

THE CABOT CHRONICLE

Proudly Published by the



First Established 1920 ~ Re-Established 2008 ~ Cabot Chronicle available online at <http://www.CabotChronicle.org>

FREE

Serving Cabot
& Surrounding
Communities

PRST STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail

Local
Postal Customer

Vol. 18, No. 12 ~ P.O. Box 245, Cabot, Vermont 05647 ~ December 2025

Free 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

This is a great community event, and without our townfolk, it would never happen. We thank the many people who make it possible:

- Our prep crew
- Serving and packaging team
- Donors of funds and fresh local ingredients
- Table service volunteers

And all the wonderful people who come and eat with us and share good cheer.

Thank you for your support. We can't wait to see you!

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



- - - DEADLINES - - -



Thursday, January 15 5 pm deadline to file petition with Town Clerk for Town Meeting Article, signed by 5% of registered voters (60 registered Cabot voters)

Monday, January 26 5 pm deadline to file petition with Town Clerk for election to Town Office, signed by 1% of registered voters (12 registered Cabot voters)

Thursday, December 11 7 pm Community input for FY 2027 Budget before it is finalized on December 16. This is YOUR MEETING. Last chance to give the Selectboard feedback before only choice is Yes or No. Zoom online or in person at Town Hall. Join the CCA and your neighbors for cookies and warm drinks and conversation about the budget. Budget figures available at Town Clerk's office beginning Monday, December 8 and loaded onto the Zoom screen for easy reading online.

Features:
Obituaries:

Pages 1-3
Page 4

Educational Pages:
Library News:

Page 9-10
Page 12-13

School & Selectboard News: Pages 5-7
Business Directory: Page 15

Changing of the Guard Town Clerk Stepping Down



by Jeanne Johnson

Betty Ritter, Town Clerk of Cabot since 2015, has announced she is not running for re-election when her term ends at Town Meeting 2026. The Cabot Chronicle thought we should take this opportunity to ask her about her time in office.

Cabot Chronicle: Can you tell me a little about your personal history, and how that lead to running for Town Clerk in 2015?

Betty: I worked for the Vermont Supreme Court for nine years and then worked for Gleb Glinka, a local attorney, for around seven years, and for another attorney in Waterbury, Vermont, for many years. I enjoyed each one of these jobs and liked to help people out with their concerns or problems. My last job was with a local oil company, and it was a good job, and again, helped people with their needs and problems affiliated with delivery of oil or furnace cleaning, but it wasn't the employment I was looking for. When Chris Kaldor was alive (*Chris Kaldor served as Cabot Town Clerk for more than 15 years until 2007, when he unexpectedly died in office - editor*), I mentioned that I would be interested in a position with the Town of Cabot. At that time Velma White was the assistant clerk and she was talking about retiring and he believed I could fill that position. Unfortunately, this did not happen because of his early death. A couple of years later I found out the current Town Clerk was getting done, and I thought this was my opportunity to run for Town Clerk, so I ran and won (to my surprise, as I ran against four other candidates!).

Cabot Chronicle: Looking back on your time as Town Clerk, what are you most proud of?

Betty: That is a tough one. One of them is getting to know the people you serve and helping them in any way I can with their questions and/or complaints. I will admit that can be challenging and I have made plenty of mistakes along the way, but hopefully I helped more than not. Then there is the learning curve of municipality government.

Cabot Chronicle: Were there any parts of the job that surprised you or turned out to be more challenging than expected?

Betty: Elections – to make sure everyone who wants to vote can vote, having coverage for check in and check out and making sure every vote is accounted for and staying

until all numbers matched. The days leading up to any election are very busy, along with the long day of an election. When I became the Town Clerk, I discovered that we open the polls at 10:00 a.m. which could eliminate many people going to work in the morning. I found this was unacceptable and changed the opening time to 7 AM. The first year I had so many thank me for changing the time, so they were able to have their vote count. All of this couldn't be done without the help of Shirley Ducharme.

Cabot Chronicle: How have you seen the role change over the years — whether through technology, new rules, or just how the town operates? Or changes that YOU have made?

Betty: Yes, the more rules and regulations that are handed down from the state can be a challenge to get all the T's crossed and the I's dotted. Technology is a challenge to try to keep up with the changes with computer updates, emails, passwords. As soon as you learn your password they ask you to change it! Not so sure about any changes I have made, but I always strive to do the work to the best of my ability and be sure that any requests that come in can be handled ASAP. If I don't know the answer, I will always check and get back to the person.

Cabot Chronicle: What's something people might not realize about what the Town Clerk actually does day to day?

Betty: When a person comes in and states that their name is wrong on the tax bill, or they request that it be mailed elsewhere, I need to get that information for the following year and pass it on to the Listers who handle all these changes. Many people think that the only thing we do is record land records. We do birth certificates as needed, marriage licenses, hunting licenses, dog license, death certificates, arrange for the use of the Willey Building, Pavilion, and the Common. The Town Clerk oversees Elections, Board of Abatement, Board of Civil Authority. I also work with the Sheriff's office to oversee patrolling in the Town. Another thing is that I try to answer all my email questions over the weekend as they come onto my phone. Sometimes I get calls also and I try to give them an answer.

Cabot Chronicle: Is there a favorite memory or moment from your time in office that really stands out —

something you'll carry with you?

Betty: The very first time I was sworn in. It was very special. At that time we had our Town Meetings at the gym and all ballots were hand-counted, and there was a huge snowstorm. The former clerk said I could go home and wait, but I wanted to know right away and was surprised and happy that I won. The ride home in the snowstorm was a breeze after waiting for a few hours to see if I won or not. We now hold Town Meeting in the Auditorium, voting is done in our office and it works very smoothly.

The flood of 2023 stuck out. Our office received some flooding and we couldn't work in it like it was. Our computer "brain" was on the floor and was destroyed. We moved up into the meeting room, were in business the next day, and conducted business from there for three or four months. It was called Command Central. Rural Solutions, who backs up our computers, was able to get our computers up and running and we were back in business by the afternoon the day after the flood. It was an interesting time for all of us. The meeting room became the Town Clerk's Office with a few tables, phones and our computers. We were in charge of donations coming in, ordering dumpsters for ruined household items (I believe we did five or six huge dumpsters in a two-week span.) We moved back down in September into a newly-renovated office, complete with waterproof flooring, new windows, and fresh paint.

Cabot Chronicle: If you could pass along one piece of advice to the next Town Clerk, what would it be?

Betty: Always be available and always be willing to help anyone that calls or walks in the door. Two things to remember: they voted you in, and you work for them. It is hard at times when you have many things that need to be done, and the person

on the other side of the counter or the phone wants to talk to you regarding their life or anything else.

Cabot Chronicle: What advice would you give to your successor to be effective in this role from day one?

Betty: Be willing to listen, learn and accept that there are a lot of things you can't answer. Have a lot of patience, and be willing to accept the blame if you have made a mistake. Sometimes you just have to say no to a person, and that is hard. As a Town Clerk you are basically on duty all the time and I have had to interrupt my personal life regularly.

Cabot Chronicle: What do you think are the top priorities the next Town Clerk should focus on for the community?

Betty: Serving the public with a smile and sincerely caring for the people in front of you at the counter or on the phone.

Cabot Chronicle: Why are you leaving?

Betty: I love my job, and it was a very hard decision to make, but I am well past retirement age and believe it is time to retire. More than likely, I will be doing some volunteer work but would like to take some time to relax.

One thing I would like to add to this is to thank everyone for allowing me to serve each and every one of you for the past eleven years and that I will miss the day-to-day activities in the office.

Cabot Chronicle: What's next for YOU?

Betty: That's a good question. It will take a while to not think about the next item that needs to be done, checking the dates to make sure I post everything in a timely manner, worrying about this thing or that. I know one of the things I really want to do is work in my garden, and as always, continue my work in my church and school.

I would add just one more thing, I hope the new Town Clerk will be happy in his or her work and serve the community.

TOWN OFFICE CLOSED

December 24-26, 2025
Christmas Holiday
AND
December 31, 2025
New Years Day



THE CABOT CHRONICLE

DEADLINE: 15th of the month prior to production

Publisher: Cabot Community Assoc.

Coordinator: Jeannie Johnson

Design/Pagination: Todd Jones

Send Ads to: inbox@cabotvermont.org

The Cabot Chronicle is published monthly and is provided locally free of charge.

Phone: 802-279-6897 • Email: inbox@cabotvermont.org

P.O. Box 245, Cabot, Vermont 05647

Copyright 2025 by The Cabot Chronicle ~ Published by the Cabot Community Assoc.

All Rights Reserved 2008-2025 ~ The Cabot Chronicle ~ ISSN# 1942-0943

No part of this paper may be reproduced without express written permission from The Cabot Chronicle. Publisher is not responsible for typographical errors. Acceptance of advertising is contingent upon publisher's approval and agreement by advertiser to indemnify publisher from loss or expense on claims based upon contents of advertising. Publisher does not assume liability for errors in any advertising beyond the cost of space occupied by individual item in which the error appeared.

Subscriptions available \$25 per year ~ <http://www.cabotchronicle.org>

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



Cabot's Ambulance News

by Ruth Goodrich

So far this year we have had 104 incidents we have responded to. Our members have been quick to respond in all cases and we couldn't be more pleased with all of them.

We want to congratulate Victoria Garrison for working hard all summer on completing an AEMT course in Enosburg, Vermont, as well as her family for

the sacrifice of the time and travel involved. She and her son Ethan have been a huge asset to CEAS, with their commitment, enthusiasm & outreach.

It has been a challenging year and it's not over yet. We again thank the community for continued support. Please remember to drive safely with snow & ice covered roads during the winter season - we DON'T want to see you at a motor vehicle accident!

Ask the Fire Department

Do You Have Questions or Concerns?

Cabot officials and voters have important and difficult decisions to make concerning public investment in the volunteer fire department facility and the impact on property taxes. "Why?" is often heard, followed by any number of questions. It is difficult to make the best decision when viewed from the future historical perspective, and VERY easy to make a bad decision if based on misinformation, assumptions and lack of understanding. We can't afford knee-jerk response.

For that reason, The Cabot Chronicle is collecting questions from people who have a "what?" or "why?" Submit your polite question to Inbox@CabotVermont.org by December 15, and the Fire Chief, Dean Deasy, has committed to providing answers for the January 1 Cabot Chronicle.

If you want your question to be anonymous, please state that in your email, and we will accommodate that request if the question is civil and reasonable.

Answers in January
Cabot Chronicle

Good News on FEMA Funding for the Cabot Public Safety Projects



The Town of Cabot received good news from FEMA today (11/13) regarding three projects that were appealed to FEMA in June of this year.

All of the projects: Temporary Fire Station Costs, Cabot FD Demo (Old Station) and the Cabot Public Safety Building New Facility passed the first significant hurdle demonstrating that damage to the facility was a direct result of the declared flood incident of 2023.

This is a huge hurdle moving us toward funding a new Public Safety Building.

The Town will continue to work with FEMA and State Emergency Management to move forward with any needed paperwork and follow up.

Thank you to all of you who encouraged us throughout this very tedious process. We will keep the town informed of any new information as it comes to our attention.

Thank you to Chief Deasy and our Treasurer in the development of the appeal.

Michael Hogan- Chair, Cabot Selectboard



ADVICE FROM THE TREE WARDEN

by Roland Payne, Jr.
Cabot Tree Warden

As winter sets in, our woods become a wonderland of snow-laden branches and frosty trails, but it is important to remain cautious when venturing outdoors. This season, the combined effects of wind and heavy snow can increase the risk of falling limbs or trees, especially along roads and trails. Ice and snow accumulation may weaken branches, while gusty winter winds can bring down trees that might otherwise have stood firm. Adding to these natural hazards, the Emerald Ash Borer—a destructive invasive beetle—has been confirmed in multiple areas of town. Infested ash trees are often structurally weakened, brittle, and more susceptible to breakage, even during moderate weather. This means that what may look like a healthy tree could, in fact, be compromised and pose a danger to passersby below.



To stay safe this winter, consider taking a few precautionary steps: avoid walking or parking under large trees during or after storms, pay attention to trail closures or warnings of hazards, and keep an eye out for signs of tree damage such as hanging limbs or cracked trunks.

Remember, the woods can be enjoyed safely with a little extra awareness and preparation during the winter months. Also, be mindful that deteriorating conditions and increasing winds can be nature's subtle way of telling you it is time to leave the forest. Enjoy your time outdoors this winter and be safe while recreating or working in your woods. Happy Holidays, Roland Payne Jr. Cabot Tree Warden

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES FOR TOWN MEETING 2026 DECISIONS

DEADLINES:

- ♦ **Thursday, January 15** 5 pm deadline to file *petition for Town Meeting Article*, signed by 5% of registered voters (minimum 60)
- ♦ **Monday, January 26** 5 pm deadline to file *petition for election to Town Office*, signed by 1% of registered voters (minimum 12)

EVENTS:

- * **Thursday, December 11** 7:00 p.m. CCA/Cabot Chronicle-Sponsored Conversation about proposed FY 2027 Town Budget to give Selectboard input before finalized at Selectboard meeting December 16, in person at Willey Building or via Zoom—cookies and warm drinks available.
- * **Thursday, February 12** 6:30 p.m. CCA./Cabot Chronicle-Sponsored Town Meeting Articles discussion and Meet the Candidates Night, Willey Building—light refreshments available.
- * **Tuesday, February 17** 7:00 p.m. Legislatively-mandated Formal Public Information Hearing on Town Meeting Articles as printed on ballot – presentation by selectboard – for informational purposes to understand what we are voting on, no changes may be made.
- * **Tuesday, March 3** 10:00 am Town meeting, 7 am – 7 pm Australian Ballot voting, and last day to register to vote on Town Meeting Articles
- * **Tuesday, March 24** 6:00 pm Selectboard Meeting where town appointments will be made
- * **Wednesday, March 18** 5:00 pm Last day a voter may contest Town Meeting election with Washington Superior Court
- * **Friday, March 20** 5:00 pm Last day a losing candidate or voter may request recount
- * **Thursday, April 2** 5:00 pm Last day voters may file petition for reconsideration of Articles voted on Town Meeting Day

GOOD TO KNOW:

- ◇ **December 1 & 8** 6:00 pm Last two Selectboard budget meetings
- ◇ **December 2 & 16** 6:00 pm Selectboard Meetings – 2027 budget finalized December 16
- ◇ **Thursday, January 22** Town Meeting Warning Available on Town Website
- ◇ **Wednesday, February 11** Town Meeting Ballots printed and available for BCA delivery and early or absentee voters

Think About It Offices to be Elected at Town Meeting 2026

It takes many hands to accomplish the business of running a town. Significant dedication and problem solving is required. According to the 2025 Annual Town Report, the following positions will be voted on in person at the next Town Meeting and in the ballot box in March. The positions with checkmarks require petitions Consider how you may be able to serve fellow community members:

- Town Meeting Moderator one year term
- ✓Selectboard Member 3-year term
- ✓Selectboard Member 2-year term
- 2 Listers 3-year term
- Delinquent Tax Collector 1-year term
- Grand Juror 1-year-term
- Cemetery Commissioner – 3-year term, 1 position
- ✓School Director 2 3-year terms
- Library Trustee 3-year term, 2 positions
- CCIF Committee 3-year term
- Willey Building Committee 3-year term, 2 positions

Contact the Town Clerk for information on where to find details about position responsibilities, deadlines and how to get your name on the Town Meeting ballot.

Deadline for positions requiring filing a petition: January 26 with minimum 12 registered voter signatures with Town Clerk.



OBITUARY

Ellen B. Voigt



Ellen Bryant Voigt was born on May 9, 1943, and raised on her family's farm in Chatham, VA. The middle child of a school teacher and mail carrier, she grew up near a large, extended family of grandparents, aunts,

uncles, and cousins. Ellen showed an early talent for the piano, earning her a scholarship to the music school at Converse College in Spartanburg, SC. But it was during a summer job at a resort in Blowing Rock, NC, that her interest in poetry was sparked and she changed her major to English, graduating from Converse in 1964 and going on to earn an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. In her first semester at Iowa she met Francis Voigt (from Oskaloosa, IA) at a mixer for dorm counselors. Fran, despite his good looks, failed to make a good impression, but eventually, he did get her to go out with him, and they were married less than a year later on September 5, 1965. Tempted by advertisements for inexpensive farmhouses and land in rural Vermont, they moved to Central Vermont in 1969, when Fran took a job at Goddard College. They found themselves in the middle of the back-to-the-land movement of 1960's and it was there they decided to put down their roots.

Goddard College attracted an unusual mix of artists and intellectuals interested in creating unorthodox, experimental, and alternative educational programs that inspired Ellen to cofound and direct a low-residency MFA program—the first of its kind, which would set the standard for the low-residency program of graduate study throughout the United States. She taught in the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College for nearly 40 years, following its move from Goddard in 1981. She also held teaching positions at Iowa Wesleyan College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 2013, Ellen was the visiting poet at Smith College and was also a popular and frequent faculty member at the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference in Rip-ton, Vermont. She was the poet laureate of Vermont from 1999 to 2002 and served as a Chancellor for the Academy of American Poets.

Ellen supported herself throughout college and graduate school playing the piano in bars and lounges, accompanying singers, dance classes and even the synchronized swimming team at Converse. She continued to be an in-demand pianist in Vermont, finding like-minded musicians, as well as playing for Taste of Opera, Barre Opera House, Plainfield Opera House, Unadilla Theater, Larry Gordon, various choirs and the Cabot School musicals.

While in Iowa, Ellen was introduced to what became the extended Voigt family's passion for the University of Iowa Hawkeyes Football. This was just the beginning of what grew into a fervent interest in sports. She was a scrupulous

scorekeeper for her son Will's Cabot School sports teams, and later could be found in the stands for his Vermont Frost Heaves and the other teams he coached. Both Ellen & Fran were deeply committed to Cabot School, which continued long after their children had graduated. Ellen and two other Cabot parents created the Cabot Enrichment Program, tapping community experts to offer a wide array of experiences from ice fishing to photography. In addition to their enduring involvement in the community, Ellen & Fran co-founded New England Culinary Institute with John Dranow & Louise Glück, which changed the food landscape throughout Vermont and beyond.

Ellen was the author of nine poetry collections, including *Collected Poems* (W. W. Norton, 2023); *Headwaters* (W. W. Norton, 2013); *Messenger: New and Selected Poems, 1976-2006* (W. W. Norton, 2007), a finalist for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry; *Kyrie* (W. W. Norton, 1995), a finalist for the National Book Critic's Circle Award in 1995; *The Lotus Flowers* (W. W. Norton, 1987); and her debut, *Claiming Kin* (Wesleyan University Press, 1976).

Ellen also published two books on the craft of poetry: *The Flexible Lyric* (University of Georgia Press, 2011) and *The Art of Syntax: Rhythm of Thought, Rhythm of Song* (Graywolf Press, 2009). With Heather McHugh, she coedited the anthology *Hammer and Blaze: A Gathering of Contemporary American Poets* (University of Georgia Press, 2002). With Gregory Orr, she coedited the essay collection *Poets Teaching Poets: Self and the World* (University of Michigan Press, 1996), a volume to which she also contributed.

Ellen's other honors include the Literature Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Folger Shakespeare Library's O. B. Hardison Jr. Poetry Prize, and fellowships and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Academy of American Poets, and the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. In 2015, she received a MacArthur Fellowship.

Ellen had a stroke in 2018, following the death of Fran after a long illness. Through her incredible determination and strength, she defied and amazed the medical experts by making a remarkable recovery; embracing daily exercise and rehab, publishing her final volume, working on her audiobook, giving readings around the country, spending cherished time with family and friends, doing every crossword puzzle she could get her hands on, and watching a lot of basketball. She spent the last seven years living with her daughter Dudley and dividing their time between Cabot and St. Paul, MN.

Ellen Bryant Voigt died on October 23, 2025, and was predeceased by her parents, Lloyd & Missouri Bryant, and her husband Fran. She is survived by her sister Joan Shelton, brother L.G. Bryant, daughter Dudley, her son Will (Sabrina), her three grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. A celebration of her life is being planned for April.

AMERICAN RED CROSS
BLOOD DRIVE
DECEMBER 5TH
9:00 – 4:00



CABOT DECEMBER Calendar

FREE Food Share

DECEMBER 3RD 12:00 - 2:00 pm
DECEMBER 17TH 12:00 - 2:00 PM



SENIOR ADVENTURE'S

CHRISTMAS PARTY DECEMBER 2TH 10:00-1:00

TOYS AND WARM CLOTHING GIVEAWAY!!

DECEMBER 12TH & 13TH 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM
MONDAY DECEMBER 15TH 11:00 AM TO 8:00 PM



12TH NIGHT DINNER AT NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

JANUARY 3RD 4:30 – 6:30
CHICKEN & BISQUITS / by Donation

3339 Main Street
Downtown Cabot Village
Call: 802-563-3322

NeighborsInActionVT.org
www.facebook.com/neighborsinactionvt

HAZEL M. GREAVES INCOME TAX & BOOKKEEPING SERVICE



802-563-2332
2010 BAYLEY HAZEN ROAD
EAST HARDWICK VT 05836

hazelgreavestaxservice@gmail.com

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

Budget Preparation - Highway & Listers

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

It is budget season again, and the Selectboard has kicked off its annual series of "Budget" meetings, the first of which occurred on November 3. At this meeting the board talked with Sid Griggs about the highway budget for the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27).

Sid started the discussion by saying he didn't know where to start, and Mike Hogan suggested they talk about the big ticket items. Sid responded, saying the big thing is equipment. He pointed out that they don't have an equipment schedule, and that it's hard to plan without a goal. Sid added that it's taking two years to get a new truck.

Mike asked what is the most critical piece of equipment that needs replacement. Sid said it was the grader, adding that it is ten years old. He said that he met with United Ag and Turf and they informed him that the grader was at an "ok" age. But Sid said that once you hit 15 years, parts start to become obsolete and hard to get. He added that equipment starts having their biggest problems around 10,000 hours. Sid noted that the transmission had been replaced at 4,000 hours.

Sid concluded that they need to focus on having money to replace it in 2028. Mike asked about the cost of a new grader, and Sid informed the board that it was around \$400,000. He said that they can try out different ones from different manufacturers over the next two summers. Sid also said that excavators are a dime a dozen, but if the grader breaks down, it is a much bigger problem.

Fred Ducharme asked Sid about the excavator and if the town should get a bigger one. Sid explained that John Deere jumps in sizes to the next bigger one, but added that other companies have sizes in between. He suggested that would be another piece of equipment they try out.

Fred also asked about when the new truck would arrive, and Sid said it was still expected at the end of the month. Mike wanted Sid to explain the leasing program for new trucks, and Sid answered that it was a seven year lease with a buyout at the end. Sid said that

the lease saves the town from big maintenance items, and informed the board that last year they spent \$1,500 just for brass shims. And the prior year it was \$2,500 for shims on the turn table.

They talked about the loader, with Sid telling the board that it was in pretty good shape, with only some minor rust. Then they talked about reducing the amount of equipment they had. Sid thought the chipper was something they could rent, rather than own, since they didn't use it very often.

The conversation returned to trucks when Mike asked about the possibility of a rebuild on Sid's truck, and asked him to explain the process. Sid said that it takes about two to three months and costs around \$200,000. He explained that they strip down the frame and sand blast it. They also go through the transmission, the rear end, and the suspension to replace any parts that are worn. Sid mentioned that he would prefer to have the town vote on rebuilding the truck. He mentioned that it now takes two years to get a new truck, so it has to be ordered two years in advance.

Mike asked about other big items and Sid mentioned paving. He said the last mile on 215, to the Walden line, is in real bad shape. Mike said that it has been a while since the town posted a paving bond. Mike asked Sid to look over the line items in the highway budget and come back to a future meeting.

The Selectboard also heard from the Listers about their budget request at this meeting. Jeanne Johnson presented a request for \$9,000, \$1,000 more than last year. She explained that the only thing that changed was the amount for certification courses. Jeanne said there is a new requirement from the state that listers must receive a level of certification within one year of being elected.

Jeanne and Amy Monahan also presented the budget amount for the Development Review Board (DRB). Amy explained that the budget is for postage, which keeps increasing. She said that the previous year's budget was \$600 and it was all spent. Jeanne said that it should probably be increased to \$750 and Amy agreed. The board settled on making it \$800.

the budget related to dispatch and town water, but decreases due to changing insurance companies. He said the budget increase was below 4%, basically level funded.

Dean went on to talk about equipment that needs to be replaced. He explained that the tanker is eight years beyond its

life, and it would take about two years to get a new one. He also said that the radios are manufactured by Vertx which was bought out by Motorola and subsequently shut down. Dean mentioned that he is working with a joint purchase program with 25 other towns in an attempt to save money purchasing new radios. He mentioned the department had tried to obtain several grants since 2021 for new radios, but has been unsuccessful.

Mike Hogan said that it is obvious how important radios are, and that they are very expensive at \$8,000 a piece. He asked Dean how he would suggest a purchase of radios that amount to about \$111,000. Mike worried if they put it into the budget it would likely fail, and speculated it might be better as a separate article. Mike also speculated that they could use CCIF funds because it is a necessity for the town. Dean suggested they purchase all the radios at once.

Mike said if it was part of the budget, the money wouldn't be available until after July 1, 2026. He proposed if the voters approved borrowing the money, it could be available immediately after Town Meeting. Mike also proposed spreading the cost over ten years would not be a lot of expense added to the budget. Dean said that Capital Fire is collecting the orders and hope to put the order in by the end of the year. He said the company selling the radios would be willing to defer payment.

Skip asked about the life of new radios, and Dean responded with "about 15 years". Jenn Miner suggested that the town set aside enough money for one new radio each year so the money is available when the radios need to be replaced. Fred stated that a few thousand a year isn't enough, and asked Dean how much is needed.

Dean said the radios are obsolete, and the pumper is 28 years old, so he estimated over \$500,000. Mike stated that they need a capital plan. Fred agreed, and noted they need one for the highway department too.

Dean asked Amy how much is in the sinking fund, and Amy said \$20,000. Fred said that he doesn't want to increase taxes, but the fire department needs new equipment. Dean reminded the board that he had recently purchased used self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) that had a short life span. He said the SCBA brought the department back into compliance, but the apparatus are all going to expire.

Mike said they weren't going to make any decisions tonight since they are just drafting the budget. He said the board needs to talk about it amongst themselves.

The board next heard from the Trails Committee budget request from Kris Schmitt. She told the board the committee was requesting the same amount as last year, \$2,000. The board asked about the trails, and Kris told them they had 13.9 miles of trails. She reminded them that their goal is to eventually link the

LVRT and the CRT, but that would require another 12 miles of trail. Kris also noted that the average age of trail stewards is 68. She added that it seems no one wants to get their hands dirty anymore.

The tree warden, Roland Payne, presented his budget request and talked about the Ash Borer. He said that he knows of three areas where he has confirmed its presence and is sure it is elsewhere. Roland said there are three things in the budget, ash tree removal, replacement of the chestnut tree on the commons, and the need to take down the dying poplars behind the playground at the Willey building. The board and Roland discussed the costs of the three items and Mike summarized that the total is around \$15,000.

Betty Ritter talked about the Willey Building needs and noted that the planned cost to replace the elevator was \$38,000, but now the price is \$75,000. She also said it was mandatory to have the fire escape. The discussion ended with a budget of \$75,000 for the Willey building.

Next, the discussion turned to the Town Clerk's Office. Betty told the board that in the previous year \$20,250 was spent, excluding salaries. She said it included training, and all kinds of office supplies. She said that they need paper all the time. Mike clarified that it was all operating expenses, and Amy noted that only \$10,500 had been budgeted.

Amy reviewed the expenses and said it was only a little over budget. Betty said she thinks the extra cost was training. Mike asked what was budgeted for FY26, and Betty said it was \$21,000. Amy disagreed, saying that number was too high and she believed it was \$10,500. Mike told them to find out what will be needed.

Then the board discussed salaries. Amy told the board that she calculated an increase of 2.8% because that was the Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for the coming year. She also noted that she included 800 hours of overtime for the highway crew. She said she went back to before the flood and found it was 250 hours, and then the next two years were 900 hours.

Amy told the board that they should consider what they are paying the Town Clerk, and Assistant Town Clerk. She said that across Vermont the salaries are "all over the map", so it's hard to come up with a number. Amy put in \$25/hour for the clerk, at 36 hours per week, and an assistant at 16 hours per week.

She told the board that she didn't think the office needed three full time people, and noted that before the floods, there were only two full time people in the office. Amy felt that the transition from Michelle was complete and they didn't need the additional staffing going forward.

Mike asked Amy to plug in 2.8% and put the number into the budget. Skip noted that Cabot's salaries are high compared to the towns in the area.

Budget Preparation - Fire Department, Town Clerk, and Salaries

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The Selectboard held another budget meeting on November 10, starting with the Fire Department. Dean Deasy, Fire Chief, presented the budget request to the board and read from a prepared statement. He talked about increases in



SELECTBOARD UPDATES

Budget Preparation - Library and Others

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The Selectboard started their third budget meeting by hearing from the Library Trustees. Leah Sare, the treasurer, presented the library budget to the board. She told the board that the proposed FY27 budget would decrease from the FY26 budget by 3.5%. She said that the changes mostly occurred in payroll and medical stipends.

Leah praised Amanda Otto for her work to increase the offerings for youth and adults, and the increase in participation. She also noted that in the budget they are increasing the collection spending to 8.5%, though that is still under the state requirement of 15%.

She told the board that they are looking at a grant to pay for capital needs, but the information will not be available until December. Leah said that they are looking at replacing the public computers, and also refinishing the floors, as well as lighting and other electrical needs.

Mike Hogan asked about the status of the library and Leah said there were over 500 residents registered with the library, about a third of the town's population. She added that her two small children love the after school program too.

Kerri Moll asked from the public to hear the total for the budget, as only the Selectboard had copies of the budget sheet. Leah read the total to be \$118,014.90.

The board next heard from Neighbors in Action (NIA). Elizabeth Vitale, the interim executive director, presented a budget request of \$2,500, the same as last year. The discussion then centered around the programs offered by NIA and the food share operated. Fred noted that they need a walk-in freezer and/or refrigerator. Elizabeth told the board they currently have about ten chest freezers and multiple upright refrigerators.

Cabot Ambulance presented their budget request next, and Ruth Goodrich noted they had already had 104 responses this year. It was noted that 100 responses were normal for a year, but there were still two months left in the year.

Ruth handed the board the documents to show the roster, the licenses and certificate of insurance. Glenn Goodrich then explained the appropriation request, not-

ing there were a number of things they were addressing in the coming year.

Glenn explained that some members were pursuing intermediate level certification so they can administer IVs and other drugs. He also told the board that they are building a temporary facility to park the ambulance on their property. He said the process to build a permanent facility is complicated, but when that happens, they will buy the temporary facility back.

He also said they are considering becoming part of the municipality. Glenn stated that it would be advantageous for Cabot Ambulance to consider the change. He added that they do need a new ambulance, and to qualify for grants, Cabot Ambulance has to be municipal. Glenn said the current ambulance is doing well, and got a new transmission at 85,000 miles. Skip speculated that ambulances are probably like fire trucks, and very expensive.

Brittany Butler was last to present budget requests to the board, for both the Planning Commission and Zoning. She told the board that the Planning Commission had asked for a budget of \$3,500 but only received \$2,000. She talked about the needs of the commission, and what they wanted to do. She also said they need \$3,000 for legal fees. Mike noted that would fall under the legal fees line item, and speculated that would put the budget at \$1,000. Brittany said she had \$500.

Mike then asked about changes to the Zoning Bylaws. Brittany said the commission is working on regulations and references. She said they are not making any huge changes, and just trying to make things clearer.

Mike asked when they might bring the updated zoning draft to the board. Brittany said that she didn't think it would be before town meeting, and reminded the board that state law changed and small towns can change zoning without a vote, but there is an appeal process.

Next Brittany talked about the zoning budget and told the board it was all postage. She said that last year it was \$1,000, but postage was going up and they've been over budget the last two years. She asked for it to be increased the \$2,000. Mike agreed, saying it was a "no brainer".

ACT 250 To Affect Everyone

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

Representatives from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) came to inform the Cabot Selectboard about Act 181 and how it is changing Act 250 permit requirements. Niki Sabado, Land Use & Community Planner, and Brian Voigt, Program Manager, were present at the November 18th board meeting.

Niki started their presentation by providing an overview of Act 181 and its impact on Act 250 permitting. She said that the Vermont legislation passed Act 181 in 2024 and it will affect everyone in the state, relative to Act 250. She said that it will be contentious, especially when it comes to housing.

She said that Act 181 is creating a tiered framework and requires regional planning commissions (RPCs) to develop land use maps. She added that they anticipate having a draft map ready for early 2026 for review and approval.

Niki also said that Act 181 is changing the trigger for Act 250 review from size to location of development. She explained that there will be three tier levels, with Tier 1 broken into two sub-tiers. She said Tier 1a will have full exemption from Act 250 review, and Tier 1b will have up to 50 units exempt from Act 250 review. Niki said this approach was done to encourage smart growth and added that Tier 1a is mostly Chittenden County.

She added that Tier 2 will remain the same as what exists under Act 250 today.

Niki then talked about Tier 3, which will have additional restrictions to protect natural resources. She added that the intent of the RPC mapping is to provide standardization across the state.

Niki went on to describe how the different kinds of development, from housing and business to residential and agricultural are envisioned to fit within the new tiered system. Then she turned the discussion over to Brian.

Brian pointed out that the map they are developing is a planning document, a living document, that can be changed. He emphasized that it does not replace zoning and does not dictate where development can happen. Brian stipulated that the map does not indicate that locations can not be developed.

He explained that the existing program will be sunset, and village center designations will be transferred to the new designations. He repeated that Tier 1 areas will now have exemptions from Act 250 review, and Tier 3 areas will have a lower threshold than today.

Brian reiterated that a property that is tier 3 does not mean it can't be developed, it just means the trigger for act 250 will be lower. He then explained the "Road Rule". He said the rule applies to a private road, or driveway, serving a single residence that is over 800 feet, or 2000 feet for those serving multiple residences. Brian added that the Road Rule only applies to Tier 2 and Tier 3. He again noted that the map is under development and when it is complete, it will be made public for review.

Greg Burt asked about properties located in Tier 3, and if someone wants to build a house will it fall under Act 250. Brian said that the process is still being developed, and the rules still need to be developed. He speculated that it might need to have some level of state review. He added that a single residence on a parcel falls under "use by right" and the state can not say "no", but there could be limitations.

Greg then asked about agriculture and Brian said that has been generally exempt. But he again noted that the rules are still being developed. Brian explained how a Land Use Review Board is being created to perform the Act 250 reviews under the new Tier system.

Brian then relayed that the legislation listed 17 different criteria for implementing the tiered framework, and when they looked at combining all 17 criteria it covered 75% of the state. So the decision was made to reduce the criteria to headwaters, habitat connectors, and forest blocks.

He said this reduced the area to about 6-7% of the state. He reminded everyone that the percentage was an average and different locals will see different percentages. Brittany Butler highlighted that Cabot is around 25%. Brian stated that the intent of Act 181 was to identify the high value natural resources.

Brittany asked how the village of Cabot could be placed in Tier 1b, and if the town had the infrastructure to meet the criteria. She wondered if they could keep the aesthetics of the village.

Brian's answer was elaborate, and he discussed that the mapping process was assigned to the RPCs, and that the real driver for being eligible for Tier 1 was infrastructure. He said that the fact that Cabot has a water and a wastewater system in place, it is possible to expand the village area to encompass the full service area.

Brittany asked about the possibility of a different area, separate from the village, having a density of a hamlet. She noted that in 2019 the zoning had a denser area along Route 2, but the town voted it out of the bylaws. She asked if it would be possible to bring it back. Brian said that it was worth exploring.

He said that the issue speaks to the point that this map is a living document. He mentioned that sometime next year they expect to have a land use map and regional plan. Brian stated that if it doesn't meet the towns needs in a year or two, then a map revision process could be engaged.

Brittany returned to the fact that Cabot will have about 25% of its land in Tier 3, and wondered how that may affect development over the next 20 to 30 years. Brian agreed that the Tier 3 is a headline grabber, but he said he thinks the road rule will have more of an impact on development.

Ken Denton asked specific questions about his property. He noted that the Tier 3 areas on the map seemed to follow Thistle and Danville Hill roads, and that areas beyond that were not in Tier 3. Brian said that is probably because those areas are habitat connectors, and speculated that the areas further from the road would be subject to the "Road Rule" and may not need to be designated as Tier 3.

Ken asked some more questions about the existing road on his property, and Brian pointed out that the changes are not retroactive. Brian said that if Ken decided to extend the driveway onto the forest road then it would probably trigger an Act 250 review. But Brian also said he (*see, 'Act 250 Everyone', page 7*)

HILLTOP AUTO BODY

TIM and JENNIFER GOCHÉY



Professional collision repair, associated with all insurance companies, we'll handle your claim from start to finish including rental cars.

802-426-3738 or 802-563-2377

SCHOOLBOARD UPDATES

Transgender and Gender Nonconforming students

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The School Board held their regular monthly meeting on October 27th with the decision about conducting a survey regarding the closing of the high school settled at the previous meeting.

Present at this meeting were several teachers, and they talked about a letter they had sent to the School Board. The teachers offered to answer any questions or concerns and provide clarity with regard to the letter. They also told the board that they had set up a committee should the board wish to confer with them. Nothing specific on the matter was communicated. Copies of the letter were not handed out, no one read from the letter, and the letter is not provided on the school website.

After the administration responded to questions from the board regarding the reports they submitted, the meeting moved onto the one policy on the agenda that was up for possible approval: Policy C28 - Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students.

Chris Tormey told the board that the State recommended the policy and it had been warned last month. He said that since this was the second warning, the board could adopt the policy. Ellen Cairns asked about procedures and Matt Foster responded that the school has matching procedures for all policies. He said that for this policy, he didn't see much that would require a procedure.

Jason Monaco asked if the policy conformed to President Trump's executive orders. Matt pointed out that executive orders do not have the weight of law, and that this policy is compliant with state and federal law.

School PCB's Revised

by Frank Kampf, Staff Writer

The School Board held their regular monthly meeting on October 27th with the decision about conducting a survey regarding the closing of the high school settled at the previous meeting.

The School Board discussed the status of the PCB remediation at their October 27th meeting. Matt Foster told the board he had contacted the state and the engineer told him that things were still on hold. Alicia Heber stated that there had been funding available last year but even though Cabot was first to be tested, it failed to act in time to get funding.

Matt said the state had a priority list which determined how funding was distributed. Ellen Cairns also said that she disagreed with Alicia's assessment. She added that the previous superintendent was constantly in touch with the AOE and other state agencies regarding the PCBs. Ellen stated that there was never a time where the board was asked to make a decision and the state never offered the money. She added that it wasn't a failure to act.

Alicia expressed, as a new board member, deep disappointment that the window to get that money was closed. She

Alicia asked about how the policy affects curriculum and Matt said he would have to defer that answer to the teachers because there is a lot of different things in the curriculum. She also asked about when sex education started in school and Jason responded that it was in 6th grade. Matt also noted that the school needs to teach younger kids what safe interactions are with adults, and that those subjects are taught at a young age, as is required by the state.

Alicia said the conversation has been proactive with kids in that they might be transgender. She asked what level is correct for elementary staff to engage kids on this subject. She expressed concern that the school has been acting outside of curriculum. Alicia added that this has come up and without the proper oversight the process could get out of control.

Matt stated that she proposed an interesting question, adding that one can ask ten people and get quite a few different answers. Chris said that it could be useful to look into the curriculum and what the teachers are teaching.

Mike Moriarty told the board that the school uses the state approved standards. He said that the standards break down what is appropriate at different age levels. Mike added that it is difficult to find teachers with health education endorsements, therefore there are gaps in the curriculum.

Alicia and Matt continued to debate and Chris eventually said he would add the topic to the agenda for the next meeting. The board adopted the policy changes, with Jason abstaining from the vote.

stated that someone should take responsibility and the PCB issue needs to be mitigated. Chris Tormey stated he didn't remember there being any window. Matt added that the state had used up all the money.

Chris reminded the board that the state started the process of testing all the schools and Cabot was one of the first. He said that the school was then tested again, and as soon as the results were available, they were sent to the state. Chris added that the state had a rubric on how the money would be spent. He added that because Cabot can continue to use the space until remediation is completed, it moved the school down below schools that couldn't even use their buildings.

Alicia recalled that there were options the board had talked about. She asserted that they should talk about those options and start looking at how they would pay for the work. She restated that there was money at one point and expressed that she thought there was a lapse. Alicia stated that the fact remains that PCBs are in our school, and we should continue the discussion about how we plan to pay for mitigation.

Chris said that Mark Tucker presented three options and the board could look at them again. Alicia proclaimed that the PCB levels are high enough that children under 6 shouldn't use the gm. Jason Monaco recalled that after the second round of testing was completed, with the ventilator turned on, the state guid-

ance was changed.

The public meeting ended after this discussion and the board moved into executive session in accordance with 1 V.S.A 313 (a)(3) Appointment, employment, or evaluation of a public officer or employee. The board took no action after the executive session.



Now Hiring

2 positions available

Lead Teacher & Director

Join our team of teachers to provide safe, fun, and educational care for infants and young children in our Cabot village location.

Benefits include:

- Health Insurance
- Dental & Vision

- Retirement Plan
- Paid Planning Time
- Gym Membership

Full job description at CabotVermont.org/cabot-childrens-center/



To apply, contact:
CabotChildrensCenter@gmail.com
802-473-2772

CABOT VERMONT ANNUAL EVENTS 2025

Sunday, December 7, 2025
CABOT COMMUNITY MEMORIAL TREE

Friday, Saturday & Monday
December 12, 13 & 15, 2025
TOY AND WARM CLOTHING SHARE

Thursday, December 13, 2025
**CABOT HOLIDAY FESTIVAL
& OUTDOOR MARKET**

Thursday, December 25, 2025
**CABOT COMMUNITY
CHRISTMAS DINNER**

Act 250 Everyone

(continued from page 6)

wasn't sure how logging and Tier 3 will interact.

Kate Chatot expressed that she thought that this was yet another layer of zoning. Brian said that this wasn't a zoning map, but could be thought of as overlays on the existing town's zoning map.

Kate asked if it was a transfer of power from the local boards to the state, and Brian said that a local permit was still needed before any Act 250 review.

She asked what was the impetus behind Act 181. Brian said that it was to alleviate permitting on housing development, and that the "Road Rule" is trying to minimize the fragmentation of habitat.

The Cabot Village 12th Night Celebration

January 2nd & 3rd 2026

ALL 12TH NIGHT EVENTS ARE FREE!

FEATURING

MODERN TIMES THEATER ★ KEITH MURPHY AND BECKY TRACY
TOM (BANJO) AZARIAN – CRANKIE SHOW
SANDGLASS THEATER ★ HEARS CROW ★ FIFTH BUSINESS
THE MIDNIGHT CAPERS ★ CABOT COMMUNITY THEATER
CABOT TRAILS SCAVENGER HUNT ★ ARTS AND CRAFTS WORKSHOPS
WASSAIL COMMUNITY SING ★ SUNSET LANTERN PARADE
NEIGHBORS IN ACTION COMMUNITY DINNER
HOT COCOA STATION AND MORE!

CABOTARTS.ORG



THE 12TH NIGHT CELEBRATION IS SPONSORED IN PART BY GRANTS FROM THE VERMONT ARTS COUNCIL,
THE CABOT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, LOCAL BUSINESS SPONSORS, AND YOU!

PHOTO BY MARC BOULANGER



CABOT GREENHOUSE
AND NURSERY



CABOT ARTS IS DEDICATED TO MAKING MUSIC AND ARTS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL. LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN HELP!

Meet Stephen Owens, Cabot School's Interim Principal

**interviewed by Tristan Dill,
Cabot School 7th Grade Student**

Excerpt from October 7, 2025, Cabot School Newsletter, Interview of new interim principal of Cabot School. Reprinted with permission.

Tristan Dill Hello, we are here with Mr. Owens. How are you? We are here to ask you some questions, is that alright?

Stephen Owens You bet.

TD Do you want students to use your first name, or do you prefer Mr. Owens?

SO I do what people do at school. Throughout my career I was Mr. Owens, but students refer to their teachers for the most part by their first name basis so I'm just rolling with that.

TD What made you want to accept the interim principal position here?

SO I have known Cabot for a long time. I taught a graduate course many years ago to Cabot teachers. I have friends in Cabot, and I know a lot of people here and I just live in the next town over. I also know the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. I like them and uh, when I saw the ad on School Spring, I got right on it because it looked like an interesting job.

TD What is the most difficult part of being an interim principal?

SO This is my 3rd time being an interim principal and it's a different type of job because you have to step in and do as much good as you can. Every school offers its own challenges. My previous interim gigs were very different from each other, and Cabot has a different set of needs. What I am going to do is just try and assess what the folks in Cabot would appreciate and try to do that.

TD What do you see as the biggest challenge of stepping into a leadership role after the school year has already started?

SO I didn't have the summer to study things and get on board. I am trying to learn as I go. It is really challenging to learn as I go and also the other thing here is this is the first interim job I have had in this district and all of the systems in this district are different. Where I was an interim before I had already been a principal in the district, so I am having a few challenges getting up to speed on things.

TD What are your first impressions of our school's students, staff and overall culture?

SO I have a very positive impression especially of students. I think we have a really nice bunch of kids here. I have been doing this for a long time, so I am accustomed to some kids having some challenges. I am not seeing anything out of the ordinary here. Everybody has been very welcoming and very nice. I think we also have a lot of strengths of the staff and I am the sort of person who likes to build on strength rather than worrying about fixing things that

are wrong. There is a lot to build on here.

TD What is one goal you hope to accomplish here at Cabot School?

SO I want to make sure that Cabot School is a place where everybody feels welcome no matter what their background is.

TD How do you plan to communicate with students, teachers, and parents during our time with us?

SO For students I'm just going to be around to see what you're doing and I'm happy to go to classes and meetings. Students are the focus and students come first. Teachers and staff, I have always used a weekly memo and communicate with them and frankly the work that you are doing. Tristan and Angela is already built and a tremendous resource to the community. I really appreciate that you are doing that work and it exists.

TD How will you ensure that student voices are heard in your decision-making process?

SO My previous experience was with K-8 and what I find is the older the kids, the more essential the student voice becomes because when you go into middle school and high school people are maturing and they want their voices to be heard. Again, I am happy to attend class meetings if kids have a particular concern. I try to keep my door open, and I will always welcome you to come in and say hi and tell me what's on your mind.

TD What is your philosophy on student discipline and engagement?

SO They go together. I think real strong lesson plans and really engaging lessons are like a formula for good behavior. If things are super interesting for people they're engaged in and doing things that students believe are important for their own benefit, I think people are going to behave better because that type of engaging lesson communicates that you are number one.

TD What's a surprising fact about yourself that most people don't know?

SO I just graduated from college again. I just finished a Master of Fine Arts in Music Composition. I'm a classical composer and I am also a performer, and I conduct and also perform on flute, so that's my other life right now.

TD Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of education?

SO Yeah, I'm a big-time gardener. I have big production gardens in my yard. I am also a woodworker and I'm a builder. I built my house. I built my shop, and I have a woodshop full of machinery. I have a tractor. I work on my tractor. I work my property with the tractor. I have a brush hog, a tiller, a mower and snow blowers. I like to maintain my property and like to grow huge gardens and fill my freezers with the food that I grew for myself.

TD Thank you for your time.

SO You're very welcome.

Community Enrichment and Cabot School

One of the most impactful ways for students to learn is to hear firsthand from people with personal experience with and understanding of a specific subject.

Cabot School students from all grade levels have for years benefited from having "experts" in various fields show/ describe how a particular process works: High school students hiked the stream channel above the Willey Building with a watershed scientist, for example, to understand how the heavy rains of July 2023 could suddenly send dozens of trees downstream, and a guide from the Lake Champlain Basin Program used a model to show third- and fourth-graders how pollutants can contaminate water supplies. Primary-grade students have learned personally from our first-responders about the techniques and equipment used to keep us safe, while high school seniors have used mentors and internships to get a thorough introduction to chosen fields as diverse as architecture, nursing and wildlife trapping via programs like IOTA and Senior X.

Given the strong positive impact of these interactions between our students and "people in the know" in the community over the years, the Cabot School Sustainability Committee is mounting an effort this year to develop a comprehensive list of community members who would be interested in coming into Cabot School to share their interest, expertise and/or passion with students. The goal is that teachers planning a particular unit could use this list to enhance students' learning. For example:

- A builder could present about current materials/ techniques to a class studying energy conservation
- A farmer or gardener could demonstrate planting and cultivation methods to a class studying plant growth/ food production
- A sugarmaker could present their techniques to a class studying plant physiology

- A legislator could present about how laws are made to a class studying civics and democracy
- A military veteran could share their experiences/perspectives with a social studies class
- A successful artist could share their specific materials/techniques with an art class

To build this valuable list of "Interested Community Contributors" ("ICC") for Cabot School, we're asking for interested community members to provide three specifics about yourself:

1. Your name
2. What you would be interested in sharing with a Cabot School class (a skill, an experience, an understanding)
3. Your contact information.

We hope that you will seriously consider helping to enhance our kids' learning through sharing your skills/experience with them this year. Beyond learning something specific from your visit, another benefit for our students will be developing an appreciation for the broad diversity of people and professions in our community- which is considerable! Prior to coming into school all classroom volunteers will have to complete a background check and several other required forms.

Please send your information to either myself or to our Cabot School Interim Principal, Steve Owens. Our email/postal addresses are as follows:

Chris Tormey
Cabot School Board
25 Common Rd.
Cabot, VT 05647
chris.tormey@ccsuvt.net

Steve Owens
Cabot School Interim Principal
25 Common Rd.
Cabot, VT 05647
stephen.owens@ccsuvt.net

Thanks very much!
Chris Tormey
Cabot School Board
Cabot School Sustainability Committee

CABOT MENTORING Happy Winter, Cabot!

It seems that there's been a serious Halloween prank pulled on us with this weather. Every now and then I close my eyes and try to recall that "California weather" we enjoyed all through the late summer and early autumn. Hopefully this current weather will replenish folks' wells.

It seems the Cabot Mentoring Program is succeeding at its mission to connect volunteer adults with Cabot youth. We've got 11 matched pairs who have been meeting this year with one more in the process of being matched. These matched friend pairs spend their time doing a variety of fun activities from bike riding to reading and playing games and chopping wood. One pair that includes a high school student took a trip to Mont-real! There are always more kids who would like to have an adult mentor so please reach out for information.

As previously reported in this paper, our chief fundraiser, the Cabot Ride the Ridges, has become so successful that it has expanded its mission to the service of Cabot youth and last year began a scholarship program for Cabot seniors and a bicycle loan program. At this time, we are recognizing the issue of food insecurity in our community and are partnering with the Cabot School to offer holiday food baskets to some families of school-aged kids. We hope this humble contribution will make life a little easier for children who may be experiencing the stress of food insecurity.

For more information about the Cabot Mentoring Program:
Call: 802-595-1130, Mark Christensen, Cabot Mentoring Coordinator
Email: cabotmentoring@gmail.com
Website: cabotmentoring.org

Act 73 Update: Task Force

Vermont's massive school reform bill (Act 73) passed by the Legislature in June established an 11-member "Redistricting Task Force" to look at ways to reorganize Vermont's 100+ school districts into much larger units to reduce costs and/or increase opportunities for students. The Task Force is made up of retired school administrators and current legislators, and was asked to produce three statewide maps of reorganized school districts to be considered by the Vermont Legislature when it reconvenes in January.

Act 73 stipulated that at least one of the three map options drawn up by the Task Force should include independent school districts organized into "Supervisory Unions" or "SU"s.

Under an SU structure, individual school districts like Cabot, Danville and Twinfield make their own decisions about their school's budget, staff and programs but collectively benefit from shared Supervisory Union staff that facilitate collaboration as well as supporting our schools with staff and services dealing with facilities, transportation, grants, special education, bookkeeping and payroll. Across the state, SU's allow individual school districts to improve efficiency and collaboration while at the same time allowing local school boards and communities to make decisions about their individual schools.

In contrast, "Supervisory Districts" use a single elected school board to make decisions affecting the several schools within that "SD" while also hiring staff to assist with facilities, transportation, special education, etc. for all the schools included in that SD. Calais School, for example, is a member of the "Washington Central Unified Union School District". That large district's single board (composed of representatives from each of the six member schools) makes decisions on budget, programs, etc., for the district as a whole. Recently, for example, the Washington Central School Board has been considering closing two of the smaller schools within its district.

As it began its work this year, the Redistricting Task Force asked school boards across the state for input about how they would prefer their districts to be organized in a new "Redistricted" statewide map. At that time our Cabot School Board sent a letter to the task force requesting that the Cabot School District be placed in an enlarged Supervisory Union with several neighboring districts - we felt that being part of an enlarged SU would continue to allow our town to make its own decisions about our school's budget, programs, etc., while also providing opportunities for cost-

savings and collaboration with other schools in the SU.

At its meeting on Monday, November 10, the Redistricting Task Force reviewed a draft map that would have placed Cabot School District into a much larger "Supervisory District" governed by a single board and including students in the Barre, Montpelier, U-32, Harwood and Twinfield school districts. After review and discussion, the Task Force voted 8-3 not to bring that map forward for consideration by the Legislature in January.

Instead, they chose to leave the current governance structures of school districts and Supervisory Unions intact as they are now, and approved a three-part plan to improve efficiency and increase opportunities for students. Details of that plan can be found by clicking on the link to "Cooperative Education Services, Voluntary Mergers, Regional Comprehensive High Schools" from the November 10 meeting at the Redistricting Task Force's website:

<https://aoa.vermont.gov/past-meetings-school-district-redistricting-task-force>.

The Vermont Legislature will have the final say on whether they'll accept the Task Force's current plan or draw their own revised map of school districts statewide. Both Governor Phil Scott and Agency of Education Secretary Zoie Saunders have voiced displeasure with the Task Force's decision not to recommend a map that included forced mergers of smaller school districts, while one Task Force member (retired school superintendent Jay Badams) insisted that, "We're speculating in thinking that large-scale district consolidation is going to somehow save money....To put the system through so much radical change for the possibility that there might be savings sure seems like a lot to ask of our communities". (VTDigger: "Vermont's redistricting task force proposes voluntary mergers instead of new district map" 11/11/2025)

Time will tell if the Legislature will allow individual school districts like Cabot's to remain independent or force them to merge into much larger districts. That conversation and eventual decision will take place when the Legislature reconvenes in January.

Please feel free to reach out with questions you may have about Act 73 - it's a large, complicated law that directs major changes in how Vermont schools will be organized, governed and paid for in the future, but the first step is agreeing on a map.

Chris Tormey
Cabot School Board

Holly (but not the kind you're thinking of)

by Susan Socks, of Garden Goddess Consulting and Gardening

As far as plants go, holly makes more appearances in Christmas carols than most: "Deck the hall with boughs of holly", "The holly and the ivy", "Have a holly jolly Christmas", to name some of the obvious instances. When you hear "holly", you're probably picturing a plant with shiny, deep green, spiky leaves, and bright red berries. This is English holly, with the Latin name of *Ilex aquifolium*. It is native to Europe, Asia, and Africa, but not to North America. English holly was brought to the United States sometime in the mid 1800s, and since then has become invasive in the Pacific Northwest, where it makes dense thickets in the forests, preventing native tree and shrub seedlings from sprouting.

But I'd like to introduce you to a different holly. Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) is a beautiful holly plant that is native to our region. Like English holly, it has bright red berries. Unlike English holly, which has spiky evergreen leaves, winterberry drops its rounded leaves in the fall. Birds tend to leave the berries alone till late in the winter, eating them after other food sources are gone. This makes for a striking display of bright red berries, unobscured by foliage, lasting for months as a splash of color in the white winter landscape.

In the wild, winterberry grows at the edge of acidic wetlands, in areas that get plenty of sun. But they can tolerate a bit of shade, and will happily grow in moderately moist soil in a garden space. That said, they are a great plant for "problem"

wet areas, and look great massed at the edge of the yard where the wet soil has thwarted your other efforts to grow anything interesting. Winterberry is generally unbothered by diseases or pests. You will need a bit of patience, as winterberry grows slowly, but eventually it will reach 6-10 feet wide and tall.

One more thing to know about winterberry; it is dioecious, meaning each individual is either male or female. Only female plants make the lovely red berries, and there must be a male plant nearby, and blooming at the right time, to pollinate the female flowers. If you get native plants, the males and females should have coordinated bloom times, but if you choose a horticultural variety (that is, altered by people), you'll need to check if they are compatible. Nurseries label the plants as male or female, and will also note which males and females will bloom at the same time. For instance, the variety "Red Sprite" is an early blooming female, and can be paired with "Jim Dandy". The late blooming female variety "Winter Red" can be paired with "Southern Gentleman".

Have a holly jolly Christmas, and think about planting some winterberry next season!

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.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

POSTAL PROUD



CONGRATULATIONS TO
DENNIS TOWLE
OF CABOT POST OFFICE
FIRST IN BREAST CANCER
RESEARCH STAMP SALES
OCTOBER 2025
FOR UNITS OUR SIZE

- IN THE POSTAL UNIT
- IN MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE AND VERMONT
- IN ATLANTIC REGION

THIRD IN THE US FOR UNITS OUR SIZE
IN THE TOP 9% OF ALL OFFICES

*Thanks to the Cabot Residents that supported
Breast Cancer Research Stamp sales in October.*

Cabot Vt Breast Cancer Research Stamp Sales for October 2025 standings
for SDA Offices Pictured above Dennis Towle Cabot, VT Post Office

1st in MPOO E / 1st in ME-NH-VT / 1st in Atlantic / 3rd in US

Over All 992 of 11683 all offices in the top 9%

Thanks to the Cabot Residents that supported BCR sales in October

ME NH VT Cabot, VT

CABOT ARTS SHOW AND TELL

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

December 21, 2025 , 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

Ready for a Quest? Cabot Community Theater



by Karen Mueller-Harder

Auditions January 10-11

The dates have been set for Cabot Community Theater spring play "Quest! One Play to Rule Them All" The show will be performed in the Cabot School Performing Arts Center May 7-10.

Auditions will be held on the weekend of January 10-11, plus we will have one evening opportunity for anyone who is unavailable that weekend. Exact times, details, and a link to sign up for an audition timeslot will be announced in De-

cember in Front Porch Forum and on the CCT Facebook page, and in the January Cabot Chronicle.

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

And be sure to catch the annual CCT Mummies' Play at the 12th Night celebration on January 3, after the sunset lantern parade!

Amy Hornblas New Director of Vermont Stands Up

Vermont Stands Up has formed a new board of directors and a plan of action for moving health freedom issues to the table. With a focus on the pursuit of truth and balance in information, health autonomy and environmental integrity, *Vermont Stands Up* (VSU) began in 2021 in response to state and local mandates such as lockdowns and face masks.

The five new board members have all been central players in the work VSU has been doing since its formation. In 2023 they were featured in a documentary directed by Cal Hopwood titled: *Vermont Stands Up: A Look Back & Return to Freedom & Unity*.

Vermont Stands Up members have a range of opinions, but they agree on the need for open debate, especially concerning government health policies and their impact. The group's central theme is *Freedom & Unity* because members are united in their defense of personal freedom.

Amy Hornblas, a health educator and author of *The Vermont Mask Survey*, volunteered to take over as the new director last winter. In July she was



Vermont Stands Up board members Alison Despathy and Amy Hornblas hosted an informational table at the Vermont State Fair in Rutland.

elected president at the board's first annual meeting.

Next year VSU is focusing on *5 Bills to Support Health Choice Freedom & Informed Consent*. If passed, the proposed legislation could prevent discrimination based upon vaccine status, require medical professionals to report vaccine injuries, and ban mask requirements in schools.

Act 250

by Brian Voigt, CVRPC

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) is developing a Regional Future Land Use Map, as required by Act 181. A draft map is expected in December 2025 and will be available online with interactive features and an option to submit feedback. A large-format paper copy will also be made available for review at the town office. CVRPC will host public listening sessions during the comment period, and we encourage you to take part. Watch for details in next month's *Cabot Chronicle* on how you can get involved. In the meantime, feel free to contact Brian Voigt, Program Manager voigt@cvregion.com and Niki Sabado, Community Planner sabado@cvregion.com with questions or comments.

Community Contra Dance On December 12

by Karen Mueller-Harder

On Friday, December 12, take a break from the hustle and bustle of the season by coming to the Cabot Community Contra Dance! We are excited to have the terrific Adina Gordon back to teach and call the dances after a long work-induced hiatus! The dance takes place in the lovely 3rd floor space in the Willey Building (Cabot Town Hall, 3084 Main St), from 7-9:30pm. Live music is provided by a great group of local musicians--feel free to just come and listen if you prefer!

Everyone is welcome, and anyone can dance with anyone, generally changing partners throughout the evening. We use genderless terminology and all dances are taught, but 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. No special footwork is needed, and the dances are easy to learn.

Admission is on a sliding scale, \$5-10 suggested, but nobody is turned away for lack of funds! Water is provided, or bring your own water bottle, and we ask that you bring some clean, dry shoes to change into.

Cabot Community Memorial Tree Lighting on the Common



Sunday, December 7, 2025
6:00 p.m. Tree Lighting

For many years, the people of Cabot have purchased Christmas Tree bulbs in memory of or in honor of loved ones. The tree will be on the Common. Bulbs are \$3.00 for each name listed. Please fill out the names you wish to be read at the tree lighting ceremony. All are welcome to participate.

You can have names listed by filling out a form found at the Cabot Store (payment may be made at the store, or sent to Cabot United Church, PO Box 127, Cabot, VT 05647), or downloaded from the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/25sb98sw>. Proceeds will go to community resources.

Names to be read (use back of page for extra names):

Enclosed is payment of \$ _____ @ \$3.00 per bulb

Your name and phone number _____

Sponsored by Cabot United Church
Thank you! Merry Christmas

<https://tinyurl.com/25sb98sw>

Milfoil Battle Continues

by Barry Cahoon,
Joe's Pond Association

Treatment Results

Arrowwood Environmental has conducted a post-treatment (Procella COR) aquatic plant survey that is required under the Aquatic Nuisance Control Permit issued to the Joe's Pond Association (JPA) by the VT Agency of Natural Resources. JPA has not yet received the final report (it is several weeks out, according to AE, due to their time commitments nearing the end of the field season).

But in conversation with Michael Lew-Smith of AE, in summary, the AE survey determined that 100% mortality of EWM (Eurasian Water Milfoil) was achieved throughout the two herbicide treatment areas along Sandy Beach and Channel Drive. It also appears that complete, or near complete mortality also occurred in areas adjacent to the treatment zones including the entire littoral zone from the big island to the Island Drive shoreline and the Clubhouse Circle cove. Additionally, no surviving EWM has been found in the area of the Joe's Brook inlet or other areas adjacent to the Sandy Beach treatment zone.

Michael also indicated he did observe some observed herbicide toxicity to non-target species including the native Northern Watermilfoil and Water Lily. Magnitude of which was not specified. More detail will undoubtedly be provided in the AE report.

A follow-up aquatic plant survey is also required next growing season (2026). Post-treatment surveys conducted in other VT lakes in which ProcellaCOR has been applied, and toxicity noted to non-target species, have all shown quick recovery of the native plant populations, even expansion into the areas within which EWM had previously established a dominant presence. It is anticipated the same pattern will be observed in Joe's Pond and the 2026 survey will hopefully confirm that.

Boat Wash

The JPA EWM Management Committee has elected to move forward in an attempt to gain approval from the VT Departments of Fish & Wildlife and Environmental Conservation to construct a boat wash and decontamination station at the DF&W boat access area. The committee feels that despite the fact that EWM is already in Joe's Pond, there are more invasives out there lurking of which we should be doing everything in our power to prevent introduction, and that the JPA has a responsibility to ensure EWM is not being exported from Joe's Pond to other currently non-infested lakes.

The Next Battleground

The most concerning and disheartening piece of news is the discovery in mid-September of extensive infestations and establishment of EWM in the First Pond and then in early October of the Second Pond. Six dive sessions were conducted in the First Pond and three in the Second. Complete removal has not been accomplished.

If the same pattern of explosive and unrestrained EWM growth and expansion that we observed at Sandy Beach and Channel Drive between fall, 2024 and summer, 2025 (despite inten-

sive Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH) and multiple hand pulling operations) is repeated on the First and Second Ponds in 2026, the JPA EWM Management Committee could potentially be considering an extensive herbicide treatment in those two sections of the lake next season.

The Big Picture

The simple fact of the matter is that, up until the ProcellaCOR treatment on 08/13/25, EWM growth, spread and proliferation outpaced all the management and containment resources and efforts we could throw at it. By mid-July, in the Sandy Beach and Channel Drive concentration areas, hundreds of plants were visible, had grown to the water surface and were expanding and forming mats of plant material. At that time, the dive team elected to suspend operations in these two concentration areas as we felt we would be causing more fragmentation and contribution to proliferation than the benefits we could achieve. We also knew at that point that the herbicide treatment option was open to us because we had received the ANC permit.

We have learned an awful lot about EWM management over this past season, being our first full year at it (and acknowledge there's still plenty more still to learn). An important element of this learning curve is understanding what it is about EWM and Joe's Pond that makes control and containment so difficult (if not impossible by non-chemical management means).

It is clear that the propensity of EWM to proliferate by fragmentation is its most effective biological survival and expansion strategy. Three important mechanisms appear to be the primary contributors to fragmentation.

First, EWM will readily auto-fragment, especially later in the growing season (from early August on) as plant stems become increasingly brittle; taking nothing more than boat or wind wake to break off. Dozens of plant fragments have been observed settled to the lakebed around an individual EWM stalk, many of which will already have rootlets extending off the stem ready to establish and grow another plant.

Second, EWM harvesting operations, whether DASH or hand pulling, invariably generate plant fragments; and oftentimes large numbers of them. We have learned that we must always provide adequate resources patrolling for released plant fragments during harvesting operations.

The third mechanism is watercraft-induced fragmentation, especially once plants have grown near or to the water surface and additionally, later in the year when more prone to breaking.

Of these three vectors of EWM proliferation, the first is biological and one over which the JPA has no control. Of the second, we have the most control. As stated above, we cannot discount or ignore in any way and must increase our effectiveness at limiting the escape of plant fragments during harvesting operations.

The third mechanism, watercraft-induced fragmentation, is the vector that deserves the most attention by the JPA membership as we have the ability to exercise some limited control; but it requires the awareness, contribution and participation of all members. Watercraft

operation protocols have been posted on the JPA website. **All JPA members have the ability and responsibility to contribute to and participate in this vital effort to limit EWM proliferation and colonization of additional areas of the lake.**

It seems a logical conclusion, in consideration of the maturity of the plants we have been seeing on the First and Second Ponds, in comparison with those growing at Sandy Beach and Channel Drive prior to the herbicide treatment, that these new areas of proliferation have very likely resulted from EWM fragment drift from the Third Pond during the 2025 growing season aided by the three vectors of fragmentation discussed above.

As EWM effectively colonizes an increasing number of areas around the lake, we can see how proliferation snowballs and containment becomes ever more problematic; even unachievable, especially absent the application of herbicide. In comparison to this time last year,

we knew of only one relatively limited infestation area along the Sandy Beach shoreline. We still thought at that time that eradication was possible. After tremendous expansion of EWM in just one year, the hope of eradication is now a thing of the past.

The JPA EWM Management Committee will be working over the winter (meeting regularly and remotely via ZOOM) to evaluate and determine the organizational, infrastructural, and operational enhancements and improvements that can be implemented to enhance the effectiveness of the overarching JPA effort to contain and manage the EWM infestation through 2026.

But please know, our success at managing the EWM infestation will be much more dependent upon the awareness, participation and dedication of the JPA membership than the work of the EWM Management Committee, the JPA Board of Directors, or any other individual member.

Upcoming December Events at the Jaquith Public Library

All events are free and held at the library (unless noted otherwise)

For more info: 802-426-3581

or email:

jaquithpubliclibrary@gmail.com

or visit our website:

www.jaquithpubliclibrary.org

Wreath Making with Sarah Graves Tuesday December 9 from 6 to 8 pm

For people ages 12 and up. Please pre-register by Friday, December 1. We only have room for 12 people. All materials will be supplied. If you have special decorations you want to include in your wreath, feel free to bring them.

Movie: *Santa Camp* starring Finbar Ciappara

Thursday, December 11 at 6 pm

Fin had a dream of learning how to be a professional Santa, and he wanted to go to Santa Camp to learn how. He didn't give up and he made his dreams come true! Fin, 35, has spina bifida, but he didn't let that stop him. He went to Santa Camp in Greenfield, N.H., an annual summer event that's organized by the New England Santa Society. After viewing the movie, stick around to meet Santa Fin and Mrs. Claus.

Holiday Festival of Creativity, Fun and Light

Sunday, December 14 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm

Celebrate the holidays with cookie decorating, holiday card creating and lantern making followed by a Candle-lit Lantern Solstice Spiral Walk . . . outside with Erin Barry.

Art Exhibit with Pastel Artist Joyce Kahn

through January 5, 2026

Artist Joyce Kahn is a Montpelier pastel painter, whose plein air landscapes, still lifes and portraits all manifest her great joy in the use of rich color.

Story time and Playgroup on Fridays at 10:30 am

Join us for story, song, snack, craft, and free play! Outside unless the weather is frightful! For children birth to age six and their grown-ups. We follow the Twinfield Union School calendar and do not hold

the program on the days Twinfield is closed.

Baby & Caregivers Meet-up every Wednesday from 10:30 to 11:30 am

Join us for our weekly gatherings where caregivers can relax and connect while their babies play and explore in a calm, supportive setting. Geared toward babies ages 18 months and their caregivers. Siblings can come along as well.

Chapters in History Book Group Second Saturdays of the Month at 2 pm

The public is encouraged to participate in this free reading and discussion series. Books are available for loan from the library.

December 13 - *Madame Secretary Frances Perkins* by George W. Martin

Monthly Book Group for Adults

Fourth Mondays at 7 pm

Join us for the Jaquith book group. For copies of the book, please stop by the library. New members are always welcome, and it is only one hour a month! We skip December. The next book is discussed on **January 26 - *North Woods* by Daniel Mason.**

All Hands Together! Community Crafting Group

Every Tuesday from 4:30 to 6 pm

Bring whatever craft you are working on or start a new project. All ages are welcome if they are old enough to sit and work on a craft. Knitting and spinning maven, Donna Hisson from Marshfield, is the host of the group.

What is the Marshfield Resilience Hub?

Curious about the organization behind the Marshfield Farmers Market, Skill Shares, Resource Swaps, and Community Garden? The Marshfield Resilience Hub was founded in response to the historical flooding in 2023 as a community project to help our neighbors and ourselves dynamically navigate weather adversity, strengthen food security, and build relationships with our fellow residents. We meet monthly and encourage new members and ideas.

(see, 'Jaquith Library', page 13)



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.

During the Holidays the library will be closed on the following dates: Wednesday, 12/24, Thursday, 12/25, Saturday, 12/27, Wednesday, 12/31 and Thursday, 1/1

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

WHITE PINES: Readings and Photos by Jane English - Thursday, December 11, 6:30 pm - Join local author and photographer, Jane English as she shares from her magnificent new book - *White Pines - a woman's life-long friendship with these trees, and stories from other friends of white pines*. Jane will also invite you to share your own pine stories. Books will be available for purchase.

Holiday Workshop (all ages) - Saturday, December 13 from Noon - 2 pm - Stop in the library to warm up with a cup of hot cocoa or tea and stay to decorate your own sugar cookie or make a simple evergreen wreath or star ornament. All materials are provided!

Decorate Holiday Cookies (ages 5+) - Wednesday, December 17 2:30 - 4:00 pm - Join us for this fun and tasty program - decorate your own cookies with icing and sprinkles.

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!

Cabot Book Group - Thursday, December 18 - 2- 3 pm* - All are welcome! - December's book selection is *The Life Impossible* by Matt Haig. When retired math teacher Grace Winters is left a run-down house on a Mediterranean island by a long-lost friend, curiosity gets the better of her. She arrives in Ibiza with a one-way ticket, no guidebook and no plan. Among the rugged hills and golden beaches of the island, Grace searches for answers about her friend's life, and how it ended. What she uncovers is stranger than she could have dreamed. But to dive into this impossible truth, Grace must first come to terms with her past. Filled with wonder and wild adventure, this is a story of hope and the life-changing power of a new beginning. 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. **Due to the Christmas holiday, the Book Group will meet on December 18.*

Thanks so much to our Saturday volunteers: Vicky Palmer, Elizabeth Vitale, Marianne Robotham and Beth Wade. Many thanks to Joanne Vecchiola for offering a fun and successful Clay Whistle workshop and to Losada Stoddard for running our D&D program on Tuesday afternoons and to student volunteer Katy Kowalk! Additional thanks to Kay Ghose 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.

Happy Holidays everyone - See you at the library!
Kathleen Hoyne - Library Co-Director
Amanda Otto - Library Co-Director
Christina Sacalis - Assistant Librarian

Jaquith Library

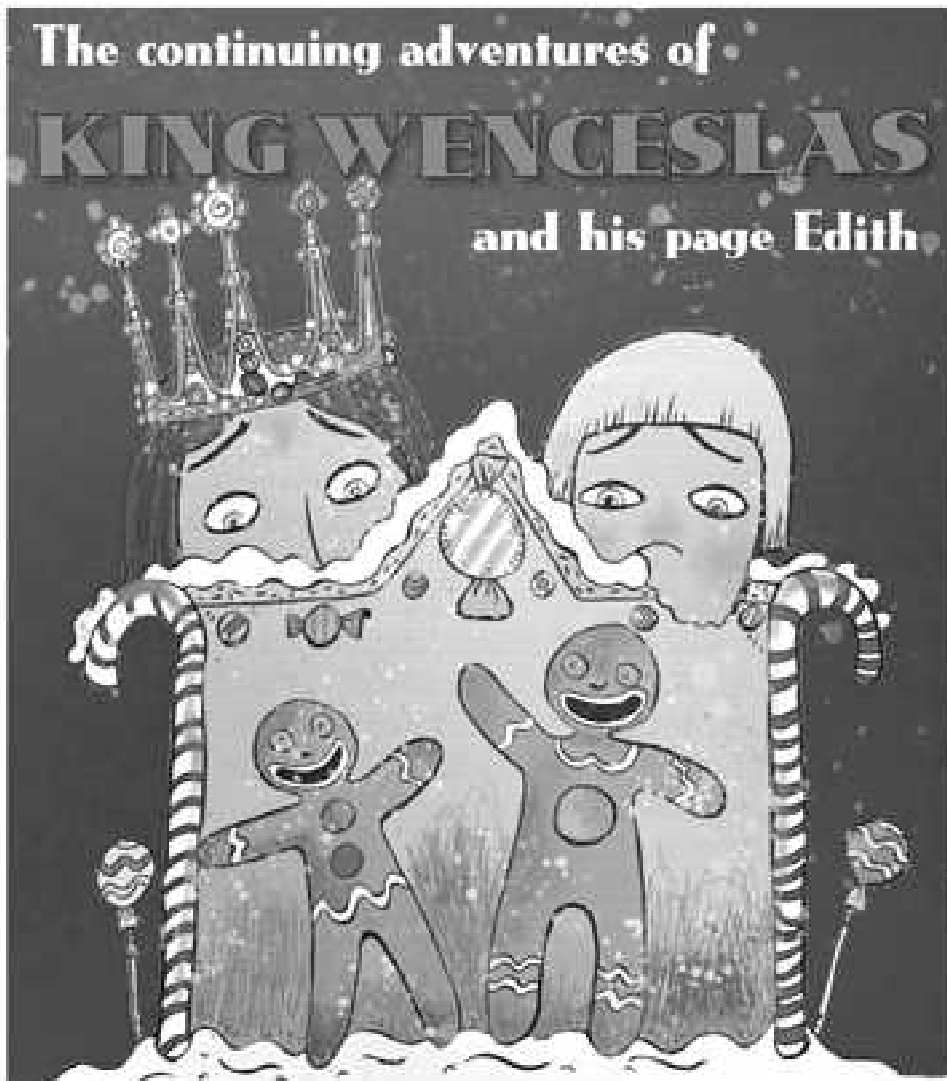
(continued from page 12)

Just Food Hub Fundraiser for Jaquith Library

The Jaquith Library is raising money by collaborating with Just Food Hub, a profit-free, volunteer-run Coop in Marshfield that helps raise funds for organizations and groups. To order coffees, teas, chocolate, hot sauces, Palestinian olive

oil, and dates etc. go to justfoodhub.us/jaquith-library.

There is so much more to borrow at the Jaquith Public Library! We just added a Tool Lending Library! In addition to tools, we loan computers, DVD players, makerspace kits, games, puzzles, snowshoes, wood moisture meter, air tester, and more! **All are available for checkout!**



**Plainfield Arts
Plainfield Opera House
Saturday Dec. 20
at 7pm**



tickets by donation at the door

Auditions in Maple Corner *Love's Labors' Lost*

by Tom Blachly

"Open y to Shakespeare, and directed by Jeanne Beckwith, will be held on December 13, 2025, between 1pm and 5pm, at the Maple Corner Community Center, 84 West County Road, in Maple Corner, VT. Please prepare a short audition piece of no more than three minutes in length.

Performances will be on July 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, and August 1 at 7pm, and July 26 and August 2 at 2pm, at the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House. For more info email blachly@together.net (mailto:blachly@together.net) or call 802-793-2092.



TWIN VALLEY SENIOR CENTER DECEMBER EVENTS

- **Saturday, 12/6** Holiday Card Making Class 10 am-2:30 pm; call 223-3322 to register
- **Tuesday, 12/9** CVCOA Mitzvah Mobile Veterinary Clinic by appointment only; call 802-461-3277
- **Wednesday, 12/10** Senior Medicare Patrol - Genetic Testing Fraud
- **Friday, 12/12** Christmas Carols with the Croans at 12:30 pm
- **Friday, 12/19** Christmas Carols with Twinfield students

No physician orders needed.

Call 223-3322 and ask for Rita.

4583 U.S. Route 2
East Montpelier
TwinValleySeniors@Myfairpoint.net
802-223-3322
Serving: Cabot, Calais,
East Montpelier,
Marshfield, Plainfield
& Woodbury

District No. 15, Petersville

by Jane Brown,
Cabot Oral History Committee

Petersville is probably the least familiar section of Cabot. School District 15 served a cluster of families who gathered primarily near Molly's Pond Brook that, together with a small stream that flowed from Peacham Pond and at least two other small brooks from the surrounding hillsides, furnished power for a saw mill.

The first settler in that area was Reuben Atkins in 1825. Others followed, and by 1858, there were enough families with children to form a school district and Selectman Peter Lyford, in 1858, was sent there to organize a school district. Unlike the other districts that were known by the name of families who had lots of children attending the school, District No. 15 became known as "Petersville."

When John M. Fisher's historical notes were published in the *Vermont Historical Magazine*, in the late 1860s, there were "4 dwelling houses, 1 school-house, and a saw-mill" in Petersville. While it might seem that four dwellings would hardly be enough for a school to be needed, families were large in those days, eight or ten children were not uncommon. Also, a Beer's map dated 1873 shows many more families in that district. A main road followed the brook from South Cabot to Marshfield, and the Corliss, Boyle, Fish, Smith, Graves, Hill, Atkins, and Reeves homesteads were all on that road. The Tibbetts, Houghton, and Buchanan families lived nearby, but not on the main road to Marshfield.

The school was located almost directly across the road from the sawmill and was about two miles from the Marshfield-Cabot town line. The sawmill provided work for numerous men over the years until it burned in 1906. The Petersville community began to change after that, and in 1912 the school closed and the few children from that southeastern corner of town went to the South Cabot school.

In the 1920s, electricity was just being introduced to the rural areas of Central Vermont. Small, independent companies, including Montpelier and Barre Light and Power Company, Green Mountain Power Company, and Mollys Falls Light and Power Company were eventually absorbed by the Peoples Hydro Electric Corporation. In 1928, Peoples Hydro was renamed Green Mountain Power Corporation (GMP).

The late Roy Sicily described Petersville as being "stonier than hell" in an

interview for *Cabot, Vermont, Memories of the Century Past*, published in 1999. In 1925, Molly's Falls Electric Light and Power Company negotiated a total of 17 land transactions that encompassed over 400 acres of former farm land for the purpose of building a dam and an electric power producing station. Included was a 1/8 acre parcel of land and the little school building.

According to Sicily, nothing was wasted. He recalled that his grandfather, Oliver Sicily, bought several of the buildings and used the lumber to build houses. In addition to removing the buildings, part of the old Molly's Brook Road had to be relocated and a bridge replaced. The road from South Cabot to Marshfield village was closed during the dam construction which began in the spring of 1926. The new road officially reopened in 1931 as Route 18 (now U. S. Route 2).

Ora Ennis was hired with his team of oxen, along with Cedil Foster, Elmer Labree, Bernard Urban and Lester Barnett to clear trees and debris from the site that would be flooded. Construction of the dam not only provided jobs for local men, it was a massive undertaking and created a great deal of interest. The dirt dam was 1,000 ft. long, and 228 feet wide at the bottom, tapering to ten feet along the top, and its highest point was 48 feet. Engineers at the site calculated it would hold 400,000,000 cubic feet (500 acres) of water.

There was a spillway at one end and an above-ground wooden penstock 6,900 ft. long that carried water to a tall surge tank located southwest of the dam on a ridge above the Winooski River. From there it dropped 328 feet to the new power house at the base of Molly's Falls not far from what is now Route 215S that follows the Winooski River from Cabot to Marshfield. The big turbine,

with a capacity of 7,000 h.p., was expected to generate more power than all of the six existing stations owned by the company together.

It took hundreds of man-hours working with teams of horses or oxen to clear the land and move earth to build the dam. Steam shovels excavated, trucks and wagons transported mate-

rials and laborers as the dam took shape. The reservoir began to fill. Meanwhile, the new power plant was soon finished and the penstock connected. On June 19, 1926, water was released into the penstock and Plant No. 6 in Marshfield went on-line in February, 1927.

In November 1927, a heavy rain storm hit Vermont. Central and North-

east communities along the Winooski, Passumpsic, and Connecticut rivers were severely damaged. Traffic came to a stop, phone lines were washed away, and power plants completely overwhelmed, leaving most areas without power or communication.

The new reservoir in Cabot had not filled completely, but officials in Marshfield and Cabot were concerned that the new earthen dam might not hold. If it broke, much of Marshfield would likely be washed

away. They consulted engineers familiar with the new dam and positioned a team of horses at the spillway, ready to release the water in order to save the dam structure. Even opening the spillway would have been disastrous for many downstream of the dam, and the Winooski was already raging, flooding homes, villages, and roads.

The only way out of the power plant was a bridge over the Winooski River, and that was quickly flooded, so nobody could get in or out of the power plant.

Telephone lines were down, and plant operator Archie Bullard was marooned there for 154 continuous hours, completely unaware of the chaos going on around him. He later found out that his station was the only one remaining on line to produce power for hospitals in Barre and Montpelier.

The decision never came to open the spillway and the dam held. Neither

the new dam or power plant suffered significant damage from the torrential rain or from the raging Winooski, and homes in the valley below the reservoir were spared.

Molly's Falls Reservoir, which is often mistakenly referred to as "Marshfield Dam," is actually entirely within the town of Cabot. The power plant and the surge tank are near the line between the two towns, but on the Marshfield side.

The dam has been reinforced and the equipment updated over the years, the reservoir drained in 1961 to replace the wood in the penstock with Western Fir, but time and temperature took a toll and the new penstock developed leaks that shot plumes of water in the air and created huge ice sculptures along the conduit. The spray also left dangerous icy patches on the paved road each winter, so the wood was replaced in 2009 with sections of steel that have remained leak-free with relatively low maintenance.

The Vermont Land Trust purchased 1,029 acres of land around the reservoir from GMP in 2012 to create Molly's Falls Pond State Park. GMP retained 23 acres that includes the dam and its buildings. The new state park includes a boat launch and parking area, and a day-camping area.

The little power plant next to the road between Marshfield and Cabot is still manufacturing electricity faithfully, as it has for almost 100 years, and the little community of Petersville is a distant memory.

We are fortunate that Ann Donahue recently donated photographs taken by her grandfather, John C. Donahue, who was the electrical engineer on the dam project in 1926-27. Mr. Donahue's photos are numbered, but there is no explanation of exactly what they are showing us. The collection is being processed and will be ready for display soon at the Cabot Historical Society.



The pipe leading into the power plant, still under construction in 1926. Photo by John C. Donahue, electrical engineer, courtesy of Cabot Historical Society.



The surge tank under construction. It was perched on top of the hill high above the power plant. Heavy steel pipe carried water down the steep hillside from the surge tank to the power plant located on the Winooski River, not far from Route 215S and the Cabot/Marshfield town line. Photo by John C. Donahue, electrical engineer, courtesy of Cabot Historical Society.



Construction of the power plant near what is now U.S. Route 215S. Photo by John C. Donahue, electrical engineer, courtesy of Cabot Historical Society.


CCA

Are you on the list?

The Cabot Business Directory
Local Roots

is up and running!

This is a free resource for Cabot businesses
 and businesses owned by Cabot residents.

To register, visit

<https://cabotvermont.org/businessdirectory/>

If you have questions, please email info@cabotvermont.org.

SERVICES



HOLIDAY FESTIVAL & OUTDOOR MARKET

December 13, 2025, 11AM-3PM
Harry's Hardware, Cabot, VT



LOCAL VENDORS FEATURING FOOD, CRAFTS & HOLIDAY GIFTS

Live Music:

Bleeding Hearts Family Band

Blue Fox Trio

D Davis & Marc Gwinn



Neighbors
in Action

Toy & Warm Clothing Share

December 12th & 13th 10am-5pm
and December 15th 11am-8pm

3339 Main Street, Cabot
(802)563-3322

www.NeighborsinActionVT.org

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.

