

NOVEMBER 2018

# HALIFAX NEWS

GARDEN DELIGHT

**A snake lives** in my wife's garden. Well, it probably lives in the old stone foundation wall that forms one of the garden's borders. My wife calls it a garter snake and says it's good for the garden, that it eats the little chipmunks and other critters that eat the tomatoes, squashes and other vegetables. I don't know this for sure, but I suppose I believe her. It probably also eats the toads that eat the slugs that eat the peppers and cabbages I like to eat but my wife doesn't want to talk about that since she likes the toads. She also says it's a cute snake. I'm sure I don't believe that.

**My wife says** she's seen the snake many times, which makes sense since she spends a lot of time in the garden. She says it's "only" about two feet long. "Only?" I've personally only seen the tail but for all I know that could be attached to another 20 feet of snake. In fact, I'm convinced that even if I saw an entire two feet of snake it wouldn't make a difference since I know that two-feet of snake could still swallow me whole if it wanted to. And I know it wants to do that. But I won't give it the chance.

I'll go into the garden to ooh and ah at her work and pick a few beans, cukes or tomatoes for dinner, but I'm out at the slightest rustle of leaves - a telltale sign of the serpent. As far as I'm concerned, any 'little' snake is really a massive poisonous python in disguise just trying to lure me close enough to quickly bite me, strangle me and flick its tongue tauntingly at me before consuming me. This I know for sure to the bottom of my soul.

**When the kids** were small they would delight at calling me over in the yard and then turn around holding up one of those "baby" snakes to watch my horrified expression as the color drained from my face. No, never mind: they still like to do that. Usually I laugh a nervous laugh and let them make me pet the snake before they turn it loose (to hunt for larger prey), but they never really understood the massive amount of adrenaline running through my veins. It's the same at any nature center or zoo we visit. The Magic Wings down in Deerfield is a great place to take young guests on a rainy day and has all manner of creepy things, none of which even ripple the surface of my emotions compared to the hurricane created by snakes.

**A couple years** ago I was cutting up a huge, downed maple in the woods well away from the house. It was a hot day and a lot of the tree had been cut. When the saw ran out of gas I set it down, took off my helmet and earplugs and leaned back against the stump for a rest, putting my hand out for balance. That hand landed on something soft which turned out to be another of those "little" pythons. I swear that's the closest I've ever come to dying. If not because of the snake itself then from the complete stopping of my heart when I saw what my hand was on. No kidding. I walked back to the house, left the saw in the woods, and didn't go back until the next day or so after my body and mind had recovered to some sort of normalcy. The snake or one of its brethren was on one of the logs when I returned, and my wife thought the picture I took of it was super cute - just a little brown snake she said. Right. Those logs are still in the woods.

**When I was** in second grade my bus stop was near a swamp -- er, what is now called a wetlands. It was swarming with slithery things. The water would ripple every few seconds with something moving underneath the surface...snapping turtles, snakes and miscellaneous monsters of unknown size and frightening demeanor. The older kids loved to catch frogs and snakes before the bus arrived and throw them at us younger kids. OK, I somehow survived that, possibly because I never had any issue with the non-snake creatures. But I could never understand how those older kids could get on the bus and go to school covered with 'snake'. Didn't it bother them one bit? Didn't they understand there might be some residual chemical that would turn them into a snake or at minimum cast them under the spell of the local serpents? I'm sure they spent the entire day at school and



returned home without washing the snake off their hands. That was what I thought about every time I saw them, and no, I didn't want to play with them after school, thank you.

**My mom's family** is from West Virginia. Every time we visited, and I wanted to play outside, all I would hear was about the rattlers and copperheads. Those are serious snakes compared to what we have in Vermont. My grandfather would sometimes take me on hikes across the railroad tracks and up the mountainside. He'd point out the snakes as we walked, hiding in the rocks and on the forest floor. He would explain to me how the ground was full of holes...broken, porous shale and limestone that the snakes just loved to curl up in. I'd just about climb on his back the whole way and never ever took those hikes on my own. He would also swear at the snakes which was a really big deal in my family back then and no doubt reinforced my attitude.

**A couple times** a summer I'll see one ahead of me while I'm cutting the grass. I won't run it over. Probably because my wife and kids like them so much, but also because part of me understands they're not totally evil and they do keep the mouse population at bay. Yes, I'm terrified of snakes and anything that looks / sounds / slithers like them. Yes, that fear may be irrational to you and even to me, if I think about it enough. On the other hand, there is no thinking required when I see a snake in the yard for my body to shiver and to cause me to turn and go in the other direction. I'm thankful we don't have the rattlesnakes and copperheads of West Virginia, or all the really poisonous snakes other parts of the world have. And my family has taught me to respect snakes at least a little. On the other hand, that 'cute' little tail in the garden may be connected to something much bigger than I care to know, and I'd just as well be back in the house on some other errand. ~ David Harris, Halifax, Vt

### **HALIFAX ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROJECTS**

The students in Ms, Merritt Youmell's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class visited Senior Meal in October. They chatted with the Seniors and sang lovely songs (see photo). They are collecting 4 items for Care Packages for deployed US Servicemembers. Drop off **candy, dental floss, pens, and travel-size toothpaste** at the Halifax Elementary School to help them prepare care packages.



### **TOWN REPORT**

Our Community Hall just 'sparkles' with fresh new paint. The Momaney painters did a fantastic job! The next project is completing the insulation project by insulating the walls, scheduled for later this month. The Hall heats up quicker than it used to, and the wall insulation will make it even better. We will have the two LP gas furnaces in the attic cleaned soon as the loose insulation has been disturbed during rewiring up there. Many quite costly things have been done to upgrade the old 1844 building. We have sent out our annual fundraising letter. A thank you to all that responded in helping our efforts to keep the community hall building a focal point in the village of West Halifax!

A good friend has fixed the sign that hangs on the front of the hall. The sign itself is in good repair but the letters were not. Gary Rand has made new letters with a new type of 'wood' that is really plastic composite so they will last "forever" (?) or at least a very long time. Thank you, Gary.

Hope to come up with some fundraisers to replace some of the HCC funds we have spent. Perhaps summer or fall of 2019 will find us at the Interstate 91 Welcome Center offering all kinds of delicious goods to travelers; that is always a good fundraiser. Look for future word on this potential event.

**Tai Chi** weekly sessions Wednesdays at 10 AM at the Community Hall followed by **Gentle Yoga** at 11 AM. Tai chi contact: Seth 802-490-4294. Gentle Yoga: [PenfieldChester@gmail.com](mailto:PenfieldChester@gmail.com).

**Halifax Community Club** meets monthly in good weather at the Copelands' farm on Hanson Road, and for Dutch treat dinner at New England House on December 19, 2018, at 5:30 pm. Contact: [LaurelACopeland@gmail.com](mailto:LaurelACopeland@gmail.com) or 368-7097. HCC documents: <http://czresearch.com/halifax/>



The **Snake Mountain Bluegrass Band** (<http://snakemountainbluegrass.com/>) concert and bake sale (Oct 21) was enjoyed by all and brought in some welcome funds. It was a fun event! The B&S Gang cooked up hamburgers and hotdogs. Volunteers made pies including 21 baked by Heidi (Copeland) Schmitt of West Virginia! One little kiddo, when not sitting on Dorie Mirucki's lap, was dancing and keeping the rhythm on whatever was available. And Joan and Wayne Courser were kicking up their heels!



Fun and food at the Snake Mountain Bluegrass concert on Sunday afternoon, October 21, 2018 – Halifax Community Hall

**HUNTERS TURKEY SUPPER** - The Halifax 'Celebration committee' presents the annual turkey supper November 10<sup>th</sup>, Community Hall, serving 5 to 7 PM. Turkey and all the trimmings and pie for dessert. Everyone welcome!

**FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS**

- Sept. 26 four men responded to Halifax Elementary school for a back injury. Deerfield Valley Ambulance (DVA) transported to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital (BMH).
- Sept. 27 four men responded to Abbott's Glen on Route 112 on a medical call.
- Oct. 2 three men responded to a mutual aid call to Guilford. They were turned back en route.
- Oct. 2 personnel were called to Guilford to a second alarm house fire; three men and one truck responded.
- Oct. 3 three men responded to a medical call on Thurber Road.
- Oct. 3 four men and one truck responded to an automatic house alarm on Hatch School Road. Nothing found.
- Oct. 3 two personnel and DVA responded to medical call, Thomas Hill, Halifax. DVA transported to BMH.
- Oct. 14 two personnel responded to medical call, Jacksonville Stage Road. DVA transported to Greenfield
- Oct. 16 two men responded to a motor vehicle accident on Hatch School Road. Pickup truck into a fallen tree with wires down. The driver and pickup had left the scene.
- Oct. 19 four men responded to a medical call on McMillian Road; large limb fell and struck a man on the head. DVA called for helicopter and more personnel to set up an emergency landing zone at Chase Farm on Pennell Hill Road. Altogether eight men responded. The helicopter landed safely and transported the man to



Bay State Hospital in Springfield, MA with serious injuries (but he's doing okay). It was the same DART helicopter crew that landed at the Halifax Celebration for a demonstration of the emergency helicopter.

**SENIOR MEAL** – Friday, November 16 will be the next Senior meal in Halifax. We serve at noon in the Community Hall at 20 Brook Road, West Halifax and all seniors are welcome. Menu: Turkey Pot Pie, Mac & Cheese, two veggies, rolls and dessert. October's meal of Sauerbraten (marinated beef) was well received, getting more complements than any meal we have served!! I hope to repeat that meal in January. Let us know you are coming! It's much appreciated. Please call Joan at **802-368-7733**.



**AUTUMN COMES TO HALIFAX (PHOTOS):** Halifax colors by the PO, heavy frost October 14<sup>th</sup>, Halifax colors viewed from Hogback Mountain, buck, snow on my armadillo porch art October 18<sup>th</sup> (Laurel Copeland).



**JOAN'S SIGHTINGS** - I have been told of some sightings, but unless I have paper & pen to write them down they sometimes 'leave' my memory. (It isn't as good as it used to be !!!!) Liz Hull saw a Bobcat around her place and a Black squirrel. Lots and lots of wild turkey – many traveling down Reed Hill Rd. to Laura & Lewis's lawn (pictured), cleaning up corn left from the kids' Celebration Day games. The bird population has



exploded at my place. Winter birds are arriving daily. Today 10/25 the Juncos arrived in force. I bet I counted at least 30; the ground is black with them! There are many Chickadees now -- that makes me happy. I counted 12 Blue jays one morning!! Many Goldfinch. Mourning Doves seem to visit early evening. White Crowned Sparrow & White Throated Sparrow have increased very much here. I am having trouble figuring out the different

Sparrows I see. I have studied them and the bird book and the best I can figure is I have several Tree Sparrows?? I was thrilled to see a Yellow Shafted Flicker at the suet feeder; I got a nice picture of it. I also saw a Bittern between us and the firehouse then followed him to the old beaver pond down back but could not get a picture as they blend in with the surroundings so very well. We have much enjoyed the Cardinal family here. They raised two broods this year, and the male is so cute feeding the (not very little) babies. They come every early evening (the babies on their own now) -- so great to see four or five Cardinals in the feeders. The Grey Squirrel have descended on us: we have **three** here. That is unusual; they are very attractive but also eat A LOT!! Too many Red Squirrels too! I try to supply them with peanuts so they leave the sunflower seeds for the birds, but they seem to devour both quickly! I am excited and looking forward to reporting the birds at our feeders to Project Feeder Watch in Albany, NY starting Nov. 10th. **HAPPY BIRDING!!!** Love hearing from you with your sightings: [jwcinvt@gmail.com](mailto:jwcinvt@gmail.com)



-- Joan Courser

November 1948

- 70 years ago -

## High School Notes.

Mr. Giffin and 10 members of the FFA attended the Southern District FFA meeting held in Chester on Wednesday. Ronald Morse was elected treasurer for the district.

The FFA boys are planning a dance for Nov. 26.

The moving pictures, "Where the Road Turns Right" and "Crystal Clear," were shown in assembly Friday.

The teachers' meeting of Tuesday was held in the Home Economics room where several of the Home Economics girls with their teacher, Mrs. Ray Corkins served refreshments to the teachers.

Harold C. Collins, director of admissions at the University of Vermont came last week Thursday afternoon to give the seniors a little college talk and advice. He also explained what his particular college offers.

The seniors went to Brattleboro Friday to have their class pictures taken and were accompanied by O. J. Collard, Miss Dorothy Robinson, and Mrs. Verne Stone who furnished transportation.

The officers for the Glee Club have been chosen as follows: President, Forrest Murdock; vice-president, Joanne Freeman, and secretary and treasurer, George Tanner.

Anyone having any news of former high school students or any other alumni news give it to Lee Stone. This information is needed for the Alumni News in the school paper, "The Echoes."

There was no school last week Thursday in observance of Armistice Day.

John Brigham and Ronald Morse left last week Wednesday night for the National FFA Convention held in Kansas City, Mo. John is the state delegate. The Student Council held a meeting Wednesday and voted to give a donation to Ronald Morse to help defray expenses on his trip.

The moving picture, "The Alcan Highway," was shown in assembly Friday.

## WEST HALIFAX

Mr. and Mrs. Lyman Wrisley, Jr., and family of Southhampton, Mass., and Mr. and Mrs. William Wrisley of Leverett, Mass., were callers at Kenneth Summer's the first of the week.

Mr. and Mrs. Charley Fowler moved to their new house last Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. William Eddy have rented Clifton Dean's house and moved there Tuesday.

There will be public supper and dance Saturday night, Nov. 20. The supper will be from 6 o'clock to 8 at Grange Hall. The dance will follow at Community Hall.

The West Halifax school held its P.-T. A. meeting during Education Week. It was decided to start a series of parties at the schoolhouse beginning tonight. Several parents and one school director visited school during the week.

## EVENTS OF THE PAST

Recalled from Files of Reformer and Phoenix 75, 50, 25 and

### 10 YEARS AGO.

Jacksonville: Mrs. Edna Hager was much surprised last week Thursday morning to open the door and find her cat which had been gone since the flood. A neighbor saw the cat jump into the water as the high water came up to the Hager home and nothing had been seen of pussy since.

## SOUTH HALIFAX

Mr. and Mrs. William E. Hebard of Brookfield, Mass., spent Sunday with his brother, Emory Hebard, and family.

Water supplies continue to diminish. For some time water for use at Valley School has been carried on the school truck from the artesian well at the Dr. Olson farm. This week water is being obtained from the newly driven well at the Oliver Dean place as the Olson well has failed.

Verne Dean did the work at the Miner farm over the week end while Henry Miner was ill with grip after an asthma attack.

Apple picking and packing has been finished for the season at the Amidon fruit farm.

The highway crews have been putting up snow fences in preparation for winter weather.

The Home Demonstration group will meet Tuesday, Nov. 9, at Mrs. Lewis Sumner's. The topic will be "Toss Yourself a Salad," conducted by the nutrition leader, Miss Josephine Costello.

## New Company Takes Over North River Ski Area

Officers and directors of a new corporation, the North River Ski Area, Inc., were elected at a meeting of the incorporators Tuesday afternoon at the offices of Gibson, Gibson & Crispe. The company plans expansion and improvements to the winter sports resort in Halifax on Route 112 from Jacksonville to Colrain, Mass., which was operated on a limited basis last season by Joseph Darrow, Jr., under the name of North River Ski Trails.

A new and longer tow is being installed for skiers and there will be a lodge and a warming hut.

Officers elected Tuesday are President Kenneth Suhl, Secretary Richard J. Moylan and Treasurer Stanley J. Powers, all of Greenfield, Mass. Walter K. Starr of Orange, Mass., is vice-president. Directors elected include the officers and Robert P. Dolan, Jr., Killiam K. Bomely and Charles E. Warren, Jr., all of Greenfield; Van B. Hopps, Griswoldville, Mass.; Joseph Darrow, Jr., and Wesley A. Stone, both of Halifax. Incorporators are the officers and directors.

Articles of association for the new organization were filed with the secretary of state in Montpelier last Oct. 4.

## State Issues Pamphlet Describing Ski Areas

MONTPELIER—First copies of the pamphlet "Vermont Winter Sports 1948-1949" have been received from the printers and distribution will be made by the Vermont Development Commission.

Listing 55 Vermont ski areas with brief, descriptive material about each, the pamphlet is made especially attractive through the liberal use of color photography.

Superimposed on a map of Vermont are figures listing average snow depth by area and a legend showing what skiing facilities are available at Vermont areas.

Three new ski areas, Hardwick, East Jamaica and Midway Slopes, between Barre and Montpelier, are not shown on the map but information is listed for these areas along with 52 others.

News from  
Bygone Days



Squirrel incursion in Halifax VT!



NEWSLETTER  
P.O. Box 27  
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# Halifax News

NOVEMBER 2018



Autumn breakfast, West Halifax,  
Vermont (Photo: Joan Courser)

Fall colors,  
West  
Halifax,  
Vermont  
(Photo:  
Laurel  
Copeland)



NEWSLETTER NEWS. Got a great Halifax story? Write it up and send it over! Send your story to Joan at [JWCinVt@gmail.com](mailto:JWCinVt@gmail.com) (802.368.7733) and/or Laurel at [LaurelACopeland@gmail.com](mailto:LaurelACopeland@gmail.com).

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