

THE Hardwick Gazette

INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

Hardwick • Cabot • Calais • Craftsbury • Greensboro • Marshfield • Plainfield • Stannard • Walden • Wolcott • Woodbury

Wednesday, October 28, 2020

Volume 131 Number 43

Hazen Union Settles Into A New Routine



Arne Hagman



Bailey Shepard



Deanna Gann



Finn Burgess



Ollie Grant

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – On March 13 of this year, Hazen Union Principal David Perrigo made an announcement on the school’s public address system. Introducing himself with “this is your captain,” he told students to take home with them everything that they might need because, due to COVID-19, the school might not reopen the following Monday. Two days later, on March 15, Governor Phil Scott ordered all schools to shut down and switch to remote learning.

What followed was a turbulent period in which teachers and students struggled to adapt to an unprecedented interruption to the school year. The switch was a big challenge to students, teachers and parents that ended with a thoughtful transformation of senior graduation festivities.

When it was announced that schools would reopen, school administrators, students and parents braced for another round of chaos. But more than a month into the reopening, much of the chaos has abated. What has emerged from the crisis are new opportunities that could benefit both students and educators.



Sadie Gann



Zeke Wohlberg

Arne Hagman, middle school and high school science teacher

The word Hagman repeatedly used to describe March was “crazy.” He said that while he had prepared himself for the possibility of a switch to remote learning, the reality “did not go the way I expected.” Part of the issue, Hagman said, was that a fully remote learning system was not available in March.

“What I thought would be fully workable remotely did not work out,” he said. “I had to adjust. I feel very comfortable with technology, but the fully remote teaching was not ready.” Educators “did as well we could, given the circumstances” he said.

This year, Hagman said, is “off to a much better start.”

But Hagman admitted he was concerned when he first learned the schools would reopen.

“I was very nervous,” he said. “Having two elderly parents, I was very worried about how to keep them safe.”

So far, he said, many problems from the spring seem to have been resolved. And there are some new, unexpected benefits. The shortened school day, ordered by the state to allow for teacher preparation, allows him time to touch base with students who need extra attention. “The school has given us time to work with kids we otherwise wouldn’t have the time

to, and we also use it for teaming, and meeting,” Hagman said.

Having extra time to spend with students who need it is just one benefit the pandemic has generated, Hagman said. The Hazen Union Artisan and Entrepreneurship Academy has been renamed Makerspace and has big plans. Hazen Union is also offering an enhanced partnership with the Vermont Virtual Learning Collaborative (VTVLC).

“I think there’s some really

See ROUTINE, 2



photo by Doug McClure

The Hardwick Village Restaurant had an unplanned drive-in customer on Tuesday when the take-out window was damaged by an automobile. An employee said that a contractor has been called to assess the damage.

Protocol Established for Common Use Permits

by June Pichel Cook

CRAFTSBURY – The sound of militias’ training and cows bellowing have long disappeared from the Common, though the church spire, white fences, stately homes, and gazebos still paint a quintessential New England scene. The bucolic farmers’ market, concerts, Antiques and Uniques, Old Home Day, Craftsbury Academy ice cream socials and graduations, and other festivities now bring the community together in new ways.

In earlier times, a Little League diamond had a place on the Common. Recently, the diamond was resurrected through the generosity of an anonymous donor. Due to renewed interest in how the Common is utilized, the select board implemented protocols and a permitting process.

At its meeting last week, the board voted to establish the Town Common Permit process. The permit policy is a procedure for groups to reserve use of the Common on a first-come, first-served basis. It establishes guidelines to ensure activities do not cause harm or damage to the Common and are carried out in a way that ensures public health and safety.

The permit is not an endorsement by the town of any policies,

See PERMITS, 4