efforts to explain the complexities of how spending

per equalized pupil is calculated.

The takeaway is, it's complicated. But it's the per-pupil spending level, not the school budget, that directly affects the tax rate.

And there's not a lot that people in Holland can do about that as long as the number of children in the school continues to drop.

"I expect the numbers will level out in the mid-thirties," Mr. Castle said. "But something could happen to surprise us."

There was a considerable amount of discussion about the preschool. About six or seven pre-kindergarteners are expected.

But several voters, all elderly, wanted to know whether there were proven educational benefits to preschool.

And several people, all parenting age, defended preschool, both for its social and educational benefits.

"School is an educational institution, not a social welfare institution," one older woman said.

Several people said in one way or another that children deserve the best possible start in school, whether or not their parents have taken the time to teach them.

"Are we mandated to have it?" a man asked after ten or 15 minutes of back and forth on the subject. "Then why are we having this discussion?"

"We're mandated to provide access, not to provide the program," Mr. Castle said. "So if we don't have a program and send children to the program in Derby, we still have to pay for them to go."

The only other issue that generated much discussion was the question of whether to require groups that are asking for money at Town Meeting to petition to get onto the warning.

Currently anybody can request money from the town of Holland just by sending a letter.

Requests totaled about \$10,000 this year, and have been rising every year.

Voters decided that circulating a petition before being allowed to make a request at town meeting was reasonable.

But they voted down a suggestion that all of the current requests be level-funded based on what the town gave each group last year.

Ms. Judd, speaking as a member of the historical society, explained why that group asked for more money this year than last. There is a major roof problem that could ruin the building, she explained. And the group didn't get a grant it was counting on.

Without having that kind of information about why each group on the list might need more money this year than last, it was impossible to make a blanket decision to level fund the organizations.

So in the end, voters decided to approve all funding requests except for one from the music nonprofit Big Heavy World. That group doesn't have a strong presence in Holland, voters decided.

In town elections, Norm Fortin was re-elected to the select board for a three-year term.

Sara Camber was re-elected as lister for three years. Paula Markwell was re-elected to a three-year term as auditor.

Marc Farrow was re-elected as constable for one year.

Diane Judd was re-elected to one-year terms as delinquent tax collector and town agent.

Lucy Neal was elected as grand juror.

"It's one of those old-fashioned jobs," Ms. Judd said.

Lucy Neal and Bill Crowley were elected to the planning commission.



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Glover Town Meeting

Town gathers for two-hundred fifteenth meeting

by Stephan Cantor

GLOVER — Cars and trucks lined both sides of Route 16 for several hundred yards in Glover Tuesday morning as townspeople gathered once again for the annual Town Meeting. This was Glover's two hundred fifteenth Town Meeting Day, noted long-time town moderator Nick Ecker-Racz, and as always the meeting was well attended.

Nearly all the seats were taken, and many more people stood along the side walls and in the back of the room. Most found standing room between the tables set up to showcase several organizations that are important to the community, including the Glover Ambulance Squad, the Glover Town Library and the Glover Historical Society. Members of Glover's newly created Energy Committee, which grew out of the work of the Glover Planning Commission, were on hand with an array of helpful information about reducing individual and residential energy consumption. Another table overseen by Gloria Powers, director of the Glover Senior Meals program, held the very important cookies, doughnuts, coffee, and other refreshments needed to fuel the dedicated crowd through a long morning of the town's business.

In spite of having what many Vermont towns would consider an enviable crowd size, some in the room worried that attendance at Glover's Town Meeting has dwindled over the years. Following his opening announcements, the moderator opined that Town Meeting and the school meeting are the heart of the Glover community.

"We have something special here," said Mr Ecker-Racz. "Our community starts here."

Those present seemed to agree, and offered several suggestions for increasing attendance at the yearly meeting. Changing the day of the week was discussed and rejected, but providing childcare for attendees, something that was done in the past, had broad support. Ashley Morrill, a student at Lake Region Union High School and a resident of Glover, suggested that high school students who are looking for community service opportunities could be recruited to help with day care on Town Meeting Day. That could be

organized through Lake Region's Community Service Coordinator, Ms. Morrill said.

Tuesday's Town Meeting was notable for its overall lack of controversy. The mood, though serious, was co-operative and friendly, and the crowd had a shared sense of "Git 'er done." Without exception all of the town officers and officials were elected unanimously and without opposition.

Donna Sweeney was re-elected as town clerk and treasurer; Brian Carroll will serve as selectman for another three years; and Lucy Smith and Ned Andrews will return as auditor and lister, respectively. The voters chose Nancy Rodgers to be a new library trustee. She will serve one year to finish the term of Mr. Andrews who is leaving the library board.

Selectman Jack Sumberg reviewed the recent renovations to the Glover Town Hall. Most of the improvements, including a new roof, were directed toward energy efficiency and savings in energy costs.

Mr. Sumberg also reported on the status of the selectmen's plan to build a new town garage. This is a significant expenditure for the town, and it will require a bond vote. An informational meeting on the project and its financing will be held on April 10. The bond vote is scheduled for April 11.

After a few questions and clarifications on budget details, the town budget passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Appropriations to the many and various organizations that ask Glover taxpayers for financial assistance were also approved with little disagreement. The Barton Senior Center's request for additional funds beyond last year's appropriation was denied, however, due to the fact that Glover's own senior meals program is going strong and serves more Glover residents. The Glover program did not make a request for funding. Ms. Powers expressed appreciation to the selectmen and the town for the use of the Town Hall and for their support of the meals program.

Though it was technically the business of the afternoon school meeting, Carol Young took advantage of the time given to "other nonbinding business" to stress the importance of being

involved in the process of responding to Act 46, the school district consolidation law, and its implications for schools and communities. She urged everyone present to stay for the school meeting.

Representative Sam Young of Glover joined the meeting after visiting Town Meetings in Wheelock and Sheffield. Representative Young serves as vice-chair of the powerful Ways and Means Committee this legislative session. He stressed that there is a new government in Vermont. With a new government in Washington, state lawmakers face more than the usual uncertainty about future federal funding and policy directives.

After a few thoughtful questions to Mr. Young about taxes, Department of Motor Vehicle inspections, and the state's position regarding new federal immigration policy, and with a round of applause for Glover town officials, Town Meeting was adjourned with time to kill before lunch.

A day of town business was punctuated by the always amazing, nap-inducing, midday meal prepared and served by the ladies of the Glover Community Church. Suffice it to say that no one left the church hungry.

The Glover School Meeting was convened promptly at 1 p.m., and it, too, moved smoothly through the business that had been warned. The voters authorized a capital reserve fund of \$10,000, and on the next article unanimously approved the school budget of \$2,042,507.

The position of school director was the only contested election of the day, with a challenge to the incumbent, Richard Epinette, from Matt Eldridge, who has a son in kindergarten at Glover school and another young child "in the pipeline," as he put it. Mr Epinette prevailed, 33 votes to 13, but he took the opportunity to thank Mr. Eldridge for running and for his willingness to serve.

Mr. Ecker-Racz, the moderator, quipped, "When a committee needs a volunteer you know who to call."

Dennis Gibson, wearing his Glover Ambulance jacket, grinned at Mr. Eldridge and added, "You're on the list, man."

Couple donates Lowell land to Vermont Land Trust

Jeannie and John Panner have donated 197 acres in Lowell to the Vermont Land Trust. The land is located on both sides of Route 58. The mostly forested property has long views of Hazen's Notch and Haystack Mountain across a 55-acre wetland.

Ms. Panner was born on a dairy farm in New York in the late 1940s. "My earliest memories include feeding the calves, walking the land, bringing the cows home to be milked," she said.

The family connections to farming inspired the purchase of the Lowell land 30 years ago. With its woodland, hayfields, and a little brook, it was idyllic. "My parents lent us the money to buy it," Ms. Panner said. "My dad said, 'Jeannie has her farm now.'"

At the time the Panners bought the land, they planned to raise crops or animals and to use the forest. Instead, it became a peaceful, beautiful place to get away from their jobs in industry.

They visited the land often, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, and enjoying the views and the diverse wildlife.

When they retired, they found themselves living too far from the property.

"We still loved the land, but realized that it needed a new steward, someone who would preserve and use the land," Mr. Panner said.

"As long-time supporters of the land trust, we thought that donating the land would be our best chance at finding an owner who shared our love of the land and its significant wildlife habitat and scenic values, as well as its potential for multiple uses," he said. "It was also a great way to help the Vermont Land Trust in its important mission."

The land had some agricultural history. The remains of a farmhouse are visible and a field was hayed by a local farmer for a period of time after the Panners bought the land. In addition to

scenic views of Hazen's Notch, the property's most striking feature is its natural wetland with an alder swamp, cattail marshes, and beaver dams. The diverse landscape provides excellent wildlife habitat.

The land trust will put the property on the market in the coming months. It will be sold subject to a conservation easement that will allow for one house. The remainder of the land will have development permanently restricted but will be available for forestry and agricultural purposes. The wetland and natural area will be protected as well.

Proceeds from the sale will be used for future conservation work.

Those interested in learning more about making a gift of land to the Vermont Land Trust can learn more through a new video posted on vlt.org. — from the Vermont Land Trust.



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Westmore Town Meeting

Melissa Zebrowski elected town clerk

by Brad Usatch

WESTMORE — One measure of the apparent level of comity in Westmore this year is that, as the noon hour approached and already 19 of 25 articles warned for Town Meeting had been dispensed with, Moderator Andrew Berley leaned over to outgoing Town Clerk Greg Gallagher and said, “We might want to be careful we don’t finish the whole thing before lunch.”

That did not come to pass, and Mr. Gallagher assured people that lunch would be served even if it had.

Before a single article was addressed, Orleans County Sheriff’s Deputy Corey Bingham made himself available for questions. According to the town report, Westmore received a little over 400 hours of contracted coverage from the Sheriff’s Department in 2016 at a cost of \$19,000. Deputy Bingham left to a smattering of applause and thank-yous without having to field a single question.

“That was easy,” he said as he exited. “I’ll sign up for this meeting next year.”

Representative Paul Lefebvre also stopped by to pass on a report from Montpelier, and hear questions and concerns from his constituents.

From his seat on the Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Committee, he was able to provide specific information on a nascent effort to re-evaluate the now 50-year-old Act 250. He also discussed possible funding streams for the mandated cleanup of Lake Memphremagog and other Vermont waters.

One resident was skeptical that Canada was footing its fair share of the bill for the cleanup. Mr. Lefebvre conceded that most of the lake lies in Canada, but explained that the watershed feeding the lake is actually much larger on the American side of the border.

Resident Ron Holmes chimed in: “Maybe the Canadians are a little smarter than we are and they didn’t build a landfill by the lake.”

In one final preliminary act before tackling the itemized agenda, Selectman William Perkins presented Mr. Gallagher with a plaque commemorating his service to the town.

“We wanted to buy you a new fishing boat or something, but it wasn’t in the budget,” Mr. Perkins said.

The lone ballot item at this year’s meeting would decide who would replace Mr. Gallagher as town clerk and assume all the other duties traditionally subsumed by that position in Westmore — treasurer, tax collector, town agent, and trustee of the public funds. After 11 years at the post, Mr. Gallagher was stepping down one year into a three-year term. He had previously said he would have liked to retire last year but no one came forward with an interest in the position.

This year, two candidates — Maree Bushey and Melissa Zebrowski — ran to fulfill the remaining two-year vacancy. In her brief remarks to the meeting, Ms. Zebrowski stressed her passion for the town and the area. She said she hoped to increase transparency in town affairs, perhaps by using the town website to reach people who may be part-time residents or just looking to visit the area.

Citing “Coventry and cash,” Ms. Zebrowski said she also wanted to establish a system of checks and balances to insure that Westmore, which like Coventry trusts many duties to one individual, does not find itself missing money under questionable circumstances.

“It’s a sensitive subject and I don’t want anyone to have to question that,” she said.

Ms. Bushey, who currently serves as both a lister and as the town’s assistant zoning administrator, touted her extensive experience as an administrator and executive administrator with both businesses and nonprofit entities. She said she is knowledgeable with network accounting systems, including the one used by the town, and felt that, if elected, she could hit the ground running.

“I get along with everyone and I feel I can serve the town without bias,” she said.

Both candidates offered to keep Mr. Gallagher on as assistant town clerk, if he should desire, and both said they intended to continue his tradition of attending meetings of the select board.

“It’s not a requirement of the job that you attend select board meetings,” said board Chair Burton Hinton, “but it will be a royal pain in the ass if you do not.”

In the end, Ms. Zebrowski was elected by a vote of 57 to 15 with one blank ballot.

All other elected officers in the town were returned to their posts, including Mr. Hinton who was put through to serve another three years after no other nominees came forward.

Mr. Berley moved the meeting along

One could not clearly identify every creamy, cheesy, breadcrumb-coated chicken, potato, and vegetable casserole being offered, not to mention the Swedish meatballs, but one couldn’t go wrong.

efficiently, though most articles did elicit some comment or request for clarification from the board.

Article Three authorized the select board to negotiate a wage for the town clerk. Resident Ruth Gjessing asked if the people could set an upper limit on that negotiation. When Mr. Perkins assured her that was the case, Ms. Gjessing drew a laugh with her observation, “Good, so it can just go down.”

Bruce Tanner, speaking as a trustee of the Westmore Community Church, rose to clarify Article Six, requesting an easement from Long Pond Road to a church-owned woodlot on Goodwin Mountain.

After residents were assured by Mr. Tanner and the select board that there would be no costs to the town, and that the easement would — with some clearing and culvert work — follow existing skid roads, the measure passed on a voice vote.

Randi Pickel Rosenstein offered her objections to Article Eight, which would authorize charging an 8 percent fee to any tax bill not paid by the stroke of four o’clock in the afternoon on October 20.

She said she felt the fee was too high for someone who may only be a day or two late, and maybe for reasons beyond their control. She said it happened to her once just because she had a

money market account that matured on a Saturday so she was unable to access the money until the following week.

“My point is that if someone has an emergency, I think that fee should be abated,” Ms. Rosenstein said.

Delinquent Tax Collector Annette Parenteau noted that her pay comes out of that fee. She also said that she informs delinquent payers who claim a hardship of the right to seek an abatement through the town clerk.

“We’re easy,” said Mr. Gallagher. He said such requests are rare, but in cases where payment is mere minutes late or there are emergency circumstances, an abatement will be considered.

The article passed as warned.

With only three articles yet to be decided, the meeting broke for lunch provided by the Westmore Ladies Aid Society. One could not clearly identify every creamy, cheesy, breadcrumb-coated chicken, potato, and vegetable casserole being offered, not to mention the Swedish meatballs, but one couldn’t go wrong. Likewise for the selection of cakes, pies, brownies, bars, cobblers, and buckles that made up the full third of the table space reserved for desserts.

After it was clear that all had had their fill, Mr. Berley gavelled the meeting to order for fear that everyone might fall asleep if he didn’t. Before getting back to the agenda, Mr. Berley consented on behalf of the town and without a voice vote, to a request by the Ladies Aid Society that any leftover food would be packed up and given to a Westmore family that lost its home to a fire on Saturday night.

The good cheer from lunch carried on to consideration of Article 24 — an itemized list of 24 community appropriations. After some discussion, the article was amended to add \$500 to the proposed \$1,500 appropriations to both the Barton library and Jones Memorial Library in Orleans.

When no one rose to offer any other business for consideration, Mr. Gallagher thanked the town for his years as clerk. He was answered with warm applause as Mr. Berley entertained a motion to adjourn.

Northern Flyer to play at The Music Box March 18

Northern Flyer will play at the Music Box in Craftsbury on Saturday, March 18, at 7:30 p.m.

Members of the band will be familiar to bluegrass fans: Andy Sacher on mandolin, Mark Struhsacher playing guitar, Andy Greene strumming the banjo, and Kirk Lord on bass.

While the music rings with a hard-driving bluegrass authenticity, Northern Flyer by no means confines itself to the traditional bluegrass repertoire.

The band played its debut concert at the East Fairfield Meeting House on the Green Vermont Treasures concert series in October.

To find out more about the band, visit <https://northernflyerbluegrass.com/>

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Derby Town Meeting

Voters hold lively discussion of Act 46

by Joseph Gresser

DERBY LINE — Scarcely a ripple disturbed the tranquil surface of Derby's Town Meeting, held Monday evening at the Derby Elementary School in Derby Line. Not a single "no" vote was cast as the 100 or so voters gathered in the school gym breezed their way through the warning in less than 45 minutes.

The ease with which voters agreed to a 14 percent increase in the municipal budget was an indication of satisfaction with the management of the town rather than lack of interest.

A lively discussion of Act 46, held under other business at the end of the evening, showed that townspeople are far from disengaged.

Voters gave their approval to a \$2.8-million municipal budget that included about \$333,000 in funds appropriated for various civic groups. Last year's budget, including \$325,000 in appropriations, was \$2.4-million.

In answer to voters' questions, Grant Spates, the chair of the Derby Select Board, said much of the additional money is earmarked for the town road department, including \$145,000 to pay the town's share of a new stressed concrete culvert for the Eagle Point Road, \$167,000 for a new truck body, and \$17,500 to pay for screened sand.

Another \$40,000 was allocated for public safety, he said.

Mr. Spates said most of the repairs to the Eagle Point Road will be paid for by the federal government. The road leads to the property left to the nation by Michael Dunne. The town is required to pick up a fifth of the \$750,000 cost for the project, but may be able to trade labor and equipment for some of the cash match, he said.

The road collapsed recently, and the culvert has been replaced while a temporary bridge is installed, Mr. Spates said. He said the work on the Eagle Point Road and the John's River Road will be done over the summer.

School directors got approval to put \$100,000 in unspent money from last year into the building and grounds and technology funds. Voters approved putting \$55,000 into building and grounds and \$45,000 toward technology improvements.

School Director Timothy Bronson, who decided not to seek re-election this year, said the school has been able to spend nearly a million dollars for school improvements over the past ten years and just under \$500,000 for technology by directing unspent money to the funds. The school has \$110,000 in a bus fund, he said.

The school's request for \$5.5-million for the coming school year was approved by a vote of 290

to 181. That represented spending of \$12,249 per equalized pupil, according to the ballot question.

Derby's cash reserves became an argument against consolidating into a larger school district under Act 46, when the issue came up at the end of the meeting.

School Director Abigail Provost told the meeting that North Country Supervisory Union hopes to learn whether residents want to comply with the school consolidation law by eliminating individual town school boards in favor of a new district setup that would have a single board with town representation based on population. The alternative would be finding a way to convince the state to allow the continuation of the current school governance structure, she said.

"Doesn't Act 46 call for the consolidation of funds?" asked Moderator Richard Nelson, who also sits on the North Country Union High School board. "Won't all the money you put aside because of your frugal ways become the property of the new district?"

Ms. Provost said Mr. Nelson was correct.

Mr. Nelson said he thought the law might work well for more urban areas than it would in the North Country Supervisory Union.

"Here one board would stretch from Lowell to Island Pond," Ms. Provost said. "We'd lose control over our budget and I'd have to vote on a budget for Lowell when I know nothing about the kids in Lowell and what they need."

School board member Gigi Gobeil-Judd said, "The whole premise of Act 46 came about because of finances. It's funny how it moved into governance instead."

"For 49 years we have lived under consolidation with North Country Union High School," said Derby resident Allen Yale. "For 49 years people have missed their high school. Part of Vermont culture is to have local control. This is an example of local control being taken away."

"I can't think of why it would save us a lot of money," Mr. Nelson said. "Serving on the high school board earns just a bit more than what I get

for moderating."

A resident asked what financial penalties the supervisory union might face if it didn't consolidate.

"There are financial incentives if you do consolidate but they're declining," Ms. Gobeil-Judd replied.

She said much of any money received from the state will wind up paying fees to lawyers who draw up the paperwork for consolidation.

"Teachers make our school," Ms. Provost said. She worried that a consolidated district might move teachers around to the detriment of Derby.

"Consolidation has been good for special education," Mr. Nelson said.

Having supervisory unions manage those services means an aide can stay with a student as she moves from school to school, he said.

Karen Chitambar, a teacher at the high school, said the idea of having schools in different towns specialize, educating students at one or two grade levels, might sound reasonable, but it doesn't take into account how long a young child should be sitting in a school bus every day.

"It is a question of logistics," Mr. Nelson said. "How many snow days did we have this year? Imagine how many more we would have if we were consolidated."

Mr. Yale asked if the state might be able to force the district to consolidate.

"The state is beginning to back pedal because of who we are and what we have," Ms. Gobeil-Judd said.

She said the supervisory union has schools that teach students from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade and others that teach kids from kindergarten through eighth grade.

"If we can figure out what communities really want and really need and fight for it, we can convince the state," she said.

Ms. Gobeil-Judd said the supervisory union plans to continue to hold information meetings with citizens through March.

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Albany Town Meeting Sheriff's Department request inspires debate

by Meredith Jones

ALBANY — Democracy was in effect here Tuesday as about 85 citizens came out to make important financial decisions for the town. Standing at the lovely new podium, made and donated by Andy Bedard, Moderator Gary Heath Mason addressed the hall asking for respectful, courteous and civil behavior because “in the end we care for each other and that’s more important than any differences we may have.”

Debra Ann Geoffrey was re-elected town clerk and treasurer for three-year terms, and also delinquent tax collector for one year. Re-elected unopposed were Selectman Brian Goodrich for three years; Lister Dylan Kinsey for three years; Auditor Jane Rayner for three years; First Constable William Doherty for one year; and Town Agent Mike Nelson for one year. Meghan Stotko replaced Stuart Soboleski as grand juror for one year.

The new deputy from the Orleans County Sheriff's Department was politely asked to leave the room so as not to be put on the spot. Voters argued not to give the department the requested amount but, instead, give it the same amount as last year or nothing because they are rarely seen and don't stop speeders or are entirely

unavailable after hours because the dispatchers are in Williston and, as the deputy said, “you can kind of explain where you are and they will try to figure out where you mean because they are not familiar with the rural location.”

After a 40-minute debate and a couple of paper ballots, the requested amount of \$12,274 was passed 61-24. The town will also look into getting a speed limit detector. Longtime EMT Mark Creaven noted that people are looking into having a more local dispatch service but that will take funding.

Without opposition, the town will raise \$100,000 for the General Fund and \$220,000 for the maintenance of Class Two and Three town highways, the same as last year. The town will raise \$20,000 for the purpose of blacktop on town roads only. It was agreed the roads have been great in Albany. The town will raise \$5,000 for summer maintenance of Class Four roads, which is just half what was asked for last year.

By a paper ballot vote of 33-15 after an impassioned and effective plea from fire department members Jeanne Peters and Carol Irons, citizens again voted \$28,500 for the Albany Volunteer Fire Department, with \$3,500 to be put into the vehicle replacement fund.

Albany will raise \$10,200 for the maintenance of the town cemeteries and will raise \$8,515 to start mapping the cemeteries with ground-seeking radar. This is needed so that in order to locate and map all remains that may be unmarked or have lost or broken headstones. Currently no new graves can be scheduled because of the lack of records. The South Albany and Chamberlin Hill cemeteries will be the ones done this year.

Voters unanimously approved \$4,000 to finance recycling and trash disposal, \$200 for the emergency management coordinator to attend training, \$150 for the observation of Memorial Day, and \$7,000 for the Albany Town Library. Albany approved \$13,069 for almost all requested appropriations, only denying the Lake Region Senior Center because apparently no folks from Albany go there anymore.

In a historic vote, throwing away the tradition started in 1789 at the town of Ludlow's

first Town Meeting, the Albany Town Meeting next year will begin an hour earlier at 9 a.m., which hopefully will enable the town to complete the meeting by noon.

Promptly at 1 p.m., Mr. Heath Mason was re-elected moderator for the school meeting. Tracy Lamarche was re-elected school director for a three-year term. By a paper ballot vote of 30-22, Matt Kittridge replaced Jim Daniels for the remaining two years of a three-year term.

With a ballot vote of 51-10 the town agreed to appropriate an additional \$110,000 to the school exterior maintenance fund. This will help pay for a new roof, which will be standing seam metal. The school directors will receive \$850 in salary, the same as last year.

By an Australian ballot vote of 61-29, Albany passed the school budget of \$1,504,477. This will result in education spending of \$14,935 per equalized pupil. Also by Australian ballot, voters approved the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District budget of \$755,527 in a vote of 71-19.

NorthWoods offers backcountry weekend

As part of its backcountry ski series, the NorthWoods Stewardship Center in East Charleston is hosting a Bunkhouse, Backcountry, and Brew Weekend, Friday through Sunday, March 24 to 26. The cost of \$325 includes lodging, dinner, breakfast, transportation, and tour guides.

Participants will earn their turns, enjoy an après ski celebration, and a good night's sleep in the center's newly constructed bunkhouse. NorthWoods will provide dinner and breakfasts, optional film screening, and live music. Saturday will feature an alpine start and a full day tour of a Vermont backcountry zone. Sunday will include a shorter ski. Participants should have skiing experience, and an alpine touring setup, including skins. To reserve a spot, call 723-6551. — from the NorthWoods Stewardship Center.

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Barton Town Meeting Croteau is re-elected

by Nathalie Gagnon-Joseph

ORLEANS VILLAGE — In a very short Town Meeting on Tuesday evening, voters here approved all budgets and appropriations.

“It was a slide of a meeting,” said Bob Croteau who was re-elected selectman in an uncontested race by Australian ballot.

He won 74 of the 84 votes. Five were blank, one was spoiled, and there were four write-ins.

The 2017 town budget minus income is \$427,953, down just over \$83,000 from last year’s \$511,085. That breaks down to a total of \$479,575 in expenses and \$51,622 of expected income. The 2017 highway budget minus income is \$547,347, up \$11,729 from last year’s \$535,645. That’s \$675,374 of expenses and \$128,000 of expected income.

There was no discussion and there were about 50 people there, Mr. Croteau estimated.

Voters approved a 3 percent increase in all elected officials’ salaries.

“There were no surprises,” Town Clerk Kristen Atwood said about those who were elected by Australian ballot.

Bill Davies was elected agent

with 76 votes, six blanks, and two write-ins.

Patricia Tompkins and Richard Jesmer are the library trustees for the next five and three years, respectively. Ms. Tompkins won with 82 of the 84 votes. There was one write-in and one blank ballot. Mr. Jesmer won 72 of 84 votes with nine blank ballots and three write-ins.

Shelia Martin is the delinquent tax collector with 78 of the 84 votes. Six ballots were blank.

The number of people voting and attending town meetings has noticeably gone down, Ms. Atwood said.

Signatures from 5 percent of the checklist are required to get onto the appropriations list. That amounts to 87 votes, more than the number of people who actually voted, 84.

“That’s pathetic,” she said.

Neither the lister nor the first constable spots were filled. The select board will have to name a lister, and the first constable position will remain vacant, as it did last year, Ms. Atwood said.

This year she didn’t have to return to the office to deal with media requests. She usually gets five or six media requests. This year she got none.

the Chronicle's AMAZING PHOTOS!



Irene Perry of Newport was house sitting and heard the dog barking and came out to find these raccoon babies in the grass. She thinks the mother was close by but didn't see her.

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Lowell Town Meeting

All items pass at good natured meeting

by Natalie Hormilla

LOWELL — Townspeople passed all articles as written at this year's town and school meetings, though some only after lengthy discussion that sometimes involved nearly a dozen people at a time, and often with plenty of laughs.

School Director Steve Mason addressed the room just before the town voted on the school budget, which is up almost 7 percent from last year.

"Our spending is actually down by \$53,000," he said. "So if you read the article you'd say, why are we spending so much more?"

"We're not, we're spending less. So what's the discrepancy? It's revenue. Our revenue is down."

The revenue depends on many things, he said, including the town's pupil count.

"In 2011, our pupil count was 127 kids. This year, it's 111. Our revenue is based on the number of kids in the school. So if you have that reduction, you're going to get less money.

"This budget also includes a figure — and I can't tell you what that figure is because we're in negotiations — for a projected increase in teachers' salaries. But there's also an increase in health insurance, and I'm sure a number of you are experiencing this yourselves."

If you rank the 255 schools in Vermont by per pupil spending, Lowell is in the bottom quarter with an average of \$12,000, Mr. Mason said.

"Most towns would be very happy to have a per pupil spending like ours," he said. "Our board takes a great deal of pride that it is where it is."

Mr. Mason encouraged townspeople to attend the Lowell school graduation sometime.

"I think that you'll all find that it is absolutely worth it," he said.

Most people in the room applauded.

Gordon Spencer wondered if spending more money on the school would encourage Act 46 to go forward.

Mr. Mason then talked a bit about Act 46 — the school consolidation law currently moving

through Vermont — and why he thinks it wouldn't be a good solution for Lowell.

"It's pretty much impossible to see us consolidating schools," he said. "The two closest would be Irasburg and Troy. And they couldn't take us, and we couldn't take them."

Mr. Mason touched on different points as to why he thinks Act 46 would not benefit Lowell: The town wouldn't have its own meetings about the school budget, town representation at school board meetings would drop, and it would be harder to tell from the budgets where the town's money goes.

Townspeople approved the budget on a voice vote, with just a few nays.

Just before the school meeting portion of the morning ended, Lister Larry Chase moved for a vote of confidence for the school board, under nonbinding business.

"I think they've done a good job and they've put a heck of a lot of energy into it," he said. "I appreciate their work."

The room officially congratulated the school board on a job well done both through unanimous voice vote of Mr. Chase's words and through applause.

All officers were elected unanimously, as follows:

Selectman Dwight Richardson was re-elected to his position, for a term of three years; Lister Larry Chase was re-elected, for a term of three years; Chris Hagar was elected lister for a one-year term; Auditor Arlon Warner was re-elected to his position for a three-year term; Mandy Neilan was elected as first constable; and Darren Pion was elected second constable for a one-year term.

Townspeople did not pass up the opportunity for fun during the election process.

When the moderator called for the election of the town agent, someone yelled out, "What's the agent do?"

"Nothin'," said Mr. Warner.

Incumbent Town Agent Andre Tetreault Sr.

was there to elucidate the details of the position.

"All I've ever done as town agent is if any legal documents come to the town, like a suit, they get served to me, and I sign it and that's about it," he said.

"And we only get about a dozen of those," Mr. Warner said.

"So I haven't been very busy," Mr. Tetreault said.

He was unanimously re-elected for another one-year term.

The very next election to be called, for grand juror, was another held by Mr. Tetreault.

"Want to explain what the juror does, too?" Mr. Warner said to the laughing crowd.

"Not anything, no," Mr. Tetreault said.

He was unanimously re-elected again.

Gina Arel was re-elected to a five-year term as library trustee.

Also, Jason Blay and David Legacy were both elected as elementary school directors, for a two-year term and a three-year term, respectively. And Alden Warner was again elected as both school moderator and town moderator.

There was lengthy discussion ahead of voting on the money used for town expenses and liabilities.


"I see that last year we didn't use all the money we had in the budget," said Jeremy Cochran. "There was about \$2,500 left over. Can we take that off this year's budget?"

"Why?" asked Dotty Spoerl. "What would that do to our current budget?"

"It's only a budget. We anticipate that some expenses will go up," said Selectman Richard Pion. "If we don't spend all the money, it will still be there in the budget next year."

Through lengthy discussion, it became clear that most people thought the amount of money was too small to bother with worrying over. When it came time to vote on whether to reduce the selectmen's budget by \$2,500, the call was shot down by a majority voice.


(Continued on page twenty-one.)



















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Mines Road continues to be in rough shape

(Continued from page twenty.)

A question about the winter road budget also kicked off much discussion.

"If anyone's driven through the Mines Road lately, they know they have to go about ten miles per hour," Mr. Cochran said.

He wondered if the town could appropriate some of the winter road budget to specifically go toward working on the Mines Road.

"It's not up to the voters how the money is spent," the moderator said. "We can up the amount or decrease the amount."

"Can I ask the road commissioner?" said Mr. Cochran. "Do we need extra money to fix that road?"

"I know what you're talking about, but we spent a little over \$100,000 on the Mines Road this year," Road Commissioner Calvin Allen said. "We did the best we could."

If you price it out, it would cost half a million dollars to pave that road, Mr. Allen said.

There was much discussion before someone called attention back to the question on the floor — whether or not to approve the winter road budget.

That budget was approved unanimously, as were the budgets for the summer roads and the fire department.

At this point, many discussions were cropping up in the room.

"Do you reckon we could have a little more quiet in the back corner please?" the moderator said to the small group growing near the coffee and doughnuts.

There was much discussion about the proposal for the town to borrow \$150,000 to replace the fire department's 25-year-old tanker truck.

"We're not just looking for a new truck. As most of you know we're pretty clever with money."

"Can we sell the old one?" asked Brenda Wesolow.

"Yes," the moderator said. "Would you like to buy it?"

Talking over the laughter of the room, Ms. Wesolow responded, "Have you seen my yard? I don't need any more."

"The truck is a '92? And it's got 10,000 miles on it?" said Mr. Spencer. "Why can't you just fix it? What's wrong with it other than just being old?"

"It hasn't gotten a lot of use," the moderator said. "But it's a reliability issue being 25 years old."

The road commissioner said he hopes to get around \$10,000 out of the truck, if it goes through a bid process.

"But to answer your question," he said to Mr. Spencer, "We're not just looking for a new truck. As most of you know we're pretty clever with money."

For one thing, the 40,000-pound truck is difficult to drive, and also to stop.

"There's a liability issue," he said.

And it doesn't meet safety standards, he said.

Other townspeople had more questions: How will they know that anything they buy will be any more reliable than what they already have? Where will the money come from?

One man pointed out that keeping an old truck will affect the insurance rate.

In the end, the town voted unanimously to take out the loan for a new truck.

Money for the library also came under question.

"What do they use this money for?" one man asked.

"We use the money for books, supplies, and our salaries. That's it," said Librarian Regine Griswold.

(Continued on page twenty-two.)


HEY KIDS!



HERE'S SOMETHING JUST FOR YOU!

Instruments in a Marching Band

Marching bands can have many different instruments




Flute
 Piccolo
 Clarinet
 Trombone
 French Horn
 Sousaphone
 Trumpet/Bugle

Glockenspiel
 Bass Drum
 Tom Tom
 Snare Drum

THE STRING FAMILY

ELECTRIC GUITAR
 VIOLIN
 VIOLA
 CELLO
 HARP
 BANJO
 GUITAR
 DOUBLE BASS

WORLD FACT!



THIS MUSICAL INSTRUMENT IS A SYMBOL OF IRELAND.

ANSWER: HARP

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Piano

SPANISH: Piano

ITALIAN: Piano

FRENCH: Piano


GERMAN: Klavier

Did you know?

MUSIC ENGAGES AREAS OF THE BRAIN INVOLVED WITH CONCENTRATION AND MAKING PREDICTIONS.



GET THE PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: VIOLIN

Chronicle CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11			12		13		14		
15					16		17		
	18			19	20		21		
			22	23			24		
25	26	27	28	29					
30						31			
32							33	34	35
			38	39	40		41	42	
			43			44			
	45	46	47						
48				49			50	51	52
55				56			57		58
59				60			61		
62				63			64		

CLUES ACROSS

1. Fall down	32. Beloved Cubs third baseman Ron
5. Walmart founder Walton	33. Shapes
8. Los Angeles time zone	38. Giants signal caller Manning
11. Gallantry	41. Moves all the way around
13. Early Supreme Court justice Bartlett	43. Babe Ruth retired as one
14. One-time governor of MD	45. Relinquishing
15. Act of imitating	48. Native religion in China
16. Popular basketballer Jeremy	49. Not well
17. Round Dutch cheese	50. Fill with high spirits
18. S. American rodents	55. In bed
20. Comic opera "Princess ___"	56. Type of pet
21. Commodities buyers and sellers (slang)	57. Somewhere to go
22. Hovers	59. Smaller quantity
25. Having had one's head cut off	60. Ingested
30. One-time monetary unit of Greece	61. Singer and Jacobs are two
31. Not no	62. Anger
	63. British rockers ___ Zeppelin
	64. Like

CLUES DOWN

1. Polyvinyl acetate	35. Serbian mythological demon
2. Canadian folk musician	36. Bulgarian currency
3. Evergreen trees and shrubs	37. Midway between south and southeast
4. Meat from a pig (French)	39. Makes sense
5. Secretion	40. A way to single out
6. Quality of yielding nothing of value	41. Criminal (slang)
7. Aquatic mammal	42. Former Tigers third baseman Brandon
8. Father	44. Wobbled
9. Protective crusts	45. Singapore's second highest peak
10. Caps	46. Grossly overweight
12. Handwoven rug	47. Radioactivity units
14. Soil-like material	48. Famed Spanish painter
19. Not wide	51. Internet router algorithm
23. When you aim to get there	52. Expression of sorrow or pity
24. Hold molecules	53. Druidic mother goddess
25. Tooth caregiver	54. Electronic counter-countermeasures
26. Amount of time	58. Midway between east and southeast
27. Beverage container	
28. Perform	
29. Appollo's grandmother	
34. Obsolete home-ent. device	

Voters ask for details on appropriation requests

(Continued from page twenty-one.)

The same man wanted to know if anyone keeps track of who uses the library, and why the town has both the library in the school and the public library.

“One is a town library open to everyone in the community, and one is for schoolchildren,” said Amy Olsen.

The \$6,000 library budget was eventually approved.

The budgets for the Little League, T-ball, and Jr. Hoops basketball teams were all unanimously approved with no discussion.

The \$3,500 appropriation for the Orleans Essex VNA and Hospice garnered much discussion.

The VNA had a \$400,000 profit in 2015, according to the website Guidestar, said Trish Pion.

“Where did that money go?” she said. “Is it still available?”

Ms. Pion also wanted to hear more details about the VNA’s services to the people of Lowell.

Karla Lillicrap, who is a human resources director for the VNA, was able to answer some of the questions.

Though she did not have any financial information about the VNA, she did give details about what the health agency did for Lowell in the last year: 29 people received services, six participated in wellness clinics, there were 625 visits in Lowell last year, and the total free care provided in 2016, among 24 communities, amounted to \$269,063, she said.

“I think before we approve \$3,500 towards the hospice service, it would be nice to know, again, where the \$400,000 went,” Ms. Pion said. “If a nonprofit has a profit of \$400,000, then I don’t think they should be asking for \$3,500 from the town.”

Several townspeople spoke in defense of the value of the VNA’s services. The appropriation was eventually approved.

The long list of appropriations near the end of the warning also came under scrutiny.

“I see on here that the animal shelter is getting more than the child abuse,” said Sarah Cochran, in reference to the proposed \$500

appropriation to the Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter, and the proposed \$200 appropriation to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont.

“I love my children more than my animals,” Ms. Pion said. “I’d like to put in a motion to switch the amounts for the animal shelter and child abuse.”

This motion kicked off much discussion.

“I’d like to make a note that we appropriate what we’re asked for,” said Pam Tetreault. “So if Child Abuse wanted \$500, they would have asked for it.”

“The last two years, I had to track them down to make sure they had something coming in, the day before this went to print,” said Town Clerk Sandy LaDeau, in reference to the Town Report. “They are so hard to get a hold of. And, again, I validate what Pam said — that’s what they requested.”

Someone said to the crowd that the animal shelter provides services to people when the town constables can’t, and that each appropriation should be judged on its own merit, not whether kids need more than dogs or cats.

“What if we took a couple hundred off the RCT budget?” said Taylor Wesolow. “Because I can’t catch a bus to work.”

This suggestion spurred some grumbles and at least one loud “no” from the room.

“If you take \$200 from RCT, that brings that down to \$500, and you could give that to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, and then we can just forget about the animal shelter — leave it where it is,” Taylor Wesolow said.

“I don’t personally think we should take money from RCT,” said Selectman Richard Pion. “They don’t have bus service but they provide transportation for people who are going to doctors’ offices, and a lot of things for elderly people and people who have no means to transportation. I would be opposed to taking money from those.”

Taylor Wesolow’s motion was not seconded.

“Then that is out,” the moderator said.

At this point, there was some confusion about what exactly people were to vote on.

“Right now, the motion on the floor is to swap the amounts from N and O,” the moderator said,

in reference to the motion to switch the proposed amounts for the animal shelter and Prevent Child Abuse Vermont. “Is there any more discussion or amendments to that?”

One woman addressed the room to say that Prevent Child Abuse Vermont provides education to people about child abuse, like classes and pamphlets; not that it offers protective services.

“I don’t think this is what people think it is,” she said.

“What we have is agencies who have requested support,” said Camellia Morrison. “When we begin to switch or swap, we’re not actually following procedures.”

Ms. Morrison’s words were shortly followed by what sounded like a unanimous nay to switch the appropriations.

Another appropriation kicked off much talk.

“I make a motion to remove L, the \$500 to Orleans County Citizen Advocacy,” said Mr. Cochran. “According to the little report in the back here, they don’t really do a whole lot that I can see.”

This motion was quickly seconded but spurred more discussion.

“Microphone, please,” said Mr. Chase from the second row. “It bothers me that we would be making motions to change numbers on agencies that we’re really not familiar with. I appreciate the fact that you’ve read the article in the back and you feel they don’t offer that much service, but I’m still concerned that there may be individuals in the community who are dependent on these agencies.

“We’re not talking a whole lot of money here.”

This vote was also shot down.

In the end, all appropriations were approved as written.

The moderator asked the crowd if they had anything to discuss under non-binding business.

“Like do you want to move the school a half an inch to the left?”

The room laughed.

A few townspeople took the opportunity to speak well of groups like the fire department and emergency services.

Brownington Town Meeting

Falconer elected to select board

by Eileen Wolfe

BROWNINGTON — Maybe Town Meetings are like apple trees: Years vary between bumper crops and lull years.

Brownington’s 2016 Town Meeting yielded a bumper crop of controversy, but 2017’s Town Meeting, including the school district meeting, was very quiet in comparison.

On the town side, the only article eliciting much attention was the election of a selectman, as Paul Raybold declined to run again. Three nominations were received: Larry Faust, Darcy Libby, and Bill Falconer. An initial ballot was inconclusive, necessitating a second ballot, which whittled the field to two: Larry Faust and Bill Falconer. A third and final ballot elected Bill Falconer, who had expressed his desire to be a set of fresh eyes on the select board, by a narrow margin of 36 to 34.

Even special appropriations, often a contentious area, were mostly passed unanimously or by majority vote. Only one appropriation, for the Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter, was denied, and only the appropriation dealing with Sheriff’s Department services generated much discussion. This article (for \$12,698) passed with a slim majority of 32 to 30.

All other town articles were dealt with peaceably and speedily. The following were elected: Pat Davis as moderator; Valerie Fault as town clerk, treasurer, and delinquent tax collector; David Chase as lister; Scott Nichols as cemetery commissioner; Adam Brunelle as first

constable; Geoff Falconer as second constable; and Debbie Brunelle as auditor. The following planning commissioners were also elected: Liz Butterfield (one year), Brandy Robillard (two years), Roger Patenaude, Bill Davis, and Mike Glodgett (all for three years).

Town reports were accepted with minor corrections. Town and highway budgets were approved with no significant discussion, and all other special appropriations were passed as follows: RCT (\$1,414), Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging (\$600), Orleans Essex Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice (\$2,500), Jones Memorial Library (\$1,000), Orleans County Citizen Advocacy (\$500), Northeastern Vermont Development Association (\$741), SymphonyKids (\$100), Orleans County Court Diversion (\$200), Northeast Kingdom Human Services (\$954), Green Mountain Farm-to-School (\$300), and Umbrella (\$700).

The town, having received an informational report from Orleans County Historical Society Director Peggy Day Gibson earlier in the meeting, approved a request to exempt the former Grange Hall (now known again as the Grammar School) from taxation for ten years.

Following a short question and answer session regarding the plan for reclaiming the Center Road from the clutches of the Willoughby River, the meeting adjourned to allow the citizenry time for the usual delicious lunch provided by the Brownington Parents Club.

The school district meeting opened after lunch and proceeded nearly as quietly as the

town meeting had.

Elections yielded Pat Davis as moderator, David Martinez as school director for three years, Jeremy Haney as school director for one year, and Pat Davis as Lake Region Union High School director.

Voters were amenable to all articles, including appropriating \$10,000 to the capital reserve fund and slightly increasing the stipend paid to compensate school directors for time spent in related committees.

The school budget itself generated mild discussion. Questions asked included details of a breakdown in the school heating system this past year (Principal Larry Fliegelman reported that the school custodian competently handled the breakdown and that the majority of the school closure time was in waiting a day for the specialized replacement parts to arrive). Another question was about why Brownington doesn’t participate in the Burke downhill skiing program (these funds were reallocated by the board for increased time for students with the guidance counselor, which they felt was a higher priority due to issues such as bullying). And voters wanted to know what, if any, control the local school board has over how many special education support staff must be hired (very little).

Once these questions were settled to the satisfaction of the majority of voters, the school budget was easily passed, and the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

We all love apples, but perhaps we’d be happy with another lull year in 2018?

Morgan Town Meeting

Monday night meeting sets a speed record

by Elizabeth Trail

MORGAN — It had to be a record, one man said as he put on his coat on Monday night to leave the Morgan Town Meeting.

Start to finish, the whole thing took about 56 minutes, a number only slightly bigger than the number of people who attended, which rose to 54 when a couple of latecomers walked in the door a little after the 6 p.m. start.

Last year, 52 people attended. The year before, only 40 showed up.

“We’re holding our own,” said longtime moderator Charles Woods.

But, Mr. Woods said a little wistfully, he would sure like it if people could think of something that would get more participation.

A single candidate was nominated from the floor for each vacant position, and elected by a single ballot.

There was nothing controversial on the warning, and very little discussion.

Every article that was voted on Monday night passed unanimously.

But on Tuesday, voters went to the polls to approve four articles by Australian ballot.

“We vote all of the budgets tomorrow,” Mr. Woods told voters on Monday night. “But we can talk about them now. It’s a chance to ask your questions or share what you’re thinking.”

There weren’t any questions about the North Country budgets.

Morgan voters approved a school budget of \$438,200, down from the current year’s budget of \$554,000.

Per-pupil spending for Morgan students, who are all tuitioned out, will drop to \$12,601 per equalized pupil, almost 3 percent lower than the current year, despite a drop in the town’s number of elementary age students.

When a town has its own school, a drop in the town’s number of elementary age students usually raises the per-pupil spending number because schools still have fixed costs to cover.

But when a town pays tuition for its students like Morgan does, a drop in enrollment can mean lower costs for taxpayers.

“We’re going to graduate an unusually large sixth-grade class, and we don’t have a lot of kindergarten students coming in,” said Tammy LaCourse, one of the school directors.

But the number of pupils can change, so the voters agreed to transfer \$77,000 left over from the 2016 fiscal year to the tuition reserve fund.

The other thing that lowered per-pupil spending for the coming year is that the school board has entered a contract with the Derby School District for bus service, Ms. LaCourse said, saving a considerable amount of money over having the town run its own buses.

Act 46, and the possibility of the schools currently making up the North Country Supervisory Union eventually being required to consolidate into a single school district, was worrying a few people during a brief open discussion under “other business.”

Voters were encouraged to take a copy of the North Country Supervisory Union’s Act 46 survey and informational material that had been put out on a table by the door.

Surveys can also be downloaded from the NCSUVT.org web site. They need to be mailed in or handed in at a local school by March 10.

Mr. Woods was worried that there might not be enough copies to go around because only 50 had been printed.

But as the crowd thinned at the end of the meeting, it was obvious that most people in Morgan hadn’t picked one up, despite urging from the podium.

The new solar energy field came up briefly, as a resident observed that the panels are clearly visible from the lake despite assurances from developer David Blittersdorf that they wouldn’t be.

“I’m not complaining,” the woman said. “We have to have renewable energy. I just want to note that a statement was made that wasn’t true.”

“Governor Phil Scott said he’d declare a moratorium on wind,” select board Chair Larry Labor said after a brief discussion of the solar field, which was the topic of several heated special town meetings last year. “He hasn’t said anything about solar.”

The town budgeted \$10,000 this year for possible legal responses to further renewable energy projects.

In the meantime, the town made a 40-page filing with the Public Service Board, Mr. Labor said, and so far it hasn’t gotten an answer.

“The PSB owes us a response,” he said.

But he doesn’t expect anything soon. Chairman Paul Volz retired recently, and it’s up to Governor Scott to appoint a new chair.

In the meantime, the town needs to designate locations where it would allow solar development, a resident said.

“The state is encouraging towns in the future to put solar fields in closed landfills and gravel pits,” Mr. Labor said.

What is the process? several people asked.

It’s part of developing a town plan, Mr. Labor said, which is going to be required soon.

Trash — specifically trash bags — turned out to be one of the rare controversies of the evening.

Morgan residents have to put their trash out in special bags imprinted with “Town of Morgan.”

The bags are an awkward way to handle the town’s trash needs, several people said.

Morgan already has one of the highest rates of personal recycling in the state, so why should town residents have to buy bags that were in and of themselves questionably recyclable? several people asked.

“We’re being penalized for our success,” one resident said.

People also didn’t understand why towns within the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District (NEKWMD) seemed to handle their trash differently.

“If it’s not across the board,” one man said, “it’s not right.”

That thought seemed to resonate in the room.

“The same things that you’re talking about are the same things that came out of our mouths when we were talking to the state,” Selectman Robert Guyer said.

“Can’t we appeal to the state on the bags?” another person asked.

Representative Lynn Batchelor of Derby, standing at the back of the room after giving a brief speech earlier in the meeting, volunteered to find out what she could about the reasoning behind requiring the imprinted bags, and what other options the town might have.

The good news for Morgan taxpayers was that switching from tax-based trash pickup to paying by the bag has lowered the local tax rate by about three cents.

Pickup for a bag of trash costs \$2.50.

Voters approved \$12,228 to the Orleans County Sheriff’s Department for law enforcement services.

And they appropriated \$9,136 for a list of civic organizations.

Results of voting for town offices were:

Charles Woods was elected to serve as moderator for the ensuing year for the town and for the school.

Tammylee Morin was re-elected to a three-year term as town clerk and treasurer.

Sean Selby was elected town school treasurer.

Tom Bonneville was re-elected to a three-year term as selectman. Also serving on the board for the upcoming year are Chair Larry Labor and Robert Guyer.

North Country School Director Kristin Mason did not want to run for another term. She’s looking for a way to serve that doesn’t conflict with her business, she told the voters.

She had talked to Joe Boykin, and he was willing to be elected to take her place. There being no other nominees from the floor, Mr. Boykin was elected unanimously.

Tammy LaCourse was re-elected as school director.

Diane Moore was re-elected to a three-year term as lister.

The town elected Shawn Austin to another three-year term as road commissioner.

First constable will again be Robert Cain. Rick Pare was re-elected as second constable.

James Judd will serve another one-year term as delinquent tax collector

Cyrus Benson and Jane Malgeri were re-elected as grand jurors, also one-year positions.

Jane Malgeri was also re-elected town agent.

Bob Cargill was re-elected to a five-year term as a cemetery commissioner.

And the Community House Committee was voted on as a slate. It consists of Jane Malgeri as chair, Robert Cain as treasurer, and Lauri Cani, Ruby Jenness, Deanna Keenan, Rick Pare, and Tammy Pare.

Desrochers wins race on home turf



Newport native Rene Desrochers sped past the competition to win AI’s Snowmobile masters class when the Rock Maple Racing circuit hosted races at Young Farms in West Glover on the weekend of February 18 and 19. The masters class is for racers 50 and older. Mr. Desrochers also finished second to Todd Smith of Derry, New Hampshire, in the over-40 race. “It went well,” said Mr. Desrochers. “There were lots of racers and lots of snow.”

Photo courtesy of Rock Maple Racing

Newport Center Town Meeting Australian ballot article causes snag

by Joseph Gresser

NEWPORT CENTER — Voters here were moving smoothly through Tuesday evening’s annual meeting when they hit a jarring snag just before arriving at the final articles of the warning.

Moderator Glenn Foster, elected in place of vacationing Richard Tetreault, steered the meeting ably.

Most town officers were reelected, but David Ghelli decided to end his time on the North Country Union High School Board. He was applauded for his service to the town, and Dwight Brunnette was chosen to take his seat.

Voters quickly approved the town’s \$2.6-million school budget as well as \$240,000 for the general fund, and \$710,000 for roads and equipment.

Although there was some minor discussion about a few appropriations, all passed easily.

It was only when voters came to the article asking if the town wanted to start voting by Australian ballot next year for town officers and budgets, that the meeting headed off the tracks.

The article had been warned in response to a petition circulated by town resident Barry Sahagian. Mr. Sahagian vehemently objected to the form in which it was presented to voters.

He insisted that his intention had been to create a hybrid system in which voters could cast ballots or participate in a floor meeting as they wished.

Selectman Steve Barrup explained that the select board consulted with the town’s lawyer before putting the article before voters and were informed that it would not pass legal scrutiny.

Mr. Sahagian was having none of that. Displaying a piece of paper he said came from the Secretary of State, he said many towns had adopted such a system.

“If you pay the lawyer \$400, he’ll say whatever you want him to,” Mr. Sahagian declared.

He moved an amendment to the selectmen’s version of the article that would have returned it to his original language.

Much of the discussion around Mr. Sahagian’s

motion centered around how it would work.

Many voters said they thought it would be confusing, especially if some people voted for an article that was changed at the floor meeting. Others wondered if the system might make it possible for residents to vote more than once.

Mr. Sahagian valiantly defended his idea, but his amendment was defeated.

Town resident Ernie Choquette then took up the cause of the Australian ballot. Looking around the room, he said that changing Town Meeting from the daytime to an evening gathering no longer brought in crowds.

Mr. Choquette said he thought more people would participate in town business if they could cast ballots anytime during the day.

Steve Roberts said he would prefer if Town Meeting was better attended, but said “most people who are not here are at home watching television or playing with their computers.”

“If they’re too lazy to be here,” he continued, “they’re too lazy to inform themselves about the issues.”

Mr. Brunnette opined, “If a huge swell of people wanted to vote by Australian ballot they would be here to vote for it.”

Someone asked how many people cast ballots during the day on the North Country Union High School budget. Town Clerk Denise Daigle said there were a total of 113 votes cast and 88 voters present at the meeting.

Paul Duquette suggested that the Australian ballot would only make more work for the select board, which would have to appoint people for positions left unfilled when no one sought an advance nomination.

School Director Jillian Raymond said she finds it useful to be able to amend or change a budget item or to ask a question.

“With the Australian ballot you lose the ability to change things, you can only vote yes or no,” Ms. Raymond said.

In the end 58 voters opposed the proposed change, while only 14 favored moving to the Australian ballot.

North Country school budget questions

Town	NCUHS budget		Jr. High budget	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Derby	266	203	272	199
Holland	75	36	75	36
Jay	36	13	35	14
Morgan				
Newport City	275	276	285	266
Brighton	78	37		
Charleston	44	18		
Lowell				
Newport Town	55	57		
Troy	61	39		
Westfield	54	24		
TOTAL	944	703	667	515

Fred’s Charity Challenge raises \$6,000



This past holiday season, Fred’s Energy initiated a Charity Challenge. Fred’s Energy matched every donation received, dollar for dollar. In total, \$6,000 was raised and distributed equally to five local charities: Lamoille Community Food Share, United Church of Newport, Northeast Kingdom Youth Services (NEKYS), Helping Other People Everyday (H.O.P.E.), and Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA). The charities were highlighted throughout the challenge for their incredible community service. Pictured, from left to right, are: Dennis Percy, general manager, Fred’s Energy; Joan Greene, president, board of directors, Lamoille Community Food Share; James Merriam, pastor, United Church of Newport; Martha Hill, community relations/development Manager, NEKYS; Dave Keenan, board member, H.O.P.E.; and Stephanie Bowen, programs director, NEKCA.

Photo courtesy of Fred’s Energy

Jay Peak Resort makes top five list

Jay Peak Resort has made the top ten list of a major ski industry website. Voters at Liftopia, which operates the largest consumer marketplace for ski lift tickets and other mountain activities, recently ranked Jay as the fifth best resort in the country overall.

Voters in Liftopia’s 2016-17 Best in Snow Awards specifically touted Jay Peak Resort’s “tremendous amount of back country” with “New England-style skiing at its best including tight, twisty runs and challenging glade skiing that is far enough from the coast and gets tons of snow.”

“We’re proud of the one-of-a-kind ski and snowboard amenities we provide here at Jay Peak Resort,” said Steve Olson, CEO of Leisure Hotels and Resorts, the management team appointed by a federal court receiver to run Jay Peak Resort during the property’s transition period. “Our management and operation team continues to work hard and smart to ensure we deliver an elite top-to-bottom ski experience.”

The Best in Snow Awards, is the first and only list that ranks the best ski areas in North America based on feedback from thousands of skiers and snowboarders based on categories like family friendliness, terrain, crowds, and snow consistency and quality, among other criteria.

Liftopia received more than 10,000 survey responses. — from Leisure Hotels and Resorts.

Border rally supports humane immigration policy

by Joseph Gresser

DERBY LINE — A little before 1 p.m. Saturday a well bundled group of people stood in Baxter Park here, about 150 yards from the Canadian border. Some held signs saying “No Muslim Ban,” “Respect Everybody,” “We Are (Almost All) Immigrants, and “Civility Respect Kindness.”

There were no bystanders and not many passing motorists to hear the group chant “No hate, no fear, refugees are welcome here,” but one man pulled his pickup over and gleefully informed the demonstrators that Donald Trump is now President of the United States.

After a little while the group walked up the street to the First Universalist Parish of Derby Line, where they were joined by late arrivals and some less hardy souls gathering to protest the Trump administration’s immigration policies.

Between 80 and 100 folks squeezed into the church hall for a short program of speeches, songs, and performances by the Bread and Puppet Theater of Glover.

The theater’s band warmed up the crowd with a song before organizer Aimee Alexander introduced featured speaker Susan-Lynn Johns, formerly the minister of the Derby Line church, who currently is associated with a congregation in St. Johnsbury.

Ms. Johns began by reading the opening words from Charles Dickens’s novel *A Tale of Two Cities*.

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,” she read, comparing the times described by Dickens to the present day.

“Donald Trump has provided us with a golden opportunity to live out our values through peaceful protest and political activism,” Ms. Johns continued. She accused the President of creating a “campaign of hate, fear, and misinformation,” and said those in the hall had gathered to “stand in solidarity with immigrants and refugees” who, she said, “are currently being hunted down with a certain mad abandon.”

Ms. Johns said Canada has set an example the U.S. would do well to follow. She quoted a recent Tweet from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who wrote “To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength.”

The American people have a long history of vilifying the most recent arrivals to the country, Ms. Johns said, citing prejudice against the Chinese, Irish, Italians, Japanese, African Americans, Jews, and Catholics that predated the government’s recent measures to restrict immigration from majority Muslim countries.

Ms. Johns concluded by urging her listeners to speak the truth and support those who cannot speak for themselves.

“We have the power to turn this winter of despair into a spring of hope,” she assured them.

Miriam Hansen, a member of Rights and Democracy, which organized the event with NEK Indivisible, was next at the podium.

She recalled being a young child during the Cold War and being removed from a school she very much loved attending after her mother was warned by U.S. officials that she would not be allowed to visit her brother in New York City if she continued to attend the “communist” school.

Ms. Hansen told of a doctor, a Canadian citizen of Afghan origin who was informed that his Nexus card, which allowed him to travel to the U.S. easily, had been unexpectedly canceled.



Susan-Lynn Johns preaches a sermon to demonstrators who gathered in Derby Line to protest border restrictions. Ms. Johns, who was formerly the minister at the First Universalist Parish of Derby Line, took as her text the opening lines of Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities*. Photos by Joseph Gresser

When the doctor went to the U.S. border to inquire as to the reasons for the cancellation he was held without explanation for five hours.

He had gone on his lunch hour, Ms. Hansen said, and was not allowed to phone his office to let waiting patients know that he would not be able to see them.

Ms. Hansen said she had hoped to organize a demonstration on both sides of the border, but found her Canadian friends unwilling to risk potential consequences from U.S. border authorities.

She said the demonstration was called on the Vermont side of the border to allow people to “stand up for what is right, to support immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, and to stand up for refugees.”

After the group sang songs by Woody Guthrie and John Lennon and enjoyed a short performance by Bread and Puppet, most ventured out into the cold for a march to the border.

The group filed along the empty street past the U.S. Customs station in Derby Line and along Caswell Avenue to the Haskell library.

One lone Border Patrol agent watched from his cruiser as the group passed by. As they reached the Haskell, the agent smiled and waved at the group.

A few moments later four Royal Canadian Mounted Police cars pulled up, apparently to make sure the group didn’t cross into their country. The Border Patrol agent joined them a minute or two afterward.

The demonstrators stood near the border holding up signs, then walked back to their cars for the ride home.



Four members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and a U.S. Border Patrol agent stand on guard to prevent demonstrators from straying onto Canadian soil.

Farm business clinics offer financial guidance

In order to make profitable business decisions, farmers need to have a good handle on their finances, including a viable business plan and recordkeeping system.

Beginning March 14, University of Vermont (UVM) Extension farm business educators will offer individual consultations to provide help with updating financial records, developing a balance sheet or farm budget, marketing or strategic planning or answers to other business questions. The 90-minute sessions will be offered at 10 locations in the state, including on March 14 and

16 in Newport at the UVM Extension Office, 316 Main Street, Suite 101; and on March 16 and 17 in St. Johnsbury at the UVM Extension Office, 374 Emerson Falls Road.

Farmers are asked to register at www.regonline.com/march17clinics. The cost is \$25. Also visit the website for other dates and locations.

Sessions will focus on the financial planning needs of the individual farm and any farm business questions the farmer may have. Farmers should bring relevant business records

including recent bank statements, farm bookkeeping reports, their most recent IRS Schedule F tax form, loan documentation, and any farm notes used to track past production and yields. They also may bring a copy of their business plan or draft plan if they wish to use the time to discuss business planning.

Anyone who requires a disability-related accommodation to participate is asked to call Christi Sherlock, toll-free at (866) 860-1382, two weeks prior to the scheduled session. — from UVM Extension.

Four generations attend Westfield Town Meeting

(Continued from page one.)

Prue was voted in with no opposition.

Janellen Parker-Goodwin is filling a position formerly held by Kristi Pillsbury. Ms. Parker-Goodwin was voted in, no opposition.

North Country School Board member Shawn Baraw was appointed in 2016 to fill a position that has been vacant for several years. He was voted in with no opposition.

The Jay-Westfield budget passed with an easy margin of 49 yes and 8 no. This vote was followed by article 7 which seemed to be very confusing to the voters. After many questions were answered by the school board members and Kristi Ellis, principal of the Jay-Westfield School, and with the explanation that an additional \$235,587 would be raised to cover special services access, the vote was brought to the floor.

The board also explained that this article is now centralized at the district level and paid to each town on a percentage. The article passed on a voice vote from the floor.

Currently Westfield does not belong to the North Country Supervisory Union, which means for Westfield taxpayers that all seventh- and eighth-grade students are tuitioned to North Country Union Junior High in Derby, or a junior high school of their choice that will accept them.

Act 46 was also on the warning. There was a handout and a survey that the board asked voters to please fill out and return to the board or to the school.



Four generations of Westfield residents attended Town Meeting Tuesday. Pictured, from left to right, are Hilda Daigle, her daughter Kelli Dean, her granddaughter (and Ms. Dean's niece) Lara Starr, and great-grandson, six-month-old Maverick Belisle. Photo by LaDonna Dunn

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tax collector, and lister were all uncontested.

For the office of selectman, Richard Degre was up for re-election. Ann Lazor was nominated to run against him. The first vote came up a tie with 27 to 27.

A second vote was held. The result of this was Mr. Degre, 25, Ms. Lazor, 28.

Mr. Degre has served the town for the last 35 years. Selectman Jacques Couture thanked him for his years of service and always being willing to help, and welcomed Ann Lazor aboard.

The appropriation requests were many. All but one passed. There was a request for \$500 from Big Heavy World, a Burlington-based non-profit that promotes Vermont music. This was zero funded.

The ambulance, fire department and Sheriff's Department were the largest requests. All of these passed with no questions and no discussions.

And so ends another year of tradition in the town of Westfield. There were many new faces that are now new friends.

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The Outside Story

Foxes are active in late winter

by Meghan McCarthy McPhaul

The first time I saw the fox last February, I did a double take. It was late morning when I glanced out the window on my way from one task to the next. The unexpected flash of red made me stop and forget about the morning's to-do list.

I watched for several minutes as the fox trotted around boulders and past old apple trees. Every now and then it paused and cocked its head before continuing on a meandering path through the stubby field. This would be the first of many sightings over the next several weeks.

Last February's fox was likely seeking either a mate or lunch. When many other animals are hunkered down against the cold this time of year, both red and gray foxes are on the move.

"Both species experience an increase in activity, both diurnal and nocturnal, and an increase in home range size during the winter months," said Chris Bernier, furbearer project leader for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. He attributed this increase to changes in prey availability, as well as breeding activities.

Foxes may venture close to human habitations in winter, because food is scarce, and rodents tend to congregate in our barns, fields and underneath the bird feeders. And because voles, a main winter prey animal for foxes, are active during day and night, foxes hunt them whenever they have the opportunity. They use their keen hearing to locate the rodents moving beneath the snow before pouncing through the powder or frozen crust.

Red foxes often appear in open fields, like the one where I spotted the fox last winter. Gray foxes are more prevalent in areas where forests and fields meet in brushy edges. We have both types of habitat around our home and have captured both species on the game camera.

The most common evidence of foxes is in the

multitude of tracks we find in the snow, crisscrossing the fields and the paths through the woods. My puppy follows these tracks, stopping every few yards to stick her nose into the cold white.

What she garners from those sniffs, I've no idea. But foxes — both red and gray — are leaving plenty of scent communications this time of year. Red foxes mate from late January into February, while gray fox mating activity peaks



about a month later. In common with many other animals, scent marking increases exponentially when foxes are looking for love.

If you've ever noticed a skunky smell during outings through field or forest this time of year, chances are you're getting a whiff of red fox urine, left at some strategic location to announce territorial boundaries and breeding potential to other foxes. Gray foxes, Mr. Bernier said, also mark, but without a noticeably skunky scent.

"Both species mark on rocks, stumps, or any other prominent object. Red foxes, and to a lesser extent gray foxes, typically mark on such objects along trails and forested edges," explained Mr. Bernier. "Marking is believed to be more frequent in the weeks leading up to and through the breeding season."

That explains why I often catch that skunky aroma during my woods walks this time of year. Both male and female foxes leave scent communication via urine, and Mr. Bernier said an observant tracker can discern the sex of the marker by examining tracks: a squat indicates a female, a spray indicates a male.

While foxes are not strictly monogamous, breeding pairs do generally stay together after mating, through the birth of kits (there are five or six in a typical litter) in late March or April, until late summer, when the family unit disperses.

A male fox will hunt and deliver food to his mate once she has whelped, and after the kits are weaned, will bring food for the whole family until the kits are able to leave the den and learn to hunt on their own.

That may explain the frequency with which we noticed the reappearance of our neighborhood red fox in early April last year, when we spotted him sauntering through the field several times in one week. Perhaps he had many hungry mouths to feed, hidden away in a den not far from our home.

I haven't seen any foxes yet this winter. But their tracks are there, traversing the front yard, the back orchard, and the wide woods trail. And lately I've been catching that signature skunky whiff that means fox love is in the air. I'm keeping a lookout, hoping I'm lucky enough again to see a flash of red moving through the snowy field.

Meghan McCarthy McPhaul is an author and freelance writer. She lives in Franconia, New Hampshire. The illustration for this column was drawn by Adelaide Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine: northernwoodlands.org, and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: wellborn@nhcf.org

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INDUSTRIAL PARK LANE
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Hoops teams enter post-season with winning marks

by Brad Usatch

It's the first Tuesday in March, and in Vermont that can only mean one thing, maybe two if you count Town Meeting Day.

It's playoff time. Three months of high school winter sports are now being funnelled into a few intense weeks of bracket play and broken dreams. In basketball, all the local boys' teams were knocked out by round two of the playoffs, but for the girls' teams the post season is just getting started. Off the court, the North Country boys hockey team is on the cusp of achieving greatness, and the girls Nordic team has already solidified its position as the top team in the state.

On the eve of the opening round in girls basketball, all three Orleans County teams have finished their respective seasons with winning records, and each has earned at least one home playoff game.

Lake Region sprinted past Bellows Falls 62-38 in its opening round contest on Tuesday night.

The Rangers went 13-7 in the regular season to earn the eighth seed in Division II. They started the year with a dismal 2-6 record, but then rattled off 11 wins in the next 12 games.

By winning on Tuesday, the Rangers now have the honor of taking on top-ranked Mill River (17-4) on its home court on Friday at 7 p.m. Mill River eliminated Springfield 66-44 on Tuesday.

Division I North Country and D-IV Craftsbury get underway on Wednesday, March 8.

In Newport, the Falcons ran up 14 wins against six losses this season, equaling their best record since 1996. That was also the last year the Falcons reached the final four. Seeded sixth in this year's tournament, they tip off at home against Number 11 South Burlington (11-9) on Wednesday at 7 p.m. The winner of that game will face either Mt. Anthony or Burlington on Saturday for a chance to play at UVM's Patrick Gymnasium in the semifinals.

Last year North Country finished 13-7, to earn its first home playoff game since 2005. The Falcons defeated Rutland in the opening round before losing at Burlington in the quarterfinal.

"The North Country girls basketball system and philosophy hasn't changed," said head coach Chritiane Brown. "As always, our defense fuels our offense. Our scrappy, tenacious, half-court man-to-man defense has kept us in all of our games."

On the offensive end, Ms. Brown said the Falcons are trying to play with purpose and make

each possession count. The team is led by forward Kylie Wright, averaging better than 17 points and seven rebounds per game, and point guard Carley Giroux with 13.3 points and five rebounds per game.

The Craftsbury Academy girls enter the playoffs seeded third in D-IV after running up a 16-4 regular season record. The Chargers will host fourteenth seeded Long Trail School (2-15) in the opening round on Wednesday at 7 p.m. Should they prevail, Craftsbury will play at home again on Saturday at 2 p.m. to take on the winner of the game between Proctor and Danville.

The 2017 season has not been so kind to Orleans County boys basketball. Division I North Country struggled mightily this year and failed to qualify for post-season play for the first time since 2013.

Division III Lake Region dropped a 55-53 squeaker in its quarterfinal game at Windsor on Saturday, ending a string of four straight trips to the final four for the Rangers. They trailed by eight after three quarters but came up one long ball short of another trip to Barre Auditorium.

The Rangers finished the regular season 13-7, and then defeated Thetford 74-67 in overtime on February 28 to advance to the quarterfinals. The team will lose seniors Trey Azur and Sam King to graduation but look to start next year with five seniors on the roster.

Just down the road, however, second-ranked Hazen Union (18-4) will be headed to Barre after they defeated Bellows Free Academy-Fairfax in Hardwick on Saturday, also in the D-III bracket. The Wildcats will face Number 3 Twin Valley on Thursday for a chance to play for the title on Saturday.

Ranked fifth in Division IV, the Craftsbury Academy boys' team (14-7) had its post-season hopes cut short by Richford (7-14) in a first-round matchup on February 28. The twelfth-ranked Rockets upset the Chargers 57 to 52 in overtime in Craftsbury Common.

North Country boys play for title

Alex Giroux scored three goals and Brady Perron added two to help the North Country boys' hockey team upend top-ranked Hartford 6-3 on Tuesday and earn its first shot at a championship since 2005.

The Falcons went 14-5 during the regular season to earn the number four seed in the Division II playoffs. In their quarterfinal match on March 4, goalie Dana Marsh notched a shutout to lead the Falcons past fifth-ranked Milton 2-0 at

the Jay Peak Ice House.

Coach Ryan Jacobs credits strong late season defense and the continued excellent play of Dana Marsh in net.

"Along with Dana, the defense and forwards have really stepped up their play in our third of the ice," Mr. Jacobs said. "This paired with some dangerous forwards — Brady Perron, Alex Giroux, Dawson Cote — has made us successful of late."

He said that beyond the big names, a number of players who don't get a lot of credit are playing exceptionally well. Heading into Tuesday's semifinal, Mr. Jacobs said the keys to the game would be to play very strong defensively, and to capitalize on any opportunities they are able to produce.

Puck drop for the championship game is at 6 p.m. at UVM's Gutterson Field House.

Ellis, Young pace NCU Nordic to state title

The North Country Union High School girls' Nordic ski team is celebrating back-to-back state championships behind the leadership of senior Avery Ellis and junior Callie Young.

Ellis won the state classic style Nordic championship at Rikert Nordic Center in Ripton on February 24 and then finished fourth at the freestyle race at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center on February 27. Young finished third in the 5-kilometer classic event that saw five North Country racers crack the top 20, with Ani Koontz-Miller in fifth, Claire Ellis, twelfth, and Loren Searles twentieth. The North Country team of Young, Ellis, Ellis, and Koontz-Miller also won the classic style four-by-2.5K relay by nearly a minute over runner up Mt. Mansfield Union (MMU).

St. Johnsbury Academy senior Alexandra Lawson beat out Callie Young for the individual freestyle title. But with Young in second, Avery Ellis finishing fourth, Koontz-Miller sixth, Searles fourteenth and Claire Ellis crossing the line twenty-first, out of 81 Division I finishers, the Falcons still locked up the best team score by a comfortable margin. The freestyle relay team of Young, Koontz-Miller, Searles, and Claire Ellis won its race by nearly two minutes over second place Champlain Valley Union (CVU).

In combined team scoring for both the classic and freestyle events, North Country topped CVU by a whopping 89-point margin, 71 points to 160. MMU finished third with 174.

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Trout Unlimited plans fly-fishing camp

Vermont Trout Unlimited will host its seventh fly-fishing camp for Vermont teens ages 13 to 16. Teens interested in either learning the art of fly fishing or improving their basic skill level alongside some of Vermont's most accomplished fly anglers are invited to apply. The 2017 camp is scheduled for Sunday, June 25, through Thursday, June 29, at Jackson's Lodge in Canaan.

Participants in the five-day, four-night comprehensive program will learn and practice casting, basic fly tying, knot craft, insect identification and imitation (entomology), fish identification and behavior (ichthyology), safe wading techniques, angling ethics, and coldwater conservation. Campers will hone their skills on local lakes, ponds, and streams, including the

Connecticut River.

Jackson's Lodge is located on Wallace Pond and is a short five-minute drive from the Connecticut River.

Prospective campers are encouraged to apply no later than April 15 to secure a spot for this year's program. The cost for the program is \$450. Scholarships may be available on an as-needed basis.

For complete information about the Trout Unlimited Fly Fishing Camp, an application form, and many videos of the camp, go to www.vermonttroutcamp.com, or e-mail Kurt Budliger, camp director, at vermonttroutcamp@gmail.com, or call him at (802) 223-4022. — from Vermont Fish and Wildlife.

Public hearings set for deer, moose

Hunters, landowners and anyone else interested in wildlife, especially deer and moose, should plan on attending one of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife public hearings in late March.

The hearings will include results of Vermont's 2016 deer and moose seasons and prospects for hunting next fall. There will also be an opportunity for people to provide their observations and opinions regarding deer and moose.

The hearings will also include a review of the proposed 2017 moose hunting season and an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the number of moose permits recommended for 2017.

The Northeast Kingdom meeting will be on Thursday, March 23 in Island Pond from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Brighton Town Hall, 49 Mill Street. — from the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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We will be holding a rabies clinic at the Newport City Fire Dept. Please bring any previous vaccination certificates. Other vaccines will be available.
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- Dogs must be on leashes
- Cats must be in carriers

Newport Veterinary Hospital
246 VT Route 105, Newport, VT
334-2655

Specializing in Compassionate, Quality Care
FULL-SERVICE CARE FOR YOUR PETS!!
Offering: Preventive Care, Diagnostic Medicine, Surgery, Dental Procedures, and Boarding
Consultations & Second Opinions Welcomed

HARDWICK

Veterinary Clinic

Andrea Gilbert, DVM

64 North Main
St. Hardwick, VT
802-472-8400 • www.hardwickvet.com

RABIES & DOG LICENSE CLINIC

The town of Derby is holding a special clinic for dog and cat rabies vaccinations and dog licenses. All Derby residents are urged to take advantage of this special offer.

Where: DERBY LINE FIRE STATION
ELM STREET, DERBY LINE
MARCH 18, 2017 • 9 AM TO 12 NOON

Rabies Vaccination: Dog or cat \$12 each
Other vaccinations available for \$17 per shot

Dog license fees:
Male or female dog \$16
Neutered or spayed \$12

For more information call 802-766-4906.

ANIMALS MUST BE IN CAGES OR ON LEASHES!
PLEASE BRING PREVIOUS YEAR VACCINATION RECORDS.

FILL YOUR FEEDERS!

Great Savings on Blue Seal® Ultra Clean™ Black Oil Sunflower

- For Most Songbird Species
- High Protein
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\$16⁹⁹
40-lb bag

THE FARMYARD STORE
3262 U.S. Rte. 5, Derby, VT (Across from the Derby Post Office.)
(802) 766-2714

Informational meetings blunt Diaz discussion

(Continued from page one.)

money is missing from town coffers.

There was not, however, much debate about Ms. Diaz, likely due to the multiple informational meetings that the select board opted to have prior to Town Meeting. Even though Ms. Diaz wasn't the main topic of conversation, there was plenty to discuss.

The first matter of business was to see if the town would give the select board the power to hire someone for the position of collector of delinquent taxes. That post has been voted on by town members and held by Ms. Diaz. Some of the concerns about her involve how delinquent taxes appear to have been handled since she has been in charge of them.

"I've been to most board meetings since moving here," said Dave Barlowe. "I've read the reports and a lot of issues in this town are because of the improprieties, alleged, of the delinquent tax collector. It's very important that this situation be straightened out right now, not 12 years from now. Let the board have the authority to hire someone who is highly qualified to fix this problem."

Other town members, however, were concerned about the timing of the situation.

"I don't think the select board should try to consolidate power by trying to appoint a tax collector in the middle of a civil action," resident Dan Introcaso said.

The town members decided to go to a paper ballot with the members ultimately voting to give the board the ability to hire the new collector of delinquent taxes with a vote of 120-22.

Town officials were then elected, with most staying the same. One surprise came when filling the position of trustee of public money. Ms. Diaz herself nominated Mr. Barlowe to fill the position, one that she was up for re-election for. Mr. Barlow also took over as trustee of cemetery funds, another position held by Ms. Diaz.

The meeting was adjourned in order to start a school board meeting to re-elect Amanda Jensen for a two-year term on the board and to replace Rosalie Bowen, who held a three-year term, with Jamie Stenger. Board member Frank Carbonneau then briefly discussed Act 46 (the Vermont act that would merge school districts into one board) and was questioned about a local rumor regarding the Coventry Village teachers.

The rumor, brought up by this reporter, was that the school board is going to allow the

children of teachers and staff who work at Coventry Village School, but who do not live in the town, to attend the school.

"If that happens, who pays for that child?" asked Chris Roy.

Mr. Carbonneau admitted that there was a petition about the subject and that, should this occur, it would be considered a perk for the teacher or staff member. He also confirmed that Coventry would absorb the cost of tuition for that child. A cost that, should the next few years be similar to this year, would be close to \$14,000 per pupil.

Town meeting was then restarted. Viola Poirier was very concerned about the amount the select board clerk was getting in comparison to the town clerk. The select board clerk was a position created by the select board when the controversy with Ms. Diaz started to gain momentum.

"The town clerk is a half-time position, about 19 hours a week. The select board clerk, which is now the town's administrator, is a 40-hour position," Selectman Scott Morley explained.

"Is this a one-year position?" Mrs. Poirier pushed.

"No," Mr. Morley replied.

After a round of applause for Road Commissioner Dave Gallup, who has been commended numerous years for his upkeep of the Coventry town roads, Ms. Diaz once again brought up the amount the select board clerk makes.

"I'd like the voters to realize that the select board clerk's salary is more than both our road commissioner and a full-time employee for the roads," she said. "They obviously do a great job on the roads and their salaries are less than someone in the office. I'd like that pointed out."

Ms. Diaz also made her voice heard when the town voted on an article that Mr. Morley said the auditor recommended they add to this year's meeting. The article said that the money the town had earmarked for specific categories was to

remain restricted for use within the designated categories. Ms. Diaz continued to bring up the equipment the board had leased and asked if the board was going to use the funds to pay off the lease, something the board agreed they were going to do.

This segued into a discussion about the high levels of arsenic that have been found in Coventry Town water when Jim Cobb questioned why the select board could allocate money to pay off the lease but not to fix the water problem.

"The trucks and equipment are part of the town," select board Chair Mike Marcotte said. "That's part of roads and bridges and that's part of the town. The fire district is not part of the town. That's its own entity separate from the town. We cannot give them any money. It's not part of the town."

Jean Desroches tried to explain that now that the fire district knew what was going on they were taking measures to rectify the problem.

"We have hired an engineering company that will help us assess the situation and provide removal of arsenic," she said. "We expect that to be occurring over the next 15 to 18 months."

She also stated that the school had installed a water system and was monitoring the level of arsenic, which was now below the maximum containment level, and that the water at Martha's Diner is being put through a water softener and filter.

Mr. Introcaso was the last to speak as he addressed the town about his concerns for Ms. Diaz's representation.

"I think the townspeople need to consider making sure that our clerk gets proper representation," he said. "That means an attorney, that doesn't mean she represents herself."

Ms. Diaz has currently chosen to represent herself during her court proceedings.

Late in the evening the call came in that the Coventry school budget passed with a vote of 105-57.

Breast density law takes effect

Getting your annual mammogram screening has been the key method for detecting breast cancer. 3D mammography, like that found at North Country Hospital (NCH) and many facilities around the country, has improved mammography's ability to detect breast cancers earlier, improving chances for survival.

A new Vermont law mandates that providers of mammography services notify patients of the status of their breast density. Although the law has just gone into effect, North Country Hospital began sending notices to patients since July of 2016.

Having dense breast tissue is no cause for alarm and in fact is very common. Approximately 40 to 50 percent of women are considered to have dense or intermediate density breast tissue.

"What the law requires mammography providers to do is notify patients of their breast density if judged high or intermediate so the patient can then discuss and decide with their

doctor if additional screening tests like ultrasound or MRI are appropriate," said NCH radiologist Dr. Steven Perlin.

Breast tissue is comprised of a combination of fatty tissue, fibrous tissue, and glandular tissue. A patient with a higher amount of fibrous tissue and glandular tissue would be considered to have "mammographically dense breast tissue." Dense breast tissue can make it more difficult for a radiologist to see a lesion or mass on a mammogram as it can be obscured by or blend in with the surrounding tissues.

The American College of Radiology recommends that women age 40 and over receive an annual mammogram screening regardless of breast density. Having dense breast tissue is not a diagnosis or disease. Notifying patients of their breast density status simply gives patients greater knowledge that they can use to make decisions regarding their own health. — from North Country Hospital.

NOTICE

TOWN OF ALBANY

The regular scheduled meeting of the Select Board for Tuesday, March 7, 2017, **will be changed to Thursday, March 9, 2017, at 7 p.m.**

Select Board
Town of Albany

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

Wednesday, March 8, 2017
6–8 p.m.

Westmore Community Hall
Westmore, Vermont

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation is holding a public scoping meeting to review and discuss plans for the South End Recreation Area within Willoughby State Forest. Plans may be viewed at the following web address: <https://tinyurl.com/SouthEndRecArea>. For more information, please contact the St. Johnsbury District FPR Office at 802-751-0110.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION UNDER THE VERMONT SELF-STORAGE FACILITY ACT

Notice is hereby given that

RED-E STORAGE LLC
564 Evansville Road
Evansville, VT 05860

will conduct sales of the contents located within the following storage spaces:

Ajalon Emerson	Unit #26
Bertode E. Mayberry	Unit #18
Megan Prue	Unit #23

Said sales will take place on March 18, 2017, beginning at 10 a.m.

Sale shall be by auction to the highest bidder. The contents of the entire storage unit will be sold as one lot. The winning bid must remove all the contents from the facility at no cost to Red-E Storage LLC on the day of auction. Red-E Storage LLC reserves the right to reject any bid lower than the amount owed by the occupant or any bid that is not commercially reasonable as defined by statute.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF 9 V.S.A. §3905.

CASH ONLY • ALL SALES FINAL

STATE OF VERMONT
DISTRICT OF ORLEANS, SS.
IN RE TRUST ESTATE OF
JOHN MALCOLM COLTON
f/b/o Lake Region Union High School Scholarship Fund

PROBATE COURT
DOCKET NO.: 4-12-91-OSPR

ORDER AND NOTICE OF HEARING BY PUBLICATION

TO INTERESTED PERSONS:

WHEREAS, the following Motion has been filed with the Orleans District Probate Court; Motion to Allow Accounts for the period January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the court has assigned the 30th day of March, 2017, at the Probate Court in Newport, Vermont, at 10 a.m., to hear said motion, and ordered that notice thereof be given by publishing this notice for two weeks successively in *the Chronicle*, a newspaper circulating in Orleans County. Service by publication to be complete at least 14 days prior to the day assigned for hearing;

THEREFORE, you are hereby notified to appear before said Court, at the time and place assigned, to make objections, if you have cause.

Dated at Newport, Vermont, this 27th day of February, 2017.

John P. Monette
Judge of Probate

Free workshop on mapping tools

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is holding a free workshop on using the recently updated online mapping tool, BioFinder, at the North Country Career Center in Newport on Wednesday, March 29, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The workshop is aimed at town planners and conservation commissioners, but all members of the public are encouraged to attend.

BioFinder is a mapping resource used to find the places in Vermont most important for maintaining biodiversity, even as the climate changes. It includes maps of Vermont's connected forests and waterways, locations of important ecological resources, and other information used for conservation and land use planning.

"BioFinder makes your work as a community leader easier by helping you identify hotspots of biological diversity in your area," said Jens Hilke of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. "Getting the right information is the first step in ensuring that these important natural resources are available for every generation of Vermonter."

By zooming in and out to different scales, BioFinder can help users see land or communities in a larger context. It is available for anyone to use online at BioFinder.vermont.gov.

"For people working in small towns, getting

quality information is really a challenge," said Liz Thompson of the Jericho Conservation Commission. "BioFinder brings all of the current information into one place that is so slick and easy to use."

Everyone is welcome, but since space is limited, pre-registration is required. E-mail Monica.przyperhart@vermont.gov to sign up or learn more. — from Vermont Fish and Wildlife.



STATE OF VERMONT
SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL DIVISION
ORLEANS UNIT DOCKET NO: 64-3-16 Oscv

BANK OF AMERICA, N.A.
Plaintiff

v.

CLIFFORD T. FERLAND;
DAWN FERLAND;
SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
C/O INFORMATION SYSTEMS & NETWORKS
CORPORATION;
EQUABLE ASCENT FINANCIAL, LLC;
LVNV FUNDING LLC;
OCCUPANTS RESIDING AT: 195 SAWMILL LANE
BROWNINGTON, VT 05860
Defendants

NOTICE OF SALE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Clifford T. Ferland and Dawn Ferland to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for GMAC Mortgage Corporation, its successors and/or assigns, dated April 16, 2003 and recorded in Book 41 at Page 412-419 of the Town of Brownington Land Records, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by Assignment of Mortgage recorded 59, Page 41, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at 4:00 a.m. on March 30, 2017 at 195 Sawmill Lane, Brownington, VT 05860 all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

To Wit:

Being all and the same land and premises conveyed to Clifford Ferland and Dawn Ferland by Warranty Deed of Syman Belmore and Lynn Marsh, of even or approximate date herewith and to be recorded in the Brownington Land Records.

Being all and the same land and premises conveyed to Syman Belmore and Lynn Marsh by Warranty Deed of Sarah C. Stevens, dated August 14, 2001 and recorded in Book 39, Pages 130-131, of the Brownington Land Records.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

The public sale may be adjourned one or more times for a total time not exceeding 30 days, without further court order, and without publication or service of a new notice of sale, by announcement of the new sale date to those present at each adjournment or by posting notice of the adjournment in a conspicuous place at the location of the sale. Terms of Sale: \$10,000.00 to be paid in cash or by certified check by the purchaser at the time of sale, with the balance due at closing. The sale is subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

The Mortgagor is entitled to redeem the premises at any time prior to the sale by paying the full amount due under the mortgage, including the costs and expenses of the sale.

Other terms to be announced at sale.

Bank of America, N.A.,

Jeffrey J. Hardiman, Esq.
Shechtman Halperin Savage, LLP
1080 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860
877-575-1400
Attorney for Plaintiff
jhardiman@shslawfirm.com

STATE OF VERMONT
SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL DIVISION
ORLEANS Unit Docket Number 14-6-16 Oscv

Douglas Conley and Judy Conley,
Plaintiff

v.

Karl Nott
Defendant

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE

By virtue of the Judgment and Decree of Foreclosure by Judicial Sale ("Foreclosure Judgment") dated August 9, 2016 and the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage granted by Karl Nott ("Mortgagor") to Douglas Conley and Judy Conley dated June 5, 2013 and recorded in Book 60 at Pages 446-448 of the Town of Lowell Land Records, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same, the undersigned will cause to be sold at public auction ("Sale") at **11:00 AM on March 17, 2017**, the lands and premises located at **1960 Carter Road, Lowell, Vermont** ("Mortgaged Property") more particularly described as follows:

Being all and the same land and premises conveyed to Karl Nott by Warranty Deed of Douglas Conley and Judy Conley last dated June 4, 2013 and of record in Book 60 at Pages 444-445 of the Town of Lowell Land Records.

Being all and the same land and premises, together with buildings and improvements thereon, having a 911 address of 1960 Carter Road, as conveyed to Douglas Conley and Judy Conley by Bruce A. Delorme and Anna R. Delorme by Warranty Deed dated August 3, 2010, and recorded in Book 56, Pages 483-484 of the Town of Lowell Land Records, and being described in said deed as follows:

This conveyance is subject to and with the benefit of any utility easements, spring rights, easements for ingress and egress, and rights incidental to each of the same as may appear of record, provided that this paragraph shall not reinstate any such encumbrances previously extinguished by the Marketable Record Title Act, Chapter 5, Subchapter 7, Title 27, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Reference is hereby made to the above mentioned instruments, the records thereof, the references therein made, and their respective records and references, in further aid of this description.

TERMS OF SALE: The Sale will be held at the Mortgaged Property. The Mortgaged Property will be sold "AS IS, WHERE IS, WITH ALL FAULTS, WITH NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND", subject to easements, rights of way, covenants, permits, reservations and restrictions of record, superior liens, if any, encumbrances that are not extinguished by the sale, title defects, environmental hazards, unpaid real estate taxes (delinquent and current, including penalty and interest, if any), and municipal liens, to the highest bidder.

The successful bidder, other than the mortgagee, shall pay a deposit of at least \$10,000 of the purchase price in cash or bank treasurer's/cashier's check at the time of Sale. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within ten days after entry of a confirmation order. The successful bidder will be required to sign a purchase and sale contract with NO CONTINGENCIES except confirmation of the sale by the court. The Sale may be postponed one or more times for a total time of up to thirty (30) days, by announcing the new sale date to those present at each adjournment or by posting notice at a conspicuous place at the location of the sale. Notice of the new sale date shall also be sent by first class mail, postage prepaid, to the mortgagor at the mortgagor's last known address at least five days before the new sale date.

Other terms to be announced at the Sale or contact Susan J. Steckel at 802-563-4400.

The Mortgagor, or his successors or assigns, may redeem the Mortgaged Property at any time prior to the Sale by paying the full amount due under the mortgage, including post-judgment expenses and the costs and expenses of sale.

Dated at Cabot, Vermont, this 15th day of February, 2017.

Douglas Conley and Judy Conley
By: Steckel Law Office
By /s/ Susan J. Steckel
By: Susan J. Steckel, Esq.
P. O. Box 247
Marshfield, Vermont 05658-0247
802-563-4400

PROPOSED STATE RULES

By law, public notice of proposed rules must be given by publication in newspapers of record. The purpose of these notices is to give the public a chance to respond to the proposals. The public notices for administrative rules are now also available online at <https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/>. The law requires an agency to hold a public hearing on a proposed rule, if requested to do so in writing by 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members.

To make special arrangements for individuals with disabilities or special needs please call or write the contact person listed below as soon as possible.

To obtain further information concerning any scheduled hearing(s), obtain copies of proposed rule(s) or submit comments regarding proposed rule(s), please call or write the contact person listed below. You may also submit comments in writing to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802-828-2231).

Aboveground Storage Tank Rules.
Vermont Proposed Rule: 17P005
AGENCY: Vt. Agency of Natural Resources
CONCISE SUMMARY: The proposed revisions to the rule are required by Act No. 76 of 2016, Section 1, which was codified in 10 V.S.A. § 1929a(c). In accordance with the statutory mandate, the revisions would enable the Agency to regulate the installation of new aboveground storage tank systems and substantial alterations of existing tank systems that store petroleum fuel oil (formerly in guidelines within an appendix of the existing rule). The rule would also require periodic tank system inspections, establish criteria for inspection, and create a formal requirement to report certain noncompliance and designate a tank system as noncompliant and unfillable (identification is generally accomplished by affixing a visible "red tag" to the system).
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Matthew Moran, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 1, Montpelier, VT 05620-3704. Tel.: 802-522-5729. E-mail: matt.moran@vermont.gov. URL: <http://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management>.
FOR COPIES: Marc Roy, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 1, Montpelier, VT 05620-3704. Tel.: 802-522-0275. E-mail: marc.roy@vermont.gov.

Investigation and Remediation of Contaminated Properties Rule.
Vermont Proposed Rule: 17P006
AGENCY: Natural Resources, Environmental Cons.
CONCISE SUMMARY: To provide guidance for the investigation and remediation of releases of hazardous materials, and to provide a process which must be utilized for all properties where releases have occurred in a manner which is protective of public health and the environment. The Rule provides the process which must be followed from initial investigation of contaminated properties to final cleanup, remediation, and closure of contaminated properties.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Lynda Provencher, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 1, Montpelier, VT 05620-3704. Tel.: 802-249-5562. E-mail: lynda.provencher@vermont.gov. URL: <http://http://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management>.
FOR COPIES: Matt Chapman, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier, VT 05620-3704. Tel.: 802-249-4393. E-mail: matt.chapman@vermont.gov.

Regulated Drug Rule.
Vermont Proposed Rule: 17P007
AGENCY: Human Services, Department of Health
CONCISE SUMMARY: This rulemaking adds new drugs and other chemical substances that are illegal or judged to be potentially fatal or harmful for human consumption unless prescribed and dispensed by a professional licensed to prescribe or dispense them. Examples include acetylfentanyl, a lethal opioid, and newly emerged synthetic recreational drugs. The rule also establishes benchmark dosages for certain drugs to provide a baseline for use by prosecutors to seek enhanced penalties for possession of higher quantities of the drug. The rule simplifies some language for clarity.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Shayla Livingston, Vermont Department of Health, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington, VT 05402. Tel.: 802-863-7280. Fax: 802-951-1275. E-mail: ahs.vdhrules@vermont.gov. URL: <http://healthvermont.gov/regs/index.aspx>.
FOR COPIES: David Englander, Department of Health, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington, VT 05402. Tel.: 802-863-7280. Fax: 802-951-1275. E-mail: ahs.vdhrules@vermont.gov.

Rule for Medication-Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence.
Vermont Proposed Rule: 17P008
AGENCY: Human Services, Department of Health
CONCISE SUMMARY: This rulemaking expands capacity for the treatment of opioid dependence by allowing advanced practice registered nurses and physician's assistants to prescribe buprenorphine to individuals requiring and seeking treatment for opioid dependence. The rule also increases the number of patients a physician may treat from 100 to 275.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Shayla Livingston, Vermont Department of Health, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington, VT 05402. Tel.: 802-863-7280. Fax: 802-951-1275. E-mail: ahs.vdhrules@vermont.gov. URL: <http://healthvermont.gov/regs/index.aspx>.
FOR COPIES: David Englander, Department of Health, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington, VT 05402. Tel.: 802-863-7280. Fax: 802-951-1275. E-mail: ahs.vdhrules@vermont.gov.

Resort enjoys record winter, summer looks strong

(Continued from page one.)

With that advice in mind, it's possible to guess that Raymond James Financial may be preparing to offer a substantial amount of cash to get free of the suits Mr. Goldberg and a number of Jay Peak investors have filed against the company.

Mr. Quiros used accounts at the financial services company to move money around, according to the charges filed against him by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and state Department of Financial Regulation. According to those charges, which Mr. Quiros has vigorously denied, he misused around \$200-million of the \$350-million investors put into his company. The state and federal government say Mr. Quiros took around \$50-million of that cash for his own purposes.

The Vermont branch of Raymond James already settled with the state for just under \$6-million, about \$4.5-million to repay investors who lost money. A settlement with the national firm would likely be for much more.

That would be a welcome development for contractors who are owed money for work at Jay Peak and at Burke Mountain and for investors.

It would also be helpful for Jay Peak, which will have to pay \$5-million for repairs to its tramway this summer, Mr. Goldberg said.

He recalled coming to Vermont last April just after the charges were filed against Mr. Quiros.

"I was selected as the receiver by the court. I got a phone call that morning and I came up here that evening," he said.

When he arrived he found a resort that had little money and a broken tram that would cost millions to repair.

"I was worried about how I would make payroll," he recalled.

He set out to reorganize the business and did so with "the help of my dedicated employees."

The difference between then and today is "like night and day," Mr. Goldberg said in a phone call after the meeting.

He said the timetable for selling Burke Mountain may be a little faster than it will be for Jay. Similarly, Mr. Goldberg said he hopes to sell the former Bogner property in Newport in the near future.

"I've heard the city is looking for businesses that might want to set up there," he said.

Mr. Goldberg said the future for the former Spates Block is still unclear.

At the Jay meeting, Mr. Goldberg acknowledged that he had kept the town waiting for its property taxes.

"We apologize that we didn't have the money to pay taxes on time," he said. A \$13-million settlement with Citibank provided money to pay taxes and money owed to some contractors, Mr. Goldberg said.

He said \$1-million of the more than \$2-million tax bill was paid in late January and the resort made payments of \$212,000 at the beginning of February and March. Those payments will continue for another three months until the resort is fully paid up, Mr. Goldberg said.

"Next time we won't make the town wait," he

promised. "I want to thank everybody for bearing with us. To the citizens of town who are employees, I doubly thank you."

Later in the day Mr. Goldberg said he has enjoyed his time in Vermont and the people he has met here to consider buying a retirement home in the state.

Had Mr. Goldberg not attended the meeting, the big news of the day would have been the retirement of Tara Morse after a 15-year stint as the town's clerk and treasurer. Ms. Morse delivered a tearful farewell as she thanked the town for the opportunity to serve such a wonderful community.

The select board knew in advance of Ms. Morse's plans and conducted a search for her successor, choosing Lynnette Deaette to take Ms. Morse's place.

Selectman Marc Burroughs-Biron also decided to get done this year after ten years of efforts on the town's behalf. Arnold Cota was elected to fill the vacant seat.

Voters were generally in an affable mood and passed a select board budget of \$310,413, a road budget of \$361,880, and \$185,882 for the equipment and garage fund.

At the school's annual meeting, which followed Town Meeting, voters gave their approval by a 29 to 5 margin to an outlay of \$1.2-million for their portion of the Jay-Westfield Elementary School budget. Jay's portion of that amount is \$761,699.

Voters also said yes to spending a total of \$885,779 in school district expenses.

School news

Parker Lacourse named to dean's list

Parker Lacourse of Morgan has been named to the fall 2016 dean's list at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. To make dean's list, students must have at least a 3.4 grade-point average and can get no grade lower than a C. — from Seton Hall University.

Husson University announces honors

Husson University in Bangor, Maine has honored the following students for their academic work in the fall, 2016 semester.

Named to the president's list for achieving a grade-point average of 3.8 to 4.0 are Meira Buck of Derby, Kelsea Cutting of Newport Center, and Ashley Lackie of Westmore.

Myra Degre of Newport has been named to the dean's list for achieving a grade-point average of 3.6 to 3.79.

Katie Menard of Barton was named to the honors list for earning a grade-point average of 3.4 to 3.59. — from Husson University.

Andreanna Andrew named to dean's list

The Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) in Boston has named Andreanna Andrew of Newport to the dean's list for the fall 2016 semester. The dean's list recognizes those students with a full-time course load who have achieved outstanding scholarship with a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher. — from MCPHS.

Tinker named to RIT dean's list

Scott Tinker of Newport was named to the dean's list at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York, for the fall 2016 semester. Mr. Tinker is studying in the computing and information technologies program. — from RIT.

Thank you, Ozzie, for our wonderful Town Meeting supper!
— the Chronicle staff

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Resignations left council with one member

(Continued from page one.)

Mr. Monette, who was re-elected Tuesday, said the two letters were identical except for the names of the two officials.

When he was contacted after the vote, Mr. Vincent would only say, "I can't serve under the current circumstances, and that's all I have to say."

Mr. Morrissette could not be reached for comment.

By circumstances, Mr. Vincent seems to have meant the defeat of his running mate, Mr. Roberge who lost to Mr. Chenette by a vote of 253 to 277. Mr. Vincent paced the field with 330 votes, and newcomer Bill Hafer lagged behind with 174 votes.

In the past couple of years, Mr. Vincent, Mr. Roberge, and Mr. Morrissette have formed a

majority block on the council, an alignment that first showed itself when Alderman John Wilson was voted out of his position as City Council President.

Mr. Monette said he was shocked to realize that the two men's resignations left the council with only one member, Mr. Wilson. He said City Clerk and Treasurer James Johnson quickly swore the mayor and Mr. Chenette in so the council could function.

He said Mr. Johnson will call Secretary of State James Condos to seek guidance on the best way to go forward.

Mr. Monette said the remainder of the council could either appoint new aldermen for a year or hold a special election. If they fill out the board by appointment, there will be three council seats to fill next March, two for two years and one a one-year seat.

Mr. Johnson said the current situation is unprecedented as far as he knows.

Newport voters did not add any problems to the difficulties facing their government. The \$3.8-million budget passed easily 317 to 224. Voters were a little less enthusiastic about the budget for the Newport City Elementary School, but that \$5.38-million budget passed on a 292 to 253 vote.

The only item voters turned down was the North Country Union High School budget, which lost by the narrowest of margins 275 to 276. They treated the North Country Union Junior High School budget more kindly, passing it by 285 to 266.

Voters passed all requests for appropriations from local social service agencies and cultural institutions, many by wide margins.



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Brighton Town Meeting

Concerns about stormwater project aired

by Sharon Campbell

BRIGHTON — “I spent many a Saturday night dancing and listening to music in this gym,” said Jim Percy as he took his seat for the Brighton Town Meeting on Monday evening.

No surprise then that he gave a resounding “aye” when everyone agreed a \$100 grant should be awarded to the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, making it possible for members to continue bringing their trumpets and fiddlesticks to Brighton as part of the Symphony Kids program.

Equally resounding “ayes” were given to the collection of taxes, and to authorizing the selectmen to borrow money in anticipation of taxes.

There were sharp intakes of breath when Representative Paul Lefebvre gave a brief update on events in Montpelier. Explaining how non-hunters and non-fishermen may be attempting to get on the Fish and Wildlife Board, Mr. Lefebvre said, “Some see it as an attempt to restrict hunting. I don’t believe it will advance very far, but it could restrict what we once took for granted.”

Having only recently returned to his birthplace of Island Pond after living in Johnson and Titusville, Florida, Mr. Percy listened closely as Representative Lefebvre outlined his concerns about possible cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency’s funding.

“Vermont has mammoth billion dollar projects,” Representative Lefebvre said. “Yet Trump wants to cut the EPA budget. So no one knows how it’s playing out. No money and no funding means services get cut. But the Governor has plans for making Vermont affordable again.”

Next to speak from the floor was Muriel O’Gorman, who read a letter of appreciation from the Orleans Essex Visiting Nurses Association and

Hospice. Mrs. O’Gorman described the benefits the organization had brought to the community by enabling individuals to remain independent.

“Over 3,459 home visits have been made, 49 people were on the Well Being program, and 24 communities located in Orleans and Essex counties have received nursing, physiotherapy, long-term care, and homemaker assistance,” she said.

Concerns from Craig Goulet, proprietor of the Brighton Garage, about the recent stormwater project were answered by Selectman Douglas Niles, who agreed that he and his fellow selectmen, James Cross and Jonathon O’Keefe, hadn’t been pleased with how things had been left by the engineering firm hired for the job. Uneven sidewalks and unfinished road surfaces have some residents worried about tripping and injuring themselves.

“Are they going to re-do it?” asked Mr. Goulet.

“Bad weather came so the job wasn’t completely finished,” answered Mr. Niles. “Due to the poor condition that Derby Street and part of the center of town were left in, the firm will be giving us an extra \$7,000 worth of engineering services.”

“I’m concerned only \$10,000 has been given to the sidewalks project,” said resident Jan Clarke. “When Derby Street was paved a large gap was left between the edge of the road and the sidewalk. You could fall. There’s no curb. I see \$35,000 is going to recreation. I’d rather see the money put into roads and sidewalks.”

“I respect that,” replied Mr. Niles. “But we’re not going to work on roads or sidewalks until we know what’s required. Going through that process, we’re going to be looking at grants. We’re pursuing a lot of avenues to try and accomplish these things. We’re reaching out to resources. Hopefully we’ll receive grant money. With regard

to a recreation coordinator and the recreation budget, that turned out to be highly supported. It’s for kids and adults, the whole community. There was big support from the Development Committees.”

“It’s ongoing,” offered Moderator Tom Donnellan. “You have to have a certain amount of energy and initiative.”

The town budget of \$1,520,666 was passed, as was the school budget of \$1,967,000.

Also approved was the authorization for the school directors to borrow \$75,000 over five years to fund a portion of the roof renewal project. The total cost of the roof restoration is estimated to be \$134,000, with the balance of \$59,000 to come from the school’s Capital Improvement Fund.

Before the meeting drew to a close, Marty Frizzell, operations manager for water and sewers, fired everyone’s imagination with a rare glimpse into Brighton’s subterranean underworld when he was asked: “Which sections of pipe need replacing and is there an agenda to fix them?”

“There are pipes over a hundred years old in Mountain Street and Cross Street. A project to replace them would take ten years to plan. Currently we know which sections are bad. In 2008 we looped the line around the lake with 2.7 miles of pipe. We’re in fairly good shape.”

While people filed out of the town hall this reporter asked Mr. Percy, who works as a semi-retired aircraft inspector in Island Pond where he lives with Jean, his wife of 48 years, how the Town Meeting compared with those he had attended elsewhere.

“It was very enjoyable,” he said. “I counted over 50 of us in here tonight. It was lively. I spent many a great Saturday dance night in this room between 1959 and 1964. My parents, Newell and Geraldine, loved it here, too. It’s great to be home.”

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