

OSUED Agenda: Equity, Asbestos, Campus Visit Rules

by Emmett Avery

WOODBURY — The Orleans Southwest Union Elementary District's (OSUED) September 10 board meeting agenda covered a wide range of topics, including a report from Greensboro about repairs needed for asbestos in Lakewood and Hardwick school buildings, considerations of equity in sports teams across the union, and a request regarding board members' visits to schools.

Larry Eldred, Director of Buildings and Grounds at the Woodbury campus, gave the board a report on his project regarding the new union. The last two months have been extremely busy. Eldred completed a number of projects over the summer. He visited the four schools in the Lakewood school board. When he took the job, his first responsibility was to address safety and code violations, including the presence

of asbestos tile in Lakewood and Hardwick Elementary buildings. The asbestos is not a safety issue, Eldred said, but he added that the tiles are starting to disintegrate and will need to be addressed soon. Eldred estimates the cost for remediation at the Lakewood site is \$20,000-\$25,000.

The Hardwick site, which has a smaller affected area, will not be. Eldred said. He recommended that the issues not be addressed while school is in session, and suggested scheduling the Lakewood and Hardwick projects for next summer. Asbestos was also found in the boiler room at Woodbury. Providing nails or screws are not driven into the affected building materials, Eldred said it should not pose a health issue. The schools implemented a program in 1976, and Eldred said he does not believe the buildings are in violation at this point.

See AGENDA, 4



Photo by Doug McClure
Danielle Bailey and her son, Parker, at Hardwick Fitness. Danielle purchased the business a few days ago with the hope of keeping the local-owned business thriving in the community.

Hardwick Fitness Finds New Owner

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK — Until last Saturday, Hardwick Fitness in the Hardwick Inn was scheduled to close at the end of September. That was when Danielle Bailey, who had been in discussions with previous owner Karen Dunlap since April, signed the papers to take over the business. It was important to Bailey to keep the fitness center in Hardwick for use by its residents, Bailey said.

"I was so nervous after signing the papers I couldn't rest," Bailey said, "but I went home, and when I got back my wife had a half-hour later. I already had a new new-year membership."

Bailey, who previously ran a registered daycare, was planning to retire when she found out that Hardwick Fitness was going to close. "I felt compelled to save this [business] for the community," she said.

Bailey, a former client of the gym, said that while most fitness centers within driving distance are large chains, Hardwick Fitness is a local business and

should remain in the community. "I've lived in Hardwick my entire life," Bailey said. "I want to keep Hardwick [lived], and I see this business as an asset for the community. I'm also trying to keep every dollar I can for the community."

To that end, Bailey is only dealing with local companies where possible, she said. Future plans include sponsoring Wildcats basketball and possible collaborations with other community organizations. But for now, Bailey is focused on continuity. "Making things run on a day-to-day basis, then improvements," Bailey said. One change Bailey has already implemented is to offer members 24-hour access to the gym through use of a PIN code. Beyond that, Bailey hopes members will continue offering feedback about changes and improvements they would like to see.

"I really haven't had time to think of all the options yet," Bailey said.

Bailey is not the only new happy to see the business continue in Hardwick. See FITNESS, 4

Picnic Shelter Officially Opened

by Will Walters

PLAINFIELD — An opening ceremony for the new recreation field picnic shelter was held Sunday from 3 to 6 p.m.

The shelter was funded by a \$400 grant from the state Department of Buildings & General Services' Recreational Facilities funding program and \$4,000 in matching funds from the town, said James Spector of the recreation committee. After the grant was awarded in September of 2018, approximately 40 people

volunteered over a period of 12 to 18 months to help build the shelter. Efforts concluded in the spring of 2019 with completion of the roof.

Posts and other wood used for building the shelter were made by Seth Kelley of Kennebunk Hill Ironery Spector said. Kelly, a timber farmer, donated the structure with hand-hewn materials and pegs.

In addition to the shelter structure, the grant provided sufficient funds for four picnic tables and 12 electrical outlets and lighting. See SHELTER, 4

Public Meeting Explores Restorative Justice

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK — On September 10, the Hardwick Area Community Justice Center (HACC) held a public meeting to explore the principle and practices of restorative justice and its potential benefits to the community.

HACC Director Carol Plante hosted the event with attendees Mike Carlisle of St. Johnsbury Probation and Parole, Corporal Steve Mitchell of the Hardwick Police Department, and Chip Tronzo (D-Caledonia-2) of Stannard. Tronzo shared relevant insights from his former days as a

Vermont public defender. As detailed on its website, the goal of restorative justice is "making amends for harm to those impacted by crime or other offenses and the community." But Town Manager Shaun Felder claims the program has useful applications beyond criminal cases and has been used to help resolve disputes between neighbors.

The practice of restorative justice, Tronzo said, allows lawmakers to take into consideration the circumstances or environmental factors that may have led someone to break the law.

"How did this person get here?"

Whitefield Hop Yard Grows Rapidly

by Doug McClure

EAST HARDWICK — In just a few years, business for East Hardwick's Whitefield Hop Yard grows as rapidly as the hops it harvests. When The Gazette met with owners Karen and Kevin Broderick two years ago, their business was still working to find its footing. Today, Whitefield Hop Yard is one of the largest operations of its kind in Vermont. The business is drawing praise from home brewers across the state for its uniquely Vermont product.

In language usually reserved for wine critics, in 2017 Kevin Broderick described Whitefield's Centennial and Cascade hops as having a "terroir," or character endemic to the local environment. Now, Vermont breweries are using the hops to create a wide range of beers, and Tronzo said he has seen two years ago was barely

enough foral, or wild-grown hops, to make a small test batch. Now, the plants tower over one end of the field. Kevin believes these plants may be survivors of hops farmed there over a century ago. At that time, hops cultivation was so widespread in the area that locals created a map to locate the farms growing it.

"These guys are kind of rejuvenating this industry, which was dead — completely gone," said Robert Ortiz, Head Brewer of Foam Brewers, in a USDA-sponsored educational video about the form. "The flavor of the hops is unique to Vermont, and taking those flavors and putting them in a glass is an amazing experience."

This year's harvest has grown to about 900 pounds of hops, said Karen. Broderick said he's sold out at this point, she said.

While production has grown See HOP, 4

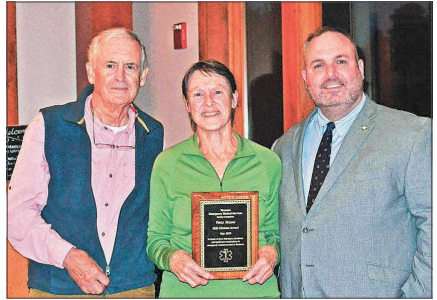


Photo by Vanessa Fournier
Patty Meyer (center) of Hardwick was presented with the 2019 Vermont Emergency Medical Services Lifetime Achievement Award by Governor Phil Scott (right) and his husband Steve (left) standing by her side. Patty was recognized at a gathering held in her honor September 10 in the Highland Center for the Arts. She joined the Hardwick Rescue Squad in 1973.

Meyer Honored for Service with Rescue Squad

by Tyler Moulter

GREENSBORO — It's a quiet past six on a Tuesday night. While most people are sitting down to dinner, Patty Meyer of Hardwick is leaving her house to head to the Hardwick Rescue building to answer a call.

"Hardwick Rescue, I need you to respond to 2875 Hardwick Street in Greensboro, the Highland Center for the Arts. We have a request of a 72-year-old female with an unknown medical problem," reported the dispatcher.

As a member of the ambulance's Tuesday night crew signed on to the call.

"It's a routine that familiar to Meyer, who has been on the Tuesday night shift for many years. But after the ambulance pulled up to the building and she walked to search for the patient, Meyer was met instead with a large round of applause. Dozens of family members, friends, and colleagues had lined the boulevard to celebrate her life's dedication to the rescue squad, and the state's recognition of her hard work."

Nominated by her peers, Meyer is the recipient of the 2019 EMS Lifetime Award. As Vermont EMS Chief Dan Batiste described the recipient's achievements, he reflected on the importance of an individual bringing people together — a fitting theme on the celebration progressed on the eve of September 11.

"In my travels as I investigate and inspect, what I see is often a reminder of the essence of our profession," Batiste said. "And

then I get to come here."

Many of the members of the rescue squad praised Meyer's talent for bringing people together. Tim Nisbet of Greensboro, a member of the squad since 1988, described Meyer as the recruiter who encouraged him to join back when he was establishing the Greensboro Garage in Hardwick. Nisbet eventually turned into a recruiter himself, at one point employing several staff who responded to rescue calls with him.

Pete Cook, of East Hardwick, joined the rescue squad in 1975 and volunteered for more than 30 years. In 1983, Cook took a leave of absence to care for a family member who was terminally ill. After his family member had passed, Cook realized how Meyer had gently encouraged him to return to the squad. Her talent for inspiring vital members of the community to get involved has not gone unnoticed.

"You truly are the heart of Hardwick Rescue," Nisbet said, "tasting the goodness of her."

Meyer's supportive, warm, and empathetic demeanor goes well beyond supporting her colleagues. Many also view her as a mentor with exceptional interpersonal skills when caring for her patients.

"She has taught me something you cannot learn from a book," said Mark Hall, a current member from Hardwick. "She taught me how to be totally present with a patient."

See MEYER, 4

Craftsbury Dark Fiber Network Lit and Connected

by June Pichel Cook

CHAFFSBURY — Four years ago, a community-led coalition led through the Vermont Council on Rural Development led to the towns determining three priorities: land protection, cell phone service, and broadband. The cell and broadband committees (C&B) was instrumental in the state's efforts with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Vermont Statewide Regional Commission (INBRIC).

The town gave a \$25,000 match to help fund the project. At its last meeting, the select board received two reports on the status of broadband service in town. Kristian Pountney and David Shover of the C&B reported on the completion of grants received almost three years ago. Michael Brinkman, founder and CEO of Kingdom Fiber updated the board on current service and installations in Craftsbury.

Frank, who served as the grant administrator, handed a 10-inch thick, 3-ring binder to the board with a smile and sense of relief, noting that closure paperwork has been filed. The grant process never fell up reporting and number of jobs created. Both grants were premised on economic development being spurred by ex-

haustment of broadband services. "We are done," she said, "in terms of the grant."

Brinkman said the town's dark fiber network, which includes connections to town-owned, fiber-optic, and state-created fiber, is now lit and generally available throughout the three networks in town.

"We" — the town's dark fiber network and initially relied out subscriber data service in March. Brinkman said, "We are grateful by the high initial subscriber response and can report widespread satisfaction with our services."

Brinkman explained that the Craftsbury networks were divided into 21 fiber service areas. See CONNECTED, 4

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