

# HALIFAX NEWS

## HALIFAX HONOR ROLL



- Photos by Andrea Rand

The new Veterans' honor roll is beautiful. Huge thanks to Gary Rand for leading the team! Gary and Jason Ashcroft designed it, and Jerry Fairbanks joined them to build it. Getting the frame installed was a community effort. A fellow who works with Rod Bemis brought a truck with a big auger and dug the holes. Tom Tefft and Rod Bemis brought a boom truck that lifted the frame and set it into the prepared holes. Then much work by Gary each day has the entire thing looking great! He even created a pattern in the bricks at the base. Elite Vinyl, in Hinsdale, N.H., printed all the names for the roll. We thank ALL who helped in any way.

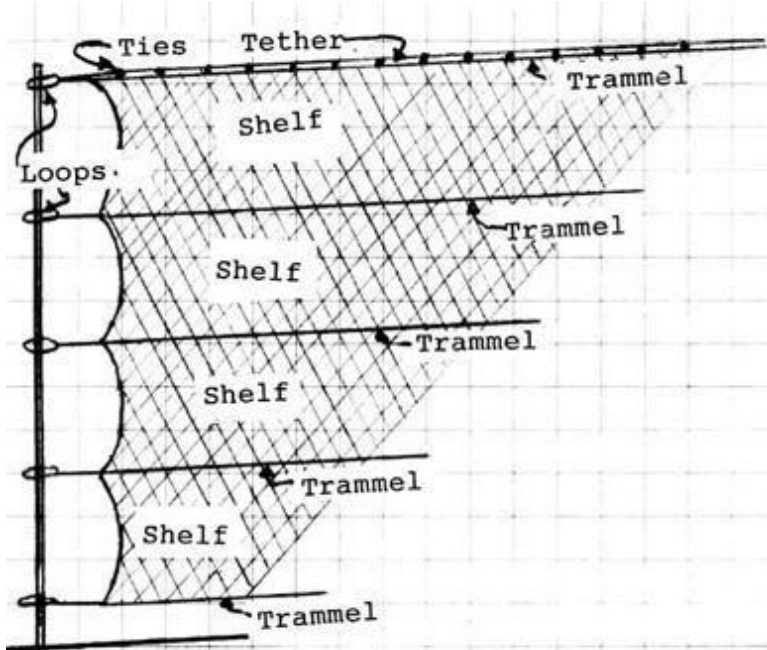
Andrea Rand and Constance Lancaster, of the Halifax Historical Society, updated our list of Halifax Veterans. No longer will the memorial start with WWII. The list of names now begins with the American Revolution. The criterion for inclusion on the memorial board is that a person who participated in American military service was, at the time of service, in residence in Halifax.

Dedication of the Halifax Veterans Honor Roll is Sunday, May 30, at noon. Pastor Mark Monroe will say a few words and a prayer. Andrea Rand will speak, as will Leonard Derby. Derby is commander of Tri-State Chapter 843 of Vietnam Veterans of America in Brattleboro. Warm thanks to everyone who donated money to help fund the reconstruction, and to those who contributed effort and energy and dedication. This memorial is something Halifax can be very proud of.

## BIRD-BANDING

by Laurel Copeland, Halifax, Vermont

Along with many other volunteers including Halifaxians Joan Courser and David Erickson, I've been participating in a bird-banding project. Eric Slayton, a trained bird bander, is conducting the project up on Hogback Mountain Conservation Area. The project is in its second year; this is my first year with it. The process is to catch migrating songbirds in nets, take them out for assessment and banding, and release them. I was excited to help set up the mist nets at the beginning of May. Mist nets are fine nets with 5 or 6 trammels (lines creating horizontal sections or shelves) strung between two upright poles, so the horizontal lines are taut and the netting between is loose, making pockets. The nets are furled overnight so we do not trap birds when we are not there.



Eric has 12 nets set up this spring. They are in locations where migratory birds are likely to fly into them. He opens the nets on bird-banding mornings when the crew is present—volunteers like me and Joan. We spend the morning walking from net to net, checking for birds. When we find a snared bird, Eric gently removes it and places it in a cotton bag. He gives the bag to a volunteer. Carrying that tiny warm body in its little bag is exciting and a bit scary. I don't want to trip and shake up the little passenger.

When we get the bird or birds back to home base, a small worktable set up in the field, Eric extracts them one at a time, describing and weighing them while a volunteer records the data: age, sex, wing length, weight, amount of body fat. If the bird is not banded, he carefully bands one leg and records the band number. Bird-banding requires a federal permit and training. The data will be

added to a federal database and inform stakeholders about types of birds migrating here, numbers of birds, species found, and the health of the individuals flying through southern Vermont. As you have likely heard if you follow Audubon or read *Science* magazine, North America has lost about 3 billion birds in the past 50 years (25%). The losses are caused by habitat destruction (like draining swamps), pesticides, fewer insects, climate change, domestic cats outdoors, skyscrapers and other manmade structures that birds perceive poorly (windows; windmill blades; guy wires; etc.).



On my first day out with the nets open, we caught one new bird and one banded bird! This is unusual because the tiny animal must make at least a complete one-way trip to be caught twice. In this case, the male black-and-white warbler (photo at right) had been banded in spring 2020, meaning it has made a complete roundtrip and passed through the very same place on Hogback two springs in a row.



The new bird was a black-throated blue warbler, also male (photo at left). This individual now has a banded leg. The female of this species is grayish olive in color. I would like to

see one of those.

These birds typically fly at night. They land on Hogback to rest and eat before continuing to their spring nesting grounds early in the year or to winter feeding areas late in the year. Some winter along the southeast coast, others go down to Central or South America. The first half of May was cold and often windy, so we caught very few birds each day. When it warmed up, the numbers remained low. One day we hiked up the Tower Trail to the top of Mt Olga. There are several vernal pools up there, and we encountered a lot more bugs. There were

also a lot more birds than lower down. In Vermont, birds have a lot of choice of where to go as there are no large cities or deserts or water bodies to funnel them into narrow passages. Perhaps there will be more birds next year. Before that, Eric will conduct the second fall bird-banding session.

### **The Last Day**

On our last day of the spring bird-banding season, we found a hummingbird trapped in a net. Hummingbirds are so small they usually fly straight through the nets, but this one had flapped its wings at just the wrong moment and gotten tangled up. Eric worked to free the hummingbird without success so cut the net. The tiny hummingbird lay in his hand, quite still. He put it in his hat and handed it to one of the volunteers to carry out of the woods. He advised the volunteers to lay the hat on the ground in the sun to see if the bird would recover. After a few minutes, the bird was no better, so we took it up to the Distillery's back deck where there was a hummingbird feeder. The bird would not drink. Eric was discouraged about its prospects. The nets needed attention, so Mary and Joan sat down at a picnic table in the sun with the hummingbird and the feeder while the rest of us went back to bird-banding. We made the last circuits of the day, finding no more birds in the nets.

Coming back from the last round, we encountered Mary and Joan just returning from the picnic table. They were jubilant: the hummingbird had revived and flown off! Joan described what happened. She was helping to offer sugar-water to the hummingbird when some of the sweetened water dripped off her hand. She had the idea to let the syrup drip off her hand past the hummingbird's beak. As she did this, a tiny tongue came out and grabbed a bit of syrup. Joan and Mary repeated this process again and again, and the hummingbird drank and drank. Then it finally lifted its body to a full standing position and took off! Joan went near to where it landed and watched it rest a while before it took off again and flew away.

## **TOWN NEWS**

### **REMEMBERING NORM FAJANS – AUGUST 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2021**

A celebration of life memorial service will be held for **Norman Douglas Fajans** (September 28, 1951 - February 25, 2021) on **Sunday, August 8, 2021, at 1:30 PM** at the Halifax Community Hall, 20 Brook Road, West Halifax, VT 05358. Please join us as we celebrate this extraordinary person. All are welcome.

**BELL CEMETERY ASSOCIATION MEETING** on Sunday, June 6th at 1:00 PM at the Bell/Fish/Grove Cemetery in South Halifax. This group meets at the cemetery. All are welcome.

### **SENIOR MEAL**

Friday June 18 is the next Senior Meal. It will be held at the Community Hall in West Halifax at 20 Brook Road. Serving at noon. The meal is still take-out (until July). The menu is: baked chicken breasts, potato, veggie, roll, and dessert. We hope to be able to have indoor meals **starting in July...BUT...we need a couple of people to help** serve...to take the food to the tables...make sure there is always food on the tables and help clear tables. Is there anyone willing to help???? the third Friday of each month (except August). Call Joan @ **802-368-7733** or email [JWCinVt@gmail.com](mailto:JWCinVt@gmail.com). – Joan Courser

### **SENIOR SOLUTIONS HELPS VERMONTERS WITH FOOD & FUEL BENEFITS**

While we may be seeing the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel, economic challenges that have faced us all are ongoing. For many older Vermonters, the challenges of paying for food, fuel, and medical bills are very real. ***And yet, 60% of older Vermonters who are eligible for assistance such as 3SquaresVT do not participate!*** Let us help you get help.

- **3SquaresVT** helps you put healthy food on your table. A family of two with a monthly gross income of \$2,659 or less, or a single senior with an income of \$1,969 or less, may be eligible to receive funds for food.
- You may qualify even if you have money in the bank, own your own home, or are employed.



- A new program, **“3SquaresVT in a SNAP”** makes it even easier! If everyone in your household is at least 60 years old or receiving disability benefits, and no one is earning income from employment, you can use a simpler application and keep your benefits for three years with no additional paperwork.

**Fuel Assistance** helps with winter home heating bills and may be used for fuel oil, propane, electricity, and even wood heating. **3SquaresVT** and **Fuel Assistance** can both be applied for in a single application. Simply call the **Senior Helpline at 802-885-2669** to start the process for either or both programs.

**Senior Solutions** can help you find other programs you may be eligible for, such as Medicare Savings Programs, Prescription Drug Assistance, and Meals on Wheels. We will help you through every step of the applications. **Senior Solutions** is a trusted non-profit agency and has operated as the area’s Council on Aging since 1973. It does not charge any fees for helping area residents. **More info:**

<https://www.seniorsolutionsvt.org/>

**HALIFAX SELECT BOARD** The Select Board now has 5 members, adding Cara Cheyette and Tristan Roberts in the two newly established seats. Continuing members are Lewis Sumner, Brad Rafus, and Pete Silverberg.

### **WEST HALIFAX POST OFFICE REMAINS OPEN!**

Our post office at 3438 Reed Hill Road did **not** close Thursday, April 29. An extension of the current lease was negotiated.

➔**USPS would be interested in another lease/rental space in Halifax if you have it. 1-802-368-7700**

### **FIRE CO. AUCTION ON SATURDAY, JULY 3**

The firemen will hold their annual **Firemen’s AUCTION** this year. The date is **Saturday, JULY 3rd at 10 AM** at the fire station in the village of West Halifax. Call Wayne Courser @ **802-368-7733** to donate items.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS**

May 7 five men responded to Hatch School Rd. for a woman fallen.

May 9 one man from Halifax and Whitingham rescue helped lift a fallen 90-year-old man; he was not injured.

May 10 one man from the Fire Dept. and some neighbors helped lift a man on Jacksonville Stage Rd.

May 17 three firemen, Whitingham rescue and Deerfield Valley Rescue helped a man who was dehydrated on Brook Rd; there was no transport.

May 20 Marlboro rescue helped a man in Thomas Hill area Halifax; he was transported by Rescue Inc.

May 25 four men and Deerfield Valley Rescue responded to Karen Day Road for a woman not feeling well; there was no transport.

Support our Fire Company! You can send a donation to:  
**Halifax Fire Co., Inc., P O Box 27, West Halifax VT 05358.**

### **GARDENING WITH WILDFLOWERS: MAKING SPACE FOR POLLINATORS AND OTHER WILDLIFE.**

**June 23, 5:30–6:30 pm, online. Register in advance:** <https://vlt.org/event/gardening-with-wildflowers>

Have you always wanted to bring bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators to your yard, patio, or community garden? Join Tori Hellwig from the University of Vermont and Liz Thompson of Vermont Land Trust for tips on Vermont’s native summer wildflowers, evaluating the habitat you have, selecting plants, and helping support life on earth.

**HISTORY...BY EDIE FENTON...**taken from a 1985 newsletter.....word for word as Edie wrote it. Community Club news....this is how each newsletter began when Edie was writing .....always the date of the next meeting.....she wrote...Next meeting will be Aug. 14th at the hall at 7:30 P.M. then she wrote...A wonderful 60th Anniversary party was held for Wesley and Grace Stone at the Community Hall JUNE 30 with ‘would you believe, sunny weather’ (must be we had a rainy spell). We think almost everyone in Halifax and Jacksonville was at the party. The only thing was...it was not a big eating party.....now drinking...that's different....only kidding... Although the Stones made a great punch. Everybody was gabbing, singing, and enjoying a fun time. The Hall was jumping with music provided by George Bruns on guitar, Laura Sumner on flute, Olive Burt on accordion and Edie Fenton on the gut bucket. The Community Club would like to thank the Stones for the opportunity to cater the party but also share it with them. Congratulations to the Stones...60 years is a long time!

## JOAN'S SIGHTINGS.

Watching all the numerous and beautiful birds at the feeders is such a joy to me. I have two pairs of Baltimore Orioles here, hopefully raising babies so our yards will have more of them. They just make me smile each time I see them! I have been seeing a male and female Evening Grosbeak. I saw an Indigo Bunting, an American Redstart (that was special), a pair of 'Jenny' (House) Wrens using one of my birdhouses, very few Blue Jays but I see one now and then, two pair of Cardinals, a couple of Blackbirds, and Red-Winged Blackbirds, a few Sparrows, a pair of Purple Finch, the pretty yellow male (and female) Goldfinches, a pair of Juncos, I am pretty sure I had a Wood Thrush (may have been a Hermit Thrush), a pair of White-Breasted Nuthatches, a Catbird, Robins, Rose-Breasted Grosbeak, a pair of Titmice, a Chickadee now and then, a Redheaded Woodpecker and a Red-Breasted. I saw an Owl in a tree while driving in Halifax. For the first time I saw a Black-and-White Warbler, that was at Hogback. I said we don't have them in Halifax, but Eric (the bird banding fellow at Hogback) said that they are here. BUT...the Hummingbird experience while at Hogback was for me the most incredible experience of my life (see bird-banding story). To have a hummingbird in my hand and be able to feed it and see it gain enough strength to fly away on its own is an experience I will NEVER forget. Tears well up into my eyes just thinking about it and each time I tell the story!!!

Jerry & Karen Fairbanks had a bear on their porch; they did not see it but something very strong pulled the feeder screwed to the porch up, screws and all, so we think it must have been a bear! Gary & Andrea saw a bear (two) at their place. I bring in 8 feeders each night because of fear of the bear breaking them. I had made up my mind to stop doing that but after hearing all these 'bear stories' I guess I will continue.



Send your sightings to Joan at [jwcinvt@gmail.com](mailto:jwcinvt@gmail.com) - Joan Courser

On Hanson Road we have seen a tufted titmouse, common yellowthroat warblers, chestnut-sided warblers, black-and-white warblers, ruby-throated hummingbirds, hairy woodpeckers, a pair of pileated woodpeckers, deer, short-tail shrews, a rabbit (first I've seen up here in decades) and a porcupine (pictured). At Deer Park Pond, Linda Lyon and I saw an Eastern King Bird. In Brattleboro, a bald eagle soared over our heads, greatly entertaining our friends who were visiting from Texas. -Laurel Copeland



**MAY IS THE MONTH OF FLOWERS** and also the month to stock ponds with fish. This fish went into a pond in Halifax.

**LAST COVERING SNOWFALLS IN HALIFAX:** April 22, 2021 (but friends on Lake Raponda had snow May 29!); May 15, 2020; May 5, 2019.



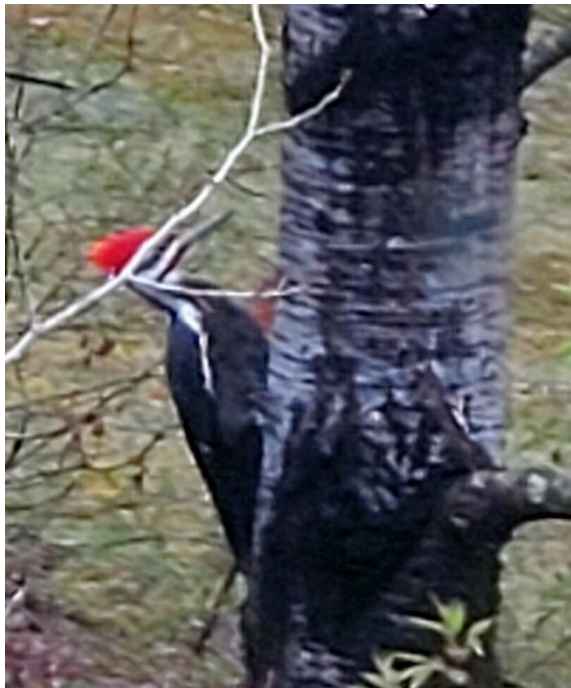
**DANDELIONS** are entirely edible. The leaves are rich in vitamins (A, C, K, D) and can be used in salad or sauteed as greens. The leaves are fiber-rich and will make you feel full. Europeans brought the dent-de-lion, the tooth of the lion, to America as a food crop. Some people wash the flower heads, batter them in a mixture of flour, egg, and milk, and make fritters of them. The flower heads can be made into dandelion jelly, yellow dandelion bread, or dandelion wine. The roots can be roasted to make an alternative to coffee. If you want to eat dandelions, choose plants that have not been treated with herbicides! In the garden, dandelions help prevent fusarium wilt. They are also some of the earliest blooms in the spring. Providing both pollen and nectar, they are an important source of food for our pollinators. If you stop using weedkiller, you are helping bugs and frogs and other wildlife. Can you make friends with your dandelions?



Newsletter  
P O Box 27  
West Halifax VT 05358



Hummingbird in Halifax  
*Photo by David Erickson, @dmepphoto*



Pileated Woodpecker on Hanson Road  
*Photo by Patrick McAllister*

# Halifax News

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Thank you!!!

**NEWSLETTER STORIES** - Send your Halifax story to

Laurel [LaurelACopeland@gmail.com](mailto:LaurelACopeland@gmail.com) or Joan [JWCinVt@gmail.com](mailto:JWCinVt@gmail.com) (PO Box 27 05358).