



# PAWLET NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 9, NUMBER 1

WINTER/SPRING 2014

TOWN OF PAWLET IN VERMONT'S METTOWEE VALLEY

## INTRODUCTION

This issue of the Pawlet Newsletter includes important information on the upcoming town elections on March 4. Citizens are encouraged to learn about the choices they will be making at the polls.

The Town would like to thank Beth Kashner for her six years of dedication and service as the librarian at Pawlet Public Library. The library is seeking volunteers to help out during the transition as the board searches for a new director.

The Pawlet Newsletter has been published continuously since April 2003 to make town news available and encourage community involvement. It may be viewed online at the Town's web site and also at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission web site (see "Town News" at [www.rutlandrpc.org](http://www.rutlandrpc.org)). The editor welcomes suggestions and submissions anytime; send to [egib@vermontel.net](mailto:egib@vermontel.net).

Thanks! *Elizabeth Gibson, Editor*

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## TOWN CONDUCTS TABLETOP EXERCISE TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY

In January the Town conducted a tabletop exercise to assess how it would handle a significant flooding event. The exercise, held at the Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department's firehouse, was coordinated by Robert Morlino, Pawlet emergency management director. The scenario presented to the group of 26 participants was a flooding event with slightly more disastrous impacts than those from Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011.

Those participating included Pawlet emergency management officials, members from the Pawlet and West Pawlet volunteer fire departments and the Pawlet Highway Department, as well as representatives from the Mettawee Community School, Pawlet shelter management, Vermont State Police, American Red Cross, Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Vermont Public Safety Answering Point (e911), Rutland Regional Planning Commission, Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Emergency Operations Center, and the Washington County, N.Y., Department of Public Safety.

The exercise simulated an extreme flooding event in March, in which several major roadways were closed or washed out. Unlike actual events post-Irene, this exercise assumed widespread power outages, presenting a greater challenge

for the response effort. Participants discussed how they would prepare for, respond to, and recover from such an event. Special attention was given to communication and coordination between different levels of responders, local, county and state, as well as the ability of the town to operate an emergency operations center during an emergency.

Several participants appreciated the opportunity to spend time with all the key players from different groups who would be working together under difficult circumstances. Results from this exercise will be incorporated into Pawlet's Emergency Operations Plan. The overall goal is to improve public safety in Pawlet.



Participants discuss a hypothetical flooding event. Source: Bob Morlino

**COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR: FEBRUARY – MAY 2014****February**

2/24, Monday, 7:30 PM. Pawlet Planning Commission, Town Hall

2/26, Wednesday, 7:30 PM. Union District #47 School Board Annual Meeting, Mettawee Community School

2/28, Friday, 9 – 11 AM. Food Pantry, Pawlet parsonage barn

**March**

3/3, Monday, 7:30 PM. Annual Town Meeting, Mettawee School

7:30 PM West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department (WPVFD)

3/4, Tuesday, 9 AM – 7 PM. Town Elections, Town Hall

7 PM. Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department (PVFD)

3/5, Wednesday, 12 PM. Pawlet Energy Group, Town Hall

7 PM. Select Board Organizational Meeting, Town Hall

3/11, Tuesday, 12 PM. Haystack Hustlers Seniors Potluck Lunch, Pawlet Church

3/12, Wednesday, 6:15 PM. Pawlet School Board Meeting, Mettawee School

7 PM. Union District 47 Board Meeting, Mettawee School

3/18, Tuesday, 7 PM. Select Board, Town Hall

3/24, Monday, 7:30 PM. Pawlet Planning Commission, Town Hall

3/28, Friday, 9 – 11 AM. Food Pantry, Pawlet parsonage barn

**April**

4/1, Tuesday, 7 PM. PVFD

7 PM. Select Board, Town Hall

4/2, Wednesday, 12 PM. Pawlet Energy Group, Town Hall

4/5, Saturday, 5 PM. Roast Pork Supper, Pawlet Community Church

4/7, Monday, 7:30 PM. WPVFD

4/8, Tuesday, 12 PM. Haystack Hustlers Seniors Potluck Lunch, Pawlet Church

4/9, Wednesday, 8:15 AM. Four Winds Workshop, Mettawee Community School

7 PM. Union District 47 Board Meeting, Mettawee School

4/15, Tuesday, 7 PM. Select Board, Town Hall

4/25, Friday, 9 – 11 AM. Food Pantry, Pawlet parsonage barn

4/28, Monday, 7:30 PM. Pawlet Planning Commission, Town Hall

4/29, Tuesday, 7 PM. Select Board, Town Hall

**May**

5/3, Saturday, 5 PM. Roast Pork Supper, Pawlet Community Church

5/5, Monday, 7:30 PM. WPVFD

5/6, Tuesday, 7 PM. PVFD

5/7, Wednesday, 12 PM. Pawlet Energy Group, Town Hall

5/13, Tuesday, 12 PM. Haystack Hustlers Seniors Potluck Lunch, Pawlet Church

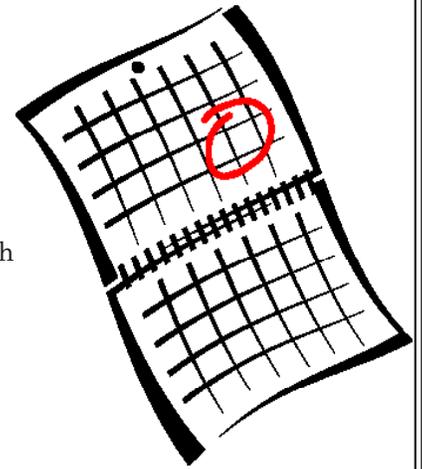
7 PM. Select Board, Town Hall

5/14, Wednesday, 8:15 AM. Four Winds Workshop, Mettawee Community School

5/23, Friday, 9 – 11 AM. Food Pantry, Pawlet parsonage barn

5/26, Monday, 7:30 PM. Pawlet Planning Commission, Town Hall

5/27, Tuesday, 7 PM. Select Board, Town Hall



*For Pawlet Public Library events and news Facebook "Pawlet Public Library"*

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## TOWN OFFICE NEWS

*Town Clerk, Deb Hawkins*

**Town Meeting Day Reminders:** Town meeting is March 3, 7:30 PM, at the Mettawee Community School; town elections are March 4, 9 AM to 7 PM, at the Town Hall. The last day to register for 2014 Town Meeting is Wednesday, February 26. March 3 is the last day to request early or absentee ballots.

*Note that the Union District #47 School Board annual meeting takes on Wednesday, February 26 at 7:30 PM and is not part of town meeting.* For more information on town meeting, see page 4.

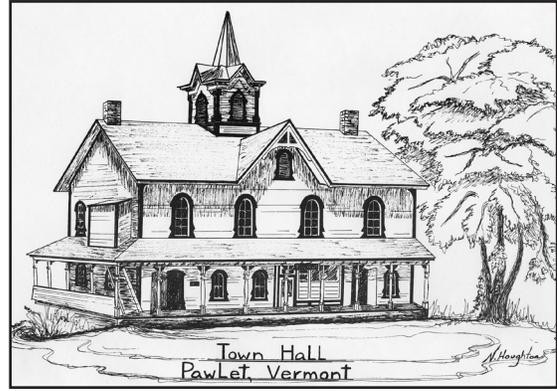
**Dog Licenses:** Vermont Law requires that owners of unlicensed dogs over the age of 6 months come to the Town Clerk's office during regular hours to license their dogs. All owners must also present a current rabies certificate to the Town Clerk by April 1 of each year. If the dog has been spayed or neutered, that certificate must be presented for the reduced license fee.

**Get connected:** Are you on Facebook? Check out the Pawlet Town Clerk Facebook Page for regular updates, notices of meetings, election results, emergency management notices, and more! If you would like to receive updates directly to your e-mail, send an e-mail to [pawletclerk@vermontel.net](mailto:pawletclerk@vermontel.net) and put "add me to the e-mail list" in the subject line.

**Town Clerk office hours:** Monday & Wednesday, 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM; Tuesday, 11 AM – 6 PM; Thursday, 9 AM – 12 PM. Closed Friday. Contact: 325-3309, [pawletclerk@vermontel.net](mailto:pawletclerk@vermontel.net).

**Holiday closing:** The Town Clerk's office will be closed on Monday, May 26, 2014, in observance of Memorial Day.

**Town Treasurer, Judy Coolidge:** Office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 9 AM – 12 PM & 1 – 4 PM. Contact: 325-3309, [pawlettreas@vermontel.net](mailto:pawlettreas@vermontel.net).



*Town Hall, by Nancy Offensend Houghton*

**Select Board:** The Pawlet Select Board meets at 7 PM every other Tuesday at the Town Hall. The public is encouraged to attend. Meeting minutes are posted at the post offices in Pawlet and West Pawlet and on the town web site <http://pawlet.vt.gov/>; click on "Select Board" page.

The board has five members: Mike Beecher (Chair), Bob Jones (Vice Chair), Clarence Decker, Charles Weeden, Sr. & Shannon Hosley Landon. Clerk of the board is Kim Ayers.

**Listers:** Call the Listers' Office at 325-3309 or e-mail [pawletlister@vermontel.net](mailto:pawletlister@vermontel.net). Also consult our page at the Town web site <http://pawlet.vt.gov/>. Listers are Charles Mason, Elaine Decker, and Karen Folger. Office hours are by chance or appointment.

**Planning Commission:** Meeting minutes are posted at the post offices in Pawlet and West Pawlet and on the town web site <http://pawlet.vt.gov/>; see "Planning Commission" page. The commission meets every fourth Monday, 7:30 PM, at the Town Hall.

**Health Officer:** Monthly reports and other information are posted on the town web site. Contact Health Officer Bob Morlino at 325-2116 for assistance.

### TOWN OF PAWLET WARNING FOR ANNUAL MEETING

**Information Meeting – March 3, 2014**

**Town Meeting Day - March 4, 2014**

The legal voters of the Town of Pawlet are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Mettawee Community School on Route 153, Monday, March 3, 2014 at 7:30 PM to transact business not involving voting by Australian Ballot or voting required by law to be done by ballot; said meeting to be adjourned and will reconvene in the Town Hall in said Town on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 to vote for Town Officers and to transact any business involving voting by Australian Ballot to begin at 9:00 A.M. and to close at 7:00 PM. The legal voters of the Town of Pawlet, Vermont are hereby warned and notified to vote on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 between the hours of 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM in the Conference Room of the Town Hall, School Street, Pawlet.

*Deb Hawkins, Town Clerk*

**NEWS FOR TOWN MEETING DAY, MARCH 4, 2014**

*From the Vermont Secretary of State:*

On Town Meeting Day, the first Tuesday in March, citizens across Vermont come together in their communities to discuss the business of their towns. For over 200 years Town Meeting Day has been an important political event as Vermonters elect local officers and vote on budgets. It has also been a time for neighbors to discuss the civic issues of their community, state, and nation.

**Important Town Meeting Dates**  
 Register to vote by February 26  
 Obtain absentee ballots by March 3  
 Attend UD #47 Annual Meeting: February 26, 7:30 PM, Mettawee Community School  
 Attend Town Meeting: March 3, 7:30 PM, Mettawee Community School  
 Vote: March 4, 9 AM – 7 PM, Town Hall

**TOWN OFFICE POSITIONS AND CANDIDATES, TOWN OF PAWLET**

**Moderator (Town)** (1 year)

Vote for not more than 1  
 John C. Thrasher

**Moderator (School)** (1 year)

Vote for not more than 1  
 John C. Thrasher

**Town Clerk** (3 years)

Vote for not more than 1  
 Debra A. Hawkins

**Town Treasurer** (3 years)

Vote for not more than 1  
 Judith S. Coolidge  
 James Glick

**Selectboard** (1 year)

Vote for not more than 2  
 Charles L. Weeden, Sr.

**Selectboard** (3 years)

Vote for not more than 1  
 Robert (Bob) Jones

**Lister** (3 years)

Vote for not more than 1  
 Elaine Decker

**Second Constable** (2 years)

Vote for not more than 1  
 William T. Humphries

**Delinquent Tax Collector** (1 year)

Vote for not more than 1  
 Kim L. Jones

**Town Agent** (1 year)

Vote for not more than 1

**Grand Juror** (1 year)

Vote for not more than 1

**Pawlet School Director** (3 years)

Vote for not more than 1  
 Norma Weeden

**UD #47 School Director** (3 years)

Vote for not more than 2  
 Scarlett Duncan  
 Cori Rail

**Library Trustee** (3 years)

Vote for not more than 2

*Proposed General Fund Budget: \$355,279*

*Proposed Highway Budget: \$420,345*

*Note: The warnings for the Town of Pawlet, the Union School District #47, and the Pawlet Town School District are posted at the Town Hall and post offices and online at <http://pawlet.vt.gov/town-offices/town-clerk/>.*



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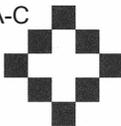
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## TOWN GREEN PROJECT COMPLETED

The Town of Pawlet would like to acknowledge everyone who helped make the recent improvements to the green in Pawlet Village center.

The design for the project was done jointly by Gary Baierlein and Eric Mach. Gary was also responsible for the landscaping work and has donated perpetual maintenance of the green by his business, Baierlein Landscaping. Eric did the stone work, including the curbstones, with granite paid for by Club 2011. J & J Trucking of Pawlet transported the granite from Castleton. Matt Waite Excavation donated the topsoil.

The green also has a new flagpole donated by Morning Flower Lodge. Additional funds for the project were donated by Fred Shehadi and John Beer.

In related work, the Highway Department paved School street and Weatherby Lane. More than 20 parallel parking places have been laid out, as well as 2 handicap parking places and a crosswalk.

The Town of Pawlet would like to thank everyone who donated their time, materials, and funding for this project. A healthy town green and improved parking are significant improvements to our village center.



*The newly redesigned and landscaped town green in Pawlet Village Center, as seen from the Town Hall.*

### WEST PAWLET COMMUNITY FARMERS MARKET *The Biggest Little Happening Around!*



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## STATE HOUSE UPDATE *John Malcolm, Representative for Pawlet, Middletown Springs, Rupert, Tinmouth and Wells*

The Legislature is in full gear as we conclude the second month of the session. Most of our work at this time happens in our committees as we take testimony, revise and deliberate on some of the 1,000 bills that have been introduced. As a full House we have voted out a campaign financing bill and a bill that makes midyear adjustments to the state's FY2014 budget.

Some of the issues that are receiving considerable attention in the StateHouse include the problems, remedies and successes of the health care exchange, the continuing discussion of the governance, funding and quality of education in the state, a bill concerning development along the shorelands of lakes and another bill proposing changes to the use value appraisal program for agricultural and forest land.

The appropriation committees are hard at work considering the Governor's proposed FY2015 spending and budget bill.

In the House Natural Resources and Energy committee, we heard from 28 witnesses as we considered adjustments to expand the state's very successful renewable energy net metering program where people can generate electricity and get credit towards their use from their utility. As the Federal solar tax credits are scheduled to expire in late 2016, we are setting up a review to design a new program to take effect in 2017. The committee is also discussing bills concerning the recycling of milk and juice containers and non rechargeable batteries.



Please contact me about any legislative issues at 325-3424, 1822 Rupert Mountain Rd., Pawlet, VT 05761; JMalcolm@leg.state.vt.us. *Rep. John Malcolm*

### KEEP INFORMED BY DIGITAL MEDIA

#### GET PAWLET ENEWS, VISIT YOUR TOWN'S WEB SITE AND CHECK OUT FRONT PORCH FORUM

The editor of this newsletter maintains an e-mail group list for updates on local events via e-mail. To receive Pawlet eNews, contact Elizabeth Gibson at egib@vermontel.net. Visit the web site for the Town of Pawlet at <http://pawlet.vt.gov/>. Leave comments, news and updates at the site or e-mail egib@vermontel.net. And check out the new Pawlet-Wells Front Porch Forum web site to share postings with your neighbors at <http://frontporchforum.com/>. Front Porch Forum helps neighbors connect and build community by hosting regional networks of online neighborhood/town forums.

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**WRITER SEEKS INFORMATION ABOUT EDWARD T. JONES, JR., OF WEST PAWLET**

Edward T. Jones, Jr., was born in 1917 in West Pawlet and went to high school in Granville, New York. He was an important person whose story is being told in a forthcoming book.

A sergeant in the U.S. Army during World War II, Jones was killed and listed as Missing in Action in 1944. His remains were discovered by a German Explosive Ordnance Disposal team in Kommerscheidt, Germany, on September 24, 2008. Jones was buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Middle Granville, New York, on September 25, 2010. He was returning home after being away for 66 years!

My name is Jack Wilson, and I live in Harvard, Massachusetts. My uncle, Staff Sergeant John J.

Farrell, Jr., of Arlington, Massachusetts was killed with Edward Jones, and both men were buried in the same shallow grave in Germany.

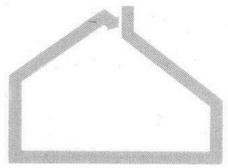
This is to request the help of the people of Pawlet and West Pawlet in learning more about Jones and his family.

Some questions are: What were Edward's interests? What type of personality did he have? Was he a good student? Did he enjoy sports? Where did he work after high school? Did he enlist with his friends? What were his family's interests?

Any information would be greatly appreciated. Please respond to: John L. (Jack) Wilson, 52 Myrick Lane, Harvard, MA 01451, 978-772-0397, wiljl52@yahoo.com.

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## TOWN HALL BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUE

This year some major improvements have been made to Pawlet's Town Hall, including installing a fire stair on the back of the building. This latest phase of the restoration project is one of many upgrades required to use the upstairs auditorium for community events.

Installation of the fire stair was made possible by a grant from the Vermont Arts Council, with matching funds provided by the town and by many generous donations. The Town would especially like to thank The Wells Chapter of the Modern Woodmen of America, which hosted a Super Bingo event to benefit the project, with all proceeds matched by the Home Office of the Modern Woodmen.

Significant energy efficiency improvements have also been made. A vapor barrier was put down on the floor of the sub-basement, and foam sealing was applied to the basement wall. More recently the attic was insulated. This work was performed by Weatherization Works of Pawlet. Partial funding came from Neighbor-Works of Western Vermont and Efficiency Vermont.

The Town Hall has served Pawlet's town government continuously since it was built in 1881. The restoration project began in 2003 when Pawlet voters decided by a margin of 3 to 1 not to investigate the construction of a new town office building. Since then the first floor offices have been renovated, and the entire building has been made ADA-compliant. The cupola has been fully restored, and the auditorium ceiling has been stabilized.

The Town gratefully acknowledges the many contributions to this effort. Longtime resident Bill Rudkin, who died in December, will be remembered for his generosity to many community projects over the years.



*Newly installed fire stair on rear of Town Hall, as seen from the fire exit from the upstairs auditorium. Source: Judith Gibson-Okunieff*

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### Pawlet Library's Board of Trustees Seeks Volunteers

The library needs help as we seek a new Library Director: Beth Kashner is resigning the position after six years, and we thank her for her dedication and years of service. Library hours are: Sunday and Monday closed; Tuesday 11 AM – 7 PM; Wednesday 12 – 6 PM; Thursday 11:30 AM – 5 PM; Friday 11:30 AM – 3 PM; Saturdays closed until the new director is hired. All activities such as yoga, Bone Builders and organization meetings will not be affected by this change of staff. For information, call the library at 325-3123.

Also note: The library will be accepting books until shortly before this year's annual Book Sale, July 26 - 27.

*Thank you, Library Board*

### VERMONT TAX FORMS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE AND BY REQUEST

The Vermont Individual Income Tax Return Booklet for tax year 2013, which includes instructions and commonly used forms, is now online on the Vermont Department of Taxes web site, along with other Vermont tax forms. *These forms will no longer be distributed through town offices, post offices and libraries.*

Taxpayers may also to e-file their federal and state income taxes using a vendor of choice. "We encourage people to file electronically," said Mary Peterson, commissioner for the Department of Taxes. "We see a growing number of Vermont taxpayers e-filing because they are finding it is easy, convenient and secure. Taxpayers also find that they get their refunds more quickly when they e-file, as quickly as two to three days."

A number of eligible taxpayers also take advantage of free tax preparation with programs through the IRS-

sponsored Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) or the AARP Foundation Tax Aide. Information about this year's programs may be found on the department's website at [www.bit.ly/TaxAssistance](http://www.bit.ly/TaxAssistance) or by calling 802-828-2865 or toll-free in Vermont 866-828-2865.

The tax booklet and forms may be found online at [www.tax.vermont.gov](http://www.tax.vermont.gov). This year, the department is introducing an "Individual Income Tax Resource Area" on its homepage where taxpayers will find links to forms, instructions and other resources they will need to file their Vermont income taxes. Paper copies of the booklet and forms may be ordered by emailing [taxforms@state.vt.us](mailto:taxforms@state.vt.us) or by calling the toll-free number 855-297-5600. The request should include full name, mailing address, form numbers and quantity of forms needed.

*State of Vermont, Department of Taxes*



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PAWLET AND WEST PAWLET FIRE DEPARTMENTS

### Keeping Your Home Safe from Fire

Here are six simple steps that every resident of Pawlet can take today to help protect their family and property from fire.

#### 1. Install smoke detectors and maintain them.

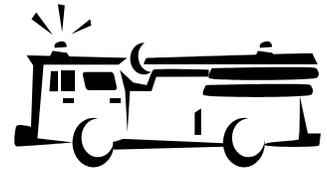
Having a working smoke detector cuts your chance of dying in a house fire in half. Detectors should be installed on every level of the home and outside every sleeping area. Make sure your detectors are in good working order: They must be replaced after ten years, so check the date of manufacture (usually printed on the back) every time you change the battery. If you don't know how old the detector is, replace it. If you're annoyed by frequent false alarms, move the detector to a better location instead of removing the batteries.

**2. Practice home escape drills.** Having detectors to alert you to a fire is half the battle; knowing how to make a quick exit when the detector goes off is the other half. Find two ways out of every bedroom and establish a meeting place away from the home so you can be sure that everyone has gotten out safely. This is especially important for families with young children. Draw a map together and then practice your plan — a great way to help kids remember what to do when the detector goes off. Make sure everyone knows that once you get out, you must stay out. Never re-enter a burning structure under any circumstances.

**3. Heat with care.** In Vermont, structure fires are often caused by heating appliances and are almost entirely preventable. Chimneys must be inspected regularly and cleaned as needed. With wood stoves, a good rule of thumb is to inspect the chimney each autumn and then after each cord of wood you burn. If you don't know how to clean and inspect a chimney, call a licensed chimney sweep. Remember that wood embers can look "out" but remain hot enough to start a fire for up to four days. Shovel your ashes into a sealed metal container and place it away from your house to cool before disposing of them.

#### 4. Keep an extinguisher in your home.

A type "ABC" dry chemical fire extinguisher should be stored in every kitchen. A small extinguisher does not cost a lot or take up much space and can keep a minor cooking mishap from becoming a major house fire. An extinguisher is a great thing to have in every workshop or garage, too.



**5. Use extension cords properly.** Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis and should be discarded if they are damaged in any way. Extension cords should be rated for their intended use (indoor or outdoor) and meet or exceed the power needs they are being used for. Never daisy-chain or overload extension cords and power strips. A cord that is hot to the touch is a sign of imminent danger. Do not run cords through walls, ceilings or under rugs, where fraying or overheating could go unnoticed, leading to a fire.

**6. Help us help you!** The West Pawlet and Pawlet fire departments stand ready to help you when you need it, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. But can we find you? Can we get to you? We rely on property owners to post their address so that it is plainly visible from the road, day or night, and not obstructed by snow, brush, or decorations. Make sure everyone in your household knows the address, especially kids, so that they can call for help if they ever need it. We also count on property owners to maintain plowed access to their property in the wintertime so that we can get a fire truck to your home.

Thanks for your help in keeping our community safe.

*Dale Decker, Chief, Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department*

*David Hosley, Chief, West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department*

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## HAYSTACK MOUNTAIN LAND CONSERVED TO PROTECT PUBLIC ACCESS

A year ago, the Friends of Haystack, a nonprofit community organization, purchased 66 acres atop Haystack Mountain in the North Pawlet Hills to protect public access and the scenic character of this well-loved landmark. Now, to ensure its work will be permanent, the group has donated a conservation easement to the Vermont Land Trust.

The conserved land includes the fully exposed summit, which has a 360-degree view of the surrounding landscape and can be reached after a brisk one-hour hike. Protection of this parcel was vital to permanently ensure recreational access to the summit.

The mountain has long been an important landmark and recreational destination for both locals and visitors from around the world. The property is

surrounded on three sides by previously protected land. These parcels include land conserved with the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, the Vermont Land Trust, and The Nature Conservancy's 1,444-acre North Pawlet Hills Natural Area.

The Friends of Haystack credits the sellers, the Barrow Family, for being great partners in this conservation effort and for their many decades of excellent stewardship of the mountain.

The Haystack land was paid for entirely by private funds raised locally by the Friends. Costs associated with placing a Vermont Land Trust conservation easement on the land were covered by a generous bequest from the late Betsy Edwards of Dorset.



*View of Haystack Mountain from ledge on Middle Mountain. Source: George Bouret*



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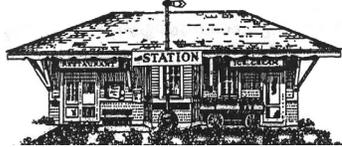
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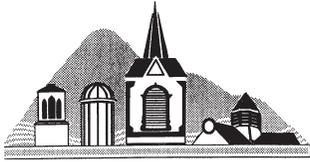


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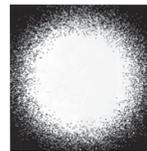
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*Ads: Business Card \$25 (4 issues, 20% discount: \$80); Double Business Card \$50 (4 issues, 20% discount: \$160)*

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*News to: Elizabeth Gibson, Editor, 128 Solar Park, Pawlet, VT 05761; 325-3619, egib@vermontel.net.*