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CFD Year-End Update

(continued from page 1)

The possible move-in date for the temporary firehouse is February 20! But the construction crews and engineers have been working long days to help move that date up even sooner. This extended effort is greatly appreciated by myself and my members. I and the department members look forward to operating out of one location again. This will also shorten our response time dramatically. The temporary structure, however, is just that, temporary. This is due to the many critical infrastructures required to be installed in a permanent public safety building to protect the volunteer's health and wellness and to comply with the state and federal requirements for new structures of such. With ongoing advancement, the permanent structure (see picture) will take 18 to 24 months for substantial completion, opposed to 100 days for the "temporary" shell structure where time-sensitive waivers were granted by the State of Vermont while we waited for the design and completion of the permanent project. Funding for these projects is heavily supplied by FEMA.

The past few months' conversations around town and articles in the Chronicle about the Cabot Fire Department have been focused on flood response, the loss of the station, and the challenges in response to both. Focus on these matters, while important, takes away from the wide array of good news within the Cabot Fire Department. This past year has been a year of significant growth in membership, strides in reorganization, and quality training.

In terms of membership, we are now up to 30 members with more applications being reviewed by our membership Team. This is the largest the department has ever been from the initial start date of Cabot Fire Department from November 1866 till today, 157 years later! I am proud to lead these highly skilled dedicated community folks. Cabot Fire Department has added a total of 11 new members in 2023: Ben and Kerri Moll, Jina Alboreo, Rory Thibault, Christopher Jennings, Ryan Dolbier, Heather Winner, Kris Schmitt, Shane Smith, and junior members Jacob Tidd and River Thibault, have brought the roster to 30 volunteers. The new members have already been busy – with many responding to the major structure fires in Walden as mutual aid in the spring, as well as motor vehicle accidents and brush fires before the summer came to be dominated by flood relief.

Cabot Fire Department, even without a fire station, has continued to do training during the week and has done

multiple weekend training courses around town. Six Cabot Firefighters also attended the Twin State Fire School in May, with members participating in the rookie course, vehicle extrication, and firefighter rehabilitation courses. Three members attended the Franklin-Lamoille Fire School in September, participating in the rookie and vehicle rescue courses. These outside training opportunities supplement monthly and special training within the Cabot Fire Department. In the Fall, Cabot Firefighters practiced hose work and external attacks on structure fires, vehicle rescue, and extrication, responses to chimney fires and ladder work, and practiced with self-contained breathing apparatus. The training program builds skills and proficiencies and builds trust and confidence in team members responding to an incident.

The revitalized focus on membership and training has coincided with the culmination of the Cabot Fire Department's nearly year-long review and revision of its bylaws and internal rules/procedures. In early June, the Cabot Selectboard approved the revised bylaws which emphasize "transparency", "clarification of roles within the department", and ensure "compliance with updated state statutes regulating fire departments". The Cabot Fire Department has also created staff functions and professionalized the processes for managing support functions – this has relieved the officers of some extra duties and allowed them to focus on quality training and the challenges associated with the loss of the station. Behind-the-scenes teams within the department that keep the wheels of the department moving for me include our powerful IT team, Community Relations and Compliance Team, Finance Team, Sustainment Support Team, Membership Team, and last but not least my Deputy Chief Will Ameden, who has handled multiple tasks that I asked him to deploy or answered my many late night phone calls.

I also started the formation of a "CFD FAST Squad" (**First Aid Stabilization Team**) to fill the need I see between the time a medical situation happens and a transport agency arrives on the scene. These critical minutes can now get immediate care responses from CFD emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and other various levels of medical certified personnel from within the department. Additional tasks like scene situation update back to emergency dispatch, CPR, Stop the Bleeding, ETC. can also be done. A FAST squad does not transport a patient but supplies transporting agencies with support. More than nine months of data gathering was done by Rory Thibault, Kris Schmitt, Heather

Winner, Silas Robbins, Neil Alexander, and Will Ameden and I thank them for their hard work. "CFD FAST squad" will soon be dispatched in the upcoming months for all Cabot medical emergencies via 911 dispatch, bringing CFD call volume up to an estimated 220 calls a year.

Finally, all these achievements relate to an emphasis on creating a positive culture. The Department is proud to have grown to include seven female members and include increasing diversity in ages, backgrounds, and interests within the Department. The Cabot Fire Department is proud that it increasingly looks more and more like the community it serves, and as long as it's under my direction as Chief, I will continue its efforts to diversify its membership, in-

crease the capabilities and experience of the membership, and serve the Town of Cabot and our mutual aid partners to the best of our professional abilities.

In closing, I want to Thank You (the Town Folks!), the ones we protect and serve, for your ongoing overwhelming support during this year of tribulations. Please be safe and enjoy the new year and, as always, if you have any questions or would like to join this great growing public safety department (Fire, Staff, and/or FAST squad), please feel free to reach out to me at Chief@Cabotfiredept.com and I will personally introduce you to the CFD membership team to start the process.

Be Safe!
Dean D. Deasy, Chief
Cabot Fire Department

Cabot Community Theater Anne of Green Gables

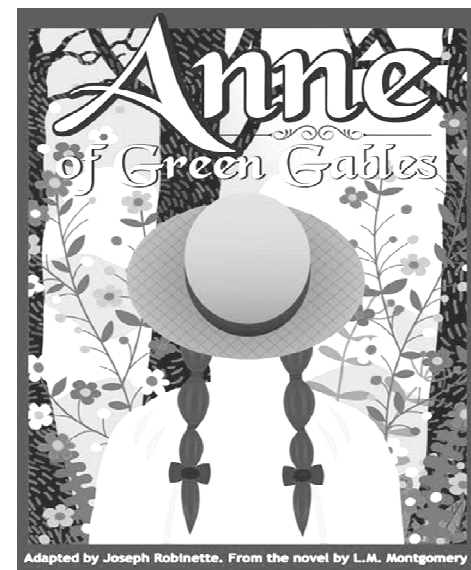
by Karen Mueller-Harder

AUDITIONS JANUARY 7 & 13

Cabot Community Theater is seeking enthusiastic actors for our spring 2024 production: Anne of Green Gables! We need kids, teens, and adults for parts both large and small in this delightful play, based on the beloved book by L.M. Montgomery. There are over 30 speaking roles (including some great parts for older women!), and non-speaking ensemble parts are also possible. Some roles (Anne and a few others) will be divided up so that more young people can have an opportunity to have a lead role, and make the memorization and rehearsal commitment more manageable.

Auditions will be held on January 7 (Sunday) and 13 (Saturday) from 1-5 p.m. in the Cabot School Performing Arts Center. No appointment needed, just come ready to read from the script, and to stay for 30-40 minutes to read with various people. If you're not a good sight-reader, feel free to prepare a short monologue (memorized or not) if you feel that will demonstrate your acting skills better. You can also request to see pages of the script ahead of time, in order to prepare. If you want a non-speaking part, we still want you to come to auditions so we can meet you and chat a bit.

Rehearsals will mostly be on weekend afternoons, with some weekday rehearsals for larger parts in late afternoons or early evenings. Most people will have one or two rehearsals a week; schedule will depend on cast availability, so please bring your schedule with you so you can let us know any conflicts you



may have! Performances will be May 2-5 in CSPAC.

We are an ardently inclusive theater company and have flexibility in our casting in terms of age and gender, to offer performing opportunities to as many participants as possible. Casting decisions are made without consideration of race or disability, and anyone may audition for any gender character. Everyone is welcome, whether you're from Cabot or a nearby town. Make it a family activity! Get your best friend to do it with you!

If you're interested in helping out with sets, costumes, props, or any other area, or have any questions about auditions, or want to audition but can't make either of the dates, please email karen@praxisworks.org or call 793-5617.

And please come enjoy our Mummies' play at Cabot's Twelfth Night celebration on Saturday, January 6, during the community activities on the Common!

THE CABOT CHRONICLE

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2023 Recorded Votes of Representative Henry Pearl *(Voice votes not available)*

H.31	Shall the report of the Committee on Environment and Energy be amended as offered by Rep. Sammis of Castleton?	Nay	Fail
H.40	Shall the bill pass?	Absent	Pass
H.66	Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on General and Housing, as amended?	Absent	Pass
H.81	Shall the bill pass?	Yea	Pass
H.89	Shall the bill pass?	Yea	Pass
H.126	Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Environment and Energy, as amended?	Yea	Pass
H.145	Shall the bill be read a third time?	Yea	Pass
H.158	Shall the bill be read a third time?	Yea	Pass
H.165	Shall the House concur in the Senate proposal of amendment?	Yea	Pass
H.217	Shall the House concur in the Senate proposal of amendment with further amendment thereto?	Absent	Pass
H.217	Shall the bill pass, notwithstanding the Governor's refusal to approve the bill?	Yea	Pass
H.222	Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Human Services, as amended?	Absent	Pass
H.230	Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Health Care, as amended, in Section 3?	Yea	Pass
H.230	Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Health Care, as amended, in the remainder of the amendment?	Yea	Pass
H.230	Shall the bill be amended as offered by Rep. Donahue of Northfield?	Nay	Fail
H.230	Shall the House concur in the Senate proposal of amendment?	Yea	Pass
H.305	Shall the bill pass, notwithstanding the Governor's refusal to approve the bill?	Yea	Pass
H.386	Shall the bill pass?	Yea	Pass
H.386	Shall the bill pass, notwithstanding the Governor's refusal to approve the bill?	Yea	Pass
H.429	Shall the bill be amended as offered by Rep. Sibilia of Dover in the first instance of amendment?	Absent	Fail
H.479	Shall the bill be amended as recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means?	Absent	Pass
H.479	Shall the bill pass?	Absent	Pass
H.486	Shall the bill be amended as offered by Rep. Walker of Swanton?	Absent	Fail
H.494	Shall the bill be read a third time?	Absent	Pass
H.494	Shall the report of the Committee of Conference be adopted?	Absent	Pass
H.494	Shall the bill pass, notwithstanding the Governor's refusal to approve the bill?	Yes	Pass
H.509	Shall the bill be read a third time?	Absent	Pass
H.509	Shall the bill pass, notwithstanding the Governor's refusal to approve the bill?	Yes	Pass
S.5	Shall the report of the Committee on Environment and Energy, as amended, be further amended as offered by Rep. Harrison of Chittenden, and others?	Nay	Fail
S.5	Shall the House amend its proposal of amendment as offered by Rep. Higley of Lowell?	Nay	Fail
S.5	Shall the bill be read a third time?	Yea	Pass
S.5	Shall the bill pass, notwithstanding the Governor's refusal to approve the bill?	Yea	Pass
S.37	Shall the bill be read a third time?	Yea	Pass
S.37	Shall the bill pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment?	Absent	Pass
S.39	Shall the House amend its proposal of amendment as offered by Rep. Peterson of Clarendon?	Nay	Fail
S.39	Shall the House amend its proposal of amendment as offered by Rep. Harrison of Chittenden?	Absent	Fail
S.39	Shall the bill be read a third time?	Absent	Pass
S.39	Shall the House amend its proposal of amendment as offered by Rep. Harrison of Chittenden?	Nay	Fail
S.100	Shall the bill pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment?	Absent	Pass

Cabot School Board School Choice - Once Size Doesn't Fit All

by Ellen Cairns,
Cabot School Board Chair

Over the past few months, the Cabot School Board has been engaged with the school administration in looking at a variety of options for the future of the school, due especially to the factors of declining enrollment and looming infrastructure needs. As Cabot principal Becca Tatistcheff said recently, our goal is creating a sustainable future for the Cabot School community.

There is currently a petition circulating around town calling for Cabot to close our high school and offer school choice to our high-school students. As the chair of the Cabot School Board, I am not writing to dispute this proposal- the Board's goals are to share factual information, foster community engagement, and engage in a civil conversation around the various options for the school. In the end, it will be up to you, the voters, to determine what you feel is in the best interest of taxpayers and students. At the CCSU Board meeting on December 18, there was a discussion about more collaboration or perhaps some sort of merger among the three high schools in our supervisory union (Cabot, Danville, and Twinfield). Becca Tatistcheff attended that meeting and spoke about the collaboration that is already happening to offer more opportunities for our students. Those opportunities include taking classes at the other high schools in our S.U., combined athletic teams, and joint theater productions. There is also the opportunity for Cabot students to select a different public high school through the lottery system, as well as to attend our regional career and technical school in Barre.

Mainly, I want to say that I know we all want what is best for our children. The tricky thing is that what is best for some students and families is not what is best for all. As a Board, we are doing our best to consider all options so that we can propose to you, the voters, what we believe is in the best interest of the majority of students and taxpayers. We understand we won't be able to please everyone. When I first moved to Cabot and heard about St. Johnsbury Academy, I thought, "Wow- if I had known about that when my daughter was younger, I might have moved to St. J!" (I'd heard of the school, but didn't realize that residents of St. J. - and, I now know, school choice towns, could attend for free.) As a parent, my daughter's education was as important to me as I know it is for the parents in Cabot who are advocating for their students to be able to attend the school that fits them best. But all choices have consequences. I am not going to get into complicated school finance here, but I have heard from our neighbors in the school choice towns that - as with everything- there are pros and cons.

All this is to say that the board is exploring all potential options for the future of Cabot High School. We welcome your input, and we will do our very best to bring to the community a proposal to consider that is in the best interest of the majority of Cabot students and taxpayers. You can call me at 802-343-7956, email me at ellen.cairns@ccsuvt.net, and attend our meetings, which are generally the fourth Monday of each month, and are always warned on Front Porch Forum and the Willey building and school bulletin boards. There is also always a Zoom option for attending the meetings.



COMMUNITY COMMENTARY

The views, opinions and information expressed in the Community Commentary, are solely those of the writer and not necessarily those of this newspaper or its affiliates.

High School Choice Misconceptions

by Sharon Kulsick

Dear community, with inflation at an all-time high, student mental health and academic success at all-time lows, the infrastructure of our school failing, and the budgets deep underwater, please consider re-exploring high school choice for Cabot students.

Truth is necessary when considering school choice and it's very difficult to find. I have found there are quite a few false arguments made against school choice to deter people from considering it.

One false argument against allowing students to have more choice in their HS education is that families would have to provide the transportation and therefore low-income families wouldn't be able to participate. However, families *already* provide transportation for sports not offered in CCSU. Does this mean that low-income families are currently *unable* to access sports outside of CCSU due to lack of transportation? If so, this should be remedied immediately as it's discriminatory. Otherwise, if transportation is a

non-issue and we offer choice for sports, wouldn't it make even *more* sense to offer choice for academic programs, which impact a child's life more so than sports? Also, many schools that accept tuition students provide daily shuttles!

Another false argument is that the accepting schools could raise their tuition to whatever they wanted, which would be detrimental to the town. This argument is untrue. There is a state law that *caps* the amount of tuition a receiving school can collect from sending communities: they cannot charge more tuition than what the Average Announced Tuition is for the state, which is announced each year (around \$21,000). School choice *does not* cost the taxpayers a cent more above this rate. Additionally, families do not have to make up the difference in cost. I encourage you to ask your neighbors with children in towns with choice if they must pay anything out-of-pocket.

A third false argument against creating a more inclusive education for all high schoolers by allowing for more choice, is that the town just simply couldn't afford it. Is this true? Walden, our *(see 'High School Choice', page 13)*

OBITUARIES & MEMORIALS

Annika Marie Booth



Annika Marie Booth of West Palm Beach, FL, graced Heaven's gates on December 1, 2023. Annika was born on January 8, 1997, where she began her journey toward impacting the lives of others with her kindness and compassion. Her love for her family, friends, and animals was unconditional.

In 2015, Annika graduated from Twinfield High School where she actively participated in sports. She played basketball and soccer, and was on the Montpelier golf team. Annika had the ability to be a fierce competitor, but also liked to have fun. Annika also attended the Vermont State Police Cadet Academy for her lifelong dream to become a police officer. She also attended CCV for two years with a focus in social work.

Christian Henry Curschmann III



Christian Henry Curschmann III, from Barnet, age 68, passed away unexpectedly on December 2, 2023, at his home. He was born April 4, 1955, in Peekskill, NY, to Christian Henry Curschmann Jr. and Marie Sholan (Ackermann).

He graduated from Lakeland High School and went on to attend a vocational school. In 1974 he joined the Air Force, where he was an aircraft maintenance specialist until 1978. When he returned home, Chris went to work on his uncle's farm in Cabot. He was later employed by Eastern Artificial Insemination, Caspian Arms, NSA, VT Aerospace Industries, Vermont Microtechnologies and briefly at Vermont Mold and Tool.

Chris enjoyed being surrounded by his family and friends. He was well known for his humor, joy of singing and playing his harmonica. Christmas was his favorite holiday, making a huge meal and watching everyone open their presents.

In 2021, Annika moved to Huntington Beach, CA, for a year and created many long lasting friendships. In 2022, she moved to West Palm Beach and lived with her close friend, Nicole. She instantly connected with an amazing community of wonderful people. She worked at The Good Life as a technician. It was there she met the man of her dreams, Sal. At the time of her passing, Annika was employed at New Life Rejuvenations where she found her true calling. Her administrator and co-workers embraced her with open arms as she had a strong work ethic.

Annika leaves behind her parents, Tim and Sheila Booth, of Bluffton, S.C., her cat, Lulu, her partner, Salvatore Venuto of Delray Beach, FL, The Durkees and her daycare family of Marshfield, VT, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins and the many friends she touched by her heart. A celebration of Annika's life will be at a later date and held in Vermont.

ite holiday, making a huge meal and watching everyone open their presents.

On October 14, 2011, he married his sweetheart, Kim.

Chris is survived by his loving wife Kimberly Curschmann (Heisholt) of Barnet; his children: Christian Curschmann IV and fiancé Stacey Dwyer of Lyndonville, Nathan Curschmann and wife Jennifer of Walden, Nicole Curschmann of Hardwick, Melissa Waterhouse and husband Corey of Underhill, VT, Ben Heisholt and wife Claudia of Barnet, VT, Tor Heisholt of Middletown, CT, Sonia Williamson and husband Jimmy of Fairfax, VT; 18 grandchildren, one great-granddaughter; as well as his mother Marie Sholan (Ackermann) of Hardwick, sister Lesa Curschmann of Hardwick, brother Alan Curschmann of Fort Walton Beach, FL.

He was predeceased by; his father Christian Curschmann Jr., stepfather Larry Sholan, and brother Craig Curschmann.

In lieu of a funeral, there will be a celebration of life in the spring.

tend Shrine events, play cards with friends, cook and host family holidays.

In 1961, she and John bought a lot on Joe's Pond in Cabot and together they built the family summer home. Summers were filled with pontoon rides, Pitch games, mushrooming, happy hours and gatherings with her family, friends and later grandchildren and great grandchildren. Her grandchildren will always remember her favorite saying "G to B," Go to Bed!!!

At the time of John's retirement, they hit the road, traveling around the country exploring the US while staying at campgrounds and making new friends. Deciding to settle in Sun City Center, FL, where they wintered for over 25 years. During these years they enjoyed trips to Australia, Texas, California, and a couple cruises.

After John's passing she spent several more winters in Florida before moving to live with family in Leander, TX. In 2021, she moved to the Legacy at Crystal Falls, where she enjoyed crafts, games, social hours, and periodic Jeopardy contests.

She is survived by a son, John "Jack" LaGue Jr. and his wife Susan Rousse-LaGue of Sarasota, FL; four daughters,

Debra Bisson and her husband Peter, Donna van der Hagen and her husband Marty, and Karen LaGue all of Leander, TX, and Linda Atkinson and her husband Paul of Montgomery, TX; two sisters, Rachel Bancroft and her husband Robert of Sun City Center, FL, Elisa Storti and her husband Allan of Barre, and a sister-in-law Suzanna LaGue of Berlin. She had 11 grandchildren; Jennifer and Sean LaGue, Katherine, Rachel and Christopher Bisson, Matthew, Courtney, and

Ferguson McKay



Ferguson McKay, 91, devoted husband and loving father, sadly left us on December 2, 2023, after a brave battle with Parkinson's disease. He passed peacefully in his sleep at The Meadows of East Mountain in Rutland.

A Renaissance man before that was a thing, Ferg was an English professor, delicate writer, tender soul, pragmatist, lover of classical music, good food and LL Bean plaid flannel shirts. He was sensitive, witty, refined, and both generous and frugal. Mostly, he devoted his life to his family and was the undisputed chief of our little family tribe, caring for our mother even with Parkinson's and the loss of most of his eyesight from glaucoma.

Born in Belmont, MA, on June 21, 1932, Ferg loved classical music, particularly the piano and the recorder, and initially wanted to become a concert pianist. He went to Phillips Exeter Academy, attended Harvard University and graduated from Amherst College in 1957, then received a master's degree in English from Yale University.

Ferg met Jane Coyle at a church singles group in Cambridge, MA. Jane had grown up in Cabot, attended Radcliffe, and was teaching elementary school. They married on June 20, 1959, and moved to Albany, NY, where Ferg taught in the State University of New York system, then back to New Haven, CT, where he pursued a PhD in English at Yale.

The family moved to Vermont in 1967 and over a 24-year career at Lyndon State College (now Vermont State University Lyndon), Ferg taught English and served as Dean of Faculty, then Acting President. As Dean in the 1970s, he helped bring the nationally renowned meteorology program to LSC from a defunct college in New Hampshire. As an English professor, he most wanted his students to learn to write effectively and got a master's degree in writing from Northeastern University in the early 1980s. He is fondly remembered by his students as a thorough, caring professor who taught them to express themselves fluidly through the written word.

Although raised in the Ivory Tower of academia, Ferg had little tolerance for elitism. He judged people by their character, not by their titles or stock portfolios and was at ease talking to tradespeople and academics alike. He could quote Shakespeare, expound upon the problems of a septic system, figure out why a car wouldn't start, and wonder aloud what astrophysicists know about dark matter. He also loved a good dirty joke.

Once in Vermont, Ferg cast aside his suits and ties, preferring white Hanes undershirts, flannel shirts and dungarees.

Kelly Atkinson; and Jessica, John and Sarah van der Hagen; 6 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband, her parents, a brother, Ricardo Rasines and a granddaughter Jacqueline LaGue.

A small private celebration of her life was held by the family in Leander, TX, and another Celebration of Life will be held at Joe's Pond in July of 2024.

He cultivated a huge and well-kept vegetable garden, and embraced organic food decades before it was a trend. His daughters had to eat organic peanut butter sandwiches at school while their friends got marshmallow fluff. Much to his daughters' dismay, he foraged for fiddleheads in the spring, then served them steamed with butter — the cause of a few mealtime stare-downs.

Ferg stood out for his thriftiness even by Vermont standards. He carried his lunch to work every day in the same reused Walnut Acres granola bag. During the energy crisis in the 1970s, he turned the heat down so low that even the cats were cold. "Wear a hat!" he told his wife and daughters when they complained. But he made the house feel warm, safe and secure for all of us, the greatest gift a parent and spouse can give. He installed a woodstove in the kitchen and spent summers chopping wood.

The only thing he readily spent money on was good food, and he loved cuisine from around the world. An all-you-can-eat buffet was money well spent. On Jane's 100th birthday in November, he ate heartily at his favorite Rutland restaurant, Roots.

Ferg's biggest "fix-it" project was Jane's family home in Cabot — a Victorian mansion built by her great-grandparents. After retiring from Lyndon State in 1991, he renovated and rewired half the house, jacked up its sagging foundation, and he and Jane spent summers there for the next 26 years. They enjoyed concerts at the Adamant Music School and plays at the Unadilla Theater in Marshfield and Lost Nation Theater in Montpelier.

After living in retirement in Chapel Hill, NC, and Brunswick, ME, Ferg and Jane moved to the Gables at East Mountain in Rutland in 2018 to be closer to family, and finally the Meadows. The family would like to thank the wonderful staff at the Meadows for their love and care and the devoted caregivers of At Home Senior Care, who helped Ferg and Jane live at home as long as possible.

Ferg is survived by Jane, his beloved wife of 64 years, two daughters, Betsy McKay of Woodbridge, CT, and Peggy (McKay) Shinn of Rutland, and their spouses Neil Bainton and Andrew Shinn, three grandchildren (Larisa and Andy Bainton, and Sam Shinn), and grandson-in-law Kevin Hernandez. He is also survived by his younger brother, Donald McKay, Jr., of Decatur, GA. He is predeceased by his parents and older sister.

A memorial service was held December 15 at Grace Congregational Church in Rutland, with a second memorial and burial service in Cabot this coming June. In lieu of flowers, donations in Ferg's memory may be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research at <https://www.michaeljfox.org/>.

Arrangements are with Tossing Funeral Home in Rutland.

Esperanza C. LaGue



Esperanza "Dolly" C. LaGue, 93, of Leander, Texas and Cabot, Vermont, died peacefully on November 19, 2023.

She was born on November 5, 1930, in Barre, the daughter of

Augustin and Baselisa [Peral] Canizo. In 1939 she and her family moved to Elberton, GA. After a serious automobile accident, they returned to Barre where she attended Barre schools, and graduated from Spaulding High School. She worked for the Homer Fitts Company and the State of Vermont.

On July 3, 1954, she married John L. LaGue at St. Monica's Church in Barre. In 1956, they moved from Montpelier to LaGue Drive in Barre Town where they made their home. As a stay-at-home mom raising five children: her time was filled with volunteering in different classrooms and driving the kids to and from after-school activities. She loved to sew with her mother, volunteer at CVH, at-

OBITUARIES & MEMORIALS

Jane Coyle McKay



Jane McKay sadly passed away on December 16, 2023, two weeks to the day after her beloved husband Ferguson McKay and five weeks after celebrating her 100th birthday.

Brokenhearted by the loss of her partner of 64 years, she passed with her two daughters by her bedside at The Meadows at East Mountain in Rutland Town, Vermont.

Jane was a seventh generation Vermonter who spent her life either residing in the state or yearning to get back to it. She was tenacious about protecting and preserving her family's history, dating to a Revolutionary war officer who settled in Vermont before it was a state. Cabot was the center of her universe, where she grew up and spent many of her adult years. It is because of Jane that a Victorian home built by her great-grandparents remains in the family today, passed down through five generations of women and full of treasures from those many years. She instilled a love for Cabot and for Vermont in her own family.

Jane was a devoted wife and mother who was always there for a hug and a kiss, sometimes with cookies, always with too many vegetables. Dinner was regularly served with at least two veggies from the garden and a salad, and conversation about the day. She was kind, gracious, protective, and had a big warm infectious smile that could light up a room. Her happiest moments were when she was surrounded by her family. She made friends wherever she went and doted on her two daughters.

Like her husband Ferg, Jane was both generous and frugal. She was an enthusiastic shopper who never saw a sale rack she didn't want to peruse. She taught her daughters never to waste food, to reuse aluminum foil and Ziploc bags, and how to best navigate Filene's Basement. She loved Liberty print blouses, Talbots, hot fudge sundaes, and Scotch on the rocks, which she drank at her 100th birthday party.

She was an eager host who always made guests feel at home, with warm blankets on the beds, food in the kitchen, and things to do. She was also an avid card player, forming a bridge group while living at the Gables at East Mountain and easily beating much younger family members at rummy.

Born "across the river" in Hanover, NH, on November 8, 1923, Jane spent her early years in Springfield, MA, where her father ran a children's clothing factory. When he lost the factory in

the Depression, the family moved to the family home in Cabot.

Jane thrived in Cabot, in her multi-generational family, at school, and with friendships in the tight community. "A Childhood of Freedom and Adventure," she later called it in an essay reminiscing about skiing and tobogganing on a hill behind her house, and about a church social group where young people shared boxed lunches.

Jane attended junior college in Vermont before matriculating at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, MA, now part of Harvard University. She taught elementary school for several years after college, including on a U.S. Air Force base in Goose Bay, Labrador.

That was just one of her many adventures as a young woman. Jane also fearlessly skied Tuckerman Ravine on Mt. Washington, studied for a summer in Oslo, Norway, traveled through Europe and sailed home alone on a freighter. She never lost her desire to travel, even asking her daughters in her final months to take her on a cruise or trip to her favorite country – England.

Jane met Ferguson at a church singles group in Cambridge, and they married on June 20, 1959. Her love of Vermont drew her new family back to the state in 1967 when Ferg took a job at Lyndon State College (now Vermont State University Lyndon). After Ferg retired, he and Jane spent the next 26 summers living back in Cabot. Jane loved having cocktails with friends on the porch, serving trays of crackers and cheese to guests when she was well into her 90s.

Jane and Ferg moved to the Gables in Rutland in 2018 and then the Meadows. The family would like to thank the Meadows staff and At Home Senior Care caregivers for their love and devotion in Jane and Ferg's final years.

Jane is survived by two daughters, Betsy McKay of Woodbridge, CT, and Peggy (McKay) Shinn of Rutland, their spouses Neil Bainton and Andrew Shinn, three grandchildren (Larisa and Andy Bainton, and Sam Shinn), and grandson-in-law Kevin Hernandez. She is predeceased by her parents and two sisters.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, January 6 at 2 p.m. at Grace Congregational Church in Rutland, with a second memorial and burial service for Ferg and Jane in Cabot this coming June. In lieu of flowers, donations in Jane's memory may be made to the United Church of Cabot, P.O. Box 127, Cabot, VT 05647 or the Preservation Trust of Vermont at <https://ptvermont.org/about/give/>. Arrangements are with Tossing Funeral Home in Rutland.

tonino and Isabella (Cipolla) Napoli, first generation Italian immigrants.

He attended PS 163 Elementary School and Flushing High School, graduating in 1951, followed by New York University, graduating in 1955 with a BS Degree in Aeronautical Engineering. In 1976 he received his MBA from Central Michigan University. After graduating from New York University, Anthony worked for a year in Baltimore, MD, for

Glen L. Martin Company in the Advanced Design Department on the Sea Mistress Jet Propelled Seaplane. He was active in the ROTC during college and joined the U.S. Air Force as a Second Lieutenant in February of 1956. Anthony advanced through Spence Air Force Base, GA, Flying Training, training on the T-28, T-34. He then went to Greenville, MS, for jet fighter training in T-33's and Moody Air Force Base, GA, for Interceptor Training on the F86B/L. After receiving his pilot wings, he was assigned to the 440th Fighter Interceptor Squadron in Erding, Germany, where he was responsible as a fighter pilot for overlooking the Air Defense Network in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Switzerland. In 1959 he was picked by the Wing Commander of the 86th Fighter Wing to be the Liaison Officer at the Brindisi Air Force Base, Italy, to initiate a Rocket Firing Interceptor Gun-nery Range.

While stationed in Germany he met the love of his life, Christel Elsa Herta Wolf, in Berlin, Germany. They were married September 1959 in Erding, Germany, and began their military life, moving 23 times in 27 years in the Air Force. After completion of his tour in Germany in 1959 he trained and was assigned for four years as an Air Defense Controller and spent his last year in Iceland. He was instrumental in alerting the North American Air Defense Command of the flight of the first Russian Bear aircraft to Cuba after scrambling four F-102's from Keflavik Air Force Base to intercept and identify an unknown aircraft as a Tupolev TU-95. Upon returning to the States he went to F-102 fighters at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, NC, and from there to Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base, KS, changing from F-102s to F-106's flying Air Defense for NORAD.

In 1969, he deployed to Tan Son Nhut Air Force Base, Vietnam in RF4Cs (Reconnaissance Fighters). He and his navigators flew both In-country and Out-country (North Vietnam and Laos) Reconnaissance missions. Their motto was "Alone, Unarmed and Unafraid." He flew 163 missions earning nine Air Medals for missions flown and two Distinguished Flying Cross medals for courage under enemy fire. During one of his missions, he and his navigator received battle damage. Streaming fuel from the damaged aircraft, he flew the crippled plane back to DaNang, making an approach barrier engagement due to a hole in the wing and loss of brakes. After temporary repairs to the aircraft, he was tasked to fly it from Saigon, Vietnam, to the

United States via Clark Air Force Base, Philippines, to Guam, to Hickam Air Force Base, HI, to Sacramento, CA, refueling midair throughout the journey.

After a distinguished flying career, Anthony was assigned to Air Force Systems Command at Andrews Air Force Base, MD, in 1973, where he served as the new Fighter Programs Systems Officer and Flight Director in Research and Development. He worked on many programs, most notably the F15, YF16, A10, YF17 and the development of the F22, as well as being instrumental in launching the Joint Stars Program. Anthony served for four years as chairman of a multinational NATO committee which developed a Standard NATO Agreement on Target Identification. He was also involved in a six-month study in Woods Hole, MA, on Close Air Support that included both academic and military experts. He conducted various studies in the development of Tactical Weapons. He retired as a full Colonel in 1984 after 28 years of active service in the USAF.

Military honors and awards include Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal and others.

Besides airplanes and flying, Anthony's interests included engineering and chemistry. He enjoyed traveling, camping, family vacations and built their dream summer home in Cabot, where he and the family have spent 52 wonderful years.

Survivors include his loving wife of 64 years: Christel Napoli of Hollis, N.H. and Cabot, VT.; three daughters: Angela Markwell and partner Susan Powell of Culpeper, VA, Diane Napoli Williams and husband Christopher of Salida, CO, and Patricia Bishop and husband Kevin of Glastonbury, CT; seven grandchildren: Christina, Erin, Laura, Anthony, Sabrina, Katherine, and Nicholas and one great-grandchild: Liam; and two nieces: Carol Kipp and Elizabeth Halstead.

He was predeceased by his parents; a sister: Mary Meli; and a cousin: John Licastro.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on December 7, 2023, at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in St. Johnsbury. Burial will be in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks donation be made to Good Shepherd Catholic School, 121 Maple St., St. Johnsbury, VT 05819; 802-751-8223; lcartularo@goodshepherdshoolvt.org. Memories and condolences may be shared at CaledoniaLifeServices.com.

Colonel Anthony Napoli



Anthony Napoli, age 89, of Hollis, N.H. and Cabot, VT, died peacefully at his home in Vermont surrounded by his family, on Nov. 24, 2023.

Anthony was born in Flushing, NY, on December 22, 1933, to An-

GREAT BIG THANK YOU CABOT COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER

Thank you to the many cooks, bakers, organizers, couriers and helpers who made the dinner possible, and the generous donations that make this event free. About 150 dinners were served, more than 100 were delivered by Amanda and her elves on Christmas Day.

by Fred Ducharme

And very special thanks to the delightful community members who participated and made our day! Some volunteers have been with us from Day 1 and some were first time helpers. We had fun, and we hope you did, too.

Thank you to Cabot School for the use of this great facility and many thanks to the school board for making it possible.

And SPECIAL THANKS to Shirley – I couldn't do it without you!!

Donations are always welcome at CCA, PO Box 245, Cabot, VT 05647, marked "Christmas Dinner."

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 selectboard 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 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. Digital Recordings of selectboard meetings are available on the Town website, CabotVT.US by clicking on "Selectboard Meetings."

Clark Sawmill Dam

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

Mike Hogan talked to the Selectboard about the Clark Sawmill Dam at both recent meetings of the board (December 5 and 12). Mike talked about a meeting he had with the town's attorney, Mike Tarrant, and mentioned the firm had just hired David Mears who is an expert in environmental law. Mike went on to say that they talked about the Sawmill Dam and the West Hill Pond Dam.

Mike said they might have to get Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to do some testing of the remaining sediment to determine if there is still contamination. He also said they have to work out particulars on ownership and he has been talking to Ed Larson. He mentioned that Ed seems amenable to work something out with the town.

Mike went on to explain that the town cannot do anything until the town takes ownership of the dam property. He noted that Mike Tarrant would guide the town through the process. He said the board needs to consider upstream damage, and the properties past the old saw mill. He noted there has been a lot of erosion of the banks.

At the later meeting, Mike told the board he had asked David Mears to put a road map in place to help navigate the next steps. Mike said prior to the dam coming down with the July flood, the town had tried to work with Friends of the Winooski to take down the dam, and had some push back, but the flood took care of that.

He reiterated that the town can't really do anything on the property until we have ownership. He said they can't clean it up or put fill there. He said he had been talking to Ed Larson every other week, and that Ed finally sees that he dodged a bullet and is willing to sign a quitclaim deed giving it all to the town. Mike said he told Ed that given the damage done due to the dam collapse and because of its neglect, the town is not amenable to giving him any money for the property.

Mike then read from a letter from the attorney which said, based on what the attorney learned, he did not see any risk if the town assumes ownership. If there is some contamination at the site, his recommendation proceeds in the following manner before acquiring the property. The letter went on to talk about a testing process, and involving the DEC. The letter also mentioned liability under the

Superfund Law, but noted the EPA is unlikely to take action. The letter concluded that it might be in the interest of the town to proceed quickly.

Mike then speculated it might be good to clean it up and make it into a green space. He added that they don't need the voters permission to acquire property, or the board could choose to have an article at Town Meeting for an advisory vote. He advised that he didn't think they should walk away from it, and that he thinks the town should acquire this property. He said if the board agrees, they can have the town attorney do the paperwork.

R.D. Eno spoke about liability protections and noted the letter stated the town must conduct steps before acquiring the property. He reiterated that the town needs to take steps before they sign the quitclaim deed. He noted they could apply for a grant from the municipal assistance program to assist.

Mike agreed that they could hire a consultant to contact the DEC and get the brownfield out of the way. The EPA defines brownfield as "a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant."

R.D. and Mike talked about the various ways they could apply for funding and Mike mentioned a meeting on Friday of that week, and that perhaps they could have a plan in place by January. R.D. asked if the two of them could communicate with the other board members through email regarding this information. Mike said they could use email for information only.

After the board mulled over the various steps needed to take ownership, R.D. asked if they should consider the West Hill Dam as part of the project. He pointed out that once they take ownership, no one would own the flowage rights of that dam. Mike felt they should keep the two dams separate. Mike also added that the dam might be technically owned by the house there by the dam. He said that when Caleb Pitkin was on the board, the board looked at West Hill Pond Dam, and there was a lawyer for one of the owners that did research and never came up with an owner for the dam. Mike added that the state said they might be able to find some money to do a deep inspection of the dam. He noted that if that dam ever goes, it would take out all flood mitigation projects downstream.

an accent of concrete lintels, as well as metal panels. He noted that the bay doors would be high speed, and the apparatus bay would be about 16 feet tall.

Dean Deasy added that they are working on the ongoing costs to maintain the building, and that using the metal panels on the outside would reduce maintenance and last a long time. He added that they are at the point to talk about positioning. He noted the reason the building has

been turned was to position parking close to the ADA entry, and to consider the wetlands.

Dean then said if the plan is approved that night, Joel has a slew of engineers that need to start moving forward. He added that Connor contracting also wants to start putting items out for bid.

Dean went on to say they did shrink the building because of the wetlands. He noted they are not just looking at what is needed today, but what is needed way into the future. He added that there is a potential for regional fire fighting, and the new building would put Cabot at the top of the list, as well as a regional training facility.

Dean went on to say that inside they will have a multi-purpose room for training or meetings, or it could be used for tier one communications when there is another emergency.

R.D. asked about the floor plans because they have not been provided. Dean said because of the building being shrunk, the space is very tight, and they think things will have to change when the engineers get involved. R.D. then asked what the board would be approving. He also asked about the square footage.

Dean said the old firehouse is around 3,000 square feet and the proposed new

firehouse would be around 10,000 square feet. He added the double drive-through bays take up a lot of space, and that accounts for the majority of the space. He said they would have storage, a meeting room, offices and bathrooms. He asked the board to accept the design of the building.

Mike asked what the dimensions of the building would be and Joel did not have the figures on hand, but estimated it would be 110 feet wide and little more than two fire trucks long.

Karen asked Dean to talk the board through the power systems, solar panels and propane tank, and anything else that would impact the visual landscape. He said the intent was to have all utilities underground.

Dean added that there is a propane tank for the generator and emergency heat. He said they are trying to make the building net zero plus, and the roof will be capable of holding solar panels. He said they were going to use a pellet boiler, but the mechanical contractor still needs to work it out.

R.D. asked about onsite fuel tanks. Dean said they would be double walled and above ground and would be movable. The board approved the design presented by Joel.

The Selectboard held a special meeting on November 20 in the form of a roundtable to specifically talk with the community about post flood activities. Mike Hogan welcomed all those in attendance to the first roundtable discussion regarding the post flood activities. He said the town needs some creative thinking, and they need to determine what they want to accomplish.

Mike gave an account of what happened when the flood occurred, based upon his notes from that time. Mike mentioned that after the storm the Selectboard met right away and prioritized things. He said they prioritized people, and the town borrowed one million dollars at that time, in lieu of FEMA reimbursement. He said they should get reimbursed 90%, and the other 10% is questionable, and some might come from the State.

Mike talked about the Willey Building being the command center, and how they worked on a system to handle flood debris. He noted that FEMA stayed in town for a while, and there were tons of volunteers. Mike talked about the Clark Sawmill Dam giving way during the flood and all the debris went downstream.

He talked about how the board is working with the town attorney to purchase the dam property, and turn it into green space. He spoke about the red tagging of the firehouse, and that it will be taken down soon. He also mentioned the temporary firehouse was going up near the rec field.

Mike said the town had the West Hill Pond Dam inspected, and all the bridges,

too. He mentioned that he and Karen had lots of discussion on what they were doing and tried to use every social media platform to disseminate information. He expressed that the town needs a better system of communication to get information to people.

Mike told everyone the town had various individuals from the State, USDA, and ANR visit Cabot. He mentioned one of the areas that they reviewed was the double culvert under the village. He said the USDA guy started laughing when he saw the culverts, and said that shouldn't have been put in there. The USDA official said it should have been a box culvert. Fred Ducharme added that when they put in that other culvert under Main Street, the engineer thought they were doing something good. He said that he now sees that was a waste of time.

(see 'Post Flood Roundtable', page 7)

TOWN
OFFICE
CLOSED

2024

New Years, Monday,
January 1, 2024
and
Martin Luther King
Jr. Day, Monday,
January 15, 2024

The New Firehouse Design

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

Joel Paige of Scott and Partners Architects returned to the Selectboard at the December 5 meeting to present a plan for the new firehouse. He said it would be a two story building and showed drawings of the proposed building from various angles. He said it would be made of very durable materials, primarily brick, with

Post Flood Roundtable (continued from page 6)

Mike told everyone the town had various individuals from the State, USDA, and ANR visit Cabot. He mentioned one of the areas that they reviewed was the double culvert under the village. He said the USDA guy started laughing when he saw the culverts, and said that shouldn't have been put in there. The USDA official said it should have been a box culvert. Fred Ducharme added that when they put in that other culvert under Main Street, the engineer thought they were doing something good. He said that he now sees that was a waste of time.

Members of the public participating in the round table started to engage in the conversation and Johanna Thibault said the one thing that stands out for the future, we don't have complacency anymore. She said that where she lives, she never thought she would have to deal with the flood. She said with regard to communication, the town was lucky it didn't lose power, but next time that may not be the case.

Dawn Andrews said a lot of people have ideas about mitigation, but there is no big solution, it will be a lot of different small things. She speculated that the rain will come and gravity will keep working. The community should understand how dynamic the situation can be.

R.D. said that VTrans has a system of communication. He said he gets regular notifications on work being done on Route 2. He expressed that the town needs to establish a system to send out notices, and noted he was not aware the governor had declared a state of emergency before the storm. Frank Kampf mentioned the town could look at the system used by the school, which calls all parents when there are closings.

Gary Gulka then addressed the group and talked about the focus of the flood mitigation task force. He presented a series of slides and described their focus on the two tributaries that feed into the village. He acknowledged that members of the task force are not experts, and they will need experts.

Thomas Dunbar, Cabot School science teacher, presented some findings his "Waters of the Winooski" project class had

generated. He said the tributary behind the Willey Building drains 708 acres of mostly forested land, and it received over six inches of rain, which works out to 23 million cubic feet of water.

Thomas went on to describe six inches of erosion two-thirds of the way up the tributary, and the land consists of poorly drained soils that either sit atop bedrock or a hard clay layer. He said the land cannot hold a lot of water, so it all runs off.

Roman Kokodyniak asked how much of the clay soils are impervious. Chris Tormey answered that when the students were walking down from the Hourihans, they thought it was slate, until they struck it and saw how it fell apart. He added that when he talked to a scientist from the State, the scientist speculated it was glacial deposits several feet thick. Chris said the clay layer was responsible for the majority of trees falling into the tributaries.

The group continued to discuss the various things Gary, Chris, Thomas and the students discovered in their explorations of the tributaries. Then the group started talking about how one property owner protecting their property will likely endanger another property, as the water needs to go somewhere. Dawn Andrews said there has to be a balance.

R.D. said "equilibrium." He mentioned their mission going forward should be to find a solution that brings all interests together. He said the task force obtained a large study of a community in California. The study contained their flood mitigation solution, a process by which they got all the stakeholders involved to achieve that equilibrium. He said people didn't think they were being taken advantage of, and were prepared to make sacrifices to reach a solution that doesn't disadvantage anyone unnecessarily.

Gary pointed out that individual land-owner actions could be extremely helpful. He said their goal is to involve the entire community and to have everyone feel as though they are part of a solution.

Before the board shared their final thoughts, Fred brought up the need to house people, and the flood showed that was a need. Mike then offered a kudos to Neighbors in Action for the amazing job they did feeding people.

Cabot Ambulance

Offering Training, Seeking Space

Thank you, citizens of Cabot, for your support! Many of you have come forward to say how much you have appreciated our quick responses and transports, and how meaningful it has been to see familiar faces in time of need. We really appreciate you! Thank you for your donations, too!

Cabot Ambulance is housed temporarily in the Goodrich's Maple Farm truck garage and is responding from there. Response time from there has been rapid, as Glenn and Ruth live and work at that location and can respond quickly. Many of our calls have been on the Route 2 side of the hill this summer and fall. We are looking at parcels in the town for a new permanent location for the ambulance station, as we will not be allowed into the new fire station or the temporary station when they are constructed, due to FEMA restrictions, as we are a private business. We have

been out and about to a good many calls recently, many of you have expressed gratitude for having our ambulance serving the town. There have been several high risk cases over the past year that would not have had a positive outcome if the patient had to wait for an out of town ambulance.

We will be hosting a VEFR course shortly, as we have had quite a number of new applications from local residents who wish to become certified and work on the Ambulance crew. Anyone who would like to take this class, which is a two-day advanced first aid course, may sign up by contacting Jennifer Miner (802-498-8245), Ruth Goodrich (802-426-3418) or Marcy Martin (802-563-2766). This course will certify you to run on the ambulance or on the fire department fast squad they are putting together. All are welcome, but advance reservation is necessary.

Respectfully, Cabot Ambulance Crew

Willey Building Usage

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

At the December 5 meeting, Town Clerk Betty Ritter spoke about use of the Willey Building and some proposed changes. She talked about how the Willey Building is used for gatherings and scheduling must all come through the Town Clerk's office to avoid conflicts. People rent rooms by filling out a form and providing a cleaning deposit.

She went on to talk about how she has to tighten down on the requirement to clean after using the building. Betty mentioned that people renting a room do not always clean the bathrooms or the halls when they track in snow. She said that after a function the hallways and bathrooms are always dirty.

Betty said this applies to everyone, even town usage has the same responsibility. She went on to explain that for people dancing, rubber mats will be purchased for everyone to use when they change from boots to shoes.

She then talked about fees, and said if a person or committee is using the library, and they are collecting a fee, then they should make a donation to the upkeep of the Willey Building. She gave an example, without mentioning who or what program it was. She said they come in every Sunday and charge \$10 a per-

son. Betty knows the person that oversees the program needs to get some money, but she expressed that they could give \$1 or \$2 per person to the Town. Mike Hogan asked if they cleanup after the Sunday program. Betty responded that "sometimes they do".

Betty then mentioned there isn't enough storage in the Willey Building before talking about increasing rental fees. She said that whenever anyone calls her, they say that the town is "so reasonable, you are not charging enough." She listed the possible rate increases and explained that it would be to cover water, electricity, and cleaning.

Betty went on to say that if a person would like to donate something for the use of the building to make it more accommodating, then instead of purchasing something and using it thereafter, she proposes they give the money to the Willey Building. She explained that she is trying to get it back to a good standard for use of the building.

R.D. Eno asked if Betty could circulate the proposed rent increase so the board could read it through. Betty agreed and gave an example; if there are 10 people at \$10 each, that person is getting \$100, if the town gets \$10, it would go for the maintenance of the building.

Razing the Old Firehouse

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

At the December 5 regular meeting, the Selectboard opened bids for razing the old firehouse. Mike Hogan started the process by saying he figured "we do it in open session, that is the best way to do something like this."

Betty Ritter, the Town Clerk, proceeded to open the five bids the town received from the RFP that had been published. She read out the numbers: Ben Ackermann \$46,750, does not include removal of hazardous material; Mangan Excavation \$86,071; Hogan Excavating \$48,971; J Fenoff Siteworks \$73,500; Kirk Vanoff and Son Excavating \$119,000. She then mentioned that there had been one other query, but they did not bid.

Mike asked if the removal of hazardous material was a requirement, and who included it in their bid. As the board reviewed the bids, Karen noted that Ben Ackermann stated it was not included. She added that Mangan indicated they would be able, but it would be at an extra cost.

Mike then asked Dean Deasy, the Fire Chief, to help analyze the bids. Dean and Will Ameden took the bids into another room and sat down to review the bid details and came back later in the meeting to tell the board what they found.

Dean said they looked at the two lowest bids, those of Ackermann and Hogan. He said both were plus costs if any hazards were located. Dean calculated that there was a \$2,221 difference between the bids. He mentioned that with Ackermann's bid there was no insurance submitted, but noted that it's already on file with the town. Dean added that neither of the two lowest bidders submitted a list of the sub-contractors they intend to use.

Will added that every bid had plus cost for hazardous materials. Dean summarized that basically they were down to the lowest bids. R.D. Eno asked if there was any reason to look at the higher bids? Dean responded that FEMA is going to say the lowest bidder, and if the town chose a higher bidder they need to have a real good reason.

Fred asked Dean if he was comfortable with either bid, and Dean said they both have a good track record. Karen Larsen asked if there is a problem with hazardous materials, did either submit a time and materials statement? Dean responded that Hogan actually submitted the cost of his testing agency. He added that Ben does have an outfit, but he did not include it with the bid, and the town did not require it for the bid.

R.D. then asked why the spread was so large across the five bids. Dean said there were various reasons, but added that both Ben and Steve have seen the building, and that neither of the Fenoffs asked to look at the building. R.D. mentioned that Steve's bid was impressively detailed, and he has experience with both contractors, and that both have done great work.

Karen asked about the timeline for the recreation field since Ben is contracted to do that work. Dean said the razing is required to start five days after the bid's acceptance. He added that the building needs to be razed and the temporary building built before the town can receive its first funding from FEMA. The board accepted Ben Ackermann's bid.



Helen Morrison Teaching and Cats: The Perfect Journey

As told to Jeannie Johnson

Tell me your Cabot story. Where did you live before you came to Cabot, and what brought you here?

I grew up outside Philadelphia and lived there until I went off to college and one year of graduate school in New England. Then I taught in inner city Boston, music mostly and some math. I came to know people who were good at working with kids and acting and choreography, which I knew nothing about, and we did a lot of musicals together. One example was West Side Story, which was tricky in an inner city school when it's about gangs and you worry about that triggering something with the kids in the show. But the Romeo and Juliet story worked out well because the kids were willing to dive into it and forget about those real rivalries. The kids were mixed, and the only thing showing the "gangs" were different colored T-shirts.

I was there about 14 years, but ultimately, administration was starting to cut the arts, so my music job was going to get smaller, and they wanted me to teach more math classes. But the size of the classes were 40 kids or more, and you really can't teach at that size; you teach to the middle and nobody gets it. With fewer and fewer adults, it got really difficult, with fights and stab-bings, and I decided I needed a change. I went to school for awhile, to get more science. I had always loved music and math and the sciences.

My mom had bought the property on Joe's Pond and I came up to Vermont a lot in the summer, and I learned there was an opening to teach science in Cabot high school when Diane Bentley left, so I applied for it and got it, and I absolutely loved it for 27 years.

Anybody who is able to make their job something they are passionate about is very lucky, and I was passionate about teaching and loved teenagers and working with them. And then I stopped that and now I've been here at Kingdom Animal Shelter for 10-11 years, and this is something I am also absolutely passionate about, caring for them, finding them the best home for the rest of their time. Some of them have had a really rough time. . . and they deserve caring, loving, safe homes.

I retired in 2004 from Cabot School and for two years I was volunteering in various venues, but not feeling like I was making any difference. So I went back to Cabot School in 2006 because they were looking for somebody to pick up the AP courses. I taught AP Biology, AP Chemistry and Bioethics again and I loved it. It was part-time (but it wasn't really part-time for me!). At the last of that time, we had Twinfield and Cabot kids together, and that was fun. I loved meeting one on one with the kids because I think it helped them understand some pretty hard stuff better. But when I was shuttling back and forth to both Cabot and Twinfield, it took a lot of time and I got a little tired.

In 2011 I retired again. I always wanted to take Calculus - I never had before - so I asked Bill Tobin if I could join his AP Calculus class - I came every



day. I loved it, it's a mind-bender! I didn't realize that - the rate of change of the rate of change It's so applicable now about climate change and the population, among many other issues. I was always strict with the kids when I was the teacher: be on time for class, do your homework, do your best; they always did, they were very good about that, and I love them for it. Then, when I was taking calculus with Bill, I'd meet the kids in the hallway and they'd ask me: Did you do your homework, Miss Morrison? Are you ready for your test? How did you do on your test . . . ? It was very cute.

After you retired from teaching, you embarked on a whole new mission. Please tell us how you got involved in Kingdom Animal Shelter and what has changed through the years.

I saw in the paper a story about a Kingdom Animal Shelter cat named Collin at a Western Avenue veterinarian. It had a collar on as a kitten and he'd grown, and the skin had grown around the collar and was choking him. The wound was just horrible. It was a difficult surgery to get that out and then it took forever to heal. The ad in the paper was asking for help from the community with the expense. I went in and donated and got interested in Kingdom Animal Shelter in 2012 and that's how I started volunteering with them. I got on the Board in 2014 or 2015 and I've been President of the Board since then. It's a fascinating Board - not a governing board where you tell other people what to do, but a working board where everyone is involved and everybody does what they love and do best.

Do you see any cross pollination between your career in Cabot and your work at the animal shelter?

Absolutely. I found my skills as a teacher were useful here - working with volunteers, organizing, helping volunteers feel good, scheduling, fundraising, teaching everyone about cats and health in a way that makes it useful for them. I was pretty much a loner as a teacher, but here you can't be that way - it has to be group decisions and problem solving. Everybody contributes to the many tasks - opening in the morning, nighttime tuck-in, Trap-Neuter-Return, supporting foster homes, cleaning, feeding, maintaining supplies - the list goes on and on.

Tell me about the transition to this facility.

I believe Kingdom Animal Shelter was incorporated in 2003, and in 2009 moved into a small storefront on Memorial Drive. We rented two small rooms with cages and a tiny storage/isolation room. We didn't even have a lease, but the rent was reasonable and the landlord was very accommodating. But in 2016 he informed us he had sold the building. The new owners wanted us to move out to renovate, but they became very sensitive to the needs of the cats, and in the end, allowed the cats to remain until we had a new facility to which to take them.

At around the same time we received a significant bequest and started looking for property to buy, but we learned it would be way too expensive to construct a new building to meet our needs. Peter Murphy owned a lot of buildings in St Johnsbury then and was interested in selling. Board members asked him to consider donating this former RCT building, and he said yes! The stars aligned. We embarked on a capital campaign, raising about \$125,000. That and the bequest allowed us the \$250-260,000 to renovate. With that, Dana Young Construction gutted this building full of dark hallways and small offices and turned it into a beautiful, bright, sunny new Shelter. We were able to move in on November 3, 2018. All the cats were loaded into carriers and cats and condos were transported over to the new facility in whatever vehicles were available.

The cat apartments are bright, safe and comfortable. The cats are very content, with no signs of stress, and volunteers are really enjoying the cheerful

front-of-house space. As far as I know, we are one of the few shelters that, to any significant degree, take senior cats and cats with health or behavior issues, along with more "normal" cats, of course.

We've had some Cabot residents, both adults and students, helping out at the shelter, a number of cats from Cabot have been rescued, and several cats from the shelter have been adopted by Cabot residents. We also get calls for advice from Cabot.

What are your future plans?

We want to continue brightening dark halls at the back that have not yet been adapted, so they are as cat-friendly and human-comfortable as the redone areas.

We always appreciate volunteer help or financial support. Check us out online at <https://www.kingdomanimalshelter.com/>, call 802-473-3377, or email info@kingdomanimalshelter.com.

The return of our infamous and delicious KAS Spaghetti Dinner including fun raffles will be held on February 10 at the United Community Church on Main Street in St. Johnsbury.

Kingdom Animal Shelter is a non-profit organization, so we run on the donations we receive. All donations, physical and monetary, are greatly appreciated! There are many ways you can donate to Kingdom Animal Shelter. Select the link below to learn more. Any amount that you can donate would help us greatly to take care of and adopt out more cats looking for forever homes:

<https://www.kingdomanimalshelter.com/donate-merchandise.html>.



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Let's Talk About ART



Chad Hollister and horn section at the Cabot Arts and Music Festival, 2022

by Janet Van Fleet

This month, I'm bringing you a brief review of the variety of arts activities that have engaged our community for the past ten years or so. Next month, I'll begin talking with individual artists from different art disciplines about their work.

DANCE: Contra dances have been held in the Willey Building since 2013, organized by David Carpenter and assisted by Karen Mueller-Harder. After David's death in 2021, Karen took over organizing and publicizing the dances, which are held monthly on the second Friday from September to June. Recently Karen has organized occasional afternoon dances on the weekend for families with younger children. Another dance connection to Cabot is the Midnight Capers Morris Dancers, led by Lisa Ginett, that dance every year in the 4th of July parade, and Sarah Spletzer's Movementum.

MUSIC: Many people in Cabot sing, play instruments, and get together in bands! Cabot Arts has been producing concerts in town since 2013, first arranged by R.D. Eno from 2013 until 2018, after which the energetic Dana Robinson took over the project, establishing Cabot Arts as a fully-qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit. In addition to concerts, Dana has created highly successful annual festivals that have engaged hundreds of visitors and local people. Cabot is fortunate to have multiple venues in town where musical performances have been presented – the Town Hall, the Cabot United Church, The Cabot School Performing Arts Center (CSPAC), and at times the Cabot Common and the Lower Cabot Schoolhouse home of Dana and Susan Robinson, where the Arts and Music Festival was held last summer after the flood.

In 2023 alone, Cabot Arts produced the third annual 12th Night Celebration, eight folk club concerts, six special concerts, three free Summer Concerts on the Common, the second annual Arts and Music Festival, the first annual Cheese and Culture Festival, founded a

Music Mentoring Program, and (since 2017) maintained the weekly Old Time Jam Session at Harry's Hardware on Sunday afternoons! And looking to the future, Dana aspires to develop staff and an active volunteer base to make these public events sustainable. Next up: Cabot Village 12th Night Celebration, Friday and Saturday, January 5th and 6th, 2024, which will include dance, music, theater, and crafts!

THEATER: After the Cabot School Performing Arts Center (CSPAC) was completed, Karen Mueller-Harder undertook to produce Cabot Community Theater in which all ages of performers could participate. The first show was presented in 2011, and since then plays have been produced annually, alternating straight plays and musicals. Starting in 2016 they have also run one-week summer camps, and have been performing a Mumpers' play each year at Cabot's Twelfth Night celebration.

VISUAL ARTS: The Cabot Artisans Gallery, led by Sandy Ducharme, was open during the summers of 2018 and 2019 in the white house at 3053 Main Street, showing work by 42 local and nearby artists and craftspeople. Later, the Cabot Art Barn was a pop-up gallery created by Neil Bainton that displayed and sold artwork at the historic Wiswell House in 2021 and 2022, during the 4th of July and Fall Foliage season. There is a monthly gathering of makers (anybody who makes something -- from pottery to paintings) in the meeting room of the Willey Building. Contact Roz Daniels to be notified of dates.

Currently, local artisans with retail outlets include Sandy Pond Studios at 201 Urban Farm Way, and Klingler Woodcarving and Art Gallery on Thistle Hill Road, Sandy Ducharme's Vermont Rug Hooking Studio and Richard Ducharme's Hillcrest Chairs at 849 Ducharme Road, and "Birdman" woodcarver Ed Menard on Danville Hill. Many other artists, craftspeople, photographers and designers work in their home studios in all parts of town. Cabot is indeed rich in artists!

Draft Budget Information Town of Cabot FY 24-25

by Mike Hogan - Selectboard Chair,
On behalf of the Cabot Selectboard

The Selectboard is conducting a meeting January 2, 2024, to discuss the draft budget for FY25. Listed below are some areas where the budget has increased since FY24.

As many of you know, 2023 has been a challenging year for all of us. The July flood has impacted our community deeply and touched all our lives and those of our neighbors. The Town has worked extremely hard with countless volunteers and local contractors to put Cabot back together to its pre flood condition.

The work has not stopped. Lots of meetings have been held to assess the damages and plan for mitigation projects that will alleviate future damage in a troubling weather pattern for our state.

All of this work and planning cost money! Each year the Selectboard evaluates the town's financial needs for the upcoming fiscal year. We have started public meetings since October going over line by line what are the needs of each function that offers services to Cabot taxpayers.

The fiscal year FY25 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025) will see some significant increases to cover all our anticipated costs for the upcoming year. At Town Meeting 2024 we will be asking for appropriations that total approximately \$1,871,611 compared to the previous fiscal year of \$1,652,482, or an increase of \$219,000, or 13%. This is a draft number at this time and could be lower or even higher as we continue discussions and look at other ways to finalize this budget.

This meeting is an opportunity for folks to look at the budget and give us feedback on how we should proceed. We do take into consideration the fiscal impact on the town and the tax implications for all of its citizens.

Let's look at some areas where you will see some increases:

**General Fund: Increase of \$98,599.
FY25 VS FY24 appropriation:
\$825,218 - \$726,619**

Line item 3 Cabot Appropriations: it is made up of the Cabot Ambulance, Cabot Cemetery, Cabot Chronicle, Cabot Senior Citizens, CCA, and Neighbors in Action. The Cemetery, Chronicle, and CCA increased around \$15,000. The Ambulance is in transition as it moved out of the old fire station into a temporary building at the Goodrich Sugar Facility. The Board is considering what steps are needed to keep emergency medical services available for Cabot residents. At present, we have two options under consideration: Fund the Cabot Ambulance with an appropriation of \$40,000 or go out to bid for a contract for emergency medical services. No decision has been made thus far.

Line item 15 Fire Department Expenses: As you know, the current Cabot Fire Department Building was impacted by the July flood to the extent that it was reg tagged (condemned) by the State Fire Marshall and will be razed in the coming weeks and months. FEMA is funding a temporary building by the recreation field that is currently under construction. The new firehouse

on VT 215 South is already designed and permitted and will be constructed in 2025 and will also be funded by FEMA. To get the fire department through the next fiscal year it is asking for an appropriation of \$122,900. Part of that increase from the previous year is \$23,300 to create a fast squad that will supplement any need to respond to medical emergencies. Many towns have fast squads, and the Cabot Ambulance is supportive of this move. We also have added \$10,000 in a sinking fund to eventually replace the aging tanker used in many fire calls. In addition, there is an increase in dispatching services and some monies for dry hydrants which are critical in having a water source to fight fires.

Line item 21 Library Expense: The Library increase over last fiscal year is \$13,209. It's made up of salary increases for the Librarian, Youth Librarian, taxes, and miscellaneous expenses.

Line item 7 IT and Cyber Security: The increase of \$20,000 is consolidating all the expenses related to IT from all town departments.

Line 35 Tax Map: \$18,000 has been added to update our tax maps through new software that will give the town a more accurate picture of property lines, and valuation that are used in selling property and making any land changes.

**Highway Fund: Increase of \$120,530.
FY25 VS FY24 appropriation:
\$1,046,393 - \$925,863**

Line item 11 Equipment Lease: The town is replacing its trucks on a rotating basis. It will be leasing a new truck to be delivered in 2024 which increases the payment on our leased vehicles. It has a seven-year warranty, with the last balloon payment paid with the monies allocated to the sinking fund. Most towns lease their trucks and have service coverage because of all the wear and tear of seasonal use. Cabot put a lot of stress on its equipment with the July flood. Increase of \$42,737

Line item 16 Gravel- increase \$10,000. Cost increases of material.

Line item 18 Health Insurance \$20,500 increase to update coverage.

Line items 32 Salt and 33 Sand- Salt increased \$10,000 as inflation and demand increased prices. Sand increase \$15,000 as inflation and demand increase prices.

Line 28 New Equipment \$15,000. Town is replacing its aging Pickup, and this amount is being applied to the purchase price.

Line 12 Equipment Repair- \$15,000 for anticipated repairs that come up all the time.

Budget Decisions Yet to be Decided!

Cabot had a positive fund balance from FY22. The FY 23 audit is under way, and we have no idea how much that will be. Some of those monies could be applied in this budget which will bring down the final tax rate.

The town has borrowed over \$1.5 million to cover expenses related to flood damage from the July 10 storm. FEMA should reimburse the town for 90% (see 'Draft Budget', page 13)

Budget Preparation (Part 1)

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The Selectboard held four special budget meetings this past month, starting on November 27 and concluding on December 18. During the four meetings, the board heard from departments and committees of the town regarding their budget request, as well as local non-profits regarding their appropriation requests.

The Selectboard intends to publish their draft budget in the January edition of the Chronicle and hold a public forum in January to get public feedback before the budget is finalized for Town Meeting. The following is presented in the order the various organizations were scheduled to present their requests to the board.

Up first was Sid Griggs, Road Foreman, to discuss the Highway budget. The board reviewed each line item in the highway budget with Sid, and started by talking about bridges, and which ones need repairs. Sid mentioned the bridge at Ackermann Flats, and the one on Lovely Road. He also talked about the bridge on Mack Mountain Road, which has at least three feet of gravel on top of the bridge.

They moved on and Sid asked to raise the building maintenance budget from \$2,000 to \$3,000 because “nothing is getting cheaper.” And when Mike asked about culverts, Sid reviewed the costs of them and said they should raise it to \$15,000.

Then the board talked to Sid regarding buying or leasing trucks. Sid said he had consulted two dealers, and both said

the town’s best bang for the buck is a six-year lease with a balloon payment for buyout. He added if they did the seven year warranty, and trade the truck in at six years, that it would be worth more because the dealer gets a truck with one year of warranty.

Sid went on to say that repair costs are going to spike soon, and \$30,000 isn’t enough as he described the cost of a transmission oil change. Mike mentioned that when trucks are newish, there are fewer breakdowns. They agreed the repair line item needed to be raised to \$40,000.

The board and Sid then talked about paving projects, and how there is \$40,000 this year to do Whittier Hill. Sid said they could do two aprons a year with \$40,000. Sid also told the board that salt was going from \$71 a ton to \$89.50 a ton. He says they can use over 700 tons in a year.

Up next was Roland Payne, the Tree Warden. Roland told the board that he took numbers off the ash tree removal plan. He said the plan called for \$23,900 for tree removal. Mike reminded Roland that he had asked for so many a year. Roland agreed, and also noted that the number of trees are down to 73, from over 90 two years ago. He said that the power companies had taken a few down, as well as some homeowners.

The board and Roland talked about training for the road crew, and then turned to the amount for the budget. Roland asked for \$10,000 to get started with some contractors. Mike proposed adding \$4,000 for training the road crew.

Budget Preparation (Part 2)

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

At the second budget meeting, Cabot Ambulance presented their appropriation requests. Jenn Miner told the board the ambulance is operating out of Goodrich’s Sugar House. She stated they are bumping up their EMT numbers. Jenn talked about the age of the ambulance, and the cost of dispatch being a huge item. She mentioned they had to buy a new cardiac monitor and are working to pay it off.

Jenn said their previous year’s expenses were \$46,920 and they are asking for \$47,000 for the next budget. She reminded the board that they do not charge when there is no transport. Jenn added that half of their calls are for no transport.

Mike asked what the insurance line item included, and Jenn said it was for liability, worker’s compensation, and the vehicle insurance.

Karen Larsen asked about coverage levels, and there was a discussion about who were the EMTs. Mike asked about their plans for housing the ambulance long term. He also asked if Cabot Ambulance is sustainable. Both Jenn and Ruth Goodrich answered that question by talking about how a lot of organizations are having staffing issues. Ruth mentioned Barre had been down six people recently, and they are paid positions.

The conversation delved into coverage of other towns, and into the differ-

ent levels of EMS certification and the amount of training needed for each level. Then Karen and Ruth went back and forth regarding the business practices of Cabot Ambulance and the state of the books and tax filing status. Mike said it would be good to have a certification from the CPA, and suggested the board get a certification each year.

Then Karen asked about the vehicle, and Ruth said it’s not as dead as everyone says. She exclaimed it was normal wear and tear and required maintenance. Karen then questioned, “there is no plan to replace it?” Ruth said they have a plan and are looking at congressional funding.

The Library Trustees presented their budget next, and Kathleen Hoyne states she has been doing the budget for 14 years. She said it can be broken down into three parts, utilities, book budget, and payroll. She mentioned that since the result of last year’s positive vote regarding the youth librarian, they regard that question a done deal.

Kathleen went on to say the trustees have put in a modest increase for her salary. She noted that according to the average librarian salary, she has been underpaid for the entire 14 years she has been a librarian in Cabot. She noted that this budget is also unanimously supported by the library trustees, and that every year the Selectboard has cut from the library budget request. Each time the trustees have petitioned a vote for the additional monies and the voters

of Cabot have always voted to fully fund the library.

Mike said that he takes issue with what was said, and that the board has always supported the library. He mentioned that he has testified on his state budget and had to explain every expense. He stated the Selectboard is always looking for equity across town expenses. He added one of the things they struggle with as a board is that they have thought the increases are too high.

Grace Hoffman, library trustee, responded by saying she appreciates that, but her point is that librarians are professionals, and they are paid because of their background. She said the more educated, and the more experience, justifies the increase. She added that Kathleen has a degree in library science.

Kurt Stienart, library trustee, added that if you start someone low and only give them cost of living increases, they can never make any ground and you’re are not accounting for their increased experience.

Karen asked if the library keeps metrics on library use, and asked what Kathleen sees as a trajectory for library use, especially the last few years due to COVID-19. Kathleen said they do have an annual report that is sent to the Department of Libraries which covers 100 different metrics. She added that as far as the youth librarian goes, there are about 30 people that come to story hour.

The next budget reviewed by the board was the Fire Department. Dean Deasy started out by saying the Fire Department currently has 30 members, the largest it has ever been. Dean described that shortly after the flood, the fire department was asked to run automatic mutual aid with the ambulance and during that time period they realized they needed to develop a fast squad.

Then Dean described the parts of the budget. He said the department is looking for \$86,168 for its operations, and another \$23,300 for the startup of a FAST squad (first aid stabilization team). He added that he would also like a sinking fund going forward so they can plan on a brush truck, as well as replacing the tanker. He noted that attached to the budget was an estimate for contracting ambulance transport services, which was \$30,000.

Karen asked for a 50,000-foot view of what a fast squad is and how it works. Dean said that a fast squad cannot transport, and there are limitations due to licensing and certifications. He said a FAST squad shows up at the scene, and can possibly do CPR or stop bleeding. Karen described a FAST squad as being attached to the fire department, and would show up and stabilize for the transport agency with the understanding a FAST squad can get there sooner.

Dean said it depends upon the certification level of who shows up, and described that there are five levels of EMS certification. The FAST squad would be at the lowest level, and could show up and start things.

R.D. then asked about the \$30,000 estimate for a transport service. Dean said they put a team together to investigate a FAST squad which looked at the percentage of calls and what was being

billed. They also visited all the neighboring towns to see what they are being charged for ambulance service. He said that Cabot Ambulance does 115 to 125 calls, and about 50% are no transport. The no transport calls are where the FAST squad can provide the service.

Mike suggested to the board that they could put the \$23,000 for a FAST squad on a separate article for the town vote, or include it in the budget.

The last organization to present to the board at this meeting was the Cabot Community Association (CCA). R.D. Eno recused himself from the discussion because he is a board member of the CCA, and stepped out of the room.

Lori Augustyniak, CCA Executive Director, presented the Chronicle and CCA budget appropriation requests. She pointed out that the staff has not had a cost of living increase for the last six years, and noted that the Chronicle is entering its 17th year. She also mentioned that postage and printing costs keep rising.

Lori added that they have determined the newspaper needs to be monthly. Lori also said they are looking to add coverage on School Board meetings. She concluded by stating the appropriation request for the Chronicle is \$20,000 for FY25. She said that the budget is \$31,750, and the CCA will raise the remaining \$11,750, of which about \$7,000 will come from advertising.

Mike responded by saying that he didn’t think anyone on the board would argue that the Chronicle isn’t an important resource.

Lori then turned to the CCA appropriation request. She highlighted that the private-public relationship is important to Cabot, and last year the CCA was able to take the \$10,000 appropriation and use it to enable another \$216,000 to come into the town. She highlighted the recently opened Child Care Center, among other activities. She said that this year the CCA is increasing the request to \$15,000.

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Budget Preparation (Part 3)

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

At the third budget meeting, the Rec Committee presented its budget. Shannon Smith was there to represent the committee, but said she really didn't have anything. She said that last year was so very strange, it's hard to approach. She added that they currently have no treasurer, and no secretary. She questioned if they were legitimately a committee. She said there is her, acting as an iterim, and Cam and Jesse. She noted that Jesse is the paid member who facilitates the committee's programs

Shannon went on to say that they didn't do the easter egg hunt in the past year, and for 4th of July they just did the bouncy house. She noted that they "kinda" take care of the pavilion, but the work is really done by the town.

The board and Shannon discussed the status of the ice skating rink, which was on hold for the time being. They ultimately decided to level fund the rec committee at \$10,000.

Then the board looked at the special appropriations, which Betty reviewed with them. Betty said there were no new ones, and it was comparable to last year, up about \$1,600 to a total of \$18,375.

Then the board discussed the Cabot Ambulance appropriation, which was up from \$40,000 to \$47,000. Mike recalled that Dean submitted an estimate for ambulance transport costs as part of the fire department budget. Mike said he wasn't sure they should put it out to bid this year, but recalled there were a lot of questions from the board on Cabot Ambulance's status.

Mike asked the board if they should look at this for another year and then decide. Fred Ducharme said that is what he was thinking. R.D. said he wasn't sure he understood, since they were currently funded until the end of June 2024. R.D. said they could seek a contract next spring, and could put enough in the

budget to contract with Cabot Ambulance.

Karen spoke to the idea of a FAST squad as being a good one. She expressed that it sounded like a good idea. She also said it would also deal with some of the problems that Jenn was speaking about, in that half the time the ambulance gets toned out, they don't transport. She also stated that Jenn was in favor of having a FAST squad in the fire department.

Mike said that Cabot Ambulance has six more months under the current budget. He speculated that if they put it out to bid, the Cabot Ambulance would bid on it.

The board then started to talk about how they would go about the request for proposal (RFP) bid process for an ambulance service. Fred said what they are thinking about sounds good, but he felt they should check with the voters. Mike said the board has the authority to contract with anyone, but that idea should be given some consideration.

The board then discussed the Willey Building, and Fred mentioned the boilers are getting older and need new pumps. Fred went on to describe other improvements that should be made to heat the building more efficiently. R.D. asked if \$50,000 was reasonable? Michelle noted that the \$19,000 in loans won't be in the budget anymore, so there would be extra money with the same appropriation.

The board then looked at the bottom line and wondered where the big increase was coming from. They talked about various changes, and noted that much of the library increase was due to the youth librarian, which was outside the budget as an extra article last year.

Mike estimated that the budget at that point represented a 12-cent increase on taxes, and was worried about what that would mean overall after the state announced a significant increase to school taxes.

Budget Preparation (Part 4)

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The Selectboard held the fourth special budget meeting before the holidays on December 18. At this meeting they reviewed the budget and prepared the draft for publication in the Chronicle.

Sid Griggs was present to review quotes he had obtained regarding leasing a new truck. Sid said he had just gotten them and hadn't had a chance to look at the quotes. He got Sandy, the dealer, on the phone and the board went over the quotes to better understand the options.

They discussed the option of either making the first payment when they received the truck, or at the end of the first year after they received the truck. The former option was the cheaper option. The option the board settled upon was six years of payments at around \$42,000, followed by a balloon payment estimated to be \$110,000.

R.D. asked about paying extra on the lease early, and Sandy said that there would be a penalty. Sandy reviewed the town's last purchases, and said they

were set up as lease to turn in, not lease to own. He described that it works the same way, but when the agreement is to turn in, the town loses the equity in the truck. He said when the town makes the final balloon payment, the town gains all that equity in that truck.

Sandy also stated that the \$100,000 balloon payment is an estimate on what the truck would be worth. The board asked Sandy about the trade in value of Aldo's truck, which Sid said had just turned over 100,000 miles and was a 2016 model. Sandy guessed it would be around \$30,000 to \$40,000, but couldn't be sure without looking at it.

After more questions and answers between the board and Sandy, Fred summed up the discussion by saying "so we are going to lease the truck" and plug in \$42,000 for the payment. Mike said they would add it to line item 11, and change it from \$29,237 to \$71,237.

The board then talked about signs and painting parking spaces and stop lines on the road. They acknowledged that parking is becoming a problem when there are events, and people are

parking up Whittier Hill Road and Danville Hill Road, creating dangerous situations.

R.D. then asked if they had any carry forwards, and Mike said that there was an audited fund balance of \$153,000 from the last fiscal year. R.D. wondered if that could be used to offset the proposed 18% increase. Mike also noted that they would have approximately \$120,000 from Neighbors in Action when the sale of the Masonic Hall goes through.

Mike then talked about the \$1,500,000 the town has borrowed due to flooding. He said that FEMA will not be reimbursing them any time soon. He speculated that it may not happen until 2025 and they are going to have to carry the \$1,500,000 plus interest. R.D. said the interest should be in the budget. Karen noted that the interest isn't reimbursable by FEMA. Michelle pointed out that the town might need to borrow another million dollars, but did not clarify why.

Before concluding their budget discussions, the board discussed the Cabot Ambulance appropriation request. Mike noted that the request was up from \$40,000 to \$47,000, and they are currently funded through the current fiscal year. He asked the board what everyone wants to do for the following year. Fred said that he had gotten a few phone calls by concerned residents, and said the board needs to be careful.

Mike said he has mixed feelings about what they should do, and said the board could look like the bad guys or the heroes. Karen noted that Jenn expressed enthusiasm about the FAST squad and having an ambulance service providing transport. She said all the surrounding communities are pricing

between 20k and 30k a year for an ambulance service.

Karen noted that if they were funding them both, then 47k was probably correct. She added that if they are just a transport service, then it probably isn't correct. She speculated that if the board goes out for bid, then Cabot Ambulance can bid. Karen speculated that if Cabot Ambulance doesn't have all its ducks in a row, and can't meet the requirements of the RFP, the town could contract another service for a year, and Cabot Ambulance could bid the following year.

The board recognized Ruth Goodrich to speak about Cabot Ambulance, and she said they do have their license, it was never in question, and they do have their ducks in a row. She went on to say that suggesting Cabot Ambulance is not viable and is not getting out on calls is getting pretty old.

The conversation delved into the viability or non-viability of Cabot Ambulance and strayed away from budgetary items. R.D. brought the discussion back to the budget by saying the allocation of \$47,000 to Cabot Ambulance doesn't guarantee anything. He said that if Cabot Ambulance is thoroughly certified, then there should be no problem for it to respond to an RFP.

R.D. wanted the board to decide which way it wanted to go, and Mike said that for the purposes of that night, they just needed to plug in a number.

Then Mike spoke about the interest rate on the two flood related notes. Michelle looked up the terms of the loans and said the \$1,000,000 note comes due in July of 2024, and the \$500,000 note comes due in November of 2024. Mike agreed to work on the interest amounts with Michelle and plug in the numbers before sending the final draft budget to the Chronicle.

Letter to the Readers

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

I am announcing that I do not intend to run for another term on the Cabot School Board. Since I moved to Cabot in 2010, I have served on various committees and boards in the town, the school, and the CCA. I was raised in a family that values community service, and I have tried to continue the dedication my parents had throughout their lives. I will continue to serve on the board of the CCA, and as a staff writer for the Cabot Chronicle.

To that end, my departure from the school board will allow me to expand the Chronicle's coverage of town boards to include the School Board. I will continue to attend the school board meetings, not as a school director, but as a Chronicle staff writer. My hope is to keep the town better informed on the discussions and decisions made by both the Selectboard and the School Board.

REMINDER

CABOT FINAL 2023 PROPERTY TAX PAYMENT DUE BY THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 5:00 P.M.

Mail payment to Town Clerk, Cabot Town Hall, PO Box 36, 3084 Main Street, Cabot, VT 05647, postmarked by January 18.

- or -

Delivered to town office or outside drop box (next to the rear entrance) before 5:00 p.m. January 18.

- or -

Pay online at www.Cabotvt.us, click ONLINE PAYMENTS, enter payment amount and Parcel ID from tax bill. Be aware, the payment portal host will add a 3% convenience charge for providing the town this service. Payments after 5:00 p.m. will be considered delinquent.

General Fund and Highway Expenses

2024-2025 Highway Expense		Approved Budget	Actual Budget	Approved Budget	Proposed Budget
		2022-2023	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
1	Payroll	173,286	186,287	208,624	212,588
2	Payroll Taxes	22,000	23,836	27,000	28,000
3	Bridges	2,500	-	2,500	1,000
4	Legal	500	-	500	500
5	Building Garage Maintenance	2,000	3,993	2,000	3,000
6	Chloride	18,000	24,978	21,000	21,000
7	Clothing Allowance	3,500	3,497	5,500	4,000
8	Cold Patch/Sealer	9,500	-	9,500	9,500
9	Culverts	9,000	13,596	13,500	15,000
11	Equipment Lease	27,100	28,497	28,500	71,237
12	Equipment Repair	25,000	49,993	25,000	40,000
13	Equipment Loan Princ.	79,415	43,128	79,415	43,308
14	Fuel Expense for Equipment	45,000	58,196	55,000	55,000
14	Garage Supplies	3,000	5,431	3,000	9,000
15	Garage Repairs		4,200		-
16	Gravel	70,000	66,616	80,000	90,000
17	Highway Grants	1,600	8,202		-
18	Health Insurance	18,500	17,564	34,500	55,000
19	Highway Propane	8,000	7,105	10,000	10,000
20	Hired/Rented Equipment	5,000	1,500	5,000	8,000
21	Insurance	26,000	31,029	27,000	35,000
22	Interest-Paving Bond	2,609	2,609	2,609	2,609
23	Interest-Garage Bond	652	652	652	652
24	Principal-Paving Bond	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
25	Principal-Garage Bond	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
26	Loan Interest	7,200	6,060	11,397	6,000
27	Miscellaneous	1,500	2,880	1,500	2,000
28	New Equipment	6,000	21,759		-
29	Paving Misc. Projects	30,000	61,360	40,000	40,000
30	Paving Loan	52,953	47,070	47,166	47,000
31	Permits stormwater	3,000	1,765	2,000	2,000
32	Salt	55,000	50,485	55,000	65,000
33	Sand	28,000	29,595	35,000	50,000
34	Sinking Fund	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
35	Signs & Guardrails	3,000	1,254	7,000	10,000
36	Tires	15,000	12,924	20,000	20,000
37	Tire Chains		7,404		8,000
38	Transportation Planning	5,000		1,000	-
39	Utilities	5,000	5,766	5,000	7,000
	Total Highway Expense	823,815	889,232	925,863	1,031,393

2024-2025 General Fund Expense		Approved Budget	Actual Budget	Approved Budget	Proposed Budget
		2022-2023	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
1	Payroll	157,609	125,179	166,423	156,890
2	Payroll Taxes	20,500	15,050	21,635	21,500
3	Cabot Appropriations	83,250	83,250	88,750	102,500
4	Special Service Appropriations	18,554	18,554	17,135	18,735
5	Audit	14,000	11,325	12,000	13,000
6	Legal	10,000	2,841	10,000	10,000
7	Computer - IT & Cyber Security	1,000	3,130	1,000	20,000
8	Conservation Commission	500	5,818	500	1,500
9	Task Force				1,500
10	Constable	1,000	150	1,000	1,000
11	County Tax	14,000	14,835	15,000	15,500
12	Development Review Board		543	1,000	600
13	Dues & Subscriptions	14,000	13,957	16,000	11,500
14	Emergency Management	500	-	500	500
15	Fire Department Operations	52,500	59,260	81,250	122,900
16	General Expense	2,000	2,625	2,000	3,000
17	Health Insurance	12,200	12,035	12,200	12,200
18	Health Officer		-	500	500
19	Insurance	14,000	15,151	14,000	15,000
20	Interest Expense	1,200	5,223	7,500	6,000
21	Library Expense	87,252	90,942	103,334	116,543
22	Lister Expense	7,500	6,118	7,617	6,200
23	Main St. 2466 - New Property	28,000	50,266	2,000	-
24	Masonic Hall Expense	3,500	5,569	4,000	-
25	Meetings/Elections	5,000	3,404	5,000	5,000

26	Office Expenses	6,000	10,307	6,000	7,000
27	Office Supplies	2,000	2,097	2,000	2,000
28	Planning Commission/DRB	2,500	23	2,650	2,650
30	Pound keeper	500	802	500	500
31	Rec. Committee Ops	8,000	10,757	10,625	10,000
32	Selectboard Misc.	15,000	11,525	4,000	4,000
33	Sheriff	7,000	7,107	7,000	8,000
34	Recycle Center	9,700	8,972	10,000	10,000
35	Tax Map				18,000
36	Trails Committee	1,250	8,261	2,000	2,000
37	Trees				7,000
38	Village Expenses	38,000	32,677	41,000	41,000
39	Wiley Building Expenses	55,000	65,808	50,000	50,000
40	Zoning Admin.	800	1,294	500	1,000
	Total General Fund Exp	693,815	704,859	726,619	825,218

Please join us for Cabot's next Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting:
Monday, January 22, 2024

by Peg Elmer Hough

About a dozen of us met on December 11, at the first public meeting for the re-write of this required plan. We reviewed the list of natural disaster hazards the state has listed for Vermont, concentrating on the ones that hurt us the most (erosive flooding!) and occur the most (severe storms that result in extended power outages) and several more.

At the meeting on January 22, we'll dive deeper on what mitigation strategies Cabot can take on in the next five years to address the hazards we highlighted as potentially causing disasters here. Please join us at 6:30 p.m. that evening in the Wiley Building to help us sort out those details and offer ideas you may have.

Public Meeting January 22 To Discuss Hazard Mitigation

by Keith Cubbon, CVRPC

The Town of Cabot has been working to update the town’s Local Hazard Mitigation plan with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. We are holding a public meeting at the Wiley Building on January 22 at 6:30pm, to discuss mitigation actions and projects for reducing the impacts of disasters in the community. The town is drafting the Hazard Mitigation Plan to be approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Public participation is encouraged and we would love to hear your ideas on how to make Cabot safer! If you haven’t already, please take our short online survey found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/w5t4cu8h>. This is a great opportunity for you voice to be heard in preparing for disasters. This work is being done to access FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant funding and help prevent damages in future disasters or extreme storm events and to increase state funding for your town in disaster recovery. Not only this summer but with this most recent storm the climate in our region is changing and we are documenting an increase in extreme rain events and unseasonable conditions. Please participate and help to make Cabot safer from future incidents. Please contact Keith Cubbon cubbon@cvregion.com for more information.

New Years Resolution: Buy Seeds That Align With Your Values

by Susan Socks of Garden Goddess Consulting and Gardening

For roughly 10,000 years, people have been saving and planting seeds. When a plant was especially productive, or tasty, or resistant to disease, smart growers would save seeds from those plants, rather than just eating every last delicious one. Every year, plants developed and changed. From the humble teosinte, humans developed corn. From plants with starchy roots, humans developed potatoes. From a single plant, *Brassica oleracea*, we developed cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, kale, Brussel sprouts, collard greens, and kohlrabi. For 10,000 years, generations of growers worked season by season to improve the plants that the vast majority of us rely on.

A sudden shift occurred in the past 20 years. Advances in genetic engineering allowed for seeds resistant to chemicals, especially herbicides. Massive chemical companies such as DuPont, Bayer, Syngenta, and Monsanto, sensing a vast opportunity, expanded into the seed

business. Between 1980 and 2014, Monsanto bought 60 independent seed companies. A few giant corporations now sell more than half of all seeds worldwide. These companies dictate the type of seeds available for sale. If they choose not to offer a variety, it can disappear from our collective heritage of seed types.

In some cases, especially with commodity crops such as corn and soybeans, multinational seed giants now prevent the saving of seed by imposing licensing agreements. Growers are legally required to re-purchase seed every year, rather than save a portion of each year’s crop for replanting. Further, companies have harassed and prosecuted farmers who have NOT bought seed from them, but end up with patented genetics in their fields due to contamination via pollen from neighboring growers. Clearly, it should be the other way around, with farmers suing for having their crops contaminated with unwanted genetically modified pollen, but who is going to have more money for lawyers: a single farmer, or Monsanto?

(see ‘Garden Goddess’, page 13)

High School Choice

(continued from page 3)

neighbor, offers HS choice to their students even though they have no “bustling economy” to speak of (no Cabot Creamery, Village Store, Harry’s or The Den, Senior Center, or anything up-and-coming such as Headwaters). How do they manage? Did Walden once have a bustling economy, but then every busi-

ness was forced out of existence due to HS choice? Are they better at spending their money than we are? With a population one-third smaller than Cabot, somehow, Walden offers more inclusion in education for their HS students than we do. Not only is Walden able to afford and sustain HS choice, but every student, no matter the socio-economic status, is able to find transportation to his/her school of choice. How *do* they do it??

December Update on the Cabot Youth Council

**by Laura McCaffrey,
VYP Community Coordinator
for Cabot Vermont Afterschool**

Bike trails? Movie and game nights? Some more games and seating at the rec field? These are questions the Cabot Youth Council is considering as it tries to finish up work on proposals for the \$40,000 grant Vermont Afterschool has provided to Cabot youth.

At this point, the Cabot Youth Council is working with a number of community partners to sort out logistics for proposals. This might seem a little bit like putting the cart before the horse, as my dad always used to say, since the Cabot Youth Council hasn't yet held a vote on which projects to fund. However, we need to make sure that all the project proposals we put out to the larger youth community in Cabot as voting options are projects that can indeed be completed in Cabot.

I had hoped to complete a lot of this work during the summer and early fall, but that was BF, one might say, Before

Flood. Our October, November, and December have been a flurry of planning and researching.

The Cabot Youth Council will hold a vote on proposals either the week of January 22 or the week of January 29. If you are a young person, please keep your eye on Front Porch Forum and the Cabot Connects FB page for more information about where and how to vote. Announcements will also be at Cabot School, and we will potentially hang posters.

As a reminder, the Cabot Youth Council is always welcoming to new members, and anyone ages 11/12-22 who is interested in joining can contact me at laura@vermontafterschool.org. Any adults who are interested in the process or who want to provide support for proposals can also reach me at that email.

We're finally seeing ideas turn into possible realities. I'm looking forward to continuing this process and finding out what youth in Cabot will vote to fund from these projects we're working so hard on!

Draft Budget

(continued from page 9)

with the remaining 10% coming from multiple sources yet to be determined. The interest on this borrowing will have to be accounted for and may be part of this budget request. We are anticipating that amount to be around \$54,000. In the end, the Town should have a small liability after reimbursement from

FEMA and could spread that liability over a few years to lessen the taxpayer impact.

If you have any questions regarding the FY25 budget, please contact the Selectboard or the Town Clerk's Office or attend an in person or Zoom meeting on January 2 at 5:00 p.m. in the Willey Building. Details will follow regarding the Zoom meeting invite.

companies, and independent breeders, and you can support their work (and protect our collective seed heritage) by ordering garden seed from them. My favorite seed companies are Fedco (a cooperative in Maine), Johnny's (also Maine), High Mowing (Vermont), and Seed Savers Exchange (Iowa). When you buy their seed, you continue their good work of offering a diversity of seed varieties, and supporting further development of seed that is NOT patented...seed that can be saved and improved by anyone. Fedco in particular is a fantastic resource. They list the size of operation for every producer of the seeds they offer, and give instructions in the catalog about how to save your own seed.

This season, don't buy your seed from just any old place. Know where your seed comes from, and who and what your money supports. Enjoy your independent seed company catalogs in these dark times , and dream of bountiful gardens!

This garden article is brought to you by Susan Socks, aka the Garden Goddess. Stay tuned for upcoming articles on green lawn care, pruning, garden tools, edible landscapes, and more. For gardening help, visit www.SocksFamilyFarm.weebly.com or call 802.498.7785.

Garden Goddess

(continued from page 12)

These corporations fund seed breeding programs, but rather than contributing to the genetic diversity, and allowing small breeders access to continue the work, they file patents. Huge chemical/seed corporations patent both genetics from their breeding programs, and traits. You didn't misread that...they are patenting *traits*. Meaning that if they develop a tomato with improved resistance to cold temperatures, and place a patent, these multinationals can come after small seed companies or independent breeders who develop similar traits, and present legal challenges to their work. Not for use of the genetics developed, but just *the similarity in traits*. Understandably, this has a chilling effect on small-scale seed companies and plant breeders.

This is very alarming, but there is some good news. Globally, governments have taken notice and begun to develop policy to try and rein in some of the excesses of the corporations. But corporate pockets are deep, and it'll be a tough fight.

So why tell you all this? Because you can help preserve our heritage of seed diversity! There are still independent seed

2024
CABOT
Strong
Shop Local
Thrive Local

CABOT BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS

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I invite you to tell us about your business using a quick, easy form:

- Scan the QR code with your smartphone
- Use this link from your computer - <https://forms.office.com/r/TAP8tyyAAG>
- Or just call me at 802-917-8883

Happy New Year!



**We welcome you to
our monthly meeting.
CABOT BUSINESS FORUM
Second Mondays
5:30 p.m.
Headwaters
Restaurant & Pub**



CABOT PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

LIBRARY HOURS: Monday noon - 6 pm, Tuesday 10 am - 6 pm, Wednesday 2 - 6 pm, Thursday noon - 6 pm, and Saturday 9 am- noon. Curbside library service is still available during regular library hours.

Youth Programming - Be sure to visit our website: cabotlibrary.com and check FPF for updates, registration information and added programming.

Dungeons and Dragons (ages 9 - 13) - **Ongoing - Tuesdays, 3:30 - 5:00 pm** - Join Losada Stoddard as DM for our newest D&D campaign. Learn how to build a Dungeons and Dragons character, and then set out on your Adventures. No experience necessary! Come for the mysteries and magic, tails and talons, puzzles, and prophecies! Snacks provided. New members are welcome anytime!

Story and Activity Time (ages birth - 5) - **Wednesdays 10:30 - 11:30 am - 3rd Floor of the Willey Building** Join youth librarian Amanda Otto for stories, songs, snacks, crafts, and open play. All are welcome!

STE(A)M Program (ages 11+) - **2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month - January 10 - February 28 -2:30 - 4:00 pm** - Explore topics in science, technology, engineering, art/design and math through a hands-on approach. Participants will be given a different challenge card and materials kit each session. As they work together in pairs or small groups, participants will have the chance to utilize higher level thinking skills, problem-solving, creativity and working collaboratively. Having fun and having a growth mindset will be emphasized as they engage in friendly competitions! Snacks provided. All are welcome! Pre-registration is appreciated - email amandaotto.cabotlibrary@gmail.com.

Coming Soon - Teen Game Night (ages 12 - 18) - Come play classic and new board and card games. Bring your friends or come solo and make some new ones. Each game night will feature different games. Check FPF and our website for updated information about dates, times, and featured games. Snacks provided!

Thank you! Many thanks to Beth and Paul Wade and Grace Hoffman for baking over 100 cookies for our Cookie Decorating Program - it was a great success! Additional thanks to Losada Stoddard for facilitating our D&D Program and to Mary Rogerson, Jen Tidd, Sandy Atkins and Alaina Robbins for their help during our Holiday Workshop. If you have a skill that you would like to share with

youth, please contact us. We would love to have community members facilitate or assist with programs throughout the new year.

Adult Programming

Mending Matters - Sunday, January 14 - 2-4 pm - **Darning & Patch-Mending Gathering** - Whether you're a visible-mending newbie or have been repairing your clothes for years, come join us at the Cabot Public Library for an afternoon of mending and connecting with your neighbors. Just bring your clothes in need of fixing, and we'll supply instructions and materials. Tea and snacks will be provided!

Yoga for Everybody! Sunday's 10:30- 11:45 am

Seize the potency of a fresh year by making a commitment to your vitality with a weekly practice of yoga! Classes are a playful invitation to meet yourself while gaining strength, flexibility, balance, alignment, and attunement to the rhythm of your breath. All are welcome, beginners especially encouraged. Mats and props provided. Donation-based (\$10 suggested). Sundays at the Willey building, ongoing 10:30-11:45am.

Wednesday, January 31, 7:00 p.m. Susan Clark of Middlesex, co-author of *All Those in Favor, Rediscovering the Secrets of Town Meeting and Community*, by Susan Clark & Frank Bryan. - Vermont Town Meeting has been described as the purest form of democracy, but our evolving way of life and Australian ballot voting have created changes, good and bad. Conversation with Susan is an opportunity to see the value in how we govern ourselves, consider what is best for our town, and take control of its evolution. Please come and share your thoughts about how Town Meeting can best serve you. Copies of the book are available at the library.

Thanks so much to Brad Woelfle from Heyday Farm & Bakery for the wonderful workshop on making Holiday Galettes - they were beautiful creations! Thanks also to Jeannie Johnson for organizing the workshop on Town Meeting. Many thanks to Christyn King for all the Sunday morning yoga sessions. Thanks also to the Library Trustees who spend many hours each month working on behalf of the library: Grace Hoffman, Niall McCallum, Angela Ogle, Kurt Steinert and Erin Ruddell and our student representative, Ila Steinert.

See you at the library!
Kathleen Hoyne - Library Director
Amanda Otto - Youth Librarian



Twin Valley Senior Center

P.O. Box 152
East Montpelier,
VT 05651
802-223-3322
irector@twinvalleyseniors.org

TWIN VALLEY SENIORS UPDATES

by TVSC Executive Director

Join TVSC for a Home-Cooked Meal

On Wednesday, December 6, TVSC had a special lunch prepared by our guest Chef Joey Buttendorf. Chef Joey trained with NECI and ran the Capstone cooking program. The lunch was delicious and we had a great turnout of in-house and grab & go meals.

We also have a new Chef, Chef Paul Mertz, who also trained with NECI and worked with Chef Joey for 20+ years. Chef Paul has spent time in Guatemala, where he opened a restaurant. He recently returned home to Vermont, and TVSC has been fortunate to have hired him on a regular basis.

Stay tuned for our next special lunch event - you don't want to miss the amazing food prepared by experienced Chefs.

Cabot Rec Committee Update No Ice Rink This Year

By Shannon Smith,
Interim President

As we look back at 2023, it has been a challenging year for the town. The Rec Committee has suffered many challenges, including flooded fields and loss of equipment, the loss of the basketball court (of course, for good reason), however the biggest challenge is lack of committee members and volunteers. Through the last year, we had our President and Treasurer step down to pursue other endeavors and yet had a successful soccer and basketball season, as well as several fund raisers.

What about the Ice Rink? At this time, the Rec Committee has decided, due to timing, the weather, and supply costs, we cannot justify setting up the skating rink and have it be cost effective for the short time it is able to be utilized.

What is next for the town Rec Committee?

The committee has received a lot of support from the select board to correct

the damaged soccer fields for next season, we have installed lights in the bathrooms and continue to make improvements to the rec pavilion. We will be receiving a new basketball court which will have lights installed for night use, and as for the ice rink, there are many available options to be discussed, including a possibility for a new location or different set up.

None of this is possible without committee members, we need active members to make decisions on improvements, implement ideas, and participate in making the community better. We currently are looking for a President, a Treasurer and board members to take about three hours of their month, sometimes a little more, to participate.

If you have ideas or are interested in learning more, we would like to hear from you.

Please reach out to slsmith0417@gmail.com with interests or comments.

**The Cabot Village
12th Night celebration**
January 5th & 6th 2024
ALL 12TH NIGHT EVENTS ARE FREE!

FEATURING
JEREMY SICELY BAND, J.D. MILLER, DAVE KELLER BAND,
NO STRINGS MARIONETTE CO., SIMON BROOKS,
EVAN PREMIO AND MICHAEL LAUGHING FOX, CHARETTT,
THE MIDNIGHT CAPERS, CABOT COMMUNITY THEATER,
ARTS AND CRAFTS FOR KIDS, SUNSET LANTERN PARADE,
WASSAILING, HOT COCOA STATION,
NEIGHBORS IN ACTION, COMMUNITY MEAL, AND MORE!

CALL STARTS 5096

THE 12TH NIGHT CELEBRATION IS SUPPORTED BY THE VERMONT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION,
THE CABOT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, OUR LOCAL BUSINESS SPONSORS, AND YOU!

HEADWATERS, CABOT ARTS, BENJAMIN, COOP, CABOT GREENHOUSE, and others.

CABOT ARTS SHOW AND TELL

Cabot Visual Arts' Show and Tell folks will gather
in the Willey Building on

January 21, 2024, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

HEADWATERS

RESTAURANT & PUB



802-563-5001 | 3075 Main Street • Cabot Vermont | HeadWatersRestaurantAndPub.com

Neighbors in Action Another Successful Holiday Season



**2023 Warm Clothes
& Toy Share**

= 418 Families Served!

Neighbors in Action is grateful to Cindy Brown and all of her helpers who gathered toys and warm clothes for a record number of families in and around Cabot.



Neighbors
in Action

Cabot Food Share:

Boxes available
Wednesdays
January 10th & 24th

3339 Main Street

More Information:

NeighborsinActionVT.org