

MAY 2018

HALIFAX NEWS

HALIFAX SUGARING UPDATE 2018

Spring came early, and winter ran late this year. Peepers were not heard by April 11th as happened in 2017. Snow, sleet and freezing rain greeted us on April 16th when most had finished their last boil. But all sugarers considered it a good season with more light syrup made than in previous years.

Two years ago the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association introduced a new classification of maple syrup grading in order to make it easier to understand and to be adopted by sugarers in other states and in Canada where slightly different standards apply. Now there are four types of Vermont maple syrup: "Golden" (with delicate taste), "Amber" (with rich taste), "dark" with robust taste) and "very dark" (with strong taste). This system replaces light amber or "fancy", medium amber, dark amber, dark, and grade "B". (Golden is the same as fancy, amber is a combination of medium amber and lighter dark amber and dark is the darker dark amber and grade "B"). There is still a grade "C" which is sold commercially and figures in manufactured products which have maple as an ingredient. The new classification system is gradually being adopted by all states producing syrup as well as Quebec, the largest source of maple syrup. It will make it easier to market product outside the United States when there is one uniform approach.



Imitation maple syrups using cane sugar have long attempted to imitate the flavor and color of dark syrup, and real dark syrup was the most popular at the recent Halifax Community Club benefit breakfast. But all flavors are good, and individuals' tastes differ. Vermont was the first to develop the lightest grade and called it "fancy". Some traditional sugar makers and consumers prefer that syrup and still call it by that name. Most people use darker grades in food they want to have the distinct maple flavor, such as baked beans, and save the lightest grade for ice cream or sugar on snow, where the delicate flavor will not be lost. Amber is the grade most produced and sold.

The four varieties of syrup are all Grade A. The difference is determined by the transparency of the liquid. Golden is equal to or greater than 75% transparent, Amber between 50 and 74%, Dark from 25% to 49% and Very Dark less than 25% transparent. The flavor of all types must be good in order to be sold retail, not an off flavor such as "sour", caused by sap being held too long before boiling allowing the development of microorganisms, "buddy" caused by the trees budding out late in the season, or "metabolism", a cardboard, popcorn or woody flavor. For those unfamiliar with these unpleasant tastes and wanting to know or be sure, the University of Vermont Extension Proctor Maple Research Center has developed a three-bottle kit to aid sugarers in identifying off flavors. The Off-flavor syrup reference kit can be purchased through the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association. The cost is \$10, plus shipping and handling. Contact Amanda Voyer at amandav@vermontmaple.org for ordering.

Nowadays there are digital readers which can classify syrup. They are very precise, giving a numerical percentage of transparency. Most sugarers in Halifax still rely on the somewhat more subjective approach of the wooden frame with three small, square bottles of colored liquid in the lightest three shades. The frame contains four slots so that a bottle of whatever has been produced can be compared to the standards. If the shade is slightly darker than the lightest, it is graded "amber" and so down the scale. The light source should be reliable and consistent in order to maintain proper standards.

Most sugarers in Halifax gathered and boiled during the days of mild weather in February and had to wait over ten days for temperatures to get above freezing in March, along with wrestling with too much snow. But they all judged the season a success. The Longe family sugarhouse reached their goal, producing 148 gallons, using 868 taps on tubing and 640 buckets. They made 108 gallons of golden, including some at 85% transparency, a personal best, and 40 gallons of amber. The Putnam family made 652 gallons of which 325 was golden and 327 amber on about 1400 taps, all tubing. Malcolm Sumner made 264 gallons, 150 golden, 75 amber and 35 dark, using 400 taps on tubing and 300 taps with buckets. Ben Barnett boiled up 152 gallons, 10 of golden, 71 of amber and 71 of dark, with 600 taps on tubing. With the aid of a new reverse osmosis machine, Jeff and Lisa Duncan at Northloop Maple Farm produced 5 gallons of golden, 90 gallons of amber and 9 gallons of dark with 450 taps, all on pipeline. Sean King used 5000 pipeline taps to make 36 barrels of amber and 14 barrels of dark. Randy Pike was unable to sugar this year but has good plans for next year. The season ended about the same time for everyone: Malcolm boiled last on April 13, Jeff Longe on April 14, Jeff Putnam and Sean King on April 15. Some still had sap in their buckets when they took them down, but many had dry holes from the long season. With luck by the time this journal reaches your home we will have seen the last of the snow for this winter in Halifax.

– John Kirk, April 19, 2018, Halifax, Vermont



Photographs: Laurel Copeland

Community News

BENEFIT BREAKFAST UPCOMING MAY 5TH

On Saturday, May 5, 2018, you can have **Breakfast in West Halifax** at the Halifax Community Hall, 20 Brook Road. First, the Turkey Hunters' Early Bird Special will be serving **breakfast sandwiches from 5 AM to 8 AM** consisting of English muffin, ham OR sausage, egg and cheese all for **\$3.00**. Stop by and grab a great easy breakfast before, during, or after hunting the elusive turkeys. OR stop by **beginning at 8 AM** for our hearty **Special Benefit Breakfast, a superb feast!** The proceeds from



the breakfast will go to the Halifax Fire Department. The kitchen crew will again be the *Breakfast & Suppers Gang* led by Coopers Coop of Metcalf Road. For only **\$7 (\$5 for kids 5-12, free for preschoolers)** you will get homemade Eggs Benedict made with Halifax eggs & Vermont Ham, Sausage gravy on Biscuits with Jacksonville General Store sausage, Fried Potatoes, and 3 kinds of Pancakes: Plain, Chocolate Chip, and fresh Blueberry topped off with Real Maple Syrup tapped and boiled in Halifax. Mmmm!

The breakfast & suppers clan (affectionately known as 'the BS clan') hopes to bring back some of the Halifax suppers soon. Come to the Breakfast on May 5th to fill out a mini-survey about what you want to see for supper (or breakfast)!

COMMUNITY CLUB

The Community Club pot luck on Saturday, April 28 was postponed to June.

The Halifax Community Club (HCC) did not meet in April due to mud season holding sway over Hanson Road. This is not to say the road has been impassable: our wonderful Road

Crew grooms it frequently to ensure we can all get to work, etc. The next regular meeting of the HCC will be at 6:45 pm on **Monday, May 14**, at Art & Lynda Copeland's house, 1581 Hanson Road. If you are interested in volunteering in the various HCC and Halifax Community Hall projects (it's almost time for spring yard clean-up!), contact LaurelACopeland@gmail.com / (802) 368-2439.

FIREMEN's NEWS

On April 8, twelve men and two trucks plus rescue personnel and ambulance responded to a motor vehicle accident on Rte. 112.

The firemen were called to Marlboro but were turned back (sorry about not knowing and reporting the date and times, I am in NJ and the info I need is in VT. Usually Wayne is in VT. to give me the info but he has joined me in NJ this trip; will supply any I missed next month).

FORTY YEAR AWARD ACCOMPLISHMENT



We are very happy and proud to announce that born and raised in Halifax **Malcolm Sumner** was awarded a forty-year service plaque at the annual March Forest Fire dinner meeting this year. Malcolm started as Halifax's Forest Fire warden when he was only twenty years old. Forest fire warden is a very important & detailed job. As fire warden he is in charge at all forest/brush fires, handling the extinguishing of the fire, the safety of all firefighters on hand, always knowing the direction of the wind & the terrain of the land, and much more. He must fill out paperwork on the fire, report how much acreage burnt, how many firefighters were there and what equipment was used, and ensure equipment is brought back and put in its proper place while making sure the brush truck and other fire equipment is back in service ready to go to the next call. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated, hardworking, generous man volunteering his time in our town

for forty years. Malcolm is also Assistant Chief of the Halifax Fire Department. Congratulations Malcolm! If you should see Malcolm, **shake his hand for a much-deserved "thank you"**.

IT IS BRUSH FIRE SEASON... Remember... **You DO need a PERMIT to burn.** Call Malcolm Sumner @ 368-2484 or Wayne Courser @ 368-7733 for a burn permit.

Other concerns to report? Contact First Constable Andrew Rice (802-380-1986) and Second Constable Roy Richardson: halifaxconstable@gmail.com.

SENIOR MEAL

May 18 at the Halifax Community Hall at 20 Brook Road, West Halifax is the next Senior Meal. We serve at noon, and all seniors are welcome. This month's meal is affectionately called 'Clean Out the Freezer' month. It may consist of meatloaf, meatballs, mac and cheese, sweet sausage stroganoff and a few other things we have had in the recent past. I hope you are curious enough to come and try it all out. You know it is all good as you have had it all before! We will have a vegetable and rolls and dessert also. Mmmmmm! 😊
Sponsored by Senior Solutions. A call to Joan is appreciated 802-368-7733 or e-mail at jwcinvt@gmail.com.

SIGHTINGS

Folks are getting much better about e-mailing me their sightings which I am so happy to receive. I also love it when I see folks face to face or get a call about a sighting, BUT my memory isn't as good as it used to be and sometimes I forget what they tell me so the e-mail works great. Keep contacting me however is best for you.

Up on Hanson Road the Copelands are enjoying the woodpeckers (hairy) and robins, chickadees and crows, killdeer, a tom turkey displaying (pic), goldfinches & sparrows, and a hungry female grey fox. Foxes keep the mice down which helps reduce spread of Lyme disease. Mouse tracks abound on the snow up there. Laurel spotted a groundhog down on Rte. 112 and



another on Art's fields, a red fox on Collins Road, and a pair of pileated woodpeckers on Hatch School (same ones as last year?) plus an otter on the pond below Puseys' -- that might be Marlboro, tho'.

Katie and Adam on a walk saw a Snipe, and at their place they have seen Evening Grosbeaks, Red Winged Blackbird, several Cardinals, beautiful yellow Goldfinch, Juncos, Mourning Doves and Turkey. Katie wrote, "We have had a lot of exciting sightings in the yard the past week. Three male flickers showed up in the front yard on Monday - fighting for the suet feeder. We also saw a gray fox the same day. In fact, he was back today munching on sunflower seeds and some bread I had put out for the jays. Yesterday I saw a gorgeous red fox whom I've seen before but not for some time. And today I saw a female flicker, or juvenile, but I think it is a female due to its size. I have included pictures for you. And we have been hearing and seeing a lot of pileated woodpeckers lately."



Foxes and Flickers on the Brook Road, West Halifax VT, April 2018

Wayne and Joan have seen some deer and turkey and a flicker (pictured). At the feeders we still have lots of Juncos, Shiny-headed Blackbirds, Cardinals, and like Katie and Adam the beautiful summer yellow feathers of the Goldfinch. Still many Purple Finch and many other Spring birds. Soon we hope to see the Hummers and Red-Breasted Grosbeak and Orioles.



I [Joan] am very sad to tell of losing one of my chickens to a fox.

Please share your bird and other animal sightings with us: e-mail jwcinvt@gmail.com.

BERNICE BARNETT

May 19th are the graveside services for Bernice (Burnett) Barnett (August 4, 1937 - January 18, 2018). Following the committal services there will be a luncheon at the Community Hall.

SORROW

It is with sadness we report of the death of John M. Platek, Jr. (August 6, 1970 - April 8, 2018). John was a resident of Halifax. He tragically died in a single-car accident on Rte. 112. Our sympathy and thoughts are extended to his family.

NEWSLETTER NEWS

Got a great Halifax story? Write it up and send it over! We look to you, folks, for our front-page stories and short articles, too. PLEASE contact Joan if you have a story to contribute to the Halifax Newsletter: jwcinvt@gmail.com 802.368.7733 or laurelacopeland@gmail.com. Keep our newsletter going!

Thank you to all contributors, past and present. ...ALSO.... when your subscription expires (date in red on your address label) the subscription price is now \$7.00 per year, mailed to PO Box 27, W. Halifax, VT 05358.



Crocuses (at last!) on Branch Road, West Halifax VT (4/21/2018)

– Joan Courser

HALIFAX

Mr. and Mrs. Leon LaRock and Mrs. Douglas Carpenter and children went to Quechee Sunday to celebrate the birthday of Mrs. Robert Bessett.

There will be a dance in Community Hall Saturday nite with Dick Perry's band of Brattleboro furnishing music.

WEST HALIFAX

Visitors at the Wheeler-Rafus home on Mother's Day were Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Wheeler; Mr. and Mrs. Delmont Hicks of West Deerfield; Mrs. Mattie Carpenter, Mr. and Mrs. Newcomb Smead, Jr., and son of Greenfield, Mass.; Mrs. Olive Hudson, Ronald and Claire Hudson of Brattleboro; Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Wheeler of Somerset; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wheeler of Hawley, Mass.; Mrs. Annie Rafus and Mr. and Mrs. Loren Dexter of Bellows Falls.

Visitors at Leon LaRock's Sunday were Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Carpenter and children of Readsboro, Bernard LaRock of New York, Roberta and Gertrude MacFarland of Wilmington,

SOUTH HALIFAX

Mr. and Mrs. William E. Hebard of Brookfield, Mass., spent Sunday with his brother, Emory Hebard, and family. Miss Claire Hebard of Springfield, Mass., Miss Janet Hebard and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Lively and child were week end guests of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Emory Hebard, and brother, Roswell.

Mrs. Mary Burnett, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Sumner, Mr. and Mrs. Burton Hill and Mr. and Mrs. Emory Hebard of Guiding Star Grange visited the Montague, Mass., Grange last Friday evening. The Massachusetts state lecturer, Mrs. Dorothy Warden of Oxford, Mass., gave an address. Guiding Star Grange neighbored with Colrain, Mass., Grange Tuesday night.

The teachers, graduation committee and some parents met at Valley School Tuesday and discussed plans for graduation which will take place in the village church June 11, at 8 o'clock, followed by a dance in Community Hall. Seven pupils are expected to graduate.

Miss Nellie Upright and Mrs. Martha Upright and two daughters of Conway, Mass., spent Sunday at the Miner Farm.

SOUTH HALIFAX

Mrs. Edmund Litchfield of "Makepeace Farm" returned Monday from a few days' visit at the home of her sister, Miss Beatrice Wood, in Montclair, N. J. Her brother, Harold Wood, returned home with her to visit for an indefinite period.

Daniel MacKensie of Worcester, Mass., is visiting his daughter, Mrs. Fred May.

Mr. and Mrs. Norris Johnson and children, Dinah and Eric, of White Plains, N. Y., spent the week end at the Miner farm and inspected their own place in town.



PHOENIX, BRATTLEBORO, FRIDAY, MAY 7, 1948

JACKSONVILLE

Honored on Birthday.

C. A. Murdock was given a surprise party in honor of his 78th birthday Tuesday night at the club room. In appreciation of his care of the room for the past two years Mr. Murdock was given a sum of money by the "boys" who also served refreshments of cake and coffee.

A special meeting of the members of the Republican town committee will be held in the selectmen's rooms in North River Hall this evening at 8 o'clock.

Gary Ferguson and Bruce Caldwell who are having a week's vacation from their school in North Adams, Mass., are visiting their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Reed and Mr. and Mrs. Hilding Stenson.

Bruce Schwartz of Deerfield, Mass., is visiting Mr. and Mrs. Roger Moody.

Rev. and Mrs. Ernest Sommerfeld and three children of Springfield, Mass., were guests last week Thursday afternoon and evening of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Teeple. James Miller and Miss Lovell of Boston spent Sunday at the Teeple home.

Rev. and Mrs. Weston Cate and daughter, Andrea, of North Adams, Mass., visited Mrs. Hollis Stetson Thursday afternoon.

Robert Bartlett of East Bridgewater,

Mass., has come to stay for the present with his grandmother, Mrs. Hollis Stetson.

Mr. and Walter Grant of Greenfield, Mass., were callers Sunday afternoon in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Willard.

Loretta, little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Dary, is quarantined for the mumps. Mrs. Marguerite Roberts is staying with her during the day while her mother is teaching.

Mrs. Minnie Tefft finished work Saturday for Mrs. Hollis Stetson and went Sunday to Colrain, Mass., to assist in the care of Roy Nichols.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hall of Concord, N. H., and Mrs. Raymond Hall of Amherst, Mass., called on Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Allen Sunday.

Twenty-three members of North River Grange attended services in Whitingham Sunday when Rev. Lucie Freeman observed Rural Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Aimee Le Cours entertained her brother and family of Hartford, Conn., Sunday.

Several from here attended a minstrel show in Wilmington Saturday evening.

High School News.

Three movies, "History of Silver Plate," "Futurama," and "Yosemite National Park," were shown in assembly Friday, April 30.

The Whitingham High School team

played baseball with the Wilmington High School team Monday at the field there. Wilmington won by the score of 7-6. The next game with Wilmington will be played May 17.

A P-T-A. meeting was held at Whitingham High School Monday evening. Officers were installed. Visitors from Readsboro and Monroe Bridge were present. The officers are: President, Mrs. Mary Coombs; vice-president, Mrs. Cora Davis; secretary, Mrs. Dorothy Griffin; treasurer, Mrs. Carrie Roberts. It was voted to give \$9 toward the musical festival trip and \$3 to the Harriet Durkee Memorial Fund.

The students going to the Music Festival in Burlington left yesterday morning, accompanied by Mrs. Ernest Griffin and George Winter.

Report cards will be given out this week.

The following boys enrolled in vocational agriculture will participate in the annual state judging contest in Burlington May 14. Dairy cattle team: John Brigham, Lee Stone and Francis Bartlett; poultry and egg team: Howard Bemis, Ronald Morse and Carl Stone; potato team, Roland Morse, Richard Cutting and Harold Pratt.

The scrap drive is in progress all this week.

The Netherland shipped about 8,000 tons of tulip bulbs to the United States in 1947.

NAMES IN THE NEWS in 1948

- Allen
- Bartlett
- Bemis
- Brigham
- Burnett
- Caldwell
- Carpenter
- Coombs
- Cutting
- Dary
- Davis
- Dexter
- Ferguson
- Griffin
- Hebard
- Hicks
- Hill
- Hudson
- Johnson
- LaRock
- Le Cours
- Litchfield
- Lively
- May
- Miner
- Morse
- Murdock
- Pratt
- Rafus
- Reed
- Roberts
- Smead
- Stetson
- Stone
- Sumner
- Teeple
- Upright
- Wheeler
- Willard
- Winter



Green River Rising, late April 2018



West Halifax, VT 05358
P.O. Box 27
NEWSLETTER

Wild Greens.

We can benefit from using wild greens. Everyone likes a bargain and it would be hard to find a better one in these days of high food prices than a variety of greens—free for the picking.

Dandelions, fiddlehead ferns and cowslip are favorite early wild greens in Vermont. Later in the spring, cress, curly dock, sorrel pussley, chicory, lamb's-quarters and milkweed shoots are available. Since most greens become tough and strong in flavor as they mature, the younger they are the better they taste. As with any greens, they need to be washed in enough water to remove all traces of sand. Then they may be used as cultivated ones.

Quick cooking in water that cling to the leaves and seasoning with butter, margarine, bacon or salt pork fat and vinegar produces an excellent dish. Chopped onion or green pepper may be added for variety. Crisp, young, chopped greens are good in raw vegetable salads. They may replace the lettuce in any tossed salad mixture.

Greens Column & Potato Ad, 1948

Halifax News

OLD & NEW!
MAY 2018



Brook Road tributary, West Halifax VT, Apr 2018



Reed Hill Road, West Halifax VT, late April 2018