

December 2024
Halifax News

– Laurel Copeland, Halifax, Vermont

CEMETERIES IN HALIFAX

Being a cemetery commissioner for Halifax has opened my eyes to the many graveyards in this 40-square-mile patch of hilly land. Halifax was the second town chartered, west of the Connecticut River on May 11, 1750, by New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth, meaning Halifax is the second oldest town in the state after Bennington. This means there were colonists here, burying their dead and marking these burials, for the past 200+ years. In 1790, the population was 1,309, and that number grew to a peak of 1,758 in the 1810 Census—today we number about 800 souls. A crew of 3 keeps busy mowing and weed-whacking the cemeteries of Halifax, and we 3 commissioners keep busy with restoration efforts, aided by many volunteers. It is a small but mighty corps caretaking our 22 cemeteries. Recently we were pretty tickled to receive an appreciative letter regarding not just the cemeteries but the entire Town of Halifax.



Dear Commissioners,

About two weeks ago, we visited Halifax to discover the Centre Cemetery, the burial site of a third great-uncle of Dave's – Asa Smith. We have been researching our families for many decades. Finding Asa and his wife, Submit, became important to us for two reasons – Asa is the eldest brother of Dave's third great grandfather, Reverend Ethan Smith, plus Asa served in the American Revolution, as did Ethan. Since Asa was born in Belchertown, MA – our quest was to understand why Asa and his family moved to Halifax and spent their lives in this area of New England.

Ethan became a published and noted minister and we are trying to learn more about his siblings and their lives. We will be publishing a book about Ethan and want to include a bit of information about those who were also in his immediate family.

As strangers in your town, we were pleasantly surprised by the welcome and help we received from Halifax citizens we met. Especially helpful was your town clerk, who found the cemetery plot graphics for us. We discovered upon arriving at the cemetery that it was in pristine condition, well taken care of with designated markers for your veterans *and their wives*.

You, and all in your community, need to be commended for the most respectful care you take of this burial ground. We visit many towns and their cemeteries, and this is often not the case. We recognize and appreciate the enormous effort it takes to continually maintain a space over 200 years old. Please accept our gratitude for respecting the lives of Asa and Submit. Thank you.

Appreciatively yours,
David and Diana Smith
Scottsdale, Arizona



ELIJAH SUMMERS NAMED A 2024 SOUTHERN VERMONT EMERGING LEADER



Halifax resident Elijah Summers, collaborative top timber technician at Raspberry Ranch Timber Frames, has been named a 2024 Southern Vermont Emerging Leader, along with 23 other young people from across the Bennington and Windham regions. Individuals were nominated based on their work as community leaders and volunteers, and for their professional accomplishments and commitment to serving the region and were presented with awards in May at the Southern Vermont Economy Summit in Dover.

What Elijah’s nominator had to say: When I first met Eli, I immediately felt their warmth, joy, and passion for life. Eli is both passionate and humble. They have a great sense of humor and great depth and thoughtfulness. They are a community-builder and a bridge-builder. Since the series of horrific events in Israel and Gaza which erupted on Oct 7, Eli has been able to intelligently articulate their opinions while

also listening with an open heart and mind to people they disagree with. They reach out to all who show up at Brattleboro Area Jewish Community – veteran members and brand-new faces – with warm, welcoming energy. They truly want to connect with others and go out of their way to do so. Eli seeks to understand as well as to be understood. Eli is a huge asset to any project or community they engage in!

Elijah’s Reflections

If people feel cared for, they will reflect on whether their words, actions, and values are in alignment

I ... do my best to approach political and interpersonal differences with curiosity about others' thoughts and emotional experiences, with the belief that if people feel cared for, they will reflect on whether their words, actions, and values are in alignment.

Solutions for the housing crisis while maintaining communities

My main passions are natural building (construction with local natural materials) and affordable housing. Often, naturally built homes are accessible only to the well-off because they must be custom-built and it is difficult to get mortgages for “unconventional” building practices, even if they have been in use for thousands of years.

I believe that with state and federal funding, we could build natural, barn-size apartment buildings with under 7 units and community spaces such as gardens, workshops, grocery stores, or cafes. These buildings would fit in with the historic appearance of the towns and allow older people to stay in their communities and younger Vermont families to explore if more rural life in towns like Halifax is right for them.

While most of my building career has been self-guided, I deeply appreciate Liz Johndrow, Serena Torrey, and Eric Nash for their patience with me while I learned new skills and the support and confidence they offered at times of growth.





HALIFAX ROAD CREW EARNS AWARD. Pictured at left are Ben Barnett, Wade Janovksy, Keith Stone, and Mike Fournier receiving their copy of the 2024 Municipal Service Award, which went to all Highway Departments in Vermont in recognition of their hard work in putting Vermont back together after the floods of 2023 and 2024.

The commendation noted, "In the hours, days, and months following these floods, you could hardly turn your head without seeing a news story about a town's road crew rushing to reconnect a Vermonter to civilization, replacing a culvert, or miraculously making tons of dirt and stone appear where gaping holes existed just hours before. The men and

women who serve our municipalities have put in long hours, prioritized the public good over their families, and pulled off many miracles these past two years." The Halifax Community Club donated a sweet treat of ice cream to the crew members.

– Edee Edwards



HALIFAX CRAFT FAIR ** SOUP & SANDWICHES AT THE CAFÉ ** GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

THREE EVENTS - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH 10 AM TO 2 PM

- I. Craft Fair at the School -- Unique Gifts, Wooden Crafts, Ornaments, Baked Goods, Greenery for the Season, and more! Contacts: Register a booth with Tina tblaiser2@gmail.com Questions? Patty halifax@myfairpoint.net
- II. Lunch at the Café -- **Soup and Sandwiches!** Grilled Cheese, Grilled Cheese & Ham, 6 Homemade Soups
- III. Gingerbread House Contest – Rules are below. Contacts: LaurelACopeland@gmail.com or 210-488-1701 (text/call), Andrea at UnderwoodJones154@gmail.com

Enter the contest! Make a gingerbread house. Decorate it yourself. Bring it to the Community Hall / Halifax Cafe to enter it into a contest. Rules:

- (1) Make and decorate a gingerbread house on a base such as a shoebox lid or cookie sheet no larger than 13x18 inches. Decorate the base, too!
- (2) The gingerbread house and all its decorations **must be edible**, and your decorations must be hand-made (but you can use store-bought pieces of candy such as gumdrops and sprinkles)
- (2) Bring it to the Halifax Café in the Community Hall, 20 Brook Road, West Halifax, on Thursday December 12 from 10-1, or Saturday December 14, after 9 am, or by appointment
- (3) Come see all the entries on Saturday December 14, 10:00am to 2:00 pm.

FREE Baked cookie sets to make a house 4 x 4 x 4½ inches are available by request (Laurel/Andrea).

FREE Powdered Meringue for the Royal Icing is available free on request (you need 3T powdered meringue for 4 C powdered sugar).

Recipe cards for [Stained Glass Cookies](#) (for windows) and for [Royal Icing](#) (the glue of gingerbread houses) are available online and in the Café.

Entries will be recognized in various categories—such as most amusing, most colorful, most likely to appeal to a squirrel, and most spirited. Might be other categories!





SORROW I am sad to report that my mother, Lynda Copeland, died Nov. 23rd at the age of 98 ½. She was born June 19, 1926, in Clinton, Illinois, and grew up loving the noise of the organ. She soon learned she had a natural talent for playing with her hands and feet simultaneously. She studied at Wesleyan and University of Michigan majoring in organ performance. She met Art Copeland in Ann Arbor MI. They started dating in February 1947, became engaged in June, and married in September of that year! They then moved to Boston for graduate studies (MIT for him, New England Conservatory of Music for her). While living in the Midwest raising a family, Marlboro Music festival drew them to southern Vermont in 1959, and they came to Halifax every summer thereafter, moving here permanently from Dover NH after retirement. Lynda will be remembered for her indomitable spirit and outspoken nature.



She is survived by her three daughters, Julia (Bruce Bransby), Heidi (Tom) Schmitt, and Laurel (John Zeber), as well as grandchildren Kamala, Katrina, Derek, Alyssa, Nikolaus, and Thea, three great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild. (Photos: 2023 and c 1958)

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SENIOR MEAL IN HALIFAX – Senior Meal in Halifax will be held on Friday, December 20, serving at noon. Menu: baked ham, mashed potatoes, applesauce, vegetable, rolls, and a dessert. All seniors are welcome. A free-will donation of \$3.00 is asked of those 60 years and over, under 60 \$4.00. Hope to see you there! Call me ahead of the day if you are coming 802-368-7733. March 2025 will be 25 years of Halifax senior meal! We are hoping to have a public breakfast perhaps in January...watch for posters and it advertised in the Newsletter and newspaper.

- Joan Courser

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FIREMEN’S NEWS

- November 1, 10 men and three trucks responded to an automobile crash.
- November 3, nine men responded to a person who had fallen. Deerfield Valley Ambulance transported them to Brattleboro Hospital.
- November 8, in the morning eight men responded to a brush fire in Brattleboro; Engine Three and the brush truck were taken. They were there a long time returning after 9:00 PM.
- November 9 three men responded to the same brush fire in Brattleboro. Our brush truck was driven to the top of a very big hill and pumped water to supply lines.
- November 17, one truck and six men responded on a mutual aid call for a Colrain, Mass., structure fire.
- November 19, 11 men, three trucks, and a personal vehicle responded to a brush fire in Guilford reported by an aircraft. No fire was found.

NO BURNING! Call for a Burn Permit before you burn brush.

Call: Dennis (802) 368-7809 or Malcolm (802) 368-2484

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WEATHER REPORT. On November 22 it snowed and hailed. The next morning we had a covering snowfall that started just after midnight. Then two days later, sitting at home we heard a sound usually reserved for late March: the thunder of snow sliding off our metal roof and crashing onto the ground. Good thing I got our protective panels up over the screened porch. If I don’t do that, the snow crashes right through the screens.

JOAN’S SIGHTINGS. ‘My birds’—that’s what I call them—are numerous: a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a couple of White-breasted Nuthatches, a couple of Cardinals, several Chickadees, a few Sparrows, lots of Blue Jays, a few Woodpeckers (a Hairy and a Downy), a couple of Titmice, a Crow or two, some sort of a Hawk (flying so high I cannot really see what type it is but it is beautiful—it seems to fly over the neighbor’s field and that is good so it is not near my chickens...but I bet it knows they are there!! A Starling, and now and then a Grosbeak...I enjoy them all! Newsletter and newspaper.

- Joan Courser

Up on Hanson Road we have Grey Foxes, Deer, Opossums, and Crows. There are Juncos, Chickadees, Blue Jays, Ravens, Turkeys, Coyotes, Grey Squirrels, Whitetail Deer, and a Bobcat. And more Turkeys! Neighbors Jennifer and Detlef sent photos from their wildlife cam from the past several months. Is that last pic a bobcat?



Halifax News

DECEMBER 2024

CALENDAR

The Halifax Café is now serving lunch every day we are open.

- November 28 & 30, 2024:** Café Closed for the Thanksgiving long weekend
- December 5, 2024 (Thursday):** Halifax Café open 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
- December 7, 2024 (Saturday):** Halifax Café open 10:00 am - 1:00pm
- December 12, 2024 (Thursday):** **Gingerbread House drop-off** at Halifax Café (or by arrangement *)
Café open 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
- December 14, 2024 (Saturday):** **Gingerbread House Contest**, Halifax Café 9:00am - 1:00pm
Café open 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
- December 19, 2024 (Thursday):** Halifax Café 10:00am - 1:00pm
- December 21, 2024 (Saturday):** Halifax Café 10:00am - 1:00pm
- December 26 & 28, 2024:** Halifax Café CLOSED for the holiday break
Happy New Year!!
- January 2 & 4, 2025:** Halifax Café closed for the holiday break
- January 9, 2025 (Thursday):** Halifax Café closed for the holiday break
- January 11, 2025 (Saturday):** Halifax Café OPEN, 10:00am-1:00pm
See you January 11th 2025!

* Contacts: Laurel LaurelACopeland@gmail.com or 210-488-1701 (text/call), Andrea at UnderwoodJones154@gmail.com



A good crowd turned out to listen to Jack Burnett reminisce about the Burnett, Barnett, and related families

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