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Junk Ordinance Passes on 3-2 Vote

by Kenneth Avery

GREENSBORO – The Greensboro Select Board finally made a move on the long-debated scrap metal and junk car ordinance, passing the ordinance by a three to two vote.

Select Board Chair Peter Romans and board members Matt McAllister and Tracy Collier voted in favor, while Vice-chair Mike Lapierre and Andy Kehler voted against.

Romans introduced the topic for discussion with some measure of fatigue, saying "We are down to everyone's favorite one, I think, the storage of junk and junk vehicles." Collier immediately made a motion to table it until the next meeting, and this was met with general mirth.

Romans said, "This has been going on for three or four months now, and I guess I would be interested in having a vote on it if we are just going to keep talking it." There were four people who volunteered to look at the ordinance a couple of months back "to make changes or whatever," according to Romans.

Select board member Andy Kehler said that he and Mark Snyder discussed the ordinance and that "we are both really conflicted

See JUNK, 4

East Hardwick Assesses Progress

by Doug McClure

EAST HARDWICK – On June 20, a group of East Hardwick residents met for the first annual meeting of the East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization (EHNO). Hardwick Police Chief Aaron Cochran and Hardwick Select Board Member Elizabeth Dow had presentations for residents on speeding issues and the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT).

East Hardwick's Cheryl Michaels was a chief organizer a year ago; as of this meeting, she and four others were officially voted as EHNO's Board of Directors. Michaels, Shelly Grenon, David Gross, Joyce Mandeville and Caitlin Strong will use priorities from the community for its next year of action.

A shortlist of action items was presented, including rehabilitating the Little Library, assisting McFaster's with its renovation plans, improving sidewalks and holding a block party. Also included was the Rail Trail and speeding. All issues drew some priority. In the end, sidewalk improvement, the Rail Trail, and library rehabilitation were seen as the pressing priorities for the next year for the EHNO board.

Speeding was still on the radar as a hot topic. An at-times heated back-and-forth with Hardwick Police Department (HPD) Chief Aaron Cochran may have answered some concerns. Cochran tried to get across – with mixed success – which issues his department can address.

Policing is a function of the executive branch of government, which enforces the laws. So, the question he can answer is enforcement. He stated that it is not up to him whether a 35 mph speed is appropriate for a street; that is a legislative concern. Police do not make laws, he said – they enforce them.

East Hardwick does not have a major problem with speeders, Cochran said. Of the three streets analyzed, an HPD investigation gathered a lot of data that indicated the percentage of people breaking a posted speed limit was in the low teens, less than every street except School Street, and most not more than 5 mph over the speed limit.

The data also showed the number of cars. School Street saw 1,400 vehicles, Church Street 2,400 and Main Street nearly 4,000 during one week (going northbound).

Cochran's answers did not sit well with one resident, who said, "Even the people in our community can't respect [speed limits]" and said he had several animals run over and was concerned about speeders while his child waits for the school bus. That resident said he did not feel safe walking down the road, and felt that taking it to the Hardwick Town Manager and HPD had not

See ASSESSES, 4

photo by Doug McClure

Circus Smirkus' 2019 Big Top Tour kicked off on June 29 with two performances in Greensboro. The theme of this year's tour is "Carnival."

Circus Smirkus Kicks Off "Carnival" Tour

by Kenneth Avery

GREENSBORO – It took 30 performers and 100-plus people to make the show run on time. For 18 days prior to their opening shows on June 29, performers ranging in age from 12 to 18 gathered at the Circus Smirkus campus in Greensboro to hammer out the groups' latest production. The theme of this year's show, Carnival, was decided on sometime last winter, but according to Circus Smirkus artistic director Troy Wunderle, all the details of what actually goes into the show are worked out over the 18 days when everyone is finally together on campus.

The opening show Saturday evening was a lively affair, with the crowd breaking into chants and clapping in anticipation of the spectacle. And a spectacle it was, with all of the crashing music, theatrics and flashing lights associated with the circus. The theme for this year's show is the idea of the "great American carnival," with all that entails: rides, games of chance, cotton candy, popcorn and carnival barkers.

See CIRCUS, 4

Vermont Court Denies Act 46 Stay Request

by Doug McClure

MONTPELIER – The latest chapter has begun in the appeal against Act 46 forced mergers. On June 28, the Vermont Supreme Court issued an entry order – essentially a half-page note – denying the appellants' motion for stay or injunctive relief. In doing so, the June 30 deadline set by the Board of Education for mandatory forced mergers came and went without any relief.

It will likely be several months before any further movement on the matter takes place, according to a clerk at the Supreme Court.

In his April 12 ruling on the original motions to dismiss and motion for injunction which led to the case going to the Supreme Court, Superior Court Justice Mello acknowledged "the issues in this case are of unusually great statewide importance, and the time available to review and decide them is very limited. Under these circumstances, this Court would be remiss were it not to afford the Supreme Court an opportunity to consider these weighty issues as much in advance of that deadline as possible."

The time given was in the end not long enough, despite Mello pointing to three counts that "may require presentation of facts that have yet to be established" as those counts were "not questions of law."

See COURT, 4

Peace Park Sports New Mural

by Kenneth Avery

HARDWICK – There is a new mural in town, joining other murals, such as the mural in the Galaxy Bookshop and the new panels erected by GRACE along Mill Street. This mural is located at the Hardwick Peace Park on Main Street, between the Hardwick Gazette building and Mike's Service Center, right on the Lamoille River.

The painter behind the new artwork is Harlen Avery, who has been putting brush to medium for the past 40 years. Avery keeps a busy schedule, working nights at the Cabot Creamery, volunteering at the Greensboro Free Library, as well as being a part-time DJ, tattoo artist and painter. He does a variety of artwork, including murals and smaller projects. A lot of his smaller work has been done on cars and motorcycles, as well as designing some two hundred tattoos.

He spoke of one his more recent commissions, a three-wheeled motorcycle on which he painted the infamous Hatfield and McCoy families, said Avery, hollow dying.

The mural in the Peace Park is no Hatfield vs. McCoy scene. It is comprised of a rushing river flowing down the wall towards the Lamoille, with high mountains in the background. Deer and coyotes make appearances, as well as a bear hiding behind a tree. The tree, in turn, hides a crack in the wall that has now been fixed. With high blue mountains and lush green land below, the

See MURAL, 4

photo by Vanessa Fournier

Harlen Avery of East Hardwick, makes some finishing touches on a mural he designed and painted on the wall in Peace Park in Hardwick. Harlen donated his time and talent to paint his "A Valley of Peace" mural and Poulin Lumber donated the paint. The park is located between the Hardwick Gazette building and Mike's Service Center on South Main Street.

Greensboro Town Plan Discussed and Approved

by Kenneth Avery

GREENSBORO – The town of Greensboro held a public hearing regarding the proposed approval of the updated town plan. Dan Predpall, chair of the Greensboro Planning Commission, outlined the changes made to the plan in this latest addition, which the select board approved later in the evening at the regular meeting.

Predpall said that the changes to the updated town plan were all requested by the Northern Vermont Development Association (NVDA) and that most of the changes had to do with energy conservation and substantial deference. Gaining the legal recognition known as substantial deference gives the town a stronger voice when going in front of the Public Service Board (PSB) during that body's review of any potential large-scale energy projects sited in Greensboro.

In order to receive substantial deference, a town has to meet a published list of standards in its town plan, showing that the town has taken a close look at energy in the community, has considered energy used for buildings and transportation, has analyzed current and future energy use, and has planned carefully in alignment with state energy policy for the land use needs of energy generation, according to a State of Vermont overview.

The planning commission also updated the maps in the town plan. Predpall said that none of the changes really affected the basic goals and actions that are specified in the plan. None were

See GREENSBORO, 4

Town Has No Answer to Main Street Traffic Woes

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – The pedestrian being struck on South Main is yet another situation where the 200-foot section on South Main Street has posed traffic and safety problems for which no solutions so far have worked.

Pedestrians worry about whether they will be hit trying to cross the street or struck by a car cutting through the municipal parking lot. Recent state traffic studies show between 8,000 and 9,000 vehicles go through South Main on an average day.

In multiple select board meetings almost every safety concern about South Main has arisen, from dangerous crossings to people cutting through at the municipal parking lot adjacent to

See WOES, 4

overlay diagram by Doug McClure

A recreation of the 2009 Vermont 15 Transportation Assessment recommendation for realigning Rte. 15 to address safety concerns. The study was done for the Town of Hardwick by VTrans and the Northeastern Vermont Development Association.

Pedestrian Struck in Crosswalk

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – At approximately 10 in the morning of June 24, a woman crossing South Main in the crosswalk by the Village Restaurant was struck by a motorist driving a Ford F-350 with "a small camper" according to the Hardwick Police Department (HPD).

In his report, HPD Officer Dario Bodor stated the injured woman, Patricia Webster, was "laying on the roadway, approximately four feet west of the point of crosswalk, almost fully in the East bound lane." His conclusion based on her position and other evidence was that the truck "clipped" the woman, and he noted it could have been far worse.

"It appears she was hit or

See PEDESTRIAN, 4

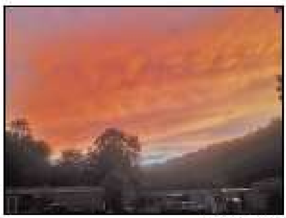

photo by Tyler Molleur

A departing thunderstorm last Wednesday night left Hardwick village just as the sun began to set, revealing mammatus formations on the underside of the thunderstorm. These develop as pockets of cold water droplets and ice crystals sink from the underside of the thunderstorm anvil and evaporate as they fall. The conditions in the atmosphere this time of year are ideal for spotting these. The thunderstorms which produced these formations were also responsible for producing small hail and gusty winds over northeastern Vermont.

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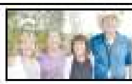
Hardwick Loses Playoff Game

In Towns, 2

Retiring Teachers from Twinfield Union



In Arts, 6

Stephanie Wheeler Band Dazzles at the HCA