

Old Earthen Dam Looms at Long Pond



This gate operating system mounted on the aqueduct supplying the East Long Pond. The dam is owned by the New York State Department and is considered to be a poor option by the State of Vermont.

by Emmett Avery

HARDWICK — The “high hazard” earthen dam at East Long Pond in Woodbury is in “poor” condition, according to the most recent state inspection. The dam, built in 1930, is currently owned by the Hardwick Electric Department (HED). East Long Pond is located at the headwaters of Nichols Brook, which flows through Nichols and Mackville ponds before joining Cooper Brook and entering the Lamoille River near the Hardwick Fire Department.

According to Benjamin Green, chief dam safety engineer for the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), a designation of “high hazard” indicates that the dam’s failure would result in loss of human life and extensive damage to homes, buildings and other infrastructure. A hazard rating indicates the condition of a potential failure, but does not predict if the likelihood a high hazard dam will be in excellent condition. However, a “poor” condition rating indicates “significant structural and/or operation and maintenance deficiencies are clearly recognized.” According to Green, “poor” is the second from best condition in Ver-

est portion of the dam crest under normal pool conditions. Two feet of freeboard is a feet lower than permitted by the state, according to the report.

The DEC report recommended performing an engineered stability analysis on the earthen embankment. The report also recommended hiring an engineer to “design a cost construct repair” to the spillways and embankment to improve the condition of the dam and “bring it into compliance with State requirements and current dam safety.”

See EARTHEN, 7

Wolcott Dam to be Repaired in the Future

by Emmett Avery

WOLCOTT — A recent article in *VTdigger* highlighted a dam in Wolcott, owned by the Hardwick Electric Department (HED).

The dam in question, sometimes known as the Potteryville Dam, is a concrete dam located just above Wolcott village and provides water to a hydroelectric generation facility, which is owned by the Vermont State of Vermont dams, the dam was built in 1920 and is in “poor” condition.

Benjamin Green, Chief Dam Safety Engineer for the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, said that “high hazard” is a designation that indicates the dam is at high risk to cause loss of multiple human lives and extensive damage to homes and industrial or public facilities and infrastructure. However, the hazard rating only indicates the consequence of a potential failure, it does not give any information about the condition of the dam. A high hazard dam can be in “poor” condition, but it is not the most recent dam safety report for the Wolcott dam, which was produced by the HED and produced by the consulting-engineering firm of King, Inc. in 2018, noted several deficiencies, but found them to be in a “fair” condition overall.

The primary concern raised by the report are the operability of the dam and the

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See DISCUSSIONS, 4

Quick Fire Department Action Prevents \$109,000 Loss

by Will Waters

EMPD the bank placed a hold on the money in the Michigan account and only \$10,000 was stolen from the \$109,000 transfer. The ambulance vendor agreed to assume the loss, leaving EMPD harmless.

Hazen Artisan Academy Gets Grant

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK — The Hazen Artisan Academy (HAA) recently received a \$25,000 grant from the Fire Corps Academy (AOE) to support a personalized learning plan.

See VOLUNTEER, 4



On the evening of Friday, December 6, light snow powdered Hardwick Village streets, continuing a trend of colder-than-usual days. Photos by Doug McClure 2018, 2019's snow season dormant.

Town House Considered for Hardwick Town Meetings

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK — Multiple members of the Northeast Kingdom Arts Council (NEKARC) Board met on the December 5 Hardwick Select Board meeting to ask whether Town Meetings should return to the Town House.

Select board and NEKARC board member Shari Cornish, along with other NEKARC members, put forward a case that the Town House should serve as a location for Town Meetings, as it had until more than a decade ago, when the building's heating system failed. Town Meet-

ings are currently held at Hardwick Elementary School (HES).

“Town Meetings” moved from the Town House due to heating system failures,” said Cornish. “Now we have insulated ceilings and storm windows and as much weatherization as you can have. NEKARC is leasing the building — so we would be paying the bill for the heat.”

The Town House, built in approximately 1860, has been utilized as performing arts space for more than 125 years. The building was converted to an Opera House in the 1880s and has served as a performance space since.

Brent McCoy of the NEKARC board said, and Cornish later agreed, that the better location and more civic-oriented space could serve to augment Town Meeting participation. McCoy said he was a Greensboro resident and Town Meetings are held at the High Land Center for the Arts with a



Dormition began on the Woodbury Country Store last week. Jeremy Bogie, owner of Blue Mountain Trucking and the store last week. The main photos attached to it will start down this week.

much higher participation rate than Hardwick sees. He attributed that in part to aesthetics and the nature of that space. Cornish said HES-based Town Meetings are prone to encourage kids to do what they do at their school gym — run around — and those distractions and bad aesthetics pose a problem.

Questions were then raised as to whether anyone had double-checked with OSUED whether hosting Town Meeting was okay now that HES is in a force-merged district. Aside from that concern, it was raised that using Town Meetings in schools under the current climate was disruptive.

“If the vote goes down on the Hazen budget election,” said NEKARC Treasurer Tom Martin, “budgetal issues have to be re-done in the same location, which disrupts the school day, so does that disrupt the school and safety protocols that are in place?”

See CONSIDERED, 7

Yellow Barn Grant Award, Request from the Chief

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK — At the December 5 select board meeting, Town Manager Shawn Fielder spoke about a grant received for the Yellow Barn. Police Chief Aaron Cochran issued a request to residents and provided an update on the grant's progress. As noted in a separate article, NEK California Director Katherine Sims thanked the idea of joining a Communications Unit District (CUD) to rectify the town's

See REQUEST, 6



Carrie Harvey completed her Peace Corps service on Oct. 12 during a ceremony held at the Peace Corps headquarters in Morris, the Philippines.

Local Peace Corps Volunteer Returns

by Jim Flint

CABOT — An adventurous world traveler is home again. After completing three years of service in the Philippines Islands as a Peace Corps Volunteer, Carrie Harvey landed at JFK Airport in New York on Nov. 21. She is preparing now to embark on the next chapter in an inspiring life story.

Ms. Harvey, 26, attended elementary and middle school in Walden. During sixth grade, a Peace Corps volunteer visited her in Walden. The volunteer shared what it was like to live and serve in Morocco. A seed for Harvey's global future was planted that day.

humburg, Virginia. Visiting him in seventh grade, I became fascinated with historical artifacts and archaeological excavation. Ms. Harvey graduated from Cabot High School, where she played soccer and served as a team captain. She attended Camp Wapanacki in Hardwick from 1999 through 2000. As a camper, and later as a camp counselor, she learned outdoor living skills and developed leadership skills. “During my senior year of high school, I traveled to Belize on a school trip for the marine biology class,” she said. “I was inspired by the marine biology teacher, Mr. Harvey shared, ‘Seeing Mayan ruins up close cemented my desire to pursue archaeology on college.’” Ms. Harvey went on to earn a

See VOLUNTEER, 4

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Old Country Store Is Finally Coming Down

by Michael Bielawski

WOODBURY — The old country store in the village, largely regarded as an eyesore and a potential safety hazard for years, is finally coming down. The old store closed its doors several years ago and the building fell into disuse. Since then, the structure has been without a caretaker, which exposed to harsh Woodbury winters. Select board members recently committed that the former store's roof might not last another season.

The town applied for a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant to pay for the building purchase and property.

“It's been, I would say five years, given or taken. It was a long time just to torch [the building],” he joked. Portions of the building have already been removed, Gray said. “The barn is down and half of the building is down, and the rest will come down next week,” he said. “That's the FEMA requirement, that no one will ever build something there again.” Select board chair Michael Gray said by about on Saturday.

Gray has been with the select board through the process. He

said dealing with the issue could at times be frustrating.

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In Sports, 8
CHARGES LOOK TO GET BACK TO WINNING

In Center
THE CRAFTSMAN BY GAZETTE!

In Arts, 6
THE NEW RACKER REVIEW

