

THE CABOT CHRONICLE

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HONORING ALL WHO SERVED



VETERANS DAY NOVEMBER 11, 2025



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Cabot Fire Department Supports Transparency, Clarity and Civility in Public Safety Building Dialogue



by CFD Public Affairs Team

On October 6, 2025, the Selectboard agenda included discussion of a petition that would call for a yes or no vote on an advisory question concerning the construction of a permanent Public Safety Building (PSB) at 2466 Main Street, a property owned by the Town of Cabot since 2018 and the site where planning has been focused for the past seven years.

In December 2023, the Cabot Selectboard unanimously approved the conceptual design for a new PSB at 2466 Main Street (there are three members still serving on the current board). Since that time members, primarily the chief, have been part of the ongoing planning process with Connor Contracting and State authorities involved in the permitting and environmental review process for the site. These efforts are consistent with the existing directive of the Selectboard to engage in this work – this is the basis upon which all planning and exploration of financing has proceeded (not an independent effort of the fire department). Past editions of the Chronicle and Selectboard minutes include updates from the Chief on these efforts, but not every detail can make it into the written record.

Unlike some other communities, such as Woodbury or East Montpelier, the Cabot Fire Department is a municipal entity not a private/non-profit organization. This means the Cabot Fire Department is fully funded by the Town of Cabot and acts on the direction of the Selectboard. Put another way, the fire department takes its lead from the town's elected leadership and answers to that leadership.

Despite this supporting, rather than lead, role in decision making, some volunteer members of the department have felt stung by public and private com-

ments. Sometimes, these comments are based on incorrect information or assumptions, but in a few extreme instances accusations have been made that members are seeking to waste taxpayer money by proceeding with the Selectboard approved design or, worse, being accused of fraud or corruption. The reality is most members have no role in this process, rather, their primary interests are service, as well as having their health and safety needs met. Civil discourse and respectful disagreement are part of what makes small towns like Cabot great, but when disrespect or disparagement overcome the dialogue, no one benefits and people stop listening to one another.

With that in mind, the biggest takeaway from the October 6 meeting is that people in Cabot are seeking more information before committing to a big project. The construction of a new PSB is a question for the Selectboard and voters to decide the details of, while the fire department's role is to provide the technical information necessary to inform the design (regarding NFPA standards on safety, decontamination, etc.) and to plan as the Selectboard directs. A new PSB is not "a fire department project" – it is a Town of Cabot infrastructure project that we all have a stake in, just as much as we all have an interest in quality roads, sufficient water and wastewater capacity, and essential services as the community grows in the future.

As the discussion continues, Cabot Fire Department plans to serve as a conduit of information. This will likely include the justifications for a new PSB and its location, as well as the limitations of the temporary station and the significant cost and impediments to a retrofit of the building to comply with applicable health and safety regulations.

To support the Selectboard's commitment to transparency, the Cabot Fire Department is encouraging a community forum, the potential re-assembling of the defunct PSB Working Group, and we will soon be utilizing its new electronic newsletter, "the Flashover," to share history and information concerning the PSB project. This newsletter will also highlight the department's members and

share more about the fire department's mission – we will be sharing more information on this effort soon!

To conclude, our goal is to ensure voters make informed decisions and are confident in the process. Any vote or decision must be based on clear information. The Cabot Fire Department is grateful for the support of the community and is proud to serve you.

Cabot Fire Department Valuable Training with Vermont Hazardous Materials Response Team & Cabot Creamery



by CFD Public Affairs Team

On October 12, 2025, members of the Cabot Fire Department participated in training and a practical exercise at the Cabot Creamery focused on hazardous materials response. Cabot firefighters were joined by mutual aid partners from Marshfield Fire Department, technicians and experts from around the State who are part of the Vermont Hazardous Materials Response Team (VHMRT), and Cabot Creamery's own employees and staff who are responsible for responding to onsite incidents.

Cabot Fire Department has the resources to address initial hazardous materials responses and minor incidents, however, major events or critical incidents will typically require specialized assistance from VHMRT. The exercise at Cabot Creamery entailed simulated a significant incident and included all phases of response from scene assessment to scene stabilization. Cabot Fire Department's particular tasks included assuming incident command and implementing an initial action plan, coordination with Cabot Creamery on their emergency response plan, and affecting a mock rescue of a downed employee within the facility and then support emergency decontamination efforts.

The scenario required firefighters to promptly assess the conditions and then utilize their training and experience to

make an emergency rescue. This included the use of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), use of gas metering instruments, deployment of the available decontamination tools (e.g. hose line for water, large ventilation fan, etc.), and practice using drag/recovery methods that could minimize the time inside of a "hot zone." The exercise demonstrated the multiple challenges that are faced when responding to a dynamic situation where there is imminent danger to life and health safety.

The scenario provided valuable insight into the areas where existing procedures are working well, and other areas of emphasis for improvement. Ultimately, the scenario demonstrated the great value of the strong relationship between Cabot Creamery/Agrimark management and the fire department – our annual walk through of the facilities ensured a clear understanding of how to effectively respond to the scenario.

The remainder of the scenario focused on Cabot Creamery's own response and then more complex mitigation and rescue efforts by the VHMRT. VHMRT also brought a wide range of advanced technology, including drones, live stream video capabilities for interior entry teams, and two of their apparatus filled with specialty tools and resources. Additionally, the Berlin Fire Department supported the operation with their HAZMAT mass decontamination trailer (see 'Hazardous Materials', page 3)

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Cabot Chronicle Mission Statement: The Cabot Chronicle is a home-delivered newspaper devoted to telling the story of the Cabot community.



Hazardous Materials

(continued from page 2)

— one of several strategically stored in our region by the VHMRT.

Hazardous materials are far more prevalent than you may think in the Town of Cabot. US-2 is a major corridor where dozens of trucks carrying hazardous materials pass each day — we all see the trucks carrying fuel oil, propane, and gasoline pass through the community — but there are also trucks carrying liquified natural gas, industrial chemicals and solvents, fertilizers, and explosives that pass through in support of farms, quarries, and industrial sites in our region. Thankfully, virtually all of this transit occurs without incident and minimal risk to the public — although many may recall several years ago when a propane tanker overturned on US-2 in Marshfield and last year when a smaller propane truck crashed on VT-14 in Irasburg, resulting in a large evacuation and months long closure of a damaged bridge.

Cabot Fire Department's primary role as first responders to major hazardous materials releases or incidents is to cre-

ate an initial isolation zone and identify needed resources. Sometimes this response may require assumption of risk and exposure to toxic substances to rescue victims or immediately implement emergency decontamination before victims can be safely treated by emergency medical services. Life safety, preservation of property, and preservation of the environment are the priorities in any response — in that order. Continuous training and preparation on these complex calls is among the many sub-disciplines of firefighting that the department must focus on — in addition to the more common structural fire and motor vehicle accident responses many are familiar with. Likewise, understanding how to minimize exposure to toxic substances during a hazmat incident and to engage in proper emergency and post-incident decontamination is part of the response protocols we practice.

The Cabot Fire Department would like to again thank Cabot Creamery for hosting this excellent training, our mutual aid partners who participated, and VHRMT for their excellent instruction and feedback.

Two November Community Dances!

by Karen Mueller-Harder

The Cabot Community Contra Dance will host TWO dances during the month of November, both held in the wonderful 3rd floor space in the Willey Building (Cabot Town Hall, 3084 Main St).

We will be holding a Family Dance on Sunday, November 2, from 3-4:30 pm! This is for families who find evening dances too late for them, and anyone else who would enjoy some daytime frolicking with people of all ages! While all our events are family-friendly, this one will feature active dances especially well-suited to the youngest members of the community. Our teacher will be Erin Smith, who loves leading family dances, and we'll have the same great live music we enjoy for the 2nd Friday dances!

And our regular second Friday dance on November 14 will feature the friendly calling of Karen Mueller-Harder, of



Cabot! Live music is provided by a great group of local musicians—you can just come and listen if you like! The dance is 7-9:30pm; if you've never been to a contra, you are encouraged to arrive right at 7:00, as we will start with the simplest dances, and then we'll build upon what you learn throughout the evening.

Everyone is welcome, and all dances are taught, and easily learned, even if you've never danced before! Admission is on a sliding scale, \$5-10 suggested, but nobody is turned away for lack of funds. Hope to see you at a dance!



ADVICE FROM THE TREE WARDEN

by Roland Payne, Jr.
Cabot Tree Warden

The Importance of Leaves as Organic Material in Your Yard and Garden

As autumn arrives during foliage season, the deciduous trees shed their leaves, and most homeowners consider fallen leaves a nuisance to be raked up and removed. However, these leaves are an invaluable resource for homeowners and gardeners interested in maintaining a healthy yard. When used wisely, leaves can dramatically improve soil health, reduce waste, and provide a range of ecological benefits. One of the primary advantages of leaves is their ability to enrich soil. As leaves decompose, they release essential nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium back into the soil. This natural process improves soil structure and fertility, making it more conducive to plant growth. Incorporating shredded leaves into garden beds or using them as mulch helps retain moisture, reduces soil erosion, and encourages the activity of beneficial organisms such as earthworms and microbes. Leaves also play a key role in suppressing weeds. When spread over bare soil, a layer of leaves forms a natural barrier, reducing sunlight exposure and hindering the germination of unwanted plants. This can minimize the need for chemical herbicides, making your garden safer for both pollinators and people. In addition, leaf mulch helps

regulate soil temperature, protecting tender roots from harsh winter freezes and summer heat.

Beyond their immediate impact on soil and plant health, leaves offer environmental benefits by reducing yard waste. Instead of sending bags of leaves to the landfill, recycling them in the garden closes the nutrient loop and lessens your household's ecological footprint. Leaves can be composted, turning them into rich humus that further enhances soil quality and eventually, plant vigor. Even a simple leaf pile will break down over time, providing a habitat for insects, amphibians, and small mammals. For those concerned about aesthetics, shredded leaves can be used as attractive mulch around shrubs, trees, and flower beds. They blend naturally into the landscape and gradually decompose, eliminating the need for synthetic alternatives. Collecting and processing leaves is easy: mow over them or use a leaf shredder, then spread the shredded leaves wherever needed. Fallen leaves are a gift from nature that should be welcomed rather than discarded. Leaves provide organic matter in your yard and garden. By spreading the leaves in your yard and garden, you are investing in healthier soil, stronger plants, and a more sustainable future. This autumn, consider letting your leaves work for you—and enjoy the rewards they bring to your landscape.

Stay rooted,
Roland Payne, Jr.

REMINDER

CABOT PROPERTY TAXES DUE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, BEFORE 5:00 P.M.

- U.S.P.S. mail to PO Box 36, Cabot, VT 05647 postmarked by November 20
- In person during office hours Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. before November 20
- Deposited in drop box at rear of Willey Building before 5:00 p.m. November 20
- By credit card in person or over telephone at 802-563-2279 (service charge applies)

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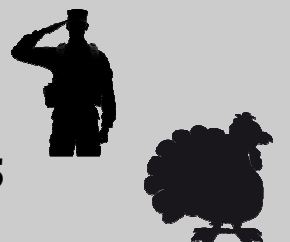
November 11, 2025

Veterans Day

AND

November 26-28, 2025

Thanksgiving





OBITUARIES

Julie E. Ackermann



Julie Ellen Ackermann, 65, of Cabot, died at her home on Monday, October 13, 2025.

The oldest of six children, Julie was born on August 30, 1960, in Middletown, Connecticut, to Cal-

vert and Patricia (Cronin) Foster, who later decided to settle in Vermont.

Julie graduated from Hazen Union High School in 1978 and, in 1979, married her high school sweetheart, Walt Ackermann of Cabot, where they raised their four children. Together, they worked at Foster Industries, Inc. in Wolcott, a machine shop founded by Julie's father, and for several years owned and operated Harry's Hardware in Cabot—a store once owned and named after her Uncle Harry.

Julie found joy in her work and valued the friendship and community that came with it. Intrigued by small-town history, she was always eager to hear your story, make connections, and learn what brought you here. She appreciated the simple, meaningful things, loved a good yard sale, and enjoyed giving antiques a new home.

Modest in her ways and generous in spirit, Julie lived to love, always greeting

others with a warm hug. She will be remembered for her kindness, for providing a safe place to land, comfort food, a hot cup of coffee, and honest conversation. She made the world a better place. Her greatest love was her family, who will hold tight to traditions and carry forward her gentle heart, unconditional love, and joy for the holiday seasons.

She is survived by her husband, Walt; their four children, Kate (Tyler) Demas of Northfield, Ben Ackermann of Cabot, Scott (Angie) Ackermann of North Danville, and Jill (Steven) Vilbrin of Cabot; six grandchildren, Abby, Ethan, Owen, Juniper, Shae, and baby Weston Walter; her mother-in-law, Elizabeth Ackermann of Cabot; three siblings, Jayne Fradette of Morrisville, Scott (Ruth) Foster of Hardwick, and Amy (Kevin) Smith of Woodbury; her sister-in-law, Sue Ackermann of Cabot; as well as several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She was predeceased by her parents and two brothers, Eugene Foster and Calvert Foster, Jr.

Interment will be private at the Cabot Plains Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in her memory may be made to the Cabot Historical Society or the Hardwick Historical Society. Condolences and memories of Julie may be shared with her family at dgfunerals.com.

Suzette doted on her eighteen grandchildren, Naia, Natalie, and Sam Frederick, Ryan and Rachel Wentworth, Liam, Danika, Madison, and Avery Sinsabaugh, Jonathan Quinlan, Leon and Wes Rutkowski, Bobbi Short, and Weston, Landon, McKenzie, Paisley, and Aubree Torrey, for they were her life.

Suzette also leaves behind her parents Felix A. and Linda A. Ducharme of White River Junction; siblings Norma (Ducharme) Williams of White River Jct., VT, Norman Ducharme of Windsor, VT, Bob Ducharme of White River Jct., Albert Ducharme of Merideth, NH, Arthur Ducharme of Port Orchard, WA, Joseph Ducharme of Chelsea, VT, and Bernadette (Ducharme) McGuire of Brownsville, VT; several nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles, and friends.

Baron Wormser, poet, essayist, novelist, and teacher, died of brain cancer at his home in Montpelier with his family on October 7. Appointed Poet Laureate of Maine from 2001 – 2005, after moving to Vermont, he and his wife Janet lived in Cabot, then settled in Montpelier.

He would like to be remembered for his writing, which include ten books of poetry, including a posthumous volume that will be out in January: "James Baldwin Smoking a Cigarette and Other Poems", as well as two co-authored books about teaching the art of poetry, and a memoir, "The Road Washes Out in Spring", about his twenty-three years of living off the grid with his family.

He also leaves behind four novels, a book of short stories, and many essays on his Substack, "The Exciting Night-



COMMUNITY COMMENTARY

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

Great News!

Dear Editor:

I have just moved back to Cabot after being away for many years.

I have been welcomed with open arms and open hearts!

Cabot has always been where my heart resided even through the years of living in other towns in Vermont. I am so grateful to all of my new neighbors here at The Cabot Commons and The

Cabot Community which I can once again call home! It is my hope to be a contributor for the highest wellbeing of this amazing community which I love so dearly!

Thank you for the heartfelt welcome home.

Blessings to you all!

Thank you,

Much Gratitude!

Sandy O'Brien.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

IT IS TIME TO FALL BACK AS DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME COMES TO AN END THE FIRST SUNDAY IN NOVEMBER.



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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."



SELECTBOARD UPDATES

Accounting, Stream Gauging, Tires and Riprap

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

There were many topics discussed at the October 6 meeting of the Selectboard, and one of them concerned the accounting software used by the town. Amy Monahan told the board that she has worked with Quickbooks for about 25 years, and felt it has never been the greatest for anything. She noted that they are paying a yearly fee of \$3,221 for the software, and said that Quickbooks has very bad customer service. She articulated that one can never speak to a human. Amy added that the number of people on the payroll affects the amount of the fee, too.

Amy then explained that the town is already using New England Municipal Resource Center (NEMRC) accounting software for the listers and dog licenses. She said they already pay the annual fee, and additional modules to do other types of accounting are a one-time fee and the annual fee of \$5,800 does not change when modules are added. Amy said to switch everything over to NEMRC would cost \$7,180.

She added that they could do the conversion from Quickbooks to NEMRC, and have quoted another \$7,000 for that service. In total, she said it would cost around \$14,000. Amy emphasized that currently they are paying for two systems, and really only need one.

Mike asked when would be the best time to change the accounting software, and she said at the end of the year. Amy said they don't want to have payroll on two different systems in the same calendar year. The board approved the expense to switch the accounting software.

Another topic discussed at the meeting was the possibility of USGS adding a stream gauge on the Winooski somewhere between Cabot and Marshfield. Gary Gulka explained that he had met with the USGS representative and they looked at a possible site at the bridge on Sawmill Road. He added that there are several other locations that are being considered, too, and explained that it would consist of a console on a pole and a conduit down to the river. Mike Hogan asked if there would be any cost to the town, and Gary said the USGS would pay for everything, and operate the gauge. The board decided to approve the location in anticipation the USGS might chose to locate it at the bridge.

Another topic related to waters of the Winooski concerned tires. Gary Katz talked to the board about the problem of a large number of tires that were left on the property formerly owned by the family of Leonard Spencer. Gary said he had become acquainted with the new owners, a young couple from Texas. He said that they intend to rehab the buildings, and had tried to get the previous owners to clean up the tires in and around the wetlands. Gary estimated there are 1,500 to 2,000 tires.

Gary stated that the tires have become a mosquito problem. He also estimated, based upon his experience with discarding tires, that it would take two to three dumpsters to hold all the tires. Gary estimated that it would cost about \$10,000. Mike Hogan suggested contacting the Agency of Natural Resources to see if there are funds for cleaning up streams. Gary Gulka said he had contacted the Friends of the Winooski, but relayed that the organization didn't think there was money available.

Gary Katz said that this was a crime committed by the previous owner, but expressed that he thought the municipality could offer some support. He suggested that CCIF funds could be used to help pay for the cleanup. Gary Gulka pointed out that the tires pose a health issue, and after the drought it could be a serious issue.

The board moved on to discussing the USDA grant for stabilizing sections of the bank along the Winooski. Mike said that he had asked the USDA to look at a bunch of areas, and the USDA picked three of them for the addition of riprap. Jenn Miner asked if the property owners would get notified, and by whom. Mike said it was the responsibility of New England Consulting Engineers.

Doug Cooke spoke from the public and relayed his experience of how he learned of the project when the consultant and several contractors just showed up on his land. He also told the board that the project was of no value to him, and was even told that trees may be cut down on his side of the river to access the river bank behind the creamery building. Doug expressed that he was not inclined to give permission to access the river from his property and asked what would happen to the project. Mike said that the engineer would have to figure out how to access the site from Route 215.

Other items on the agenda were listed as "Discussion and possible approval." Mike Hogan addressed the room and told everyone that a petition had been submitted on the fire department and read the wording of the petition.

"Shall the voters of the town of Cabot approve construction of a new volunteer fire department building at 2466 Main Street (between 2506 and 2454 Main, the old Gochey/Marcotte property), Cabot Vermont."

He then said that when he saw the petition, he knew it was advisory in nature, and gave it to the town attorney.

Mike then went through a timeline on the public safety building (a.k.a. firehouse), after which he had the town attorney address the merits of the petition. Mike Tarrant, the town attorney, said that there wasn't much to elaborate. He continued and explained there are different types of petitions, and the Supreme Court of Vermont has ruled that petitions that are within the realm of power of the Selectboard can only be advisory in nature. It is also at the board's discretion whether to warn the petitions for a vote.

Mike Tarrant also said that there are petitions that relate to decisions that are in the hands of the voters, and the Selectboard must warn those petitions for a vote. He concluded that since this petition has to do with real property, the Selectboard is empowered to make the decision, not the voters.

Doug Cooke asked about a previous advisory vote on the subject, and wanted to know what the results were. Mike Hogan said that it was a close vote, and it was during a primary with low turnout. The Chronicle previously reported the results in the February 2023 edition:

The vote occurred on August 14, 2018 and the article read as follows: "Shall the Town of Cabot advise the Selectboard to pursue various funding options to construct a future Fire Department/Ambulance facility on recently purchased property at 2466 Main Street, Cabot? According to the Town Clerk, the results of the vote were 195 Yes and 218 No, failing by 23 votes."

Mike Tarrant told the Selectboard they have the discretion to warn the petition as an advisory article, and then the discretion to follow the results. He also advised them that they have 60 days from the receipt of the petition to hold the vote.

Fred Ducharme said that it's up to the Selectboard to put it on the ballot. He expressed that he felt it should be on the ballot whether it is binding or not, whether we get grants or not. Fred stated that what the people want should be binding to the Selectboard.

R.D. Eno spoke from the public via Zoom and explained that he felt the question was whether the petition can be warned for the November 4 Special Town Meeting. There was disagreement on whether the vote is a Special Town Meeting or not, but that has no bearing on the discussion. Later in the discussion it was concluded that it was too late to

warn the petitioned article for the November 4 vote. The petition had been received on September 11 but the Selectboard didn't address the petition until this October 6 meeting.

Mike Hogan recommended that the board defer the vote to the actual Town Meeting in March. He said that there is a timing issue, and there are a lot of opinions. He expressed that there are lots of rumors, and agreed with Fred that they should hear from the people. Mike went on to speculate that people don't know that the temporary firehouse is just a shell, and it has no sprinkler system. He said it would cost a lot of money to upgrade the building.

Wolfgang Krutak, the originator of the petition, addressed the board and said that it was very simple what he was trying to accomplish. He stated that he wanted to get the voters to have input on whether to build a new building or fix up the temporary one. Wolfgang expressed that he thought upgrading the temporary building would cost less than building a new one.

Peggy Miller stated that sometimes people don't know all the information. She stated that when the Perrys granted the land to the town, they stipulated that no permanent building could be erected upon it. Ruth Goodrich spoke from the public to say that it was a municipal building, which is outside the covenant. Peggy read from the covenant "...no residential or commercial structure can be built on the site." She said that the issue needs to be resolved before spending more money on the temporary building.

Peggy continued by speculating that if someone in Cabot was asked if a new firehouse is needed, they would say no when they don't have all the information. She stated that everyone needs to have the same information before voting yes or no.

Wolfgang made the point that things are happening that will end up costing the taxpayers a bunch of money, and they don't have a voice in it. Mike Hogan said that they have been talking about a new firehouse since 2016. He asserted that there have been numerous articles in the Chronicle. He also said that everyone knows that FEMA has been stepping back because of what is happening in Washington, and stipulated that the board is not hiding anything from anyone.

After some further discussion regarding the need for a new firehouse and meeting National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, someone from the public asked how much the new firehouse would cost and how does the public get a look at the plan?

Mike Hogan responded that they had to make some adjustments and the total is currently \$8.9 million. He said they have to raise another \$3.8 million and assume they will get that from FEMA. But, he cautioned, they don't know yet if FEMA will accept the town's appeal. (see, 'Firehouse Petition', page 6)

Firehouse Petition

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The agenda for the October 6 Selectboard meeting warned of a discussion regarding a petition about the Fire Department: "FD Petition Discussion".



SELECTBOARD UPDATES

Firehouse Petition

(continued from page 5)

Dean Deasy, Fire Chief, said the plan for the building was presented at a public meeting. Mike did contemplate sending out the plans again.

The discussion then turned to what other towns are doing. Dean said that Woodbury built a new building but was already planning an addition. He said Peacham is also planning an addition, and said towns are playing catch-up. Then Dean broached the subject of regional fire departments, and said the state is considering it. He expressed that Cabot is a focal point because of the possibility of a new building.

Rory Thibault stated that the issue is a premature question. He said that the financing remains in flux, and there are no hard estimates on the costs of adapting the existing structure. He added that if the Selectboard needs to bond money for the building, the voters could stop the project by not approving the bond.

Karen Larsen also expressed that there should not be a vote without all the information. She noted that it's still in question if FEMA will provide the \$2.2 million and whether the state will cover the rest. She implored the Selectboard to

play the crucial role of informing the town, and not rely on Chief Deasy, who is not a municipal representative, but only a volunteer.

Ruth Goodrich asked if there was a "plan B" if FEMA didn't provide the money. Mike Hogan responded that they didn't know yet.

Ama Peyman, neighbor to the proposed site of the new firehouse, expressed concern about Cabot becoming a regional fire department hub. Mike said the state legislature has been talking about the concept and is looking at it seriously.

Someone from the public asked if FEMA can remove the temporary building and then the town would have no firehouse. Amy Monahan, Town Treasurer, said that FEMA has not spent any money on the temporary firehouse. Mike added that the town received \$1 million in an insurance settlement on the old firehouse, and they have borrowed the rest. He said that if FEMA gave them \$500,000 then they would have to work out who is the owner of the building.

The discussion ended without any motions or decisions from the Selectboard.

Election Day Informational Hearing

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The Selectboard has two articles that it is putting to a town vote on election day, and on October 14, the town held the required informational meeting prior to the vote. There were three members of the public physically in attendance at the hearing, and at least two members of the public on line. All the others at the meeting were either members of the Selectboard, Town Clerk's office representatives, or presenters.

The first article discussed was a bond vote for building a new Central Vermont Career Center, commonly referred to as the "tech center". Chris Tormey, chair of the School Board, started the presentation and said the tech center is currently housed within the Spaulding High School building. He added that due to space limitation, 50% of the applicants are being turned away. Chris said the tech center serves 18 different towns, and the vote on the bond will be to build a state of the art, much larger, facility in Graniteville.

Chris added that part of the expanded capacity would include additional academic offerings so that kids don't have to travel back to their sending school to take additional classes such as math and english.

Ellen Cairns asked if the tech center would just be for juniors and seniors. Chris said that there was an introductory program for sophomores. He said that program allowed the student to spend two weeks in each of the tech programs so they can decide if they want to attend one of the programs in the following year.

Chris pointed to a chart that showed that there were 443 applicants for this

year, and only 228 could be accepted. He noted that in the prior year the number of applicants was 424, and only 223 could be accepted.

Jason Monaco then presented the process that had been engaged to select a site for the new school. He listed eight criteria and stated that only seven sites were found that met all the requirements. Jason said that the board selected one of the sites and there is currently an MOU in place to purchase the property.

He then went on to describe the preliminary plans for the new building, noting that zoning required it be kept under 35 feet high. He said it would be surrounded with trees, and the heavy trades would be placed in the back of the building. Jason said there would be a central auditorium, which would also double as the cafeteria. He added that the building would consist of 167,000 square feet and the total project cost was \$149 million dollars.

Jason then presented the estimated tax impact for the various towns. The tax increase estimates appear to be based upon the number of students each town sends to the tech center, and Cabot being the smallest has the lowest tax impact totaling \$99 on a \$300,000 home. However, the estimation does not account for any income sensitivity (property tax rebate), and is based upon the current education funding formula. The projections do not apply if the state fully adopts Act 73 and changes the education funding formula, moving to a state wide property tax formula.

Jason said the project plan, should the bond be approved by the voters of the 18 towns, would have the new school open-

ing in September of 2029. Chris noted that the tech center has been located in the Spaulding High School building since the 1960s. He added that it is not part of the Spaulding High School. Jason said that they can't do renovations to the existing building because it does not belong to the tech center, and any renovations would be as costly, or more costly, than building a new facility.

The second article that was being put to a town vote regards using \$250,000 of CCIF funds for flood mitigation. Chris Tormey, chair of the CCIF committee, told everyone that Gary Gulka and Peg Elmer Hough approached the committee last fall when concern increased that FEMA funds would not be enough to work on both tributaries in the village. He said that Peg and Gary pitched using CCIF funds for flood mitigation.

He said the CCIF general fund had been at \$500,000 two years ago, and since then has increased to \$740,000. Chris relayed that the committee agreed that \$250,000 could be used for flood mitigation and that would only set the fund back to where it was two years ago.

Gary then presented the planned usage of the money to the room. He said that items 1, 2 and 4 of the warned article related to the north tributary bridge. He gave an overview of how there was a limit on the FEMA funding and there were higher priority projects that would likely get all of the funds. He then said that another grant source became avail through HUD and \$54 million had been allocated to Washington County. Gary added that the state has the cash in hand.

He then explained that they carved out the North tributary project from the proposed FEMA funded project, which would cost \$1.5 million. Gary said that they decided to offer a match of 10% to make the application more attractive,

even though it was not required. He expressed that the town has a good chance of receiving the grant.

Gary presented an overview of the proposed bridge replacement, noting that the current bridge has a 16-foot span, and the new bridge would have a 50-foot span. He noted that the new bridge would be four feet higher than the current bridge. Gary said the height would require a slope up to and down from the bridge that would affect five household driveways. He added that the driveways would have to be raised between one to three feet to meet the level of the road.

He also showed some diagrams on where the bridge would be located, and how there would be a flood shelf under the bridge, on the north side. When asked, he said the Curriers would have to agree to give up some of their land for the construction of the flood shelf. He added that normally the flood shelf would be dry, above the level of the water. Gary concluded his description by saying the new bridge would be designed for a 500-year flood.

Doug Cooke asked how much the engineering study for the project had cost thus far. Gary stated that SLR consulting had been paid \$69,000.

Turning to the part of the article not connected to the north tributary, Gary said that item 3, for \$20,000, would be used to study the viability of installing debris catchers in the south tributary, somewhere upstream behind the Willey building. He noted that it was not only the volume of water that caused the flooding issue, but also debris that blocked the culverts. Gary said the debris catchers are a backup plan should FEMA funding not be available to replace the culverts under Main Street with a bridge.

Preliminary Budget Discussion

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The Selectboard held its first budget meeting on October 6, even though it was warned as part of the regular board meeting. Mike Hogan spoke to the room and said that it's the statutory responsibility of the Selectboard to bring a budget to the town. He added that each entity comes to the board and presents a budget, they ask questions, and come up with a draft budget and eventually present it to the town for vote.

Amy Monahan, Town Treasurer, said that she was present last year for the budget discussions, but had only been on the job for a few months. She added that now she has been around for a full cycle and had some ideas on how they should structure income. Amy noted that it is not really income unless it is offsetting expenses. She also noted that there isn't anything in the budget that lists money that has to be raised to cover matches on grants.

Amy went on to talk about the current loans for the Highway Department, and noted the need to have over \$100,000 in loan payments listed in the Highway Department budget.

She then focused on the general budget, specifically the Recreation Committee. Amy noted that there has been

an ongoing problem getting people to volunteer, and she questioned why Jessica North gets a monthly stipend that totals to about \$5000 a year. She added that no one can tell her why they are doing it.

Peggy Miller suggested that Jessica come in and explain what she does. Mike also questioned where the line was between the town's responsibility and the school's responsibility. Peggy reminded Mike that the town took over the youth sports when the school stopped doing it. Fred Ducharme noted that the recreation committee now runs the sports for four towns, and that it takes a lot of coordination. Peggy added that includes finding coaches and scheduling referees.

Amy continued questioning why the town bills the recreation committee for a lot of things to do with the pavilion. She noted that it is town property. Someone from the public asked where the money goes when the pavilion is rented. Betty Ritter said the rental fees go to the town. The member of the public responded that the bills should go to the town.

Amy then talked about the wastewater plant. She reminded the board that the wastewater fund includes a \$405,000 loan from the CCIF fund. Amy said that money from the investment fund has *(see, 'Budget Discussion', page 7)*



SELECTBOARD UPDATES

Preliminary Budget Discussion

(continued from page 6)

been used to replace pumps and other equipment, and the wastewater investment fund now has about \$225,000. She noted that the wastewater department hasn't been able to sustain itself with the existing user fees. Amy added that the payments on the original wastewater bond have been coming out of the general fund because the wastewater fund doesn't have the money to cover the payments.

Mike said that he didn't think the original plan anticipated user fees cover costs 25 years later. He added that things have started to fall apart, and the amount collected in users fees is not enough to cover the costs. Mike said they need to look at other funding sources such as grants, bonds, or loans. He said that the user fees are probably not high enough compared to other towns.

Fred expressed that user fees should cover the costs of maintenance, but they'd have to go up 50%. He said that there are many things that need to be replaced, and they are even having issues with the building. He talked about several of the known problems, and surmised that they could easily spend another \$200,000.

Mike noted they had an engineering study which includes a capital plan that is around \$700,000 to \$800,000. He added that the Vermont Bond Bank offers loans at very low rates and thinks that is where the town should look for funds. Fred wasn't sure how they could pay back a loan for \$700,000 even at 1%. But he added that the cost to be on town sewer is much less than the cost of a new septic system.

Amy returned to the fact that the bond payments are coming out of the general fund (town property tax dollars),

and the wastewater fund owes the general fund over \$200,000.

She then talked about the Town Clerk's position and announced that Betty was retiring. Amy said that a new Town Clerk can appoint an assistant clerk. She noted that there used to be only two full time people working in the office, but now there are three full time people. Amy questioned if the new clerk needs a full time assistant.

Amy then said that health insurance is only going up 4.4%. But she added that a new clerk might opt to sign up for family health insurance. She noted that Betty is currently taking a stipend in lieu of health insurance. Amy concluded that there are a lot of unknowns.

Fred talked about pursuing help from the state with maintaining VT Route 215. He said that he doesn't see why the state doesn't reimburse the town for maintaining 215. Mike said that he has been talking to Greg Burt about the state taking over summer maintenance of 215, especially the paving costs. Fred added that the town can't keep up with the paving costs at \$335,000 per mile, noting that the roads were built in the 1940s.

The budget meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm, and as the board remained at their table Karen Larsen asked the board a couple questions. First she asked if the town had considered a town manager, and Mike responded that it would mean the town would have to vote on becoming a charter town. Karen then asked the board to post a detailed job description for the Town Clerk position. The room was then consumed by a myriad of different individual conversations as we waited until 6 pm for the regular board meeting to start.

dependent schools. Chris relayed that Scott said the legislature will probably make towns like Cabot designate up to three high schools. Chris also said that Scott's opinion was the legislature might even make the change retroactive to January 1 of next year.

He stated that he also reached out to Cabot's representatives and senators, and they hadn't heard anything about what Scott had told him. He said that Ann Cummings said the next session will be about choosing the redistricting map. He added that Anne Watson thought a retroactive thing was unlikely.

Chris speculated that the board could choose to continue to operate the high school, but stated that they don't know how much money they will get under the new funding formula which takes effect in 2028. At that time the state will determine how much money each school gets to operate based upon the number of weighted students. The town can only raise an additional 5-10%.

Ellen Cairns clarified that under the current funding formula, if a town decides to spend a lot of money for whatever program it wants, the costs get spread out across the state, not just to the local tax payers. Chris added that they used to have a pie chart showing that 50% of the school's money comes from the state, and 50% comes from the town. However, he said, lately the town's share has increased. Ellen explained that the state has the most complicated school funding formula, and even if our town chooses not to raise property taxes, another town can decide to spend big and Cabot property taxes would go up anyway.

The discussion then turned to a possible survey. Chris suggested they put out the survey to parents with kids in grades 7-11, and home school families. He said if they could get the survey completed by October 20, and also have the superintendent's office do an analysis of the costs of closing the high school, the board

could potentially make a decision to have a vote on Town Meeting Day. He added that if they wanted to have a vote before Christmas, then they need to decide in late November.

Melissa asked about deadlines for applying to schools, and Matt said he didn't know about the private schools but said public schools have to accept applicants if they have space.

Ellen said that both Twindfield and Danville are looking at closing their high schools, so wondered what would be the options available for school choice or designating a high school. Ellen also reasoned that some people will say they just voted on the issue of closing the high school.

Melissa Pratt clarified that they wanted to eliminate survey questions about where parents would send their kids since it is unknown what high schools will exist. She proposed just assuming all the kids would go to St Johnsbury Academy. Melissa also reasoned more people would want to move to this town if there was full school choice.

Alicia Heber asked why the board didn't support school choice last time and Chris said it was a matter of cost. Matt said this time a different funding formula would be used, so the costs may be different.

At the time of this writing, the Danville School Board chair, Clayton Cargill, had filed a complaint with the Senate ethics committee which states "I am lodging an ethics complaint against Senator Scott Beck for contacting the Cabot and Danville School Boards and pressuring them to close their high schools before January 1, 2026. As a current employee of St. Johnsbury Academy, an approved independent school in the State of Vermont that receives public tuition dollars from Vermont taxpayers, I believe Senator Beck violated ethical standards set forth in 3 V.S.A. Chapter 31, Governmental Ethics."

SCHOOLBOARD UPDATES

To Survey or Not to Survey (Part 1)

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The School Board had lengthy discussions regarding the future of the school and the impacts of Act 73 their last two meetings. The first meeting being a regular meeting on the fourth Monday of the month, but the later being a special meeting on October 1. Act 73 is the legislation enacted this year that is supposed to reorganize Vermont school districts into larger districts or supervisory unions.

Initially, the board reviewed the current enrollment. The principal, Jennifer Blake, was not present, but Chris had gotten the information from her prior to the meeting. He said that the current enrollment was 163 students, up from last year's enrollment of 148 students.

Chris then addressed the question about the status of lottery slots from their previous meeting and reminded the board they had increased the number of slots from 10 to 12. He stated that currently only six of the slots are being used, and two of the students are sen-

iors. He added that those two senior slots will be free next year, so at least a total of eight slots will be available.

He then addressed current class sizes. He reminded the board that they have challenges meeting the class minimums set by Act 73. Chris said the minimum for Grade 1 is 10, and Cabot is just a hair below. He added that for Grades 2-5 the minimum is 12. He said that Cabot is at 11.4. Chris added that Grades 6-8 have a minimum of 15, and Cabot currently has an average of 14. He then focused on the high school where the class minimum is 18 and Cabot has an average of 10.5.

Chris also addressed the issue of school choice. He told the board that he had learned since the last meeting that if Cabot would like to close its school, then students could be offered full school choice. Chris also said that he spoke with Scott Beck, state senator and teacher at St. Johnsbury Academy.

Chris said that Scott told him that the legislature is going to try and change the availability of school choice because there is so much animosity towards in-

To Survey or Not to Survey (Part 2)

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The board had left finalizing the survey until another meeting, which was called as a special meeting on October 1. The discussion regarding the survey started during public comment after some people questioned why the principal had resigned. The board and administration said they couldn't comment on the resignation because it was confidential.

Then a member of the public asked about the survey, stating that she was involved with the school choice vote last year. She asked if the board will only offer public school solutions, and expressed that if it was all about taxes, then the solution needs to be broader.

Elizabeth Vitale asked if the board intended to mention the surrounding schools and that they are considering closing. Matt Foster responded that there might not be any choice if all the local high schools close, and reiterated that they really don't know what will be available.

Sharon Kulsick asked what the rationale was for only sending the survey to parents of grades 7-11, as opposed to

the whole town, or anyone with school age children. Chris Tormey responded that a lot of people have been asking that question, and the board will be discussing circulating the survey to parents with school age kids.

The board returned to the topic of the community survey later in the meeting, and Chris reminded the board that they had planned to talk about finalizing the language of the survey. Chris told the board that he made some slight changes and that Alicia Heber made some additions.

He then presented a timeline of what he summarized from Act 73. He said the class size minimums are looked at over a three-year cycle, starting with next school year (26-27). Chris added that the school had to not meet the minimum for all three years before the state could take action. He then said the law was very vague as to what the state would do, noting that the Secretary of Education "may" recommend the school go onto an improvement plan.

Chris proposed that if Cabot didn't meet the minimums for the high school, and was put on an improvement plan for (see, 'Part 2', page 8)

SCHOOLBOARD UPDATES

Part 2

(continued from page 7)

two years, then after the two years the secretary could recommend further action. He also pointed out that even though the new districts and supervisory unions will start in July of 2028, the school's budget will be already set. He expects that the new funding formula would not take effect until July of 2029. Chris summarized his analysis by saying the school could potentially close in 2029.

Alicia said she did a search of Act 73 and can't find any mention of an improvement plan. She added that she believed Chris was referring to graduation requirements, and felt this part of the law doesn't apply to class size minimums. The board brought up the law on the big screen and continued to debate what was in the law.

Alicia asked why they are having a survey now if the board thinks the school won't be impacted until 2031. She emphasized that in 2028 they may lose the opportunity to make a choice, and wondered how they can attract more students. Chris said that the student population is always fluctuating and it's hard to predict the size three years out.

Ellen asked if they were discussing the survey now, and commented on the explanation in the survey before the questions. She said it wasn't clear until Chris made a comment during the meeting about being put into a bigger district. Ellen also wondered if it was necessary to put Senator Beck's prediction in the survey when there were three other legislators that refuted his claims.

She said to make the point that any decision might be moot if Cabot was forced to join another larger district, then the town may not have control over decisions about the school. Alicia asked for clarification, that even if the school went to school choice now, being placed in a larger district could override the decision.

Chris responded, saying that if the state put Cabot into a larger supervisory union, then the town would have the right to change the school. He added, but if the state put Cabot into a larger district, then all previous decisions up to that point are null and void. Chris added that is why the letter the board sent to the state redistricting task force requested that Cabot be placed into a supervisory union.

Alicia stated that she doesn't see how the state will let Cabot High School stay open, and leading up to 2028 she doesn't see how they will retain staff. She added that she would hate to put the town through a vote that could be overturned by the state. Alicia expressed that she didn't think they should put the survey out and provide as much stability as possible. She wondered how to attract people to the town if they don't have a high school and no school choice.

Chris said that they won't know until after the next legislative session. He said by then they will know if they will lose control of the school's destiny. Chris asked the board if they should hold off on the survey until January, or put the survey out now.

Jason Monaco expressed that some of the questions don't even matter anymore. Alicia said if they do put out the survey, she didn't know what they would do with the information. She expressed hope that in the spring they would find out if there was even a choice. Ellen said they could wait on the survey and write up an article for the Chronicle.

The board did not choose to send out the survey. At the time of this writing, VTDIGGER had reported "Danville residents are poised to vote in December on whether to shutter its high school grades at the Danville School and instead pay tuition for students to attend other schools, following a petition submitted to the school board..."

References quoted in the School Board articles:

Clayton Cargill's ethic complaint on Scott Beck:
<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Beck-Ethics-Complaint.pdf>

VTDIGGER story on Danville's High School Vote:
<https://vtdigger.org/2025/10/10/a-petition-forcing-a-vote-to-shutter-high-school-grades-at-danville-school-could-create-a-public-high-school-desert-in-the-northeast-kingdom-staff-warn/>

Not quoted but may be useful:
Original story of Beck ethics complaint in Seven Days:
<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/news/education-news/rural-school-boards-feel-pressure-amid-ed-reform-speculation/>



CABOT NOVEMBER CALENDAR

FREE Food Share 12-2PM
Wednesdays November 5th & 19th

EVERY THURSDAY-DOORS OPEN AT 5PM BINGO!
PRIZES, REFRESHMENTS, \$10 FOR 10 GAMES W/4 FACE CARDS EACH GAME

Community Supper Saturday Nov 15th, 4:30-6:30
Lasagna, Salad, Garlic Bread and Desserts
All welcome, come and enjoy some good food and live Music!!

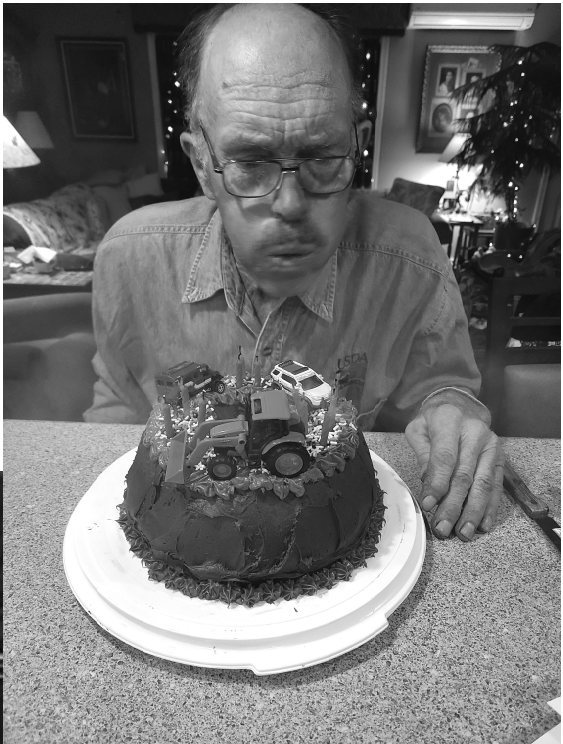
Senior Adventures
Tuesdays November 4th & 18th 10AM
Always a fun time & enjoy a nice lunch!

3339 MAIN STREET
DOWNTOWN CABOT VILLAGE
CALL: 802-563-3322

NeighborsinActionVT.org
www.facebook.com/neighborsinactionvt



Below: The Bothfeld family has been raising turkeys on their farm for Thanksgiving sales for more than 70 years. Call 563-2715 to reserve your bird. Amanda Legare photo.



Above: Skip Bothfeld blows out the candles on 73rd birthday cake. Paul Wade photo. Connie Hare cake.



Time To Order
Your Fresh Local Turkey

Our Turkeys are Fresh, Never Frozen

Thanksgiving Turkey
Raised locally by Dunstable Farm
The Bothfeld Family

To order call 802-563-2715



Spring Show: Quest!

by Karen Mueller-Harder

Cabot community theater is excited to announce our shows for spring 2026: "Quest! One Play to Rule Them All".

It's the fantasy quest of a lifetime--and everyone's got an excuse to get out of it. When all the mighty Heroes of Legend are trapped under an evil spell, lesser-known heroes are gathered to go save the day. One problem: everyone has a tale to tell about why they can't go on a quest just now. Are the Enchanted Lands doomed?

This show is a collection of smaller connected playlets, providing multiple opportunities for actors to have a lead role in a tale, as well as smaller and ensemble parts for those who are younger or shyer. From elves and demigods to thieves and warriors, the characters are varied and the scripts are hilarious!

Watch the December *Chronicle* and FPF for information about January auditions, and the dates of the spring performance, or write to hello@cct.aroundvt.org to be added to our email list.

This production will provide ample opportunities for people to help with sets, costumes, props, and publicity, so if you're interested in any of those realms, please send an email to info@cct.aroundvt.org and tell us how you'd like to be involved!

Cabot Community Theater has long had a mission of being welcoming, supportive, and inclusive, and we have a great time while producing high-quality, affordable local theater. We like to involve people of all ages and levels of experience so that we all can learn from each other. We hope to have you involved in the show!



School Board Update: Act 73 and Cabot School

Since the Vermont Legislature passed Act 73 earlier this year, schools across Vermont have been working to understand how this sweeping education reform bill will affect them. Although a number of changes dictated by the law won't take effect for several years, we've recently gotten a better understanding of how several of them stand to impact Cabot School. Here goes:

1. School Governance

A major goal of Act 73 is to reduce cost and improve student learning by combining students into much larger school districts and/or "Supervisory Unions" of 4,000+ students. Schools within a new, enlarged school district would be governed by a single, district-wide school board, while school districts within an enlarged Supervisory Union (SU) would continue to use their local school boards and voters to make decisions about their individual school's programs, budgets, etc. This summer our Cabot School Board sent a letter to the State's "Redistricting Task Force" charged with creating these larger governance units, asking that the Cabot School District be placed in an enlarged Supervisory Union.

This fall, the eleven members of the Redistricting Task Force are working to design up to three different statewide maps of these enlarged school districts/SUs to present to the Legislature. During its next session that starts in January, the Legislature is tasked under Act

73 to settle on one of these maps (or a new one of their own design) which will determine how Vermont schools will be organized and governed starting on July 1, 2028.

Because of this timeline, we won't find out until sometime next year whether or not Cabot will be allowed to continue to make its own decisions about our school as an independent school district within an enlarged Supervisory Union. If the map that's eventually approved dissolves Cabot School District and puts our school into a large single district of 4,000+ students governed by a new board, any decision we make now could potentially be overturned when that new district is formed. For that reason, our school board decided recently to hold off for now on circulating a survey to families about potentially closing Cabot High School and tuitioning our high school students to other schools.

2. Class Size Minimums

Act 73 allows the State of Vermont to close or merge schools with class sizes below state-set minimums. With help from the Vermont Agency of Education, we have gotten a clearer idea of the process and timeline under which that could happen.

Cabot School's enrollment has increased by 10% since October 2024, to 163 students this year. Here is how our current class averages for different grade sets compare with the state minimums:

	Grade 1	Grades 2-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Cabot School	7	11.4	14	10.5
State Minimum	10	12	15	18

The specifics of Act 73 spell out this process:

Starting with the 2026-2027 school year, any school that fails to meet the state class size minimums for three years in a row (for example, 2026-27 through 2028-2029) are provided with an additional two-year period (2029-2031 in this scenario) to increase their class sizes to meet the law's standards before facing any action by the State Board of Education. One of those potential actions (beginning in 2031) would be to close or merge the school.

Given our school's structure, another important question has come up: Does the State have the authority to close down or merge an ENTIRE preK-12 school even if only one part of it (for example, the high school grades) fails to meet the minimum class size standard? According to our contact at the Agency of Education, that whole-school closure would be allowed by Act 73 but

is not mandated. Besides school closure the State may also look at other options if the size minimums aren't met ("further technical assistance", for one), and any decision made would take into account the school's organization. At many points during the past year, both state officials and legislators supportive of the school reform bill have emphasized their support of a statewide system that has "local elementary schools, consolidated middle schools, and regional high schools".

Our Cabot School Board meets on the fourth Monday each month at 6:00 PM in the school library. Please feel free to attend those meetings in person or via Zoom to ask questions and find out more about the school and Act 73's potential impact. In the meantime, we'll continue to provide updates in the *Chronicle* and on Front Porch Forum.

Chris Tormey
Chair, Cabot School Board
chris.tormey@ccsuvt.net

Interim Principal Hired at Cabot School

At a special meeting on October 20, the Cabot School Board unanimously approved the hiring of Steve Owens of Calais to serve as Interim Principal of Cabot School for the remainder of the school year.

After teaching music at Calais Elementary School for over two decades, Mr. Owens has more recently served as a building principal for several Vermont schools. An accomplished musician, teacher and composer, Mr. Owens will work alongside Assistant Principal

Jeanne Segretto this semester on the days that retired Twinfield School Principal Mark Mooney is unavailable, and will determine a work schedule for Semester 2 soon.

We appreciate the great help that Mark Mooney has provided Cabot School this fall since Dr. Jennifer Blake's departure, and look forward to the support that Mr. Owens' varied skills and experience can bring to our school in the months ahead.

Chris Tormey, Cabot School Board

CABOT MENTORING

Happy November!

The Cabot Mentoring Program is growing and thriving and is now serving 12 Cabot youth with an adult mentoring relationship.

The following is our Program Mission Statement, which does an excellent job of describing what the program is all about. I thought it relevant to share with the Cabot community:

Cabot Mentoring Program Mission Statement:

The Mission of the Cabot Mentoring Program is to provide all interested youth in our community an opportunity for a one-on-one friendship with a responsible, attentive and nurturing adult in a mentoring relationship.

Cabot Mentoring's goal is to offer youth a broader worldview and increase exposure to healthy activities through a positive relationship with a caring adult. Youth who have a mentor will feel like they matter to people in their community.

We work towards positive outcomes that will benefit participating mentors, mentees and their parents/caregivers.

Mentors obtain the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a young person. They can contribute to their community in a way that is affordable, direct and enjoyable, with individual and community level outcomes. Their understanding of the community is broadened. Most importantly, they receive the friendship of a young person.

Mentees benefit by having one-on-one time with a caring and attentive adult. Participating youth have access to the life experiences and work skills of their mentors, who can serve as role models. Mentees in the community-based program gain access to regional and town activities, thereby broadening their worldview, and a friendship with an adult.

Parents and Caregivers benefit by having another positive role model for their child who can reinforce common values of friendship, respect and manners. They benefit as their child gains access to recreational activities with adult supervision. Sharing a common interest in the well-being of their child, parents and caregivers acquire friendship with a community member they may not have otherwise known.

The Community is strengthened because of the friendship and understanding created among community members. Newcomers to the town have a way to meet their neighbors. Individuals without resident children have a way to connect with youth in our community.

The program's **relationship-based model** highlights meaningful friendships and healthy activities that **increase resilience and positive outcomes** in youth long-term.

For more information about the Cabot Mentoring Program:

Call: 802-595-1130, Mark Christensen, Cabot Mentoring Coordinator
Email: cabotmentoring@gmail.com
Website: cabotmentoring.org

VETERAN'S PAGES

Well, I'm Off to Viet Nam

by Darrell Burkhalter

I was born on June 8, 1949, at a very early age, I had yet to smell the flowers or look at the stars. I had yet to consider the complex philosophy of: "To boldly go where no man had gone before." I just boldly went. Only what went in, came out. I grew up with cowboys and Indians, WWII movies, cartoons and sitcoms. Right and wrong was well defined. Graciousness, chivalry, discipline, conscience, duty, honor, humor, love of country, respect, courage, though mostly ignored, were there.

In the spring of 1968, I decided to check into enlisting into the military as I felt it was my duty to serve my country. There was a lot of controversy about the war but I was not concerned with that. I took a dim view of the protesters as a bunch of ideological fanatics who would not embrace our great country. A few of my high school friends had enlisted and my brother's best friend (Rick Clark) had been killed as part of the "Lost Platoon" in the battle in the la Drang valley as chronicled in the movie *We Were Soldiers Once . . .* My brother's brother-in-law (Genaro DeCarlo) was also killed in Viet Nam. I didn't much like the idea of the Navy or the Marines or being drafted, so that left the Air Force or the Army. There wasn't much military history in my family to influence my decision except one uncle, Hugh (Jake) who was in the Philippines in WWII, and one uncle (Raymond) who was in the Navy pre-Korea.

I had been working on the New York Central Railroad as a freight brakeman. My father and my brother also worked there as had my father's father, his grandfather, and my mother's grandfather. My father, my brother, and I had the same initials so the crew dispatcher had numbered us 1, 2, and 3. The railroad workers were a rough bunch and I worked with a few who had hired out in 1917. I believe the experience helped a lot in preparing me for the military. It also paid very, very well. However, you would be on call 24/7/365. It wasn't just a job, it was a way of life.

I dropped by the local Army Recruiting office and spoke to the recruiter, SSG Floyd M. Norman. The "Draft" was still on and I didn't want to be drafted into something I didn't want. Since I was thinking of volunteering, he said I could take a battery of exams to see what I qualified for. I had done terrible in high school and even had to go to summer school to graduate. (After summer school the graduation ceremony consisted of the school secretary handing my diploma across the counter. The date on the diploma was for the previous June 4th graduation. To this day I'm not on the list of alumni.) The recruiter arranged for me to take the first pre-induction exams and a physical at the AFEES station on West Van Buren Street in Chicago. I did great on the exam and physical. The recruiter asked me what I wanted to do? I thought, tanks, and said I didn't want to walk.

He arranged for more tests and I passed them with flying colors. He then set me up for more tests. Again, they went well. He then said I qualified for a program that he didn't have much information about: The Warrant Officer Rotary Wing Aviator Course. Helicopter pilot. That sounded very interesting. He said it might be a good idea to get a flight physical before I decided to make sure I still qualified. He arranged for the physical at Chanute Air Force Base and even drove me down there. The Air Force Flight Surgeon was CPT James W. Patty, Jr., and on 8 May 1968 I passed the physical and enlisted on 5 June in the delayed entry program for September. I had never flown so I went to the airport for a ride. Great fun! Little did I know how much.

Basic Training

I rode the Illinois Central "City of New Orleans" from Kankakee to Louisiana (the song was written by Steve Goodman and sung by Arlo Guthrie, Willie Nelson and others), and was then bussed to Fort Polk, Louisiana, for Basic Training. At the reception center we were issued our uniforms, got the famous buzz cut and had our pictures taken.

Those pictures were a fake, as the Class A greens were cut out in the back of the coat and shirt. They slipped this over our tee shirts, put a hat on us and took the picture.

I was assigned to Basic Training Company A-1-1, 5th Platoon out on the fringe of the post. The Drill Instructor was SSG Nuelua Puu, a Hawaiian. He was older than the other Drill Sergeants, but he was cool. He lined us up into four equal rows. He picked the oldest looking trainee for Trainee Platoon Leader (24), who was Steven Lane from Gloucester, Massachusetts (I was best man at Steve's wedding during flight school. He died in Viet Nam). SSG Puu liked to drink and would run out of money before pay day. He would borrow from the Trainee Platoon Sergeant and the squad leaders, but would always pay us back on pay day.

The Trainee Squad Leaders he picked from the first person in each row, of which I was one (4th Squad). The Road Guards he picked from the last person in each row.

We were some of the last to train with the M-14.

All but a couple of guys in the Company were National Guard, Reserves, but most were Warrant Officer Candidates. One of the draftees was a guy named Shade who was English. He had to have a Green Card to work in the U.S., which required him to register for the draft. The neighboring companies didn't like us because we were not draftees like they were. A couple of fights broke out which were decided by a couple of guys in our platoon who had martial arts training. Howard Kresta was one of them.

Primary Flight School

On 22 November 1968 Basic Training

was over. The WORWOC Candidates were bussed to Fort Wolters, Texas, for Primary Flight Training. Fort Wolters was just west of Fort Worth near Mineral Wells, Texas. Our group was assigned temporary housing and were called "Snow Birds" until a company was assigned. We were assigned to the 9th WOC Company which was in the old WWII barracks. I was in the 5th Platoon and spent a couple days fixing up the old barracks, assembling lockers and clearing out the "critters". The first phase of training was called "preflight" and we were harassed continually and under scrutiny all of the time. We were taught how to do everything "their way". My cube mate was Thomas Chestnut

Everything had to be precise. Everyone's footlocker, wall locker, and clothing display, had to be exactly the same. Demerits became constant. We were frequently woke up at 2 AM and ordered to "fall out" with the gym uniform on in ten minutes. We would then run around the football field about ten or more times while the TAC Officers would go through our barracks to find anything out of order. Unmade beds, messy cubical area, uniforms not on display, etc. . . and handed out demerits. They found a penny under my bed and the demerits were: One for trying to bribe a TAC Officer, one for not enough, and one for Lincoln needs a shave. This silly, goofy treatment had a purpose. You would either break, quit, or endure. However, the Army needed a lot of helicopter pilots, so if you fell behind in anything, you would have normally been let go and become a crew chief or a door gunner. But now you could be "set back" a class, have an opportunity to complete the training and save the Army the money already invested in you. I understand it cost about \$35,000 to train a pilot at that time.

After Christmas I drove my car, a 1968 Opal Rally, back to Fort Wolters. Preflight was over and we spent half the day in classes and the other half on the flight line. The harassment tapered off (a little) because of the flying. I was introduced to the TH-55 Osage (Mattel Messerschmitt) Hughes 269 trainer helicopter. Boy, was it small and touchy. The other trainer they used was the OH-23 Raven made by Hiller. This was a Korean vintage helicopter. The TH-55 was so touchy the instructor would have me place a cigarette between the first and fourth fingers of my right hand. If I broke the cigarette I would owe him a six pack. This would teach you to have a light touch on the cyclic control. Later in the Huey you learned to place your forearm on your knee so the buffeting of the aircraft would not transfer to the cyclic.

Most of the instructors for initial training were civilian contractors working for Southern Airways. Our instructors happened to be Army instructors who had already been in Viet Nam. I soloed after about 15 hours. The average was about 20 hours. Tradition was that when you soloed you would be thrown into a pool. The bus from the heliport would stop at the local Holiday Inn, where the pool entrance was

crossed with a couple of rotor blades. After many years this tradition ended when some Vietnamese drowned a small child staying at the motel. At least one time during Primary Flight School, the Army would host a dance for the candidates. They would advertise at Texas Women's University for girls and provide transportation to and from that school. It was a formal dance and many of the women and candidates' wives wore prom dresses. It was at this dance that Steve Lane met a young woman from TWU who would become his wife. At the very end of Primary Flight school my parents came to Texas for the graduation ceremony. They were camped at the lake at Possum Kingdom State Park near Mineral Wells. My instructor and I flew to the location and he landed on the shore so I could see them. That was fun.

We were informed there were too many candidates for the next Advanced Flight School at Fort Rucker, Alabama. Who would be willing to take a two-week leave between schools? Steve Lane and I volunteered, and I served as his best man at his wedding in Denton, Texas. He married Judy Rushing from TWU. Her Maid of Honor was Yolanda Herr from Houston. Yolanda's father was a VP at Texaco. The next day I drove home. Because we had already had two weeks leave for Christmas, and now two more weeks between schools, the yearly leave had been used up.

Advanced Flight School

I drove to Fort Rucker and had a little problem on the way down. My tailpipe had broken off and burnt through the plastic gas line in northern Alabama. I hitched a ride to the nearest exit that had a gas station. The attendant helped me tow the car to his station where we found the problem. He repaired the gas line and found some tailpipe in the trash to fix that. When he was done he only charged me \$7.50 for the tow AND the repairs because I was a soldier.

I was assigned to the 4th WOC Company and my new roommate was Jim Cavender. We continued the half day military classes and the half day flying where we were trained in the Bell OH-13 Sioux which was used for the instrument training. We also had the Link Trainer for instrument training. It was an enclosed box set up like a helicopter to simulate training without any outside references. The recorded flight path was a device that placed your progress on a big map on a table which the instructor monitored. He could talk to you as if he was an Air Traffic Controller and give instructions. I learned real quick that when he put you in a holding pattern he was going for coffee. I thought I'd have some fun. When he put me in a holding pattern, I waited a short time and did some quick calculations in my head. Instead of the standard "racetrack" pattern, I did a figure eight while he was gone. When he got back there was the figure eight on the map. He wasn't upset so much as amused. The actual flying in the OH-13 was pretty hard. You wore a hood on your helmet and your (see, 'Viet Nam', page 11)

VETERAN'S PAGES

Viet Nam

(see, 'Viet Nam', page 11)

side of the cockpit was whited out so you couldn't see outside. The most fun for me was the GCA approach. Ground Control Approach was via ground radar that gave the controller your direction and altitude. He would talk you down with azimuth and altitude corrections. They would even bring you to a hover without seeing outside. The controllers were young enlisted men and they were very good.

Then the big day. The Huey. Boy was that exciting. We started with the older "A" model and it handled like a sports car compared with the earlier types we flew. The autorotations (unpowered landings) were a lot hairier. In an autorotation you would cut (chop) the throttle (simulated engine failure), lower the collective (reduce blade pitch so the rotor wouldn't slow too much), and maintain a certain airspeed and rotor RPM, all while you looked for a suitable landing area (which almost looked like straight down). You would flare at about 75 feet to reduce the forward airspeed. At about six feet you would level the aircraft and begin to increase pitch to the blades in order to transfer the rotational inertia into lift. Continuing to increase pitch to slow the downward decent until you touched down with a ground run of six to ten feet. Like a feather when you got the hang of it. While with an instructor, he would chop the throttle a lot. One day Caven-der and I were assigned a "D" model instead of an "A" or "B" model. It was bigger, sat on the ground different (nose up), and more powerful. We hadn't been checked out on the "D" but thought nothing of it. When picking it up to a hover we went forward because the sight picture was different. Same thing in the traffic pattern. We raced around at 30 to 40 MPH faster, gaining on the other aircraft because of the sight picture we were used to. That was a real rush. After we landed and went back to operations a crew chief came looking for us. He asked us if we had flown that particular "D" model and we said yes, and why? He said the tail rotor had just fallen off. It's funny that we never heard another thing about it.

While at Rucker I traded in my 1968 Opal Rally for a 1969 Plymouth Road Runner convertible from a dealership in Enterprise, Alabama. Gold with a white top and white interior, a 389 with an automatic, it was a great car. I learned a valuable lesson early. There is always someone faster than you. On a weekend pass, Bill Kersey (KIA RVN) and I headed to his parents' home in Panama City, Florida. On the way down, I was passing cars a lot and noticed a Karmann Ghia in my rearview mirror who was keeping up with us on the two-lane road. I passed a truck and barely made it when I looked in the rearview and he was still there. When we hit the four-lane, he went around us like we were standing still. It was a Porsche. Lesson learned.

When graduation time came there were two. First we were promoted to Warrant Officers (WO-1), the guest of

honor was General William Westmoreland, who shook our hands and the next day we were awarded our wings. My parents couldn't make this one, so a friend's wife, Diane Winkler, pinned on my wings.

Now for another month's leave which we didn't have coming.

The day has come. After almost a year of training to become an Army Helicopter Pilot, in October 1969, I was to board a plane from the Kankakee Illinois Airport to take me to O'Hare in Chicago. It was very foggy that day and the flight was cancelled. The passengers were put on a bus to O'Hare. My parents were with me and the goodbyes were really hard. I could see the concern on their faces. The war was on the TV News every night. The bus ride was uneventful, and I arrived at O'Hare with plenty of time to make the flight to Fort Lewis, Washington. While waiting, I ran into a friend from flight school, Mike Goode from Scituate, Massachusetts. We were on the same flight to Washington and we were the only ones who knew each other.

At Fort Lewis, we were processed for our tour in Viet Nam. I was surprised when we were issued green undershirts, green boxer shorts, and even green handkerchiefs. We were not issued the jungle boots as we were informed that in an aircraft fire the nylon would melt into your feet and leather would protect your feet better. They would rot out quicker, but hey, they had lots of boots. That's good news, I hadn't thought of that. The green cloth name tags were painted on using a stencil. I still have mine and one is on my Vermont State Guard uniform.

On the flight out the first stop was Hawaii. I remember getting off the plane for the short layover and smelled pineapple. The Dole plant was near the terminal. The next stop was at Guam. After a short layover, we took off just as a typhoon was approaching. A little rough.

A beautiful flight and I got to see the Philippines, from the air, all of them. We landed at Cam Ran Bay and spent a few days there. We met a couple of CW-4s at the Australian officers club, who gave us a lot of pointers about the war. We also met some Australian officers who were very gracious and bought a few rounds. Ah, the smell. That was when we found out that they burned the poop.

We boarded a C-130 for the flight to Camp Alpha in Saigon. More fun. We landed in Saigon and were put on busses for the trip to Long Bien and the 12th Group assignment facility. Our 1st Sergeant from Fort Rucker was with us and when we arrived at Long Bien, the Warrant Officers carried his bags for him. This surprised the other enlisted men in our group.

We were ushered into a large waiting room to await assignment to our units. While we were waiting, we filled out a form checking off our preference of unit to be assigned to. A Major came in and asked, "We need a couple of LOACH pilots, who wants to go?" Mike Goode and I looked at each other, nodded, and said we would. LOACH pilots, it was rumored, didn't last long. We were then told that the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion Commander, Colonel Top, would

give us a ride over to Bien Hoa. When he arrived, I thought this older gentleman was a "grandpa type" and looked like Burl Ives. A very, very kind man. He asked Mike what he wanted to do after the Army. Mike said he wanted to be an airline pilot after the war (which he was). He then asked me, and I said I didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up. I then told him I was a railroad brakeman and would probably pursue that occupation. The conversation was very congenial. He informed us we would be assigned to the 118th Assault Helicopter Company.

When we arrived at the 145th HQ on the southern end of Bien Hoa Air Base we

didn't see any LOACHES. So we asked where they were. "LOACHES, we don't have any here." Later, I thought the Major at Long Bien had asked for volunteers for LOACHES because the duty and accommodations at Bien Hoa were very good. On this big air base we had air conditioned rooms, hot and cold water, showers, clubs, a big PX, tennis courts, swimming pools, hobby shop, etc. All the amenities a very large Air Force Base would have. Also later, I saw that the 118th Assault Helicopter Company had lost some pilots (KIA). We were replacements.

A Veteran's Story

by Susan Dineen

My father, Richard Scott Carroll, Sr., was a veteran of World War II.

"Dick" Carroll was born at home near Penn Yan, New York, on May 6, 1923. The Carrolls were a farm family with apple, pear, and peach orchards, as well as fields of berries. They also raised chickens for eggs, the majority of which were sent to New York City each week on the train. Dick attended school in Penn Yan, and graduated from Penn Yan Academy.

Dick completed his freshman year in the School of Agriculture at Cornell University. World War II intervened, and he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942. He completed basic training at Fort Rucker, Alabama, and moved on to Fort Reilly, Kansas, where he experienced his one and only tornado. The Army then sent Dick to Colorado School of Mines, in Golden, Colorado, where he studied engineering.

Dick was a sergeant, a squad leader, and a rifleman. He saw service in France, Germany, and Austria, where he oversaw POWs after the war, as well as a transportation group.

The defining and most haunting event of Dick's military career happened before he reached the European continent proper. On Christmas Eve, 1944,

he was aboard a Belgian vessel that had been converted to a troopship, the S.S. Leopoldville. The ship was heavily overloaded. It was struck by a torpedo in the English Channel, about five miles off the coast of France. The boat sank rapidly and nearly 800 men were lost. Dick was forever thankful that he was able to lead his squad to safety on a British ship, one of the few that came to the aid of the sinking troop carrier. In the dark, with rough seas and death all around them, he helped each man in his care jump from one ship to the other at the right time. He did not lose a man. Dick went last, unaided, barely missing being crushed as the vessels crashed together. Survivors of the tragic event were ordered by the top military command to never speak of it. Dick did not talk about the traumatic experience until well into old age. The sinking of the S.S. Leopoldville was eventually the subject of History Channel and National Geographic Channel documentaries, as well as several books.

Like many of "The Greatest Generation," my Dad returned from war, married, went back to school, started a family, worked, and eventually built a successful business. He died on December 3, 2012, at age 89, proud of his service to our country to the end.

CABOT VETERANS AND SERVICE MEMBERS INVITED

On Veterans Day, please join the *Cabot Chronicle* and the Cabot Historical Society at a free lunch to honor your military service:

Tuesday, November 11, 2025
12:00 noon

Wiley Building second floor meeting room (accessible via lift)

Veterans of any service are invited, no matter where you lived when you served.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Besides this edition's stories, past contributions can be found at www.CabotChronicle.org

November 2023 edition beginning on page 10:

Jack Daniels
Raymond Domey
Jeffrey Gabrielson
Jeanne Johnson

David Lynn
Rory Thibault
Chris Porter
Mark Tucker

November 2024 edition beginning on page 10:

Niels Larson
Nally Family
Jacqueline Lumbr

Richard Ducharme
Kris Schmitt



STAY SAFE ON CABOT TRAILS

The Cabot Trails Committee reminds hikers, cyclists and other non-hunters to use caution outdoors during hunting season.

To stay safe in the woods:

- Wear bright colors. An orange vest is particularly helpful during hunting season.
- Attach a bell to yourself or to your dog, which should be leashed at all times, to alert hunters of your presence
- DO NOT wear white, gray, brown, or tan
- Plan outings around the middle of the day. The lighting is better and fewer people are hunting then.
- Stick to high-use public areas or trails. Hunters tend to avoid areas where many other people are already hiking or walking their dogs.
- If you see someone hunting, call out to them to identify your location
- Follow posted signage
- If you hike alone, let someone know where you'll be and when you'll return
- Know when hunting takes place. Season dates are available in the free Vermont Hunting and Trapping Official Regulations Digest, available at gas stations and general stores, and at VTFishandWildlife.com

Find trail info and maps at CabotVermont.org/Trails

Cabot Village Flood Mitigation Update

by Gary Gulka, Flood Resiliency Task Force Chair

After two wet summers in 2023 and 2024, we are now experiencing severe drought conditions – it just goes to show the unpredictability of the weather. In 2024, Cabot narrowly missed the summer deluge of storms that affected towns like Plainfield, Peacham, and St. Johnsbury.

Following engineering studies in 2024-2025, we found promising flood mitigation alternatives that would solve our flash flooding problems at the north tributary near the Rec fields and the south tributary in the center of the village. With preliminary design plans and cost estimates, we applied for a FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant for two new bridge structures and some associated stream widening and stabilization work in the tributaries. This \$3.5 million project was ranked high by Vermont Department of Public Safety, Emergency Management Division, before applications were sent along to FEMA. However, due to the high regional demand for flood mitigation projects like property buyouts in flood zones, floodplain restoration projects, and bridge and infrastructure projects, we know that our chances for funding are limited. We don't expect to hear back from FEMA until sometime around mid-2026.

At the same time, we are pursuing a project to relocate the Cabot Garage

somewhere else in the Cabot Village vicinity – because the village center flood mitigation project cannot proceed without this happening. We have a grant from Vermont Emergency Management to fund the buyout of the property (at appraised value). This same grant is assisting us in evaluating relocation sites in and around the village. We have hired Dubois & King, a Randolph-based firm, to evaluate five or six properties for relocation potential, looking at site development feasibility and costs. We expect to have some results to share publicly soon. We then hope to select the most feasible site for more in-depth evaluation of site design and building construction costs.

This summer, another source of flood mitigation funding became available known as Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Relief, related to damages sustained in the 2023 floods. It is a comparable funding amount to the FEMA grants – and towns especially in Washington County jumped at the opportunity to apply for flood mitigation projects related to housing and infrastructure. We decided to apply for the north tributary bridge project under this funding source to enhance our chances of success. Given that moving forward on the south tributary bridge project is not possible until we resolve the Cabot Garage relocation issue, we held off on applying for this project under this funding source. We may hear back on this application as early as late November.

If we are successful, grant funding will be available in early 2026. We would then be able to use funds to contract with an engineering firm to provide final design and obtain necessary permits and approvals and construction bid documents. Construction could begin as early as 2026.

The plans for the north tributary are to replace the 1944 bridge with a bridge structure that is elevated four feet, tapering back to the existing roadway elevation. This, along with a flood bench constructed along one side of the stream and under the bridge, will provide adequate clearance for flood waters and debris in some of the most extreme storm situations. About five driveways will need to have entranceways elevated 1-3 feet to make this project work. Some vegetated riparian buffers will be added along the tributary and along the Guzman property to enhance flood miti-

gation. We thank Luis Guzman for agreeing to this buffer to make this project funding eligible.

The CCIF funding request of \$250,000 on the November 4 ballot is to support village flood mitigation efforts mainly for this project. \$150,000 of the request is for 10% grant matching funds for the recent grant application; \$50,000 of the request is for contingencies such as cost overruns in engineering and construction; another \$30,000 is for legal easements where construction will infringe on private property (such as elevating driveway entrances). The remaining \$20,000 is for studying the feasibility of debris racks on the south tributary- especially in the scenario that we can't go forward with this project – lack of grant funding or inability to relocate the Cabot Garage – at least it may be something we can do to alleviate flooding in the center of the village.

Hike With Gratitude - Cabot Trails Landowners Keep Our Trail Networks Alive

This summer, many community members have commented on how much they enjoy Cabot Trails for recreation, health, and commuting. Cabot is very fortunate to have fifteen miles of trails, but do you know what it takes to support a trail network?

Top of the list are landowners - who grant permission for the trails to cross their property. In Cabot, twenty landowners generously provide access for Cabot Trails to manage, maintain, and build trails on their beautiful property for Cabot residents and visitors to enjoy.

Our landowners play a key role in Cabot's vitality by providing trails for people and families to spend time together while enjoying the beautiful vistas and landscapes of Cabot. Without landowner support these wonderful opportunities would not be possible, and Cabot Trails users agree. Here are some responses to the Cabot Trails survey, expressing gratitude to Cabot Trails landowners:

Thank you for sharing your beautiful land!

Thank you for generously sharing your land.

I love feeling the beating heart of the Cabot community through the connectivity of these trails.

A big thank you to landowners for making the natural beauty of Cabot accessible to all.

Thank you all so much for sharing the beauty of our town with all of the citizens!

We absolutely love that Cabot offers this.

Thank you, Landowners for allowing us to use your land via Cabot



Trails- much appreciated.

So thankful for this resource!

Thank you for your generosity and community-mindedness!

Thank you for offering your land for the Cabot Trails.

These trails encourage exercise through some of our beautiful natural environment and bring commerce to Cabot.

Cabot Trails landowners receive protection by Vermont State Statute that safeguards private landowners allowing public access to private land for recreational uses. These mandates are Title 12 V.S.A. Chapter 203 § 5791-5 and Title 10 V.S.A. Chapter 20 § 448.

For more information about Cabot Trails or to become a Cabot Trails Landowner, please contact CabotVTtrails@gmail.com.

Visit <https://cabotvermont.org/trails/> to learn about other ways to support the Cabot Trails network.

CABOT ARTS SHOW AND TELL

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

November 9, 2025 , 2 p.m.-4 p.m.



Remember to Vote this month: On or before November 4

There are two questions up for consideration
by Cabot voters this November.

Central Vermont Career Center

The first has to do with expanding learning (and employment) opportunities for young people in Central Vermont. It asks voters in Cabot and 17 other Central Vermont towns that currently send students to the Central Vermont Career Center in Barre if they are in favor of bonding for construction of a new, enlarged technical center on 20 acres of land in Graniteville.

Space limitations at the existing CVCC facility at Spaulding High School built in 1969 have meant that only about half of the 400+ high school students that applied in 2024 for the Center's 12 program offerings (ranging from auto mechanics to culinary to building trades) were able to be admitted. The proposed 167,000 square-foot facility would provide state-of-the-art facilities large enough to accept the increasing number of applicants. It will also have room for new programs, and will offer an all-day program so that students can complete all their required high school courses while enrolled in programs at the career center. Students taking advantage of CVCC programs are still included in the enrollment numbers of their "home" school (for example, Cabot School or U-32 High School).

The projected annual property tax impact of the 30-year bond on local tax rates varies across the 18 towns and six school districts currently served by the CVCC, ranging from a \$420 increase in East Montpelier for a homestead appraised at \$300,000 to a \$99 increase for a property of the same value in Cabot.

Cabot Community Investment Fund

The second ballot question asks voters to approve using \$250,000 of existing Cabot Community Investment Fund (CCIF) funds to support efforts to reduce future flood damage in Cabot Village. Most of that amount would go towards replacing the bridge over the "North Branch" tributary that flows under Main Street adjacent to the Recreation Field with a larger bridge better able to handle increased flows of runoff water and debris. \$150,000 of the CCIF funds requested would serve as a 10% match for a \$1.5 million grant requested from Vermont's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief Fund to fund the bridge's replacement.

Earlier this fall the CCIF Committee unanimously supported this request. The CCIF Fund is in good shape, having increased in value by \$260,000 over the past three years. Especially given the current challenges in getting funding support from the Federal government, our committee felt that it made sense to tap into the CCIF now to support efforts to reduce flood-related damage to our town in the future.

Vote November 4, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Please remember to vote on both of these questions on or before November 4. In-person voting will take place all day at the Willey Building on Tuesday November 4, and mail-in ballots are available from the Town Clerk (563-2279).

Chris Tormey
Cabot School Board
Cabot Community Investment Fund Committee

Editor:

An important question for the public was not
included on the Ballot as a petition requested.

Democracy Struggles.

Andre' Marie DuPont

Paid Ad



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TWIN VALLEY SENIOR CENTER NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- 1) First Monday of every month - CVCOA creative art class 11 to noon.
- 2) Wed., 11/5/25 - Estates & Living Trusts w/ Cludia Pringles, Esq. at noon
- 3) Thurs. 11/6/25 - CVCOA Medicare Open Enrollment Drop In from 9 am to 2 pm
- 4) Monday, 11/10 - Free lunch for Veterans
- 5) Wednesday, 11/12 - poetry reading by John Hall at lunch
- 6) Monday, 11/24 - Holiday pies sale and lasagna dinner to go

No physician orders needed.

Call 223-3322 and ask for Rita.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR Tuesday, November 4, 2025 IS ELECTION DAY

7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Willey Building

Cabot voters have decisions to make:

- \$250,000 CCIF grant proposal for flood mitigation
- \$149,000,000 bond proposal for new technical center for Central Vermont Career Center School District

The Selectboard decided October 6 the petition signed by 94 registered voters to vote on approving construction of a new Volunteer Fire Department building at 2466 Main Street is advisory and will not be presented for vote on the November 4 ballots. The CCIF grant proposal and CVCCSD technical center bond will be on the ballot, as appear below:

TOWN OF CABOT TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025

Instructions to Voters:

If you are in favor of the Article, mark a (X) in the square marked YES

If you are opposed to the Article, mark a (X) in the square marked NO

Will the voters appropriate up to \$250,000 from the CCIF Fund to be used by the Selectboard exclusively for purposes of flood mitigation in Cabot Village consisting of:

- 1) A commitment of \$150,000 as matching funds for a grant application currently pending for approximately \$1.5 million (the match to be escrowed pending receipt of the grant) to fund the replacement of the bridge at the Rec Field tributary (aka Menard Brook) and raising of the adjacent road beds;
- 2) Up to \$30,000 for legal easements necessary for the bridge reconstruction;
- 3) Up to \$20,000 for test borings in the Village Center tributary (aka Lyford Brook) to determine the feasibility of installing debris catchers.

YES ☐
NO ☐

OFFICIAL BALLOT CENTRAL VERMONT CAREER CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT SPECIAL MEETING TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- Use BLACK Pen to fill in the mark. DO NOT USE PENCIL.
- To vote, fill in the oval to the right of your choice.
- If you make a mistake, tear, or deface the ballot, request a new ballot from election officials and obtain another ballot. Do not reuse.

Article 1

The Central Vermont Career Center School District proposes to incur bonded indebtedness for the purpose of building a new technical center at the estimated total project cost of \$149,000,000. The School Construction Aid Program is currently under consideration by the Vermont State Legislature. Therefore, 100% percent of the project shall be paid by the school district's debt without State participation. State funds may not be available at the time this project is otherwise eligible to receive State school construction aid. The district is responsible for all costs incurred in connection with any borrowing done in anticipation of State school construction aid.

shall bonds of the Central Vermont Career Center School District in an amount not to exceed \$149,000,000 be issued for the purpose of building a new technical center?

YES ☐
NO ☐

Cabot Students Bring Color to Harry's Hardware: Mural Reveal Celebrates Local Talent

by Johanna Thibault

The deck at Harry's Hardware in Cabot has a fresh new look — and a burst of color — thanks to the creativity of two Cabot School's high school students, Freya Van Deusen and Molly Paire, who spent part of their summer designing and painting a mural for the community gathering space.

The mural was unveiled Friday afternoon during a celebration that brought together the student artists, their classmates, and community members. The event included a discussion with the students about their creative process, what

inspired their design, and how it felt to see their work completed and shared with the community.

The project grew out of a shared desire to connect local youth with meaningful opportunities to create and contribute within their own town. The mural stands as a reminder of how much creativity exists in Cabot — and what can happen when young people are given a space and the encouragement to express it.

Harry's Hardware has become a natural gathering place in Cabot, bringing people together for music, conversation, and community. The new mural

adds a bright, creative touch to the space and reflects the spirit of collaboration that defines the town.

The community is invited to stop by Harry's Hardware to see the mural in person and celebrate the young artists who brought it to life.



Freya Van Deusen and Molly Paire with their mural.

CABOT PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

LIBRARY HOURS: Monday noon - 6 pm, Tuesday 10 am - 6 pm, Wednesday 11 - 6 pm, Thursday noon - 6 pm, and Saturday 9 am-noon. Curbside library service is still available during regular library hours.

Upcoming Programs - All programs are free and happen at the Cabot Public Library unless otherwise noted -all are welcome! Visit our website - cabot-library.com or check FPF for added programs. If you have a program suggestion or question, please email amandaotto.cabotlibrary@gmail.com

Clay Whistle Workshop with Joanne Vecchiola (adults & kids ages 11+) - **Saturday, November 8 - 10:30 - Noon** - Come make some music with us and create your own ceramic whistle for fun! In this workshop we will learn how to use some basic hand-building techniques to make your own unique ceramic instrument that we will bisque fire for pickup at a later date. Some clay experience is helpful but not required. Tools, clay and bisque firing will be provided. **Registration is required - please email amandaotto.cabotlibrary.com**

Dungeons and Dragons (ages 11+) - Ongoing, **Tuesdays - 3:30 - 5:00 pm** - Join Losada Stoddard as DM. Learn how to build a Dungeons and Dragons character and then set out on your Adventures. Come for the mysteries and magic, tails and talons, puzzles and prophecies! **Snacks provided**

Story & Activity Time (birth - age 5+) - Ongoing, **Wednesdays - 10:30 - 11:30 am - Willey Building 3rd Floor** - Join Amanda Otto for stories, songs, crafts, snacks and open play. Visit the library afterwards to discover our new selection of picture books, take-home kits and more. All are welcome!

LEGO Club (ages 6+) - **November 19 - 2:30 - 4:00 pm** - This club offers a fun, hands-on environment where kids can develop their problem-solving skills, foster their creativity, and collaborate with their peers through engaging Lego-based activities. **Snacks provided**

Cabot Book Group - Thursday, November 20 - 2- 3 pm* - All are welcome! - November's book selection is *A Summons to Memphis* by Peter Taylor. One of the most celebrated novels of its time, the Pulitzer Prize winner by Taylor introduces the Carver family, natives of Nashville, residents, with the exception of Phillip, of Memphis, Tennessee. During the twilight of a Sunday afternoon in March, New York book editor Phillip Carver receives an urgent phone call from each of his older, unmarried sisters. They plead with Phillip to help avert their widower father's impending remarriage to a younger woman. Hesitant to get embroiled in a family drama, he reluctantly agrees to go back south, only to discover the true motivation behind his sisters' concern. While there, Phillip is forced to confront his domineering siblings, a controlling patriarch, and a flood of memories from this troubled past. Copies of this book will be available in the library for you to borrow. Email cabotlibrary@yahoo.com for more info and to be added to the book group email list. **The date has been modified due to the Thanksgiving holiday. To Note - Due to the Christmas holiday, the Book Group will meet on December 18.*

Storywalk - October 15 - November 30 - Cabot Rec Field Pavilion - Enjoy *The Little Old Woman Who Wasn't Afraid of Anything* by Linda Williams and Illustrated by Megan Lloyd while you take a stroll around the pavilion grounds. Begin at the woods edge near the sandbox and follow around the perimeter of the field.

Thanks so much to our Saturday volunteers: Vicky Palmer, Elizabeth Vitale, Marianne Robotham and Beth Wade. Many thanks to Kathleen Chatot for providing weekly Mah Jongg lessons and to Losada Stoddard for running our D&D program on Tuesday afternoons! Additional thanks to the Cabot Village Store, Prints on Paper Studio, Cabot Smith Farm and Burt's Apple Orchard for their generous donations. We are so grateful to our Library Trustees who provide support and direction: Angela Ogle, Leah Sare, Kurt Steinert, Erin Ruddell, and Taeryn Robbins.

Houseplants

by Susan Socks of Garden Goddess consulting and gardening

After a long season of tending flower beds and veggie gardens, how are your houseplants looking? If you're like me, it's been all too easy to ignore the indoor denizens, and they are looking...um, not the best. But never fear! Here are some ways to rejuvenate (and apologize to) your indoor friends.

Thorough watering

Most houseplants rarely get a good soaking, because that can get quite messy. Instead, we give them just a little, so we aren't running for a towel when the saucer under them overflows. Over time, the soil can get very dry, to the point where it is hydrophobic. Think of a dried-out sponge, that sheds water instead of absorbing it. When you water a plant with hydrophobic soil, the water is often just running down between the soil and inner wall of the pot, with little reaching the roots. A second problem is salt buildup. When the soil never gets flushed out, it starts to accumulate salts, which isn't great for most houseplants. Treat your plants to a relaxing soak; set them in a deep dish (mixing bowls are great) and water them well. Let them sit in the runoff for 20 minutes, then dump the excess water. You may be surprised how much of the water gets re-absorbed after initially running right out the bottom. *A caution: I don't recommend this spa treatment for succulents.* They are adapted to dry conditions, and often to mild salt levels as well, and really don't like being soaked.

Clean the tops

Dusty plants can't breathe! Did you know that their leaves are covered with little openings (called stomata) for exchanging air and releasing water vapor? Dust clogs up the openings, and that just can't feel good. For tropical plants, give them a nice shower in the sink or tub, and gently rub the leaves clean. For desert plants, use a soft duster instead of water.

Fresh soil

Periodically, houseplants appreciate a fresh soil. Purchase a good quality potting soil, and make sure it is the right type for your plant (succulent mix for desert plants, general purpose for tropical). Pop the plant out of the pot, gently shake off

most of the soil from their roots, and re-plant with fresh soil. Once potted, hold the edges of the pot and tap it firmly on your work surface a few times, to help settle the new soil around the roots. Water well (also to help settle the soil around the roots). If you have plants that don't need soil, such as orchids, check their growing medium (granular mix, or peat moss) to make sure it is draining well, and isn't getting mildewed.

Reduce the roots (or increase the container)

Sometimes houseplants suffer because they have outgrown their pot. You have two choices; either cut back the roots to make the plant smaller, or buy a bigger pot. I'm frugal, have a small house, and a lot of plants, so I usually opt to reduce the size of the plant, rather than dedicate even more of my home to my chlorophyllic buddies. For single plants, use sharp clippers to cut away some of the roots. You'll want to reduce some of the foliage as well, so that the roots and top maintain about the same proportion as when you started the operation. For plants that are crowded because they made copies of themselves, pick one, and give away or discard the rest.

Start over

Some plants, with a tendency to drape or trail (philodendron, tradescantia, ivy, angel wing begonia, etc), can become disheveled over time, with dead leaves or bare stems near the pot, and fresh leaves only at the far ends. Sometimes it is easiest to re-start these plants. Cut 8-10" off the end of the trailing part, strip off all but the last 2-3 leaves, and put the cut stem into a jar of water. Once it sends out roots in the water, plant it in fresh soil. Now you have a fresh, new plant, and can discard the original one.

Most houseplants are pretty darn tough...that is why they are still with you after all these years. But they do appreciate a bit of special attention, once a year or so. Happy indoor gardening!

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, email gardengoddess802@gmail.com, call 802.498.7785, or visit www.SocksFamilyFarm.weebly.com.

SERVICES





2025 Cabot Community Christmas Dinner

Thursday, December 25, 2025

11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Traditional Seated Dining Inside

*Seeking donations of fresh-baked individual desserts
Christmas Dinner Donations: to P.O. Box 245, Cabot, VT*

Volunteers needed for table service

*Cabot Christmas Dinner Ads Sponsored By Hazel M. Greaves (still doing taxes!)
Income Tax and Bookkeeping Service, LLC ~ hazelgreavestaxservice@gmail.com*

GIVING TUESDAY

December 2, 2025

**Support the CCA this Giving Tuesday
Where Your Gift Supports Local Projects**

Celebrate Giving Tuesday by donating to one of the projects of the Cabot Community Association:

**The Cabot Chronicle
Cabot Children's Center
Annual 4th of July Celebration
Cabot Community Grant Fund
Cabot Community Theater
Friends of the Cabot Public Library
Community Christmas Dinner
Cabot Mentoring
Friends of Cabot Trails**

Giving Tuesday donations are a great holiday gift idea or can be used to honor a friend or family member.
Donations are tax-deductible.

Donate online at CabotVermont.org or mail your donation (indicate the organization of your choice) to
CCA, P.O. Box 245 Cabot, VT 05647

SHOP LOCAL

SUPPORT YOUR NEIGHBOR

Make holiday gift-giving easy this year with the **Cabot Community Gift Card**

One card that is accepted by a growing list of Cabot businesses.
Available in \$10 and \$25 denominations.

Visit CabotVermont.org/GiftCard for details.

