

Youth Café to Provide Place to Hang Out



Volunteers Heather Flinders (front, left), Amanda Carriaga (front, right), Erik Carriaga (back, left) and director Matthew Preston (back, right) are getting ready for the spring opening of Cafe Sparanza on Friday, May 4, at 6 p.m. Located at 39 N. Main St. in Hardwick, Entertainment for the opening will be by The Limos.

by Michael Blainowski

HARDWICK — In community forums over the past several years, one common theme has come up repeatedly: young people do not have a lot of places to hang out in the Hardwick area.

Now, that might change with the introduction of Cafe Sparanza at 39 North Main Street, next to the American Legion. The vision behind the new place is Matt Preston, the pastor of the Touch of Grace

Church in East Hardwick, who runs a youth group there. "I really just wanted to be a lot to do and know the temptation for drugs and different things," he said. "I just thought it'd be a nonprofit. We're just trying to fulfill a niche."

The soft opening was Monday night, there will be more food and amenities in the coming weeks. Preston said the focus is to create a nice atmosphere to just hang out.

"The main thing is to create a

hangout for kids grades 6 through 12 to come and hang out. We've got football, ping-pong, coaches, W's? We're going to do Italian sodas and more."

He said between family and work he doesn't get much time to integrate with the community, so he hopes this might change that. "I really just wanted to be in the community and do something for the kids," he said. "Things just sort of fell into place, we found the space and I know Randy Bulfin, our landlord."

He said Preston's generosity was essential.

He has a heart for the kids and the community, too," Preston said. He said the space already had a kitchen, as it was a catering business. The state informed him that the facility can hold up to 80 people, as well as getting the word out.

Preston has met with the high school leadership, the police, and he has a meeting with the select board coming up. He said the cafe will have minimal staff and rely on volunteers as much as possible. A local young person is ready to help, but he really hopes the kids that use it might help, as well.

"We're actually hoping that kids will sort of step up and take ownership of it and help to run it a little bit," he said.

Once operating on a full schedule, the cafe will offer free snacks after school Monday through Friday between 2:30 and 3:00 p.m. After that, there will be a small charge for food. The food is only for students grades 6 through 12.

The menu will include a cafeteria line with sodas, paninis, and other treats. "The menu will change and grow as we go," Preston said. "The hours will be what we can add more. It's mostly going to be a restaurant permit. We're not a restaurant, we're just a nonprofit."

Preston said that some Fridays will be open for a longer period of time, and possibly some week-end activities for younger kids.



A late spring led to a full flow of water over the dam at West Hill Pond in Cabot. The dam, built in the early 1800s, is a significant historic structure in the young town.

photo by Will Walker

Woman with Hardwick Roots Makes Significant Local Bequests

HARDWICK — Eleanor Angell did not grow up in Hardwick. She was born in Schenectady, NY, grew up in Albany, NY, attended college in Troy, NY and worked for a pharmaceutical company in the Albany, NY, area for many years. However, her grandfather, Timothy Angell, and many previous generations of the family lived and worked in Hardwick and Eleanor visited the area often. Those visits and family ties led Angell to make several significant bequests to local institutions after she died on November 28, 2016, at age 83. The family's plot is at the Main Street Cemetery and she is interred there.

According to a recent disclosure of the main local beneficiaries of Angell's estate are the United Church of Hardwick, the Redwood Memorial Library and the Hardwick Historical Society. Angell left the United Church approximately \$116,000. Rev. Dr. Evelyn Lavelle, the church's minister, said in a statement that "Eleanor Angell has roots in Hardwick and is now buried in our cemetery." Her generosity is an inspiration to us all. We at the United Church of Hardwick have been dreaming of having an elevator that would make our fully accessible bathroom and dining room available for all. With additional financial help from our members and friends and some help from the community, our

church facility could be accessible for more people to use. Angell's bequest to the Redwood Memorial Library totaled approximately \$50,000. The Director, Lisa Giammetti noted that Angell, who earned a B.S. degree in chemistry from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, "was an analytical person. She had quite an amazing life."

The Angell bequest to the Redwood was announced less than two months after another significant donation was made to the library by the estate of Parker Ladd. Angell left the Hardwick Historical Society approximately \$90,000 — many times its annual budget.

"I think there was something about Hardwick just felt like home to her," said Elizabeth Dow, President of the Hardwick Historical Society. Dow noted that the Angell family was in the granite business and helped make the Church Street bank as it does now. The Historical Society's Lorraine Hussey confirmed that Timothy Angell helped build the Congregational Church and an addition to Hardwick Avenue. "It feels miraculous," she said. The Historical Society will create a climate-controlled facility to store documents. "I don't think the board will be resistant if we name it the Eleanor Angell storage facility."



Mick Meyer (left) and his brother Taylor (right) with the new Hardwick Historical Society sign that they installed on the society's building last week.

courtesy photo

Craftsbury Post Office Needs More Than Facelift

by Jane Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY — After more than a century, more than half a century ago, the building was built in an order for the Craftsbury Common Post Office. The facility was by Sterling College and issued to the United States Postal Service (USPS).

Kurtis Bullard, USPS Real Estate Specialist, met with ten residents regarding a number of issues about the potential relocation of the Craftsbury Common Post Office. Bullard assured everyone the post office wouldn't be moving, based on new information, but that it needed physical improvements.

"It's an 1890s building," he said, "and the original lease is 50 years ago and is ending. Structurally, the building has flaws. There are safety issues about who would be doing repairs to the building: Sterling or the USPS. The lease expires on the first quarter of 2018. We will be extended. Leases are now written for 10-year terms."

"It is our standard policy to go with the community when we enact any changes. The building is structurally deficient. It is a property management issue."

The notice about relocating was posted in the post office. Bullard said the USPS was interested in going to look for a new space, but that had not been decided.

"We don't want to move," Bullard said. "We now want to work out something with the construction folks."

John Merrill, Chief Operating Officer at Sterling College, explained the college has a major capital improvement plan ongoing, which includes the Industrial Arts building and post office. The college has a fund to remodel the building.

Bullard said, "We have done our best to diligence here. Communication is much better."

The 1890s building, leased to the United States Postal Service, is scheduled to be renovated during the Sterling College capital campaign. The reconstruction will be completed by the end of 2018.

Reviewing the facility, Bullard explained, originated with the USPS property management group. USPS has 20,000 facilities nationwide. The USPS has its own architects and engineers. Plans can be sent to them to be reviewed. Bullard's territory covers the eastern seaboard, so coordinating renovations may take a bit of time. He assured the gathering that the USPS is very willing to work with Sterling on the reconstruction of the building. Residents expressed their views on moving the postal service facility. Jerry Szwant, whose husband was postmaster at the facility for 35 years, didn't want to see the service go. Margery Remondell said the post office has been moved around in the past. At one time, it was located in the back of a store, now Paradise Hill. Other residents expressed their concerns about the postal service.

Resident Jenny Stoner noted it would be a tremendous service to have the renovated building open 24/7 so people could access their mail boxes. Bullard agreed that mail boxes can be an option, but emphasized that "It is a short office and will remain [that way]."

Merrill explained that the post office is part of a larger renovation project. The post office is "important to the college and it wants to be a good neighbor." "We hope to come along with the capital improvement program," Merrill said. "It will be involved," Bullard noted. "We have an engineer assigned to us, basically acting as a consultant."

One problem to work out is how to have the building provide postal services while reconstruction takes place.

Fire and Ambulance Working Group Has First Meeting

by Will Walters

CABOT — The first meeting of the Fire Station Working Group met April 24 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the next meeting of the working group will be May 22 at 6:30 p.m. in which will move to the Willey building.

The select board recently purchased the former Larry Goehrs house and land on Route 515 south just north of the field station at the bridge in lower Cabot. The site is intended for a new fire field and ambulance station structure.

moderator and select board chair Mike Hogan indicated that the group will follow open meeting rules, which will provide agendas and meeting minutes. The group will be open to the public. Hogan said that transparency and communication are needed because there is a lot of inaccurate information and rumors around

town. He told the group that the board can purchase land without a town vote. The select board will work on providing information for the funding this fall, which the committee will review. The group will coordinate, which will be a priority.

Members of the committee are Hogan, Jack Daniels, Fire Chief Dennis Deane, select board member Jeff Durney, Dean Deasy, Brad Allen and Karen Deasy.

Daniels, a select board member, indicated that for the best use of funds, that is still up for discussion. He also mentioned that making grants will be required on part of the town, with a public hearing and a vote to approve use of funds.

The select board gave permission for Michelle Daniels's notes

Big Turnout Anticipated for Green Up Day

by Michael Blainowski

HARDWICK — Green Up Day returns to Vermont this coming Saturday and Hardwick and the Northeast Kingdom is getting ready.

This year, the Hardwick location at the firehouse will be open at its normal Green Up Day hours of 9 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There will also be a station at the Green Up in East Hardwick, open from 9 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Volunteers will be at each station to help collect material and hand out bags and gloves.

Suzanne Gunn is Hardwick's Recreation Department coordinator and will help oversee the event. She said the town appreciates a net amount of money for trash collection and that brings the Rec Dept attention to the action. She hopes for a good turnout.

"I'm crossing my fingers for good weather," she said. "But if you look out on the roadsides right now, nobody here seeing that mess." One thing she emphasized is that this is not for household cleanup. "This is not meant for household trash. It's only for road-side trash," she said.

She said that coupons for free

tickets for gift certificates and items from local businesses handed out for every green-up bag turned in.

Karen Klutz is the Green Up Day coordinator for the town itself and she will be at the fire station for the event.

"It is really inspiring to see everyone green up — all the different ages and backgrounds that participate," she said. "On the state level, Melanie Phillips is the operations manager and interim president of Green Up Vermont."

Phillips said the event has continued to grow during her 11 years with the program. The event started with 15,000 participants and that number has grown to 22,000. She said a lot of advertising has helped, including radio, print, TV, and online.

This event is the only Green Up Day in the nation. The only thing comparable in other states are single-day programs.

Phillips cautions volunteers to be on the lookout for dangerous materials, especially needles. "We definitely see needles increasing," she said. "We tell people not to pick them up, just to let their town leaders know."

Another concern is dealing with

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 BATS ARE QUIET

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In Arts, 6
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