

THE CABOT CHRONICLE

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Cabot School Board Update Budget in like a Lion, out like a Lamb

By Rory T. Thibault,
Vice-Chair Cabot Board of Directors

In last month's Cabot Chronicle, the School Board's article was entitled "challenges ahead." This month, we can report "challenges met."

On February 16, 2021, the School Board approved a budget that includes a \$0.0920 increase on the residential education tax rate from \$1.7151 to \$1.8071 per \$100 of assessed value. This approved budget was the fifth draft considered, and when compared to the first draft, it comes without the visceral sticker shock.

The first budget draft contemplated an astronomical \$0.52 increase on the residential tax rate, including a sizeable state excess spending threshold penalty. This first draft proposed no changes in the school, and to also resolve the deficit caused by unanticipated special education costs, additional Vermont State Teachers' Retirement System (VSTRS) costs, and the food service account all at once. As a board, we knew this would be unacceptable to taxpayers and that we could do much better.

Four budget drafts later, and we have arrived at a more manageable level of expenditures and tax rate. The budget reached this more acceptable rate by (1) restructuring and beginning an anticipated multi-year process to move some expensive contracted special education services in-house -- in a careful and thoughtful manner with the best interest of the students in mind, (2) planning to repay the FY 2020 deficit over the course of five-years instead of all at once, (3) reduction in facility improvement (not maintenance) funds, and (4) accounting for a staff retirement and other anticipated changes. It is critical to emphasize that this budget does not cut any faculty or staff positions and ensures stability during a critical academic year that will hopefully see the full resumption of in-person learning.

While we can exercise some control and discretion over these expenses, other

factors relating to the tax rate remain beyond our control. Last month, we noted such "headwinds," including an unfavorable statewide yield rate, common level of appraisal (CLA) calculation, and a drop in our equalized pupil calculation. Fortunately, two of these three calculations have tracked back in our favor, namely a much-improved statewide tax yield forecast and favorable revision of our equalized pupil numbers.

No one on the school board takes a \$0.09 tax increase lightly; we know residents are struggling and that every dollar matters. However, this increase is worth putting in perspective: we have maintained a nearly flat education tax rate for the prior five years, specifically, \$1.72 (FY 17), \$1.74 (FY 18), \$1.75 (FY 19), \$1.73 (FY 20), \$1.71 (FY 21, current year). For those of you who kept your Act 46 reports from 2017, it is worth noting at the time Cabot was projected to have in excess of a \$2.25 tax rate. This outcome has been avoided by a resourceful administration, the restructuring of the elementary program, and sticking to a slow and steady plan of facility repairs and improvements. While much time and energy has been devoted to discussion about changing the school structure in fundamental ways, the less controversial work of improving the curriculum, improving the social emotional environment for young learners, and keeping down costs has gone on.

The budget that will be warned, entailing an anticipated \$0.09 increase in the tax rate, represents the absolute best effort of the Board and school administration to deliver a budget that does not require cutting programs or reducing direct educational instruction. The pencils have been sharpened over and over, and alternatives considered -- and to answer the inevitable question, the business office reported in no uncertain terms that tuitioning out high school students would be more expensive -- leaving this budget as the best balance of taxpayer's financial (see 'School Board Update', page 3)

From the Town of Cabot website:

Selectpersons are responsible for general supervision of the affairs of town and must cause to be performed all duties required of the town not committed by law to the care of any particular officer.

The selectboard may enact ordinances and rules in many areas including traffic regulation, regulating nuisances, managing solid waste, dogs and recreation, and establishing bike paths.



- The selectboard warns all town meetings and specifies business to be conducted at the meeting, including proposing an annual budget. If the town does not set the tax rate, the selectboard must set a tax rate that will raise the specific amount voted at town meeting.
- The selectboard is responsible for hiring, directing, and firing almost all town employees unless the town has a Town Manager form of government; for setting salaries if voters do not do so at town meeting, and for establishing and enforcing personnel policies.
- The selectboard must authorize all town expenditures by signing orders for the treasurer to draw town funds.
- The selectboard supervises the expenditure of the highway fund and has charge of keeping town highways in repair. It also is responsible for laying out, classifying and discontinuing town roads.
- The selectboard is responsible for animal control.
- The selectboard may borrow money for periods of less than a year in anticipation of taxes.
- The selectboard must fill all town vacancies until an election is held.
- The selectboard may license many operations within the town (e.g., liquor sales, restaurants, junkyards and entertainment).
- The selectboard appoints several minor town offices (e.g., fence viewers, pound keepers, inspector of lumber and tree warden).
- The selectboard appoints and removes planning commissioners unless the town has voted to elect them. In "rural towns," selectpersons serve as ex officio planning commission members. A "rural town" is a town with a population of less than 2,500 or a town with a population of at least 2,500 but less than 5,000 which has voted by Australian ballot to be considered a rural town. The selectboard adopts the town plan unless the town votes to adopt it by Australian ballot. It also holds public hearings on proposed zoning bylaws and may, in some circumstances, adopt zoning bylaws.
- The selectboard appoints and may remove a town manager when a town has voted to adopt such form of government.
- The selectboard purchases all insurance for the town.
- The selectboard requires certain town officers to obtain a bond and sets the amount necessary.
- Selectboard members serve as members of the Board of Civil Authority.

SEE CANDIDATE SURVEY RESPONSES ON PAGES 2-3

TOWN OF CABOT ANNUAL MEETING by AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ONLY

Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Willey Building

All voting by Australian Ballot. Ballots mailed mid-February to address of record for all legal voters. Voted Australian Ballots may be returned to Town Clerk for tabulating one of three ways:

- Mail received at Cabot Post Office by 2:00 p.m. closing time on election day, or
- Hand delivered to drop box at back of building no later than 7:00 p.m. election day, or
- Voted in person at Willey Building Town Hall on election day between 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Sample Ballot inside on page 8.

For copies of the Annual Report, call Town Clerk (563-2279), email tcocabot@gmail.com or get copies at village businesses.

CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT INFORMATIONAL MEETING

March 29, 2021

6:30 p.m. via Zoom

CABOT SCHOOL DIRECTORS AND BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, April 6, 2021

7:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m. Willey Building

Australian Ballot Only

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Candidate Surveys: Pages 2-3

Obituaries:
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Three Candidates for Two Selectboard Seats

What Are the Differences?

The Cabot Chronicle and Cabot Community Association often sponsor a candidate forum before contested selectboard elections. This year, in lieu of a candidate forum, we asked for community input to develop a few questions for the candidates. Five questions and each candidate's answers are here (candidate names in alphabetical order):

1. What would you say are the two biggest challenges facing the Town of Cabot? What do you think are the most important goals for the town to achieve in the next two years?

Ian Ackermann

Challenges: Cost to live in Cabot, Information for voters

The one most important challenge of our town is involvement, and the way items should be handled. We shouldn't be rushing to put items on a ballot for people to be voting on that they don't know enough about. I know it will slow the process down, but that might not be a bad thing. Maybe that will slow the tax hikes as well.

Overall, the town is in great shape, we need to focus on tightening up spending, while keeping up with maintenance on all our town buildings, equipment, etc.... Then with the right funding and approved plans from town folk, we can focus on expanding and improvements!

Goals: Involvement, Fire station, Spending wisely

1. I want to try to get more people involved with the town to help everyone understand more about the town they live in.
2. We need to come up with a handful of options for the fire station as a town process and commit to one of them.
3. During and post-COVID we need to make sure we get the sense of community back that we've always had here in town.

Ruth Goodrich

Aging infrastructure. Buildings, wastewater system, etc. A fund needs to be established for the future by setting aside money in the budget each year.

School. Vital to our community. Buildings are aging. Higher costs with fewer students with fewer programs. We need to better prepare our kids for the real world. Establish an apprentice/vocational program within the community.

COVID-19 has affected all of us, businesses struggle to survive. I have established a social media page called Buy

Local in Cabot and invite all businesses to put on a free listing.

Mike Hogan

The first challenge and goal may be the most important and that is a lack of a financial reserve to deal with emergency situations. We can't wait another year because the next need is just around the corner. We have to plan for such events as a flood that wipes out town infrastructure or a large deficit to pay down from a difficult winter where the budget was overspent or any other unforeseen expense. I am going to advocate if I am re-elected that a reserve fund be established and an amount be budgeted each year for these types of uses.

Second challenge: Many of us tend to think in only economic challenges. That's partially true, but the town lacks a good communications platform to allow all of its citizens to participate in issues and make their voice known. It's been made clear in this pandemic that the lack of meeting in person has had an effect on a clear understanding of the issues that face Cabot. We need more than just Front Porch Forum and the Chronicle to get the word out. Those are great portals, but there has to be more! Let's brainstorm as a town and come up with some better solutions. I am sure other towns face this dilemma and have good templates we can use.

I would also mention that the wastewater treatment plant will need substantial changes in the not-so-distant future. I am sure there will be grants but the town will ultimately pay for this through its users, a reserve fund or federal grants.

Cultivate an environment to get more people, especially young people, involved in serving in local government. Look at all the gray hair on the current boards and committees! That includes me!

2. We have seen deficit spending in the past two years. How can the Town recover from the current financial crisis?

Ian Ackermann

The town will always need improvements, we just must decide what order makes the most sense from a financial standpoint. Some years I think we take on more than the town can handle. We need to slow the spending and make a list of what needs to be improved or maintained. Then start checking them off one by one. It's not a race. We don't need to accomplish everything overnight. I'm hopeful my children's children will grow old in Cabot as well.

We should look at the extra property that the town owns and create an income for the town with those pieces of land. As a town we could figure out some great uses with the land that will improve the town while creating an income. I'm sure we can find state or government funding for that as well.

Ruth Goodrich

Some inherited from previous years & some from overtime & cost overruns. We need to sell real estate. The town should not be in the real estate business. Taking properties out of the tax base hurts the town in the long run. We have worked hard to produce a budget that covers the necessary items, but we need to build up a reserve for infrastructure repair & maintenance.

Mike Hogan

I am not sure we are in a crisis, but we do have a manageable deficit to work with. We don't intentionally deficit spend! Most towns incur deficits that happen for many reasons such as a long winter that overspends its budget through no fault of its own. The State of Vermont requires that towns resolve their deficits in a timely manner. Other towns do not watch their budgets. In Cabot we do watch our budgets vs actual expense as the Board works closely with the Town Clerk and Treasurer. The current situation is this: as of this date, we have a deficit of -\$245,990. That can be resolved in different ways. This year we have budgeted \$33,000 in deficit reduction, and with the sale of the grader shed we should realize \$60,000. That drops the number to -\$152,990. If the town approves the sale of the Masonic Hall (Article 11), the deficit will be retired with no additional expense to the taxpayers. The Town presents responsible budgets to the voters that makes sure the operations of the town continue without interruption and also takes into consideration the tax implications to its citizens. I am considering proposing a different approach to budgeting based on performance that focuses on results, improvement in performance, and transparency.

3. The Masonic Hall at 3339 Main Street is owned and maintained by the Town. The nonprofit Faith in Action pays rent and provides twice monthly food shares and services to senior citizens on the first floor. The second floor is reserved free of charge for exclusive use of the Masons. What would you like to see done with the building in the future?

Ian Ackermann

I think the town should keep this building as it is generating income. The town put a lot of money into this building

to get it to where it is today. The maintenance costs will be minimal now that we've updated all the necessary items. The town has been overspending for the past few years, any extra income will help. Some would say selling would generate more income, but that is a one-time income. If you hold and keep the building maintained, the value of the building should increase while the town is collecting rent and future generations will benefit. Ultimately it is up to the town voters, but they need to know ALL the information on the matter before the vote.

Ruth Goodrich

Sell it. FIA wants it. Taxpayers by law must approve any sale. Perhaps some of the private interest groups in town might pool their funds and invest in it with FIA. Put it back in the tax base.

Mike Hogan

The Town has spent \$235,000 since 2010 in maintaining the building and receiving \$67,000 in income. That's a -\$168,000 loss to the town. Faith in Action is interested in buying the property and the Board felt it was a good opportunity to not have another town owned property to maintain. It is currently being used for food distribution and that is a very good use, especially in the economic climate we live in. The Selectboard thinks it's a great organization and one that should continue to serve the town. I think the Town has sufficient spaces for large meetings with the School Gym and the Willey Building. I am sure the Selectboard and the Listers will come up with a fair market value should the town approve the sale of the property.

4. The CCIF/UDAG Fund has paid out over a million dollars in the last six years. What do you think the town should do with what remains of the CCIF Fund after the large payouts of the last six years?

Ian Ackermann

Two ways to go about this. Either CCIF keeps helping the town improve with their extra money or if they want to end the committee, I think we pay off something the town owes on, or at least pay it down, not just let it sit in the general fund. Possibly save on interest. I do feel the best option is to get the CCIF committee going again. They could help with future improvements to the town. They could also jump start new projects that could potentially provide an income for our town.

Ruth Goodrich

The fund has drifted far from the intended purpose of assisting businesses in town to grow. It has been poorly managed at times. Divide the fund between the School and Town for needed capital investments that will benefit everyone,

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Three Candidates

(continued from page 2)

Mike Hogan

Background: The UDAG-CCIF fund was established around 1992 with the intent of loaning money to local individuals and groups that strengthen the local economy and the overall well-being of the Cabot community. A committee was formed and a plan written with various iterations approved by the town. Since that time, lots of money has been loaned and granted for various uses. In 2020, the Selectboard made a decision to suspend the committee on a temporary basis for lack of membership and to move the fund out of a bank that was investing in various financial entities that normally accrued interest in good financial times. In the Covid-19 environment, the investments were bleeding our principal to the point that we decided to put them in CD's for stability and hope that it could be reversed in the future as the market settled down. We also took over the management of the fund as we had only one member of the CCIF committee remaining after the last two chairs resigned. The board has a fiduciary responsibility to the town and felt this was the prudent step. In a recent meeting, Greg Burt, the only remaining committee member, suggested various names to be appointed next month to get the committee up and functioning. That's great news and we look forward to their involvement.

Options: 1) Fill the open seats on the CCIF Committee. Charge them with coming up with a revised plan with clear goals and objectives to make the fund sustainable. 2) Put out an RFP to enlist professional services to help the town come up with viable options to utilize these funds. 3) Use the money to further economic growth in the town by investing in a business that can add to our tax base, provide local jobs, enhance tourism and hopefully attract new families to town.

I am sure there are more ideas what to do with this fund. I hope the next Selectboard and the CCIF Committee can work together to sustain the current monies and look for ways to grow the fund.

5. According to members of the Cabot Fire Department, the current fire station is not adequate to serve the needs of the town. What should the Selectboard do to ensure responsive community fire services?

Ian Ackermann

The fire department might not seem critical to everyone, until your house is burning, or you have any other kind of emergency. These folks on the fire department put in more behind the scenes work than any of us realize. They need a larger building to keep the equipment, and most importantly, expand the service. I hope that one day we can have more volunteer firefighters. I have not been into the building in a long time, but I know it's small. Some say we should not have bought all the big trucks.... That's in the past, let's move forward. That being said, we need to weigh all the options. Improve the building we have now, build new somewhere else. As a selectboard working for the betterment of the town, we need to put together a list of options with the budgets and how it will affect our

taxes. Let it weigh in on people for six months before we vote on it so everyone can have time to process.

Ruth Goodrich

The Select Board is currently embarking on a new research effort to assess the situation, define wants & needs & look at all options. This should have been openly done before any property was ever purchased. We will work with the Fire Department on this effort. It will be Select Board driven, with the townspeople informed at all times. Need, cost & location are all vital components, as well as maintenance cost for the long haul. Improvements have been needed for years without resolution. These only became a focal point when a new station was wanted. Large equipment was purchased even though the building was known to have limited space. Other fire departments in the area suffice with structures much smaller & modest than the one the Fire Department wants.

Mike Hogan

The Selectboard in 2018 purchased a building on Main Street that seemed to be the perfect location for a future fire department. They had a short window of days to purchase it and made the decision as a future investment for the Town. There was a small working group established that came up with some ideas for a new structure. Those discussions and planning need to restart and be headed by the Selectboard with the involvement of the Fire Department, Ambulance and the citizens of Cabot. A question that has been on the mind of people is how to address the question of the Fire Department and it's long-term needs. How do we strategically plan for the protection of our properties and businesses? We need to hear from the firefighters and look at best practices used in other towns our size. What is an adequate size building for Cabot? What can we afford as a Town and maintain annually? What are the current standards for fire departments in 2021? Let's discuss whether we should build a new structure on the property purchased a few years ago, sell it, or live with the current location and make do! The Cabot Ambulance needs to be part of that discussion. The town must be fully involved in a planning process that looks at various options and then decides the direction to take. We hope to start that process soon and want all of you involved.

I would recommend that you visit the Cabot Fire Department and speak directly with those who volunteer for our community. I am sure they would appreciate your interest in what they do as fire fighters who protect our homes and businesses each day.

School Board Update

(see 'School Board Update', page 1)

interests with the educational needs of our students. To be clear, any further budget cuts or to get back below the excess spending threshold, would require cuts to direct educational resources.

We hope Cabot voters will join us for the (virtual) annual meeting on March 29, 2021. In the meantime, Board Members are ready and willing to answer your

Cabot Ambulance

COVID-19 has made an interesting year for all of us. For those who serve on the ambulance, it has been especially challenging.

First, we gained some new members from our EMT class last year, but due to people moving and job restrictions, only a couple of them have been able to turn out on a regular basis for calls. It is common for new folks to be very enthusiastic and want to run on a lot of calls, but (thankfully for our residents) our call volume is not equal to that of a larger municipal area. In response to this, they begin running with another agency to get the experience of a larger call volume or go on to pursue a career in the medical field.

Second, COVID-19 exposure is a very real risk for our members. We have had a few that have been exposed and had to quarantine, cutting down on our available EMS staff. This is not just a Cabot Ambulance issue; it is an ongoing issue across the nation and has a domino effect in the private lives of all our emergency services workers. We are well trained in the use of personal protection equipment (PPE), but none the less, whether working in close quarters with a confirmed case or with someone presenting no symptoms, we use extreme caution to not be exposed. You have to assume anyone could potentially be infectious and use all precaution. So, if you see our members in full PPE, don't be surprised, they are trying to protect themselves and you.

Third, we are always in need of caring & energetic individuals who would like to become part of the Cabot Ambulance team. Most of the time someone just needs a ride to the hospital. There are many other reasons someone may need to go by ambulance. You will learn CPR and other lifesaving techniques that can come in handy at any time. EMS is an important service to our community. If you would like to learn more or attend a CPR or First Aid class for you, your family, school, or community group, we can arrange that for you, (COVID-19 permitting of course).

On another note, I have heard some complaints and negative comments, and I wanted to address some of this. The most common complaint is that Cabot Ambulance isn't or hasn't been able to respond to emergency calls in a timely manner or did not have a crew to cover the call. This has been true at times, and for those times we express our sincere apologies. However, I want to remind you that it is not because we don't care, or because we aren't doing our job, or something like that. We are facing the same challenges that most, if not all, volunteer services across the state and country are facing, and we are doing the best we can with the resources available! Also, I/we know what it is like: When there is an emergency,

two minutes feels like 20 minutes, and ten minutes feels like an hour while waiting for emergency services to show up; I have been alone on an emergency scene for a while waiting for an ambulance or more help to show up; I have friends and family who have had to wait far longer than they should have for emergency services, and I have personally transported family member(s) in emergency situations. Many of us have "been in your shoes," so to speak, and when you have to wait longer for an ambulance, or for a mutual aid truck from another town, it's not that we don't care, or aren't doing our job; we do care a lot (that's why we joined this profession and service) and we are doing the best we can, but face the challenges spoken of above including COVID-19, reduced staffing/volunteers, and more. At this point in time, there really isn't a better solution that is affordable or cost effective. However, instead of complaining or making negative statements, why not try to be part of the solution?! Maybe you could join the Ambulance service? Maybe you know a friend or relative who you could speak to who may be able to join and help? Maybe you or someone you know could make a financial donation? At any rate, as we all know, complaining or making negative comments does not help anyone or anything. If this concerns you, please be part of the solution!

Also, we did recently miss a year's appropriations from the town (it's a long story that I believe I have explained in another article), but this is money that we depend on to keep our supplies and equipment up to date. We try to be as financially responsible as we can, and save money wherever possible, but due to our relatively low call volume and lower income from said calls, we cannot possibly survive on strictly income generated from 911 calls. As a rule, we do not bill for any call where we do not transport the patient to the Hospital; regardless of whether it is a cardiac arrest where we use a Lot of equipment and supplies, or a lift assist where we use very little, if we don't transport to the hospital, we do not bill, and therefore we cover the cost of supplies etc. So, if we request a larger appropriation in the next year or two, it is because of this, as well as the increased cost of operating as the years go by (everything's getting more expensive).

We hope life will be back to normal at some point, but we also know that what was normal a year ago may not be on the horizon anytime soon. We urge our fellow citizens to continue wearing masks when in a public spaces and around other people. Social distance and use hand sanitizer when you can't regularly wash your hands. Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth whenever possible, especially when out in public. Eating a healthy, balanced diet, and getting outside for physical activity is vital to maintaining good physical and mental health. Take walks, go skiing, sliding or skating this winter. Be aware of your surroundings when out in public. If you touch something everybody else is also touching, you may be at risk. Keep hand sanitizer in your pocket.

Stay safe. We hope we don't have to see you in our capacity as EMS workers, but if you do, know that we care about our fellow citizens to put ourselves on the front lines for you.

Respectfully Cabot Ambulance Staff

CVRPC Update

by Amy Hornblas,
Cabot Representative

I have been serving as the Cabot representative on the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) since 2017. In 2017 I tried to have an influence on the Cabot Town Plan, but found that the larger plan that is being imposed on our town had more influence in the process than the people who live here. I decided to check out the scene from a higher vantage point, to try and find out where these plans are coming from, and to see if there was any chance of influencing them. So, when an opening arose, I volunteered to serve on the board.

Based on survey results from the 2010 Cabot Community Planning Survey, the most valued feature were our working farms, with 78% of respondents rating them as "very valuable." When asked to guide the planning commission's work, "retention of farms" was listed as the top priority issue. Concerns about affordability, and people being able to age in place, were also mentioned by many respondents. When opportunities arise, I have been bringing these priorities to the CVRPC planning process and discussions.

Attending the Regional Planning Commission monthly Board of Commissioner meetings is very informative, as every month we are updated on many subjects by guest speakers and CVRPC staff. Some interesting things I have learned include: Cabot is one of five towns in the region that has "prime" wind energy potential, the "21st Century Workforce" is being trained for unknown future jobs in the technology fields, housing costs and poverty are increasing in our county, people who cannot insulate their homes and heat with wood are among the top priorities when it comes to reducing our carbon footprint, and farms are going out of business at alarming rates.

I have also served on two "special committees" of the CVRPC: the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) and the Brownfields Advisory Committee. Throughout 2019, the CWAC was charged with reviewing the *Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan*. The CWAC members had concerns about the plan, including the fact that it was based on faulty modeling, which did not include the role of chemical fertilizers, and after deducting allowances for other sources such as residential and industry, allocated the remaining responsibility for pollution onto manure. The resulting plan therefore disproportionately blames manure for the phosphorus pollution problem. The plan also suggests remedial methods, such as "no-till," which could actually increase the use of chemical fertilizers. The plan does not address other pollutants, such as neonicotinoids and Glyphosate (Round-Up), which the CWAC learned could pose more serious health hazards to the environment than phosphorus. (Did you know that caffeine is a well? We were also concerned that the Best Management Practices and other regulations that are following as a result of the plan are going to dispropor-

tionately harm small farms, holding them to as high of regulation standards as medium and large farms, resulting in the further loss of small farms and the increase of large-scale farming, leading to further pollution of the waterways.

The CWAC voiced these and other concerns in the form of questions, as part of our process of reviewing the Basin Plan. When we learned that asking questions was all we could do to influence the plan, we decided to write a letter. Our letter, outlining our concerns, had to be approved by the CVRPC board to be sent to the ANR Commissioner. Surprising (to me), was the fact that the CWAC's assertion that small farms were more beneficial for the environment, and deserved protection, was controversial. We were actually warned against bringing up this topic, as it could be seen as being unfavorable to large-scale farms.

We were able to pass the letter, with minor adjustments to the small farm statement, which, interestingly, ended up supporting instead the "economic viability" of small farms. (Videos of our monthly meetings, including this one from 7/14/20, can be found under the Board Meeting Minutes Archive at: /centralvtplanning.org). Interestingly, this is similar to the language adopted in the Cabot Town Plan, when I tried to add the concept of affordability to our town plan rewrite in 2017. What we got as a result was not helpful- we got the word "affordable" added into the following sentence: *"In this future, Cabot residents will meet their needs for food, material, shelter, and transportation using resources managed in an affordable and sustainable manner."*

Despite our concerns about the priorities and the modeling, CVRPC is applying to become a Clean Water Service Provider, part of the state's regulating and enforcing bodies. Besides basing the rules and the funding on faulty modeling, the Basin Water Quality Council is made up of the same water organizations who will, in the end, be awarded the grants and implementing the projects. Therefore, conflicts of interest are inherent in their design. The CVRPC is raising this concern with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, but there will most likely be no change in the council's make-up. Perhaps including other stakeholders on the council, such as farmers, would help?

This fall I learned that Agri-Mark was applying for a permit to open a Bio-Digester plant downtown. After doing some research, I learned the permit did not need to go through Act 250 review because it was not considered a project of "substantial regional impact," according to the rules.

After three and a half years, I've learned that the public process at the regional level has very little impact. The CVRPC has been planning since 1967, and things are getting worse for those most vulnerable: the poor, working class, small farmers, youth, and aging population. That is not the commissioners' fault; the people who represent their towns continually raise concerns, ask important questions, and have expertise in a number of areas so that as a group,

we can usually foresee the various impacts these plans will have on our towns. Nor is the staff to blame. The plans we are implementing are coming from the state and federal government, and while they require public process, they do not allow for very much public influence. That being said, I would like to continue

to represent our town and do my best to influence the plans so that we can aim towards a healthier future for all. At the very least, I can keep us informed of the process.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent our town. Let me know your thoughts!



OBITUARIES & MEMORIALS

Frederick Brown

1948-2020



Frederick W. "Fred" Brown, 72, of Cabot, passed away on Wednesday, November 18, 2020, at his home with his wife, Jane, by his side. Fred was born in St. Albans, on January 8, 1948, to Neil and Ila (Wry) Brown. He graduated

from BFA-St. Albans and obtained a bachelor's degree from the University of Vermont. He was an extremely kind and generous person who will be deeply missed. Survivors include his loving wife, Jane Brown, stepsons, siblings and extended family. There will be no services. Memories and condolences may be shared with the family at www.saylesfh.com.

Ruth E. (Wheeler) Fletcher 1928-2021

Ruth E. Fletcher, 93 passed away at Barre Gardens Rehabilitation Center on Monday January 25, 2021. A Spring

burial will be at the convenience of the family in the Village Cemetery in Cabot, VT. A complete obituary will be available soon.

Philip J. Tetreault

1934-2020

It is with heavy hearts that the family of Philip J. Tetreault, 86, announces his passing on November 8, 2020. He was born July 15, 1934 to Noel and Corinne (Comeau) Tetreault in Richmond, VT.

Philip was a skilled craftsman and carpenter and spent his working years as a homebuilder. When he could, his favorite activities included bow and rifle hunting as well as walking his property in Marshfield.

Philip leaves behind his wife, Blanche Tetreault, his daughter Kathy Ache, his three sons; Daniel Tetreault, Dale Tetreault, and David Tetreault, and his ten grandchildren. Philip also leaves behind eight step-children. Philip's final resting place will be at the Cabot Plains Cemetery where family will gather for a private service. The des Groseilliers Funeral Home is in care of arrangements.

SEND YOUR LOCAL BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS,
MEMORIALS, AND OBITUARIES, TO

**THE CABOT
CHRONICLE**

AT **INBOX@CABOT
VERMONT.ORG**

Cabot Mentoring Seeking the Next Program Coordinator

by Susan Socks



The Cabot Mentoring Advisory Board is seeking a candidate for the position of program coordinator. The goal of Cabot Mentoring is to guide youth through the tricky business of growing up, create lasting intergenerational friendships, and strengthen the Cabot community. Coordinating this program is challenging, rewarding, and important work!

The ideal candidate will enjoy working with youth and adults, and be comfortable with basic computer skills including email, Google sheets/docs, social media, and website maintenance. They will also have the ability to work independently, excellent organizational skills, and solid writing ability.

Program coordinator tasks include supporting existing matches, recruiting youth and volunteer mentors, establishing new matches, publicizing the Cabot Mentoring program and mentoring generally, assisting in fundraising, keeping accurate and confidential records, reviewing and updating program materials, reporting to and working with the

Cabot Mentoring Advisory Board, and professional development.

The new program coordinator will have training and support from the exiting program coordinator. Position averages five to ten hours/week during pandemic, and 15 hours/week post-pandemic. Pay rate dependent on experience. Please send resume' and cover letter to: cabotmentoring@gmail.com. Questions may also be directed to this email. Priority given to applications received by March 6.

A note from exiting coordinator Susie Socks: I've enjoyed working for the Cabot Mentoring program the past three years. I've gained a deep appreciation for the importance of and continued need for mentoring in our community. To the youth, families, and volunteer mentors and Advisory Board members; I am grateful for your participation, time, and energy...Cabot is a better community because of your presence in the mentoring program. Thank you all!

Through The Cabot Chronicle, the CCA promotes their mission to enhance the quality of community life for those residing, doing business, and visiting Cabot, VT. One aspect of that mission is to empower Cabot residents to participate in the governance and management of our town.

The Chronicle is dedicating a staff writer to cover select board and other meetings, for the purpose of keeping community members informed about issues discussed at meetings they might not be able to attend. Most meetings during this time of Coronavirus are available via Zoom for those who would like to listen in person. Instructions for joining meetings virtually through Zoom are posted regularly on Front Porch Forum, or you can call the Town Clerk's office for details at 563-2279.

Open Meetings Explained - Part 1

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

One aspect of the Chronicle's mission is to empower Cabot residents to participate in the governance and management of our town, and to that end this is a first in a series of articles explaining the intricacies of Vermont's Open Meeting Laws. In this article, the aspect of executive sessions and emergency meetings will be explained. Other topics will be covered in future editions.

Executive Sessions:

According to the Vermont Secretary of State (SoS) Guide to Open Meeting Law: "A public body may also enter into executive session, which is a closed portion of a public meeting. To enter executive session, a motion must be made in open session that indicates its reason for doing so, preferably naming the specific provision of Title 1, Section 313 that gives authority."

There is a litany of reasons why a board may enter executive session, and those are listed in detail in the law and the guide, but in general the reason must be when "premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage." The Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) Open Meeting FAQs explain this as "... there must be a reason that the subject cannot be discussed in open session at that time. For instance, if the municipality is in the midst of a contract negotiation, the selectboard would not want to discuss its proposed terms as that would give the other side an advantage at the bargaining table."

To enter executive session, a board must make a motion explaining the reason for the executive session. According to the VLCT FAQs, "A motion to go into executive session must be made during the open portion of a meeting and must indicate the nature of the business to be discussed. 1 V.S.A. §§ 313(a).... We also recommend that you provide in your motion as much information as you can, without giving away the details that necessitate the executive session."

The VLCT further explains that the Vermont Supreme court has ruled that it is important that the minutes show that there was a careful analysis of the need to enter into executive session before the motion is made.

Once in executive session, according to the SoS guide, "... no formal action may be taken except for actions related to securing a real estate purchase option. In all other instances, appropriate topics may be discussed in executive session, but ultimate action must be taken by motion and vote in open session."

The SoS guide concludes the act of going into executive session should be done rarely, and some bodies err on the side of caution and try to do all their business in public.

Emergency and Special Meetings:

The SoS Guide simply states "An emergency meeting may be held in the event of a true emergency, that is, only when necessary to respond to an unforeseen occurrence or condition requiring immediate attention. Emergency meetings do not require public announcement, posting of notices, or 24-hour notice to members, so long as some public notice is given as soon as possible before the meeting. 1 V.S.A. § 312(c)(3). Note that an emergency meeting should not be used if the public body is able to comply with the 24-hour notice requirements for special meetings."

When the need is not an emergency, a board can call a special meeting with 24 hours of notice when the meeting is outside of the regular schedule. The SoS Guide explains, "A special meeting occurs when a board meets at a time or place outside of its regular meeting schedule. At least 24 hours before each special meeting, a public body must publicly announce it by giving notice of the meeting's time, place, and purpose to a newspaper or radio station serving the area, as well as to any person who has requested in writing to be notified of special meetings. 1 V.S.A. §§ 310(5), 312(c)(2), (5)."

Road Crew CDL Issues

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

On January 22, the public part of the Selectboard meeting ended with a motion to go into executive session. The reason for the executive session was not discussed. Matt stated he did not know the reason, but voted yes on the motion to enter executive session. Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, the Zoom meeting ends and it is difficult to know when the Selectboard reconvenes after the executive session. At the time of this writing, February 14, the minutes were not yet accessible on the town website.

However, the recording from the part of the meeting after executive session is available on the town website, and it

	Combined Rating/Weight	Tractor Rating/Weight	Trailer Rating/Weight
Class A	Greater than 26,000 lbs	Greater than 26,000 lbs	Over 10,000 lbs
Class B	Greater than 26,000 lbs	Greater than 26,000 lbs	Not over 10,000 lbs
Class C	Not Over 26,000 lbs	Not Over 26,000 lbs	Not Over 10,000 lbs

A medical card is a certificate that indicates the driver's physical health is adequate to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle. Failure to have a current medical certificate can result in suspension and or downgrade to class D operator's license, which is a non-CDL (regular) driver license.

The subject of a road commissioner came up after this action. Mike said that

starts with Mike Hogan stating, "it has come to the board's attention that one of the highway crew members does not have a CDL class A license, which is a requirement according to our personnel policy." He continued that the board "is requiring this individual have his Class A license completed, tested, and road test completed by July 1 of 2021." John Cookson added that "he should get a medical card." Mike added "that all road crew should have a medical card as required by our policy." The board unanimously approved the motion as stated by Mike.

There are three classes of Commercial Driver Licenses (CDL) in Vermont:

he supported a point that John brought up earlier about a road commissioner. He further noted that they had money in the budget for a road commissioner in the budget to be voted on at Town Meeting. He recommended that the board start discussing seriously finding individuals for the position of road commissioner. The board agreed to put it on the next agenda.

COVID-19 Presence

by Jen Miner

As we near the one-year anniversary of the first positive COVID-19 case in Vermont, I thought it would be important to reflect on what we have been through and what we have learned. In March of 2020, when I was appointed Emergency Management Director for the Town of Cabot, no one could have predicted how our little community would be impacted.

March 8, 2020, was when the first patient tested positive, and just a few short weeks later Governor Scott would declare a State of Emergency that would continue for the foreseeable future. On March 25, 2020, a STAY HOME and STAY SAFE Order was implemented and would continue to be in place for nearly 90 days.

Here in our community, we have seen all four seasons during this pandemic and are getting ready to enter our second spring while weathering this unpredictable virus. While this timeline can appear to be a long and stressful time, I think it is important to see just what we have accomplished.

Our town leaders have been able to conduct Town business by appointment or remotely via Zoom, our Fire and EMS Departments have continued to meet and provide services to our community,

our local businesses have been able to maintain a high level of customer service, and our school has been able to operate with limited interruption by offering both in person and remote learning opportunities for the students of our communities.

We have all experienced a level of loss related to social events and restrictions but together we have been able to weather this situation. As of February 10, 2021, there have only been 15 cases reported by the Vermont Department of Health for the Town of Cabot. So as Emergency Management Director, this tells me WE must be doing something right!

If we are going to continue OUR success story in Cabot, we must all remain diligent in protecting ourselves and each other.

Masks on Faces, 6 Foot Spaces, Uncrowded places.

When it is your turn to be vaccinated, do what is right for you and your health. Together we can make a difference.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Miner
Emergency Management Director
Town of Cabot
(802)- 498-8245
WillowReignsNana13@gmail.com

3075 Main St., Cabot, VT ~ (802) 560-5999

Open Thursday to Sunday 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Serving a variety of baked goods, coffee, sandwiches, soup of the day
Sunday Take Home Meals ~ Classic and Creative Grilled Cheese Sandwiches
"Bringing Grilled Cheese to the next level"
Check us out on facebook for specials and to preorder Sunday Take Home Meals

Town Meeting Article Preparation

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

This year, due to the pandemic, town meeting articles did not require a petition with all the usual signatures. However, the Selectboard reserved the right to reword the articles or reject them. The Town Clerk received the first two proposed articles in time for the January 5 Selectboard meeting. The first article reviewed by the Selectboard was the article concerning the EV station proposed by Jim Wolynetz. The second article wasn't discussed.

The board then discussed how floor elections would be handled with only Australian Ballot. Mike Hogan made a motion, as documented in the minutes, "Those positions and their terms shall be extended one year until Town Meeting 2022. Positions extended are as follows: Lister, Delinquent Tax Collector, Grand Juror, Cemetery Commissioners, Library Trustee, Recreation Committee, CCIF, and Willey Building," which was approved by the board.

Since then, on January 19, the governor signed into law Act 1 (H.48), which according to the VLCT website, "Clarifies that municipal officers will serve until the annual meeting and when successors are chosen if a local legislative body chooses to move the date of the 2021 annual meeting."

There were several more articles discussed at the January 12 meeting of the board. The first was proposed by the Town Listers, and Jeanne Johnson was there to explain the article is needed to codify what is currently being done in practice. Frank Kampf proposed an article regarding the CCIF fund, and a legal conundrum that has been created now that the fund balance has decreased. The board decided they wanted it reworded, and Mike Hogan assumed that responsibility. The board also considered an article proposed by Sandy Pond requesting the sale of the building which had been purchased for a future fire station, and the article was rejected. The board then discussed the EV station article and voted to approve it.

At the January 19 board meeting, it was noted that Mike was working with Betty and Michelle to make the article language cleaner. It was apparent there were several articles to discuss, but they were not all reviewed. The board started with Article 11, which regarded selling the Masonic Hall. The appraised value wasn't known, so it was decided to use the value listed in last year's town report. The board decided to postpone further discussion on this article and jumped to Article 10. This article related to the CCIF fund and they decided to add the amounts for the payoff of the garage loan and interest rate subsidies. The board discussed including all the amounts in the special services article, as well as Article 12. Betty had two new articles, but the board only discussed the previously rejected article about the building bought for the new firehouse. The consensus was to wait for a special meeting on Friday morning to finalize the articles.

On Friday morning, January 22, the Selectboard meeting started with Karen Larsen speaking during the public comment period and asking if there could be public review of the articles before they are finalized and provide input or com-

mentary. John responded that the board needs to approve the articles before they can give them out to the public. Ruth added that the articles were not up for debate. Karen was confused by the response, she was wondering "if the selectboard is crafting articles, that are not subject to the review of the public, approving them without the input of the public, and then asking us to vote on them, I'm not really sure..." John injected at this point that on February 22 there is an informational meeting, "and the public can ask questions then."

Karen pointed out that when the town went to Australian Ballot, it "eliminated the opportunity to discuss, debate, or modify those articles once they were approved by the selectboard." She wanted clarification that this is the process. Ruth replied, "that is the standard procedure and how it has always been done." Karen suggested that the Selectboard post the articles in advance just like the budget was posted in advance, which allowed the public to provide feedback to the board. She said the current process "does not give the community any option to do any of that, whether review, participate, or offer any suggestions..."

Mike added some points, there are two different types of articles. Ones that are submitted by voters that are usually petitioned, and the other ones that are created by the Selectboard. Mike continued that according to the VLCT, "we have the authority to accept or reject articles that are going before the voters on Town Meeting."

It should be noted that according to the VLCT website "A selectboard is required to honor (i.e. place the requested article on the town meeting warning) a voter-backed petition when: 1. the subject of the petition is a matter over which the voters have been given specific authority in statute; 2. the petition is received by the town clerk 47 days or more before the date of the annual meeting; and 3. the petition meets the other requirements of 17 V.S.A. § 2642(a)(3), including that it contains the signatures of at least five percent of the registered voters of the town."

After public comment, the board decided not to go through every article and just went over the changes to specific articles. There was a lengthy discussion regarding an article about a new firehouse, which ultimately ended with the board choosing not to put it on the ballot.

New Firehouse Revisited

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

In the past, the topic of the existing firehouse and the possibility of needing a new firehouse has been the topic of many discussions at Selectboard meetings. This topic has resurfaced in several board meetings in the last month.

At the January 12 Selectboard meeting, the board considered an article proposed by Sandy Pond, requesting the sale of the building which had been purchased for a future fire station. Fred Ducharme and Mike Hogan did not support the article. John Cookson said the longer they wait, the more money they lose, and felt it should be sold. Matt Nally pointed out the real estate market is particularly good this year and they could easily sell it in the spring. Ruth

Village Sidewalk Snow Removal

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

Betty Ritter brought an issue to the Selectboard on December 15: the previous contractor doing the village sidewalks is not willing to continue this year. Aldo Nunn said the road crew has been doing it, but it won't happen before school, because it will not be a priority. John Cookson brought up that the town spent \$50,000 on a skid steer to do the sidewalks and people will see it not being done for the kids going to school.

Subsequently, on December 17, Angela Ward posted on Front Porch Forum: "I am wondering if anyone will be caring for our sidewalks this year? This morning the sidewalks were very slippery, and an older student almost fell just walking to school."

On January 5, the topic resurfaced at the Selectboard meeting, and John wanted to discuss it in executive session, and so did Ruth Goodrich. Fred Ducharme didn't see a reason for the executive session. Ruth mentioned they were currently down one person on the road crew and town should consider hiring someone. Fred concurred, and recalled that the road crew didn't do all the parking lots and sidewalks in the past. He felt they should be dedicated to the roads. Ruth agreed and said they had several good candidates. Ruth made a motion the town should hire a part-time employee and the board approved it. Ruth asked if John would be willing to train someone on the skid steer, but John responded that he wouldn't train someone, but would do the job. Mike said they needed a complete list of what must be cleared, and Betty already had the list. John verbalized that to do everything on the list would take at least 8 hours.

The town posted an advertisement of the job opening on Front Porch Forum on December 10, for a person to perform the duties of clearing the sidewalks of snow and ice, plow town parking lots, and all fire hydrants. The person would report directly to the Selectboard and the deadline for applications was January 25.

The topic was again discussed at the January 19 Selectboard meeting, but since there were no applicants, the discussion concerned whether it should be contracted, or the town should hire some-

one. Mike questioned how the person would know to go out and plow. Jenn Gochey asked if this was being bid out, and if not, why do we want another town employee. John noted the town had bought a skid steer to clear the sidewalks, and Ruth responded that the town had budgeted money for someone to use the equipment.

By the February 2 meeting, the town had received an application for the sidewalk and dry hydrant snow clearing position from John Miner. Betty also said she had received an application for Road Commissioner, but the Selectboard noted the position hadn't been advertised yet. Ruth was pleased that the town had received a resume, and that it was good to keep the money in the community. Mike queried about the application deadline, and Betty said it was "today." Matt Nally proposed that there needed to be an interview and hiring process and Ruth said they should set up an appointment. She mentioned that the road crew was "well strapped."

Jenn Gochey again questioned why the town was hiring another employee. Fred responded by explaining the issue was overtime for the road crew and how it impacts the budget. Ruth continued by remarking the position has already been budgeted and the town isn't spending the money, and the road crew does it after they've done everything else.

Matt summarized the discussion, the town either contracts sidewalks or hires a part-time employee. He speculated that there would be time to get someone new up to speed, which is logistically more difficult than just contract out the sidewalks for the rest of the winter. Jim Wolynetz asked if the reason why this process was started was due to overtime being out of control? Fred responded that it was started due to complaints about the sidewalks before school.

Many of the Selectboard members and the Town Clerk said they had not heard any complaint lately, and there was agreement that the budgeted overtime hours for the road crew appeared to be sufficient thus far. Ultimately, a consensus was reached that the Selectboard wasn't going to act upon the application and continue with having the road crew handle snow clearance on the sidewalks.

Matt said it is premature to sell the property without knowing what the town folk want to do with the existing firehouse. He continued that it doesn't make much sense to sell the property if the board doesn't know if it will be needed. Ruth wanted to ask the voters a yes/no question about wanting a new firehouse.

Fred tried to reign in the discussion by pointing out they had discussed the topic last week and voted not to put it on the ballot. John observed the board has been discussing the topic for two years and nothing has been done. Mike interjected that this shouldn't be rushed, and the Fire Department hasn't been part of this current discussion. He agreed the issues Ruth and John brought up are valid, and there are other properties to consider. Fred said this is an important decision, and waiting another year isn't a lot for an important decision.

(see *New Firehouse*, page 7)

New Firehouse

(continued from page 6)

Matt commented that he found it difficult to ask the voters to make a decision when the community is not well informed. He noted the information requested from the Fire Department has not been provided. He wants the board to do their due diligence then provide the information to the public before putting a question on the ballot.

Karen Larsen commented in the Zoom chat "There has been zero public discussion and there is no current information in the community. This is premature. You can't have a voice without information." Jim Wolynetz agreed, and Jennifer Gochey commented "Matt, you are correct, we don't have enough information for the public to make this decision."

John suggested making a list of the information people want to hear. And Ruth agreed the board needed more information. The conversation continued but shifted to getting information from the Fire Department. The board agreed to defer until the January 22 special meeting.

At the special meeting on January 22, the board revisited the proposed article regarding a new firehouse. Mike restarted the discussion by recalling in a previous meeting the board voted not to sell the property yet, but they were working on a compromise. Mike drafted an article for discussion with the intent to move the discussion forward. He read the article: "Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot authorize the Selectboard to study the viability of constructing a new fire department building and make recommendations prior to Town Meeting 2022 for the

voters' consideration." Mike further explained it as a process of driving this forward with input from various people and other factors.

Ruth agreed that, if we're going to hang onto the property, we should take that year and do the research. Mike added that we need to understand what Cabot needs in the future. Matt appreciated what everyone has said so far, and it is realistic for the town to look at the fire department and clarified that nothing will happen in the timeline of a year. Mike and Ruth responded that this would just be a research period.

Several people spoke from the public. First, Ian Ackerman chimed in and agreed with what everyone has said. Jim Wolynetz asked why an article is needed, when it's already the responsibility of the Town to do this research.

Michelle read some comments that were posted on the Zoom chat: Susie Socks, "I agree with Jim and Alexandria," and she is concerned about having a town vote. Johanna Thibault spoke next and felt the entire Selectboard seems to agree about pursuing this idea and agrees with Susie that a town vote is a concern and questioned what happens if the vote is "No". Ruth responded that this is an attempt to include the public in the process.

Johanna disagreed and pointed out that people may interpret the article as a decision to build a firehouse, rather than just a decision to do research. She continued that it would be best for the board to do this research in the coming year and just avoid the vote this year. John chimed in at this point and agreed with Johanna. Others agreed and the board decided not to put the proposed article on the ballot.



RUTH GOODRICH Selectboard Candidate

I have been asked by quite a number of folks to "state my platform". That is not my style, but it has become evident that little is known of those of us who live "this side of the hill". We like it that way! While that might make some assume we "over here" don't know much about what's going on "over there", it is quite the opposite. Many of our town leaders & servants have come from this side of the hill over the centuries. So here goes:

I have lived in Cabot for 40 years & married into the Goodrich/Abbott family that has been here since the early settlement of the town. That said, I have spent all that time living, raising my family, supporting my husband and building a business on this side of Danville Hill and thus pretty much out of the vision of the village inhabitants. I am a very private person, but on the other hand have been heavily involved in many things – so maybe this will give some perspective:

I have a broad Farm/Agriculture background

Nursing field: Several years in central VT area, Retired

EMT on Walden Fast Squad, Danville Rescue, Cabot Ambulance, Champlain Valley First Response for 10+ years. Retired - but then recertified to help Cabot Ambulance.

American Red Cross disaster tech for many years, local & national levels in FL (hurricanes Charlie, Wilma, Ivan)& TX (hurricane Katrina, one of 4 assistants to the shelter director at the Reliant Center & Houston Astrodome)Retired

Currently a Team Rubicon disaster worker, local & national level - a "first in" response group Assisted after Hurricane Harvey in Beaumont, TX, demolishing homes for rebuild. Safety officer for our unit.

Married 43 years, 3 daughters, 3 grandchildren Lots of kids we mentored & sheltered.

Business owner – multiple businesses : Welding, tree removal, excavation, roadside mowing for towns & state of Vt. For 35 years, Maple syrup production- since 1979, now with 2 sugarhouses & 140,000 taps, Operate a Store for sugaring equipment sales & service, another store for production & sale of maple products: retail, wholesale & nationwide mail-order, conduct year round tours of our operation for tourism since 1980, Construction for 40 years– both standard & timber frame structures, installation of sap collection systems from Wisconsin to Maine for 40 years. Motivational speaker and instructor at maple schools & events across the maple region. I do the accounting, recordkeeping & management of all aspects & have worked hands on in all areas as well. Employ 18 – 25 workers +/-

Operate Blossom & Berry farm for the owners. Pick your own blueberry patch.

Trained scoutmaster with BSA, participated in and taught Woodbadge (scoutmaster training courses), staff member at National Jamboree at the Summit High Adventure base in WV and participated in 86 mile hike at Philmont scout ranch in NM. Climbing instructor. Merit badge instructor. Cub scout leader. Retired

Church Leadership positions for over 20 years teaching in Women's & youth organizations, seminary & missionary departments on local, state & regional levels. Camp director for several years, staff member & cook for many more years, at a large camp for Young Women.

Heavy equipment operator.

Artist, photographer, graphic design, quilter, basket weaver, knitter, wool spinner – avid crafts person. Musician, vocalist, native American style flute performer & instructor

Foster Parent

Genealogist for over 30 years

Helped organize the Cabot Women's Auxillary, & we made thousands of masks for the community

Serving on the Selectboard is relatively simple and much easier than many of the others. Some people might say that's way too much, but on the contrary, with proper time management I have lots of time to raise animals, garden and enjoy the great outdoors. I am deeply committed to my country, my community, my family & friends. I believe it is vitally important to support others in a time of need. Especially now with the Pandemic. I am running for either the 2 or 3 year position. I enjoy serving the town and will continue to do my very best. I am looking forward to the candidate forum.

Respectfully,

Ruth Goodrich



Faith in
Action

Cabot Food Shares

Wednesday, March 10th - 12:00 - 2:00

Wednesday, March 24th - 12:00 - 2:00

Wednesday, April 14th - 12:00 - 2:00

Wednesday, April 28th - 12:00 - 2:00

Cabot Community Dinners

Saturday, March 20th

Saturday, April 17th

Arthritis Exercise Zoom Classes

Mondays & Thursdays at 10:00 AM

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www.faithinactionvt.org



Cabot Ballot Samples

OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
CABOT, VERMONT
MARCH 2, 2021

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

A. TO VOTE, completely fill in the OVAL to the right of your choice(s) like this: ☐

B. Follow directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office.

C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

FOR SELECTPERSON	FOR DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR	FOR TRUSTEE CABOT LIBRARY
FOR 2 YEARS VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE IAN ACKERMANN ☐	FOR 1 YEAR VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE SUSAN CARPENTER ☐	FOR 3 YEARS VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE KURT STEINERT ☐
RUTH GOODRICH ☐	(Write in) _____	(Write in) _____
FOR SELECTPERSON	FOR CEMETERY COMMISSIONER	FOR WILLEY BUILDING COMMITTEE
FOR 3 YEARS VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE RUTH GOODRICH ☐	FOR 1 YEAR VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE MELVIN CHURCHILL ☐	FOR 3 YEARS VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE FRED DUCHARME ☐
MICHAEL HOGAN ☐	(Write in) _____	(Write in) _____

TOWN ARTICLES

Art. 1. Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the payment of real and personal property taxes on August 19, 2021 and September 18, 2021 to be paid to the Cabot Town Hall postmarked on or before that date and that such taxes will bear an interest at a rate of one percent per month from the date of delinquency for the first three months and thereafter one and one-half percent per month thereafter until the due date of such tax pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5136; and, Escheat of delinquent taxes shall be paid to the collector of delinquent taxes for payments made on or before the date of payment to 8 percent of the tax collected pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1044? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 8. Shall the voters of Cabot vote to exempt 100% of inventory tax of manufactures and merchants pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 3848? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 9. Shall the voters of Cabot approve the installation of an electric vehicle (EV) charging station located at the Willey Building, the site of which will be ultimately paid by Efficiency Vermont and through Cabot Community Association (CCA) grant and private donations in an effort to encourage visitors and patronage of local businesses while vehicles are being charged? It is intended that the costs of the facility for charging are to be recouped from the electric vehicle owner utilizing the charging station based on the kilowatt hours used? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 10. Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot direct the CCIF Committee to pay off, in single lump sums from the CCIF Fund, the existing rate subsidies totaling approximately \$13,250 and the town garage loan commitments of \$115,156.98, when the total annual expenses and payments for all commitments are projected to exceed the annual revenues authorized by the CCIF Plan? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

TOWN ARTICLES CONTINUED

Art. 11. Shall the Town of Cabot authorize the Select Board to sell a piece of property located on 3339 Main Street, Parcel Id #10-103.000 the Green Mountain Masonic Lodge, with the Masons having a lifetime estate to occupy the thing, the currently assessed value of \$282,264 (according to last year's town report inventory) with the proceeds of the sale to be deposited in the General Fund as a land sale? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 12. Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot appropriate the sum of \$874,199.00 to defray the General Expenses of the Town, with an estimated \$74,205.00 coming from income and \$599,999.55 from local taxes? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 13. Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot appropriate the sum of \$794,342.00 to repair and maintain the Highways of the Town including summer and special treatment, of which an estimated \$132,600 is to come from income and \$661,742.00 from local taxes? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 14. Shall the Town of Cabot authorize the CCIF fund, to be used to forgive the outstanding Willey Building Loan balance, the amount of \$24,532.78? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 15. Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to support the Cabot Conservation Fund? [Australian Ballot]

YES ☐ NO ☐

Art. 16. Shall the voters of the Town of Cabot approve the following appropriations? (all amounts listed below are approved as requested and listed in Article 16)

American Red Cross	500
A.W.A.R.E.	500
Central Vermont Adult Basic Education	500
Central Vermont Council on Aging	500
Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice	3,200
CIRCLE	500
Family Center of Washington County	500
Friends of the Winoski River	500
Good Beginners of Central VT	700
Green Mountain Forest	733
Green Up Vermont	100
Home Share Now	150
Joe's Pond Association	750
Kingdom Animal Shelter	500
Onion River Food Shelf	1,000
OUR House of Central VT	250
People's Health & Wellness Clinic	300
Mosaic formerly Sexual Assault Crisis Team	500
Twin Valley Senior Center	3,000
Vermont Association for the Blind	300
Vermont Family Network	250
Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force	100
Washington County Youth Service Bureau	250
West Danville Community Club	500
Woodbury-Calais Food shelf	139
TOTAL	\$17,322

YES ☐ NO ☐

Town Meeting Voting

Please note the following information regarding Town Meeting Australian Ballot Voting on Tuesday, March 2, 2021:

The Ballots for Town Meeting were mailed mid-February for all registered voters in Cabot. Because of this, you need not call for an absentee ballot. Please do call at 563-2279 if you have not yet received your ballot. These ballots can be returned in several ways to our office:

1. We have a drop box to the right of the door that you can safely put your ballot envelope in. We do check this several times a day.
2. You may drop it in the mail (it is postage paid). If you mail it, it must be at the Cabot post office by 2:00 p.m. on March 2. I would recommend that, if you wait until closer to March 2, it would be best to put it in our drop box or drop it off at our office on March 2.
3. You may come in on the day of election (March 2 from 7:00 a.m.-7:00

p.m.) to either drop your ballot off or bring your blank ballot in and vote in person. (All safety precautions will take place at the polls, including wearing a mask and sanitizing after each voter.)

4. The sample ballot is posted on the website and on our bulletin board, the Cabot General Store bulletin board, and the post office bulletin board.

On March 2, you will be voting only on Town Articles. We will have another vote for the School Directors and budget on April 6, 2021, which will follow the same protocol as above. This information will also be posted again before the school election vote.

Also, Town Reports are now available. They can be found at the Town Clerk's Office, the Cabot General Store, Harry's Hardware, or we will be happy to mail one to you. Just give us a call at 563-2279.

Betty Ritter,
Cabot Town Clerk/Treasurer

ADVERTISE IN THE THE CABOT CHRONICLE

Reach up to 2000 households by the first of each month in Cabot, Marshfield and West Danville

Plus households in Hardwick, Plainfield, Danville and beyond!

E-mail for more information: ads@cabotvermont.org

Re-Elect

MICHAEL HOGAN

Cabot Selectboard Article #3



◆ 35 Years of State and Local Government Experience ◆

◆ Strong Financial & Planning Background ◆

◆ Long time Cabot Resident ◆

◆ Good Listener and flexible to see all sides of local issues

Town Meeting Vote on Article 8 Inventory Tax Exemption

by Cabot Board of Listers

If you follow Front Porch Forum, you may have noticed that on February 16 the Listers asked for a YES vote on Article 8 exempting inventory tax to support modern practice. We made this request after unsuccessfully searching town records for a previous vote on this issue.

On February 17, R.D. Eno posted his recollection of this vote already occurring

at Town Meeting 1979. With that information, and with the assistance of the Town Clerk, the Listers were able to find that vote in a dusty book in the vault. The voters of Cabot voted 77 to 64 to repeal the inventory tax on "stock-in-trade" at Town Meeting 1979.

However, Article 8 is already in print for Town Meeting 2021. It is superfluous now, but Listers request voters either vote YES or leave it blank.

One less thing to think about!

CCIF/UDAG Report

Hello Cabot! Greg Burt here- vice chair of the Cabot Community Investment Fund, formerly known as UDAG. An update on the comings and goings of the fund is available in the Town of Cabot Annual Report, but here is another offering...

First, a bit of history. UDAG was formed in 1992 to handle a \$2,000,000 trust that was established after a federal grant was received by the town of Cabot. UDAG was renamed CCIF in 2015. The main goal of the fund has remained the same since its founding: "The purpose of the Cabot Community Investment Fund (CCIF) Plan is to provide financial resources, through a fair and consistent process, to local individuals and groups for activities and projects that serve to strengthen the economic, cultural, educational, environmental, and social well-being of the Cabot community." (CCIF Plan)

The past year has seen a lot of new challenges for the Cabot Community Investment Fund. At the 2020 town meeting, Cabot citizens voted to pay \$300,000 out of the fund to pay off loans taken previously for the town dump trucks. Paying off the loans was calculated to save about \$46,000 in interest for the town over a period of several years. The savings has and will positively affect taxpayers. The challenge that comes before CCIF committee members is that the fund has seen a dramatic decrease in value over the past several years. The balance stands at \$823,576.27 as of February 12, 2021. The fund earns about 4% interest annually, which at a value of \$823,576.27 generates about \$33,000 annually. As you can see, payments on the order of \$300,000 are not sustainable for many years to come.

It was decided in April of 2020 to remove the fund from stock market investments and into more secure investments and therefore the interest earnings have been significantly lower.

We stand at a significant crossroad with the use of the CCIF. If we decide to continue to implement the current plan adopted in March 2019, we will have to stop spending more than the average annual earnings and reintroduce the funds back into the stock market. The job of the CCIF committee is to implement the plan adopted by Cabot voters. We are to manage the finances diligently, monitoring how money is acquired and spent. Ultimately, the big-ticket items that are voted on at Town meeting are out of the hands of the committee, left to voters to decide whether

funds from the CCIF will be spent on the proposed articles.

The plan states that "CCIF funds should not be used to offset Town or School operating expenses as a method of reducing the tax rate." And "Town Meeting Grants can be given to any Cabot community organization or Cabot governmental agency for capital projects that meet the goals of the CCIF Plan, subject to the approval of the voters of Cabot." And another goal being to "Preserve the fund so as to be able to continue to meet the needs of the community for many years to come." The \$300,000 to pay off road equipment allocated by article 15 of the 2020 town meeting did not meet the goals of the CCIF plan. Frank Kampf, then chair of the CCIF, and I met with the select board on January 13 of 2020 and made it clear that a grant of \$300,000 to be used for road equipment loan payments was in violation of the CCIF plan, but the article was published and voted on regardless. As I said earlier, the motives of the select board in utilizing those funds were clear and honest and did save the town \$46,000 in interest. To me, it is clear that the CCIF plan needs to be changed to meet the real goals of Cabot residents and do so in a manner that is implementable.

I personally think there are three viable options for a new CCIF plan that may be more suitable.

1.) Divide the fund in half. One half shall be placed in a trust with the Cabot School Board as executors. The plan will stipulate that the entire fund be spent within five years on a capital investment project (such as building renovations). In addition, all expenditures must be matched equally by other monies. In other words, half the project would be funded by the trust, and the other half funded by grants, donations, tax dollars, etc. Lastly, all expenditures shall be voted on at town meeting by Cabot voters.

As to the other half of the CCIF- put it into a trust with the Cabot Select Board as executors. The plan will stipulate that the funds be spent within five years on a capital investment project (such as renovations to the wastewater treatment facility). In addition, all expenditures must be matched equally by other monies. In other words, half the project would be funded by the trust, and the other half funded by grants, donations, tax dollars, etc. Lastly, all ex-
(see 'CCIF/UDAG Report', page 11)

History of the Green Mountain Lodge #68

by Brittany Butler

What exactly is the Green Mountain Masonic Lodge # 68? The Cabot Lodge was chartered on January 12, 1865, by the Grand lodge of Vermont F. & A. M. The first permanent home for the Masons was where Cabot Garage now stands, known as the Farrington Block; they had 19 members for their first meeting and at their height they were 109 members strong. The Farrington Block was torn down shortly after the fire of the Winooski Hotel. There is some recollection of the flood of 1927 damaging the block and that is the reason it was torn down. The Lodge was moved to the second floor of the building where the Cabot Village Store stands today; during that time, the store had many different names. Unfortunately, in 1935, the Union Block burned to the ground, and nothing was salvaged from the fire. There was also a fire in 1920 of a "large white house where the Masonic Hall now stands," owned by Jeanne and Charles Farr. In 1935, Jeannie and Charles Farr deeded the .5 acres of land where their residence once stood to the Green Mountain Lodge #68.

The ladies of the Eastern Star fund-raised to build the current Masonic Hall, which was constructed by members of the Green Mountain Lodge. The wood was milled at Clark's sawmill in Lower Cabot by Chubb Clark. In 1936, the Masons were able to move into their new home. The building was owned solely by the Lodge until February 16, 2007, when



Green Mtn Lodge in 1979

it was given to the town with several conditions in the deed. The lodge was able to make it on their own from 1935-2007 by dues and donations from members. When member enrollment started to decline and dues no longer covered their expenses, they decided to give the building to the town in return for a life lease of the second floor.

The Green Mountain Lodge has been a fixture in our little community for 156 years and still has active members, even though they have been unable to meet physically in the lodge for the last year due to the Coronavirus. The Lodge also houses Faith in Action, which does so much for our community.

(Information collected from Rootsweb, Cabot Historical Society, Cabot History published 1999, and members of the community and lodge, also from the vault in the Cabot Town Clerk's office.)

VOTE FOR

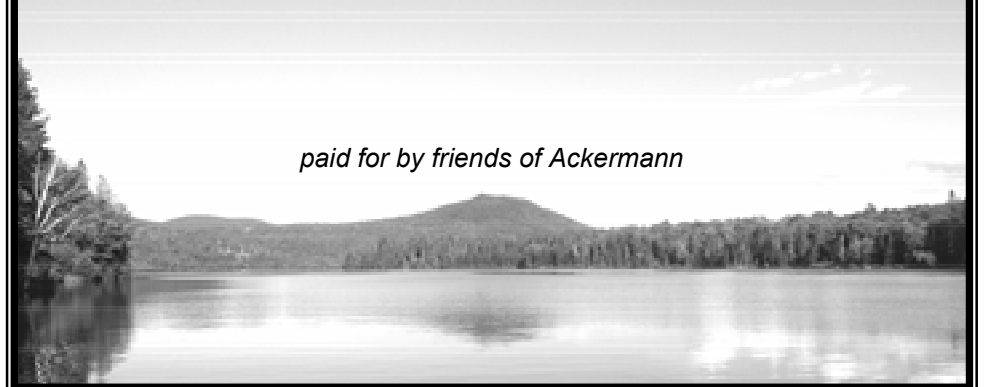
Ian Ackermann

On Town Meeting Day

Cabot Select Board Member.

"It's time for a change."

paid for by friends of Ackermann



Doing Their Part Cabot's Young Health Care Professionals

by Amanda Legare

Everyone's lives have changed because of COVID-19, but perhaps none more than students from Cabot who are now in the medical field. We thought it would be interesting to do a "where are they now" report on young Cabot folks who went into some form of medicine. Turns out there are many Cabot graduates who headed in that direction. We apologize to those we missed or could not contact.

Danelle Hollyer (formerly Danelle Parish, Cabot class of 2005) went into the service planning on becoming a medic. She got married instead and continued working in the medical field. She now owns a company providing palliative and hospice at-home care.

Bryden Considine is an oncologist at the Yale Hospital/Smilow Cancer Center. He graduated from Cabot in 2004. For a Cabot school project, he grew bacteria samples collected from various school surfaces in dozens of petri dishes under his bed. In 2017 he began an Oncology & Hematology Fellowship at Yale Medical Center. He and his wife Emma have a one-year-old daughter.

Roz Vara, class of 2006, has been an RN for three years and works on a medical-surgical floor at Denver Health Hospital in Colorado. At the time of this writing, she is working a two-month stint as a travel nurse on a COVID-19 floor in Salt Lake City. She is graduating in May with a Nurse Practitioner advanced degree. Her parents are Vicky Palmer and Jon Vara.



Katherine Elmer, class of 1999, is a clinical herbalist and founder of "Railyard Apothecary" and founder and co-director of "Spoonful Herbs." She is a lecturer in Integrative Health at UVM. Her parents are Peg and Ken Elmer.



Christopher Furey, Cabot class of 2000, graduated from the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. He is a family medicine physician at Care New England Medical Group in East Greenwich, Rhode Island. He also serves as an

Assistant Professor of Family Medicine (clinical) at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. He is married and has a five-year-old daughter. He was featured in Rhode Island Monthly's Top Doctors of the Year in 2018. His parents are Maria Acchione-Goodrich and Michael Furey.

Darah August was the valedictorian of Cabot's class of 1989. She attended

UVM Medical School and is now a family physician in St. Paul, Minnesota. Her parents are Stephen Gregg and Cathleen Besch.

Anna Westervelt is a nurse practitioner doing a fellowship in hospice and palliative medicine at Dartmouth Hitchcock. She lives in Montpelier with her husband, Jared Blum, and a son and a daughter. Her parents are Jan and Janet Westervelt.

Kate (Cook) Buzzell, class of 1996, graduated from UVM (physical therapy) and got her master's in business from UNH. She works as a physical therapist at Maine Veterans Hospital in Scarborough, Maine.

Valarie (Cook) Devlin, class of 2000, graduated from UVM (molecular genetics) and got her master's in health. She works as a microbiologist for the Vermont Department of Health in Colchester. COVID-19 testing has been a primary focus for the past year.

Nicole Creighton graduated from Cabot in 1988 and her sister, **Victoria**, graduated three years later. They are both now physical therapists working at Victoria's practice (Victoria Hill Therapy) in Hardwick. Nicole is married to Jay Strong and has three daughters. Victoria is married to Aaron Hill and has a daughter and a son.

Dore Grier is in her fourth year at medical school and will graduate with a medical degree (MD). She is getting married May 22 and will be going into family medicine, possibly at Plainfield's Health Center.

Palmer Legare, class of 1998, is a nurse working on the Medical Surgical Neurology floor of the Adventist Shady Grove Medical Center in Rockville, Maryland. He is a qualified bilingual staff member (English/Spanish). His parents are Amanda Legare and the late Merrill Legare.



Isaac Leader lived in East Cabot from 1978 - 1986 (Cabot School grades 1 - 8). He graduated from UVM and the UVM Medical School and is now an internal medicine doctor living in the Bronx with a wife and two children. His parents are Janet and Andy Leader.

Sam Carpenter has completed his first level of EMT certification and is now getting his "clinical time" in South Portland, Maine. He will then need to pass the National EMT test to become certified. He transports everything and everyone from new-born babies to donated organs, and he regularly transports COVID-19 patients. His parents are Sue Carpenter and David Carpenter.

Kelly (Gochey) Griggs, class of 2012, is a nurse working at the Health Center in Plainfield. She is also the school nurse at the Cabot School and is a certified lactation counsellor. She is married to Sid Griggs (Cabot road crew) and lives in Cabot. They have a son and daughter.

Shane Gochey is a pharmaceutical chemist at Milan Pharmaceuticals in St. Albans. He is married with two girls. Kelly and Shane's parents are Jennifer and Tim Gochey.

Alisha Celley (class of 2017) is at UVM getting a doctorate in physical therapy. She hopes to practice in the area. Her parents are Paul and Susan Celley.

Rebekah Henderson Klingler, class of 1999, earned a doctorate in cell and molecular chemistry and works at Alverno College in Wisconsin, where she teaches nursing students the biology courses they need to pass to become RNs. She is married and has two children. Her parents are Diana and Ken Klingler.

Dylan Newton, class of 2001, is a psychiatric technician in the Tampa Bay, Florida, area. He is married and they have two daughters. His parents are Dale and Janet Newton.

Michelle Russell, class of 1995, is a nurse in Crested Butte, Colorado. She is a quality control coordinator and works clinically in the Progressive Care Unit and Oncology. She also works weekly at community COVID-19 vaccination clinics and swabbing operations.

Tanya Blaisdell became a LNA in 2005 and then a nurse in 2009 after having three children. She has worked in labor and delivery the entire time. In October she left CVMC and now works at UVMC. Her daughter, Makenna, is studying nursing as well.

Shannon Maxwell Sanborn, class of 1995, lives in Barre with her husband, Jon, and their 17-year-old daughter. Shannon works for Athena Health on medical software. Her parents are Michael and Debby Maxwell.



Emma Stecker Nally is a nurse at St. Francis Hospital in Federal Way, Washington. Emma, class of 2015, married Will Nally, class of 2016. She is the daughter of Kris and Paul Stecker. He is the son of Rebecca and Matt Nally.

John Christman is a paramedic and firefighter in South Burlington.

Taylor Abbott, class of 2018, is completing her courses at Castleton College and will become a nurse.

Northern White Cedar Swamps

by Chris Duff,
Cabot Conservation Committee

This past year the Cabot Conservation Committee completed the first part of a Natural Communities study for the town of Cabot with help from a town grant from the CCIF. The goal of the study was to identify common and significant natural communities in the town and share this information with landowners and the town so the landowners can manage their property to conserve and enhance these special places. The CCC hired consulting naturalist Matt Peters from Woodbury to perform the study and to follow up with a public presentation. Matt prioritized certain areas of town based on existing state maps and data and the CCC obtained permission from landowners for Matt to visit these sites and possibly to share the resulting information with the town and state. Matt presented the information at a very well-attended public zoom presentation in November.

Matt's work focused on various areas of the town and identified several interesting and significant natural communities. Of those communities were several sites that featured Northern White Cedar Swamps and Northern White Cedar Seepages. To most of us, this may not seem so unusual since we see so many cedar trees in the area, but Northern White Cedar Swamps are uncommon and significant natural communities in Vermont according to the Vermont Natural Heritage program. Historically, logging and habitat destruction have taken their toll on these communities. Cedar once was, and still is, used extensively for building materials due to its rot resistance and high insular properties, let alone its pleasant aromatic feature.

Northern white cedar swamps can be enchanting places; dark, damp, and

mystical with hanging lichens and a deep soft sphagnum mossy forest floor. The trees in these swamps can grow to more than 200 years old. A mature and undisturbed cedar forest is often very dark with a thick forest canopy restricting sunlight and consequently has minimal understory growth. They generally grow on moist and deep peaty soils that create a thick moss layer underfoot. Though peaty soils are often thought of as acidic, the cedar swamp soils are usually neutral or alkaline due to mineral-rich groundwater seepage. Northern white cedar swamp communities can be hosts to some of Vermont's rare and endangered species of orchids and sedges as well as amphibians. The northern white cedar swamps usually have slow moving water within them, but the Northern White Cedar Seepages, while similar in botanical features, are generally on a gentle slope with slow moving streams through them. Aside from the beauty of these Northern White Cedar communities, they are often hosts to winter deer yards. On West Hill pond there is a clear 6' height line all the way around the pond from deer browsing the low hanging foliage from the ice in the winter.

Matt has identified a few of these Northern White Cedar swamps and seepages across town and has informed the associated landowners. Some of these records have been submitted to the State Heritage program and will be entered into the State's database. If you would like more information on some of the locations of these communities, would like to be part of the next phase of the study or are interested in the results of the study, please contact the Cabot Conservation Committee. The 2020 Cabot Natural Communities Report can be found on the Town of Cabot website <https://cabotvt.us/>.

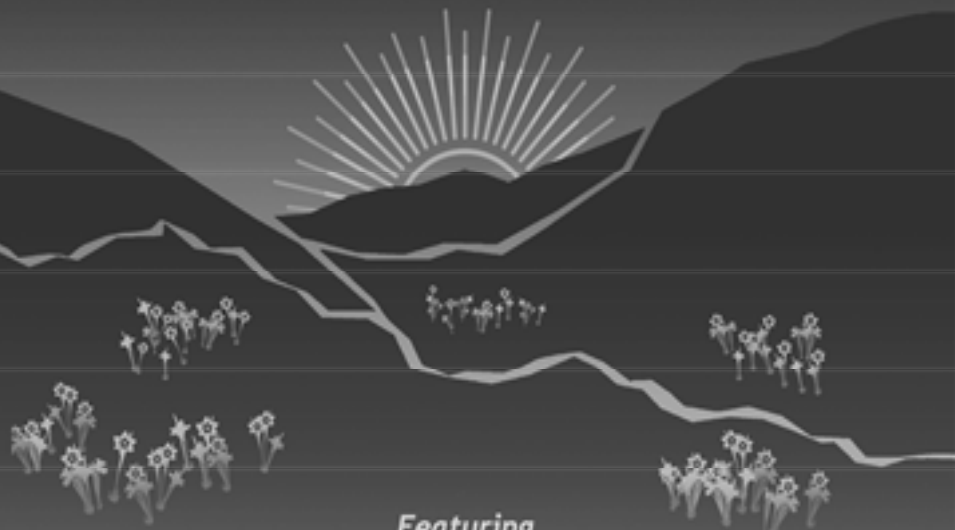
A Celtic Equinox

Online Festival of Celtic Music

March 19th, 20th and 21st • 2021

A Cabot Arts Production

In Partnership with Féile na Tána Festival



Featuring

Kevin Burke IRL • Steafan & Saskia CAN • John McIntyre IRL
The Zeichner Trio VT • Dermot Byrne IRL • Laoise Kelly IRL
Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn IRL • Zoë Conway IRL • Robbie Harris IRL
Edwina Guckian IRL • Edel Fox IRL • Louise Mulcahy IRL
Joanne Garton VT • Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh IRL • Footworks VT
Mary Bergin IRL • Donal Lunny IRL • Woodson and Finley ME
Dominique Dodge NH • Brian Finnegan IRL • Gerry O'Connor IRL
Arcanist VT • Ava White VT • Owen Kennedy ME • Hillary Weitzner VT

Suggested \$20 admission fee supports participating musicians, Cabot Arts, and the Féile na Tána festival

View online at commarts.org
Info at cabotarts.org



Joe's Pond Ice Out

Despite the turmoil of the COVID-19 pandemic this past year, the Joe's Pond Ice Out contest will take place again this spring. Tickets have been printed and are ready for purchase at Hasting's Store in West Danville and Marty's First Stop in Danville. Tickets will also be available at outlets in St. Johnsbury, Danville, Barre, and Montpelier by March 1.

Check the Joe's Pond website at www.joespondvermont.com for a list of outlets as well as an on-line option to purchase tickets. Guesses are \$1.00 apiece. Tickets must be returned to the Joe's Pond Association or postmarked April 1, 2021 to be considered.

The people of Joe's Pond and those who follow the Joe's Pond Ice Out contest worldwide are anxiously awaiting the "official start of spring" when the ice goes out on their 299-acre pond in Vermont's

Northeast Kingdom. The Joe's Pond Association will place the block /flag on the ice that will sink and stop the clock to mark the official Ice Out date and time. Last spring, the ice went out on April 15, 2020, at 6:07 a.m. After expenses, one half of the ticket proceeds will go to the person with the closest guess. The remainder of the proceeds will be used by the Joe's Pond Association to preserve water quality and to help fund Association activities such as the July 4th fireworks.

Though there are currently few signs that spring is near, this event gives locals hope that there will be summer on Joe's Pond again this year.

For further information contact:

Michelle Walker
walkermecats@charter.net
802-563-2357

RE-ELECT

Rory Thibault for School Board



I am committed to:

- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Civility
- Pragmatism

A strong & sustainable school is essential to Cabot's future. We must be prepared to adapt as our challenges evolve — and embrace change when necessary.



CCIF/UDAG Report

(continued from page 9)

penditures shall be voted on at town meeting by Cabot voters.

2.) Designate all CCIF monies to developing a suitable business venture that would stimulate the Cabot economy. Plans are in the works that would tie in existing businesses and infrastructure to create a new, authentic product rooted in the hills of Cabot. If this venture prospered, it would grow our local economy and help galvanize the businesses of Cabot. I wish I could indulge you all in the details of this, but it is very much in its early stages. I promise to give more details in the coming months, be it a rabbit trail, or venture promisingly feasible.

3.) Designate all the CCIF toward recreation, trail, and village park creation. Think of a smooth bike path looping gently around the village, better recreational access to swimming spots with clean cool water, a nice downtown park to pair with nearby food establishments and cultural activities. My wife and I recently purchased electric assist bikes. What a way to explore the hills of Cabot! I've lived here for 32 years and found roads I'd never gone down before. Quietly peddling with ease, I found myself absorbing the sights, sounds, and smells of my hometown in an unexpectedly refreshing way. E-bike rentals anyone?

What I'm getting at is there is hope for a great use of the CCIF that will benefit all residents for a lasting time. The cur-

rent plan and its implementation need change to make that something great come out of what we have left. And I hope we will have that plan to offer to you in the next year.

I recently heard that the late and wonderful Al Ackermann had suggested early on that part of the then UDAG fund be used to build an indoor public pool in Cabot and the other part of the fund earn interest to pay for the maintenance for the foreseeable future. In looking back, I think Al was on the right track.

SPRING AHEAD



March 14, 2021 at 2:00 a.m.
Daylight Savings Time Begins

*Set your clocks ahead
1 hour on Sunday!*

Staying Small Benefits Students Now More Than Ever

by Rebecca Tatistcheff,
Cabot School Principal

On January 26, community members, prospective families, current students, and alumni joined together for the first Cabot School *virtual* Open House. This event was aimed at helping prospective students and families learn more about the high school program at Cabot School. As it turns out, it also served as an important point of celebration and connection for community members to learn more about the work of the high school. That conversation highlighted, for me, the importance of small schools in the landscape of education right now. Two alums of Cabot School (who now attend Bennington College and UVM) spoke about their connections with teachers and the importance of those relationships in building their confidence and helping them to communicate clearly with peers and adults. In larger schools, students who struggle can often be allowed to stay quiet, to walk the halls less noticed. At Cabot School, all students are known well by all the adults on campus. Together, we create a space where no student or adult is invisible, and all students can receive personalized support. This was particularly evident in the stories of our current students as well.

In the time of COVID-19, these connections are particularly important for a multitude of reasons. First, we know that students, like us, are feeling a sense of continued stress as the pandemic wears on. Students across the country continue to express they feel disconnected, they miss friends, and they crave social interactions. In larger schools, students' emotional well-being can go unnoticed. Here, it does not. Our guidance team, which consists of two guidance counselors and a student success coordinator, connect with every student every day. They greet every student personally at arrival. They meet with stu-

dents regularly to engage in social emotional learning, community building, and be responsive to students' needs. They don't just know a student's name; they know their story. No student goes unnoticed. In this time of added stress, these connections are essential. As we begin to look toward next year, their ability to plan for community healing and connection will help us to navigate the long-term impacts of collective trauma.

Second, we know that many students across the country will likely end this year nine or more months behind where we might expect them to be. News headlines consistently talk about the "COVID slide." Our small size affords us the ability to be able to find time to personalize learning for students. Teams regularly gather to talk about each student academically and to make adjustments to meet their needs. This year, we have seen gains for many of our students in both reading and math. While we know there will still be much work to do, small, personalized schools are in a better position to do this work.

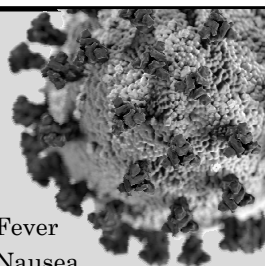
The research on the benefits of small learning communities is well documented. Students in these schools are afforded a greater sense of belonging and connection and this helps them to learn. In urban school districts, such as New York City, the breakdown of large high schools into smaller learning communities resulted in significant increases in graduation and college-going rates. Like us, urban small schools often consolidate some programs, like sports, in favor of keeping class size and school size small so that every child is known. Small rural schools have known these benefits and challenges for much longer. And many, like myself, have long recognized that these benefits make it worth it to grapple with the challenges. Now, more than ever, staying small means staying healthy: socially, emotionally, and academically.

CDC: What Symptoms to Watch For

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- Sore throat
- Cough
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Loss of taste or smell
- Fever
- Nausea
- Diarrhea

Other symptoms are signs of serious illness. If someone has trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, or difficulty staying awake, get medical care immediately.



Town Clerk's Office Unavailable for Regular Business

Tuesday, March 2, 2021
Town Meeting Day

To focus on voter safety. All health safety protocols and secure election procedures will be observed.



FRANK KAMPF

FOR SCHOOL BOARD

Our children are our most precious resource and a good and affordable school is key to their future, and the future of Cabot.

Frank was raised in a family that was dedicated to community service, and has carried on his parents tradition by volunteering for various organizations in Cabot. In local government he has served on the Planning Commission and the CCIF Committee. He currently serves on the CCA Board of Directors and is a staff writer for the Cabot Chronicle.

His interactions with Cabot School began when he met his future wife in 2008, who was a teacher at Cabot School from 2000 to 2012. Both of his step daughters graduated from Cabot, in 2011 and 2018. He and his wife have also hosted four high school exchange students over the past 6 years, from Spain, Georgia, Thailand and Mexico. They are hoping to host again, when the pandemic allows, to expose our youth to other cultures and expand their horizons.

With over 32 years of experience as a computer design engineer, Frank will bring an analytical approach to the many issues that the school will face as enrollment drops, and funding is squeezed.

Antiracism Work Continues

by Jan Van Fleet

Central Vermont Reading to End Racism (RER) is an organization that has been working in elementary schools in central Vermont for over 20 years. In an effort to bolster our country's aspiration to create "one nation... with liberty and justice for all," volunteers read children's literature that relates to racism and bullying of all kinds.

The organization was founded by beloved Vermont educator and activist Paij Wadley-Bailey, who died in 2016. Until the pandemic arrived in early 2020, volunteers had gone annually into each classroom in seven-to-ten local schools, reading a great variety of books (such as Dr. Seuss's *Sneetches*, *Teammates* by Peter Golenbock, or *Ruth and the Green Book* by Calvin Alexander) and engaging students in activities and discussion of the issues and thoughts raised in the books.

In the fall of 2020, when working in schools was no longer possible, RER created online resources for the use of schools, teachers and parents at <http://cvreadingtoendracism.blogspot.com/> with books appropriate for two broad grade levels, K-3 and 3-6. There is a summary of each book, along with discussion and activity suggestions.

Reading to End Racism is hoping volunteers will be able to go back into schools in the fall of 2021. If public



The late Paij Wadley-Bailey, who started Reading to End Racism in Central Vermont

health allows, they will be holding training sessions for new volunteers before the new school year. People who would like to become participants in the program can contact janetvanfleet@fairpoint.net or ehalp57@gmail.com.

March News from the Jaquith Public Library

We are sorry to announce we are still closed to patrons, However, we are open for curbside service on:

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY: 9:00 AM-12:00 P.M. & 3:00-6:00 P.M.

Visit our website for lists of new adult and youth books and other materials. Then call or email the library to make your requests and set up a time for pick-up. We need to know a time for your arrival so we can make sure to be within hearing distance of our new doorbell to the right of the front door.

For new adult books: www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/new-books.html
For new youth books: www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/new-and-featured-kids.html

We are still offering lots of fun activities you can do online or pick-up from curbside service and do at home:

The Lunch Bunch Book Club - Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m.

The Lunch Bunch Book Club is a book discussion group for kids aged 9-12 years old, in grades 4th-6th. Each week, kids will discuss a book from this year's Golden Dome Vermont Middle Grade Book Award List. Participants may tell the group about any Vermont Golden Dome Books they've been reading and enjoy a read aloud of a book selected by the group. The Whiting Library in Chester invited the Jaquith Library to join this informal gathering for fun, conversation, connection and to share a love of the great books nominated for this award! If you're interested in joining, please let Deborah know at jaquithyouth@gmail.com.



Snowshoes to Go!

We have seven pairs of snowshoes to lend out and we will be purchasing more in all sizes for all ages. You will get a pair of snowshoes and laminated cards for animal tracking and other wildlife discoveries. Call to reserve your pair today!

Exploring Red Clover Picture Book Series

Join us online as we explore Vermont's 2020/2021 Red Clover Picture

Book nominees! Over the next few months, Jaquith Library is providing recorded readings of each of the ten nominees, paired with resources for diving deeper into the book. Every two weeks until May, a new link will be available. Visit our website for the schedule and to enjoy the first four books in our program - *Planting Stores*, *Sea Bear*, *Lion of the Sky*, and *Fry Bread*. This program is geared for 5-10 year olds: <https://www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/red-clover-award.html>

In the spring, kids can vote for the winner of the Red Clover Book Award! **If you are interested in the take-home craft portion of the program, please contact Deborah to sign up. You only need to contact Deborah if you want the take-home craft - access to the online portion is open to all!

Email Deborah, Youth Services Librarian, at jaquithyouth@gmail.com
A huge thank you to the Red Clover Book Award Committee, and Vermont Department of Libraries.



Story Time at Home!

We now have ten different Story Time at Home bags you can check out and bring home. Each bag contains a collection of picture books (both fiction and non-fiction titles) and a related craft - with all the supplies and instructions you need to complete it. Themes available are Snow, Owls, Transportation, Butterflies, Friendship, Music & Dance, Moon, Gratitude, Pumpkins, and Bedtime. Take a little of the magic of story-time home with you! Have a theme you'd like to see? Let Deborah, our youth librarian, know: jaquithyouth@gmail.com.

Monthly Book Group for Adults Fourth Mondays of the Month at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for the Jaquith book group. For copies of the book, please stop by the library. New members are always welcome, and it's only one hour a month! We are currently using Zoom for our meetings.

March 22 - Chances Are by Richard Russo

Makerspace Kits Now Available For Checkout!

Our library of non-traditional lending items is growing! We now have eight STEAM-focused Maker kits catalogued and ready for checkout! Robotics kit, snap circuits electricity kit, engineering, and more! For a full list and description

of Maker kits, click the link and scroll down: <https://www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/new-and-featured-kids.html>.

Supported in part by the Vermont Humanities Council.

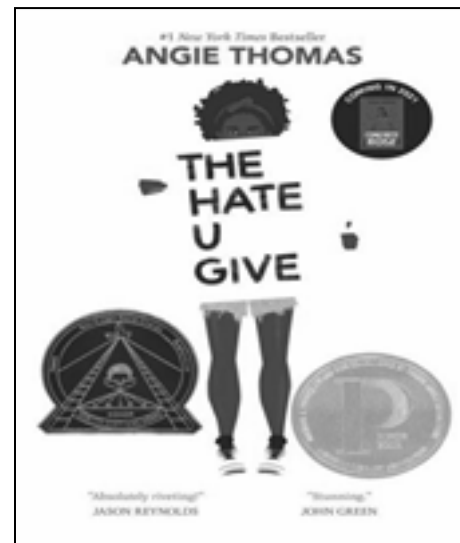
Chapters in History Seven; Deeper into the Middle East Second Saturday afternoons in 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

A free public program series co-sponsored by The Marshfield Historical Society and the Jaquith Public Library • March 13: *Bush* by Jean Edward Smith • April 10: *A Promised Land* by Barack Obama • May 8: *Leadership in Turbulent Times* by Doris Kearns Goodwin. Books are available for loan from the library. For more information, please call 454-1680. "The past changes a little every time we retell it." ---Hilary Mantel

Firewood Moisture Meter Now Available for Sign-Out

We now have a wood moisture meter available for patrons to check the moisture content of their firewood. Wood with moisture content of 20% or less burns hotter, creates more heat, and emits less harmful smoke. Sign out our meter to check your woodpile. For additional information on clean wood heating see: <https://dec.vermont.gov/wood-burning>.

Vermont Youth Book Awards -



Voted by Kids!

Looking for ideas on what to read next? Or suggestions for your kids? Every year, three youth literary awards are handed out with the assistance of the Vermont Department of Libraries. The nominees are chosen by a panel, and the winners are voted on by Vermont youth. Get your reading on!

--Red Clover Book Award (K-4): See above for information about our Red Clover Picture Book Program!

--Middle Grade Book Award (grade 4-8): Pick up a list of the 30 nominees for the Middle Grade Book Award - and a punch card to keep track! Read five from the list to be eligible to vote.

--Green Mountain Book Award (teens): There are 15 amazing YA picks for the Green Mountain Book Award - and voting is ongoing from now until spring. Vote for your favorite 2020/2021 nominees, as you read them. Link for voting here: <https://www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/green-mountain-book-award.html>

Youth Reader's Advisory

We know it can be tricky to pick out a

book when you can't browse our shelves. Not sure what books to choose for our curbside lending? Let Deborah, our Youth Librarian, help you with your selections! Email Deborah with your requests for specific titles, general topics or themes, and/or any questions: jaquithyouth@gmail.com. Emails received Tuesdays through Monday mornings by 10:00 a.m. will be filled and ready to pick up the following Tuesday.

Our Online Services:

Online access to eBooks and audiobooks is still available through Green Mountain Overdrive/Listen-up Vermont and Libby and they can be accessed through the library's website. Both of these services allow users to either stream or download audiobooks and eBooks and are free to library patrons. There are also digital resources available from the library, such as VT Online Library, Universal Class and Consumer Reports. You can find links to all of these from our website: www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/digital.html.

Activities/Ideas/Virtual Museum Visits and more, arranged by topic: <https://www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/new-digital-resources.html>

COVID-19 Information: <https://www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/covid-19-resources.html>

Homeschool/home study resources: <https://www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/home-study-resources.html>

Kid's Space: virtual storytimes, museums, and more: <https://www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org/kids-space.html>

We will continue to have free, powerful Wi-Fi available outside the library.

Do You Need Help? Call the Library!

If you need help ordering books and materials, setting up an account, remembering your library card number, or working through the use of any of these systems, please call or email the library (426-3581 or jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com) and librarian, Susan Green, will be happy to help you.

We hope you all stay healthy! Let us all take care of one another during these challenging times.

Best wishes,
Susan Green, Director and Adult Services Librarian
Deborah Connolly, Youth Services Librarian

COVID-19

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CABOT PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

by **Kathleen Hoyne,**
Library Director

Thanks to all library patrons and townspeople who vote to support the library budget this year – which is embedded in the town budget - your support is greatly appreciated. The Library Trustees presented a flat budget to the Select Board in recognition of the difficult times people are having due to COVID-19 related issues.

Curbside library service continues to work very successfully, although we look forward to opening our doors with strong safety protocols in place, as soon as the Select Board deems it safe to do so.

Many thanks to Ama Peyman for organizing a "Community Human Family Portrait Quilt" in celebration of February's Black History Month. Thanks also to all who participated creating collages with your families. Ama will be collecting them for a Cabot, Vermont "quilt" which will be posted on our website and other social media.

The Cabot Public Library was one of 200 libraries throughout the country to receive a Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC) grant of \$3,000 from the American Library Association to facilitate a community conversation with pre-K families. Thanks so much to Beth Wade, Christina Sacalis and Amanda Otto for helping to make this happen. Many great ideas were discussed about how the library might be of assistance during these difficult months of isolation. Stay tuned for more detailed info about upcoming programs and activity packets geared toward the youngest patrons in our community.

The Cabot Book Group continues to meet monthly, generally on the 4th Thursday of the month at 2:00 p.m. The latest four-book series, *Farms and Gardens* is cosponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council and folks will read/discuss Sue Hubbell's *A Country Year* facilitated by scholar Gina Logan for the March discussion. This meeting will be via Zoom on Thursday, March 25, at 2:00 p.m. Please call or email if you would like to attend, as copies of the book are available for curbside pickup, and all are welcome!

Greensboro Free Library, Jeudevine Library and Cabot Public Library are hosting a free virtual Zentangle workshop with Ohio artist and Certified Zentangle Teacher, Katy Abbot. Zentangle® is an easy-to-learn and relaxing method of creating beautiful images from structured repetitive patterns, called tangles. Supplies will be provided. This two-hour workshop is best for ages 12 and up. To register for the workshop, please e-mail or call one of the libraries by Tuesday, March 2: GFL at 533-2531 or greensborofree@gmail.com, Jeudevine at 472-5948 or jeudevinelibrary@hardwickvt.org or CPL at 563-2721 or cabotlibrary@yahoo.com. The Libraries will provide supply kits and the Zoom link in early March.

MOBA 101: An Introduction to the Museum of Bad Art – Tuesday, March 23, at 7:00 p.m. The Museum of Bad Art collects, exhibits, and celebrates art that will be seen in no other venue. Since 1993, they have collected art from thrift stores, yard sales, sidewalk trash, and even the artists who create it. They analyze, compare to classic art, and share with thousands of fans around the world. Call or email the Cabot Library for the Zoom link to attend this fascinating view of "Bad Art".

Become a Magician! Contact the Cabot Library for info on this self-guided course in which you will learn enough magic and performance skills to put on a FABULOUS 30-minute magic show with simple props found at home. Included in the course is a 30-minute magic show with Tom Verner and Janet Fredericks using the tricks.

Check out our website at www.cabotlibrary.com for the latest info on upcoming programs. Email cabotlibrary@yahoo.com or call 802-563-2721. Ask about downloading audio and ebooks for free through Listen Up! Vermont.

Much gratitude to the Library Trustees for their many volunteer hours dedicated to the library: Linda Gabrielson, Jeannie McCallum, Angela Ogle, Kurt Steinert and Beth Wade.

Wishing you all the best,
Kathleen Hoyne
Library Director

TWIN VALLEY SENIOR CENTER



4583 U.S. Route 2
P.O. Box 152
East Montpelier, VT
05651

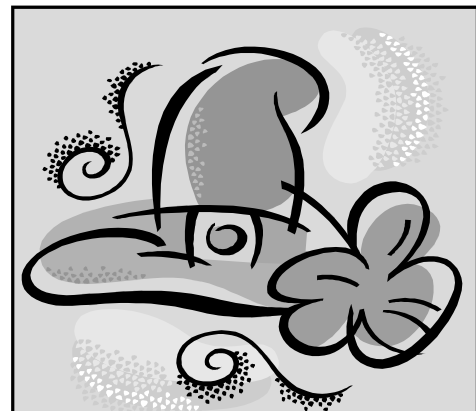
by **Rita Copeland,**
Executive Director

Cabot Residents:

It is with great importance that Twin Valley Senior Center asks again for your support at your town Meeting for appropriations to help support the center. Today, as COVID-19 remains a threat, the importance of this funding is only heightened. TVSC organization is an aging service provider in many ways in the six towns that we serve. I do not need to list the ways, as we have been in existence for a long time, only to expand on the services that bring programs closer to home. Combating loneliness (that the coronavirus has made worse) and having proper nutrition are just two factors that affect elderly health. During the past year we have had very caring, dedicated people at the center who have put the elderly first before their own health. These dedicated people not only cook, but package and deliver the meals that are so important for seniors' health, allowing them to remain in their home

and the town where they want to be.

The center is a particularly important part of each town we serve, even though our location is not within each town. We strongly urge you to consider our request for appropriations and know in advance how much we really appreciate your support, as always. We cannot wait until we can have everyone back at the center. Just know some of us are here working daily, only to be bigger and better when we can all get together again. Stay Safe and Healthy!



Corned Beef and Cabbage Fundraiser

Be on the lookout for TVSC traditional March 17 Corned Beef and Cabbage fundraising take out dinner. Details will be forthcoming on Front Porch Forum and www.twinvalleyseniors.org.



ADVICE FROM THE TREE WARDEN

by **Roland Payne, Jr.**

In last month's advice from the tree warden article, I discussed the signs of EAB (Emerald Ash Borer) infestation on Ash trees and the fact that EAB is now present in Cabot. To continue with the EAB infestation discussion, I am currently working on the development of an Ash tree management plan for Cabot. The plan will be written by Ashley Andrews, the GIS planner at the Central Vermont Regional planning Commission (CVRPC). An Ash tree management plan is a document usually 15 to 20 pages in length. The purpose of an Ash tree management plan is to be a strategic plan for the removal and disposal of Ash trees as Ash trees succumb to the damage caused by EAB infestation.

EAB larvae will cause galleries beneath the bark in the Cambium layer of the Ash trees. The galleries will effectively stop water from flowing up and down in the tree and will kill most infested Ash trees. The Ash tree management plan will likely include options for the removal of Ash trees. As well, the responsibility for plan implementation will be defined in the plan.

Also included in the plan is the roadside Ash tree inventory taken in the winter of 2018 for the Ash trees in roadside right of ways of Cabot roads. The

inventory defines the number of Ash trees along with Ash tree size described in inches DBH (diameter at breast height) present along roads in Cabot. The analysis portion of the plan will provide a summary of Ash tree quantities derived from the Ash tree inventory. Useful data when EAB infested Ash trees are to be removed on a roadway by work crews.

The Ash tree management plan will prioritize which trees will be removed first. It should also define the way Ash trees taken down are to be handled, moved, and disposed once the Ash trees are taken down. Most likely, the Ash tree management plan will include estimated budgeting for Ash tree removal, along with a five-year schedule for removal of infested Ash trees. The final part of an Ash tree management plan will be town road mapping using color shading for Ash tree size and Ash tree density along the town's roads.

After reading through an Ash tree management plan, one can see how a well-constructed plan can aid in the work of Ash tree removal. Creation of the Cabot Ash tree management plan will likely be an on-going effort for many months to come. In the next *Cabot Chronicle* article, I will provide an update on the progress moving forward towards the first draft of a Cabot Ash tree management plan.



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Rock of Ages

by Peter Dannenberg,
Cabot Historical Society

Cabot Center was the first location of the Congregational Church in Cabot. The 2017 Cabot Town Plan said, "About one acre of land encompassing the pound and church markers was given to the town in 1803. A time capsule, buried on the site, was opened and replenished on every fiftieth anniversary of the Congregational Church. The last opening took place in 2001. The capsule was not replaced." An inscribed boulder marked the site of church and time capsule.

Once thriving Cabot Center is now a clearing in the woods. Sadly, vandals spray-painted the boulder. To protect the boulder, Cabot's Highway Department moved it to the front lawn of Cabot Historical Society's Main Street Museum in early December 2020. We hope to get help to clean off the paint in warm weather.

Marvie Domey gave the Cabot Historical Society the copper tube and contents of the last time capsule and a new unused aluminum tube with a screw top. We will display them in the museum building, adjacent to the United Church of Cabot. Marvie donated many photos and clippings of past Cabot time capsules as well.

Our museum is Cabot's time capsule, now. Cabot Historical Society thanks Marvie, the Cabot Highway Department, and others who help us preserve precious relics of Cabot's past.

On August 15, 1801, a town meeting organized a religious society. A vote decided, "This society shall be known by the name and firm of CONGREGATIONALISTS IN THE TOWN OF CABOT." The Congregational Church organized at the old Center Schoolhouse October 25, 1801.

For the first six years, meetings were in the Center Schoolhouse, or at a dwelling house near the Center, often in the barn of Esquire Mercer or Oliver Walbridge. The meetinghouse raising was September 25, 1806, but the frame was unfinished until about 1810. The struggle to finish it was hard. Plastering was only



after 18 years of summer use. In winter, meetings were in dwelling houses and schoolhouses.

The old meetinghouse was large. There were two rows of windows, a high belfry, and a gallery on three sides, with 16 pews. There were 42 pews below; it could seat about 300.

The church and society debated whether to finish the building in the geographical center of town or move it to the "Upper Branch". In 1824, the congregation moved the meetinghouse to the village. Critics said moving the building was "unmanly and unchristian." Some joined the Methodist Church, some the Freewill Baptist Church, on West Hill, others remained in the Congregational parish.

The congregation first rebuilt the church at the northeast corner of the village common. A few years later, it moved to the present northwest location of the common. They added the lower story, including a kitchen and dining/meeting room, in 1849. In 1898, they reconstructed and renovated the interior.

For the first 22 years, there was no settled minister. They occasionally hired a preacher. Missionaries sometimes came from Massachusetts and Connecticut. When there was no minister, a deacon, or a member of the society, read a sermon on the Sabbath.

Rev. Moses Ingalls was the first settled minister. He was ordained and installed on October 27, 1823. He was engaged to preach half-time at an annual salary of \$200, \$50 cash, and the rest in produce or neat stock (cattle), payable in October.

The Congregational and Methodist congregations merged on July 7, 1928, to form the present-day United Church of Cabot.

Unhappy with Your Internet? CV Fiber is on the Horizon

by R.D. Eno • Thistle Hill Rd, Cabot

CVFIBER (formerly Central Vermont Fiber) is a Communication Union District (CUD), like a school or fire district, including Cabot and nineteen other towns. Our mission is to answer the need for fast, reliable internet in underserved areas and bring high-speed broadband service to every business and residence in the district that wants it. We've started our first project and expect to construct our first 120 miles of "fiber-optic cable" this fall.

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission is now providing administrative services to CVFiber, thanks, in part to a grant from the Vermont Community Foundation. We're also receiving grant support from the Vermont Public Service Department. And, with so many Vermonters forced by the pandemic to work or study remotely, Gov. Scott and the Legislature are taking a hard look at how to speed up the broad-

band build-out. CUDs like CVFiber are the most important players. As VPR's John Dillon reported two days ago: "For [private companies like Consolidated], it's all about customers per mile. And if it's not profitable to serve you because you're at the end of a dirt road, you'll wait for a very long time." CVFiber is a public entity, governed by volunteers; it's not out to make money, it's out to make connections.

You can become one of those volunteers, and you can learn how by visiting our website at <https://cvfiber.net>, where our minutes and other public documents are posted. We're also seeking a Project Manager to oversee our work for the next three to five years, a great employment opportunity for the right person or firm. And you can always get in touch with me, R.D. Eno, Cabot's delegate to the CVFiber governing board at rdeno@fairpoint.net.

See you online!



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