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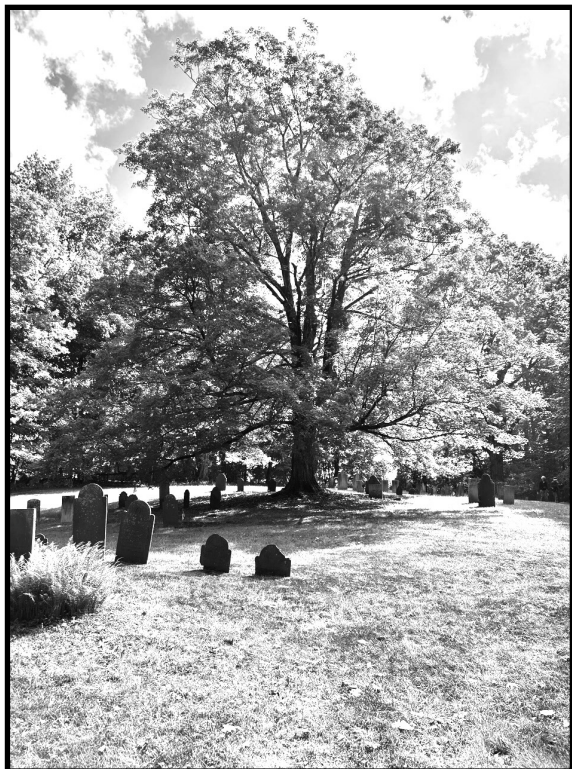
THE GUILFORD GAZETTE



August 2026 Issue

A Big Tree Comes Down in a Cemetery, Safely

BY NANCY DETRA



Ailing tree in center of Blanchard Cemetery



A branch is lowered safely to the ground

Guilford's cemetery commissioners began to worry when the majestic maple tree standing in the center of Blanchard Cemetery started to rot along one side. At first, the commissioners hoped to save it, but the arborists who came to look at the tree all agreed it was not in good health and posed a threat to the historic grave markers around it.

It needed to come down, but that turned out to be a challenge. Various tree services all insisted that a crane would be needed to fell the tree without damage to the graves below, but there was no way to get a crane up the wooded path off the Guilford Center Road. Several years went by, and the problem of the Blanchard tree came up under "Old Business" on every one of the commission's monthly meeting agendas.

In the early spring of 2026, commissioner Eric Morse contacted one more tree company. They happened to be working on Bullock Road, close to Blanchard, so the company's arborist tramped through knee-deep snow with Eric to look at the old tree. He warned the commissioner that a late season snowfall might topple the tree.

But how to get a crane up the hill? Could the job be done safely without a crane? The foreman thought they could use one of their skilled tree-climbers in combination with a small bulldozer to tie off individual branches and then lower them down to the excavator's open jaw. They wouldn't use a crane. But conditions weren't ideal—there was still a foot of snow on the path.

The crew on the neighboring road was just about finished with their work there,

so the equipment was close by. Just then a warm spell melted the snow and left the path bare. Then a cold snap hit, and the ground froze again. "The weather cooperated with us," says Eric.

The tree company's decision-makers thought their crew would be able to drive the small excavator, a tractor, and a skid-steer up over the hardened ground, if it was done immediately.

But then there was the problem of money to pay for the job. The commission's budget for mowing and maintenance at all the town cemeteries (there are 13!) wouldn't cover a project of this size. Town Treasurer Elly Majonen looked into the town coffers and found that there was a fund, the Warren Wilder Fund, that was

Continued on page 2

The Guilford Gazette

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The *Guilford Gazette* was established in 1995 and was published by students at Guilford Central School, with support from the Town of Guilford, and is now published under the auspices of the Guilford Free Library.

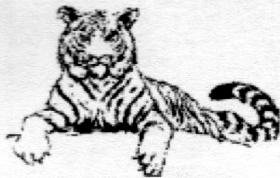
Submissions The *Guilford Gazette* is happy to consider submissions of no more than 600 words (500 if you include a photo), emailed to gazettevt@gmail.com, in an editable word-processing format such as Google Docs or Word. We also accept standalone photos and milestones. *It is the responsibility of submitters to ensure they have permission to use any names, photographs, and art. The Gazette staff cannot be held responsible for photographs and names printed without the permission of participants.*

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Blanchard Cemetery, Continued

dedicated to the maintenance of Blanchard Cemetery! Because it would take a bit of time to do the statutory work that would allow the town to draw money from that fund, the Selectboard agreed to allow the commission to borrow money from the town's general fund to pay the tree company, and then the town would be reimbursed.

The tree service came in on a Thursday and were finished by Friday afternoon. They even were able to cut and stack the wood on town property in the northwest corner of the cemetery lot. Patience, research, and cooperation — combined with good luck—led to the safe removal of the tree with no damage to the gravestones, some of which date back to the 1700s.



Eric Morse's assistant inspectors



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Friends of Music at Guilford Turns 60

The 60th anniversary of Friends of Music at Guilford will be celebrated with a two-concert festival on Labor Day Weekend. The concerts take place on Saturday evening (September 5) and Sunday afternoon (September 6) at the Guilford Organ Barn.

How it began: In 1964, A. Graham Down, a New Jersey prep school teacher and accomplished organist, acquired a summer cottage on Guilford's Packer Corners Road. Quickly realizing he lacked a convenient pipe organ for his daily practice, he searched for a "tracker-action" (fully mechanical) instrument. A disassembled organ was located in a Maine barn, the work of 19th century builder E.W. Lane.

Down prevailed upon his next door neighbor, whose farmstead boasted a spacious "barn"—which was actually a typical agricultural shed attached to the Federal Period house. The organ was relocated there and fully renovated by a noted organ builder using a number of

new metal pipes fabricated by Anderson Pipe Organ Company in Bee Barn in Algiers.

On the Sunday of Labor Day weekend in 1966, Down invited friends and Guilford neighbors to an inaugural recital of mostly baroque music on the refurbished instrument, and that Sunday has been the annual concert date ever since.

When Down sold his summer place in 1970, a group of eight local music lovers chartered a non-profit, Friends of Music at Guilford, to own and maintain the organ, continue the concerts, and expand into year-round programs ranging from chamber music to an annual Messiah Sing, a Christmas concert at Christ Church, choral programs, musical revues, school programs, and operas.

The Sunday Labor Day concert has grown to a pair of concerts. There is an evening organ concert in the barn on Saturday and an outdoor orchestral program on the lawn Sunday after-

noon. The concerts have always been admission-free, donations welcome.

Because of a brief interruption for COVID, this year's festival is the 60th annual event. The organ performance will be at 7:30 p.m. in the barn on Saturday, September 5. Then, on Sunday, September 6 at 3:00 p.m., the Guilford Festival Orchestra will perform on the lawn. Those attending can bring blankets, lawn chairs, and picnics. The concert will include works by composers who have been associated with Friends of Music. Soprano soloists will be Stephanie Hollenberg and Evelyn McLean, with conductor Lucinda Ellert.

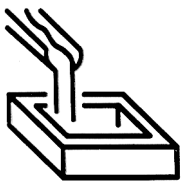
The Organ Barn is on Kopkind Drive, two miles up Packer Corners Road from Weatherhead Hollow. Further information is available at www.fomag.org or on Facebook. In the event of rain on Sunday, the concert will move to the Broad Brook Community Center, with an announcement online or at (802) 254-3600.



The organ that started it all will be played at 7:30 pm on Saturday, September 5



The Guilford Festival Orchestra will play at 3 pm on Sunday, September 6



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The Good Citizen VT Challenge 2026

A Special Invitation for Vermont Kids (Grades K–8) and Their Families

BY LINDA HAY

Greetings, parents, kids, and community members!

This summer, as we celebrate our nation's 250th anniversary, organizations throughout Guilford are encouraging local families to take part in the Good Citizen VT Challenge 2026.

The Good Citizen VT Challenge is a statewide contest for Vermont students in grades K–8. Throughout the summer, participants can earn weekly prizes—and compete for exciting grand prizes—by completing activities that range from simple to more challenging. Best of all, they're designed to be fun!

Many of the activities encourage family participation. And because we know parenting is busy enough already, we'll gladly offer help and workarounds whenever they're needed.

Sponsored by the State of Vermont along with several media and community organizations, the Good Citizen VT Challenge is a wonderful opportunity for young people to learn what it means to be a good citizen—and to put those lessons into practice while

exploring Vermont history, their communities, and civic engagement. Here in Guilford, the Guilford Free Library, Broad Brook Community Center (BBCC), and the Broad Brook Grange are all helping to support local participants.

Children may participate individually by submitting their own entries online (with assistance if needed), or they can join Team Guilford, with me serving as the team sponsor. If navigating the online submission process feels overwhelming, don't worry—we're happy to help families submit entries and manage the digital details.

Learn more about the challenge at goodcitizenvt.com.

Participants are eligible for weekly prizes, and there is also an individual grand prize: a trip for two to Washington, D.C. The website includes details about additional prizes and recognition opportunities. In past years, individuals and teams that completed the full challenge have been honored with an invitation to the Vermont State House and recognized by WCAX, Seven Days, Kids VT, and other media

outlets. Team members don't just earn prizes for themselves—they also bring recognition to their communities. Guilford participants will also be featured in the Guilford Gazette.

Need a little help? We're here for you! You can find assistance at the Guilford Free Library on Wednesdays from 4:00–6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 12:00–2:00 p.m. These help sessions will continue through August 13. I'll be away August 14–30, then return to the library through the end of the challenge on September 7. Even while I'm away, library staff will continue to help participants whenever the library is open. After all, that's one of the best things libraries do. They're here to help.

Be sure to check out the posters and handouts at the library for additional information and ideas.

Questions? I'd love to hear from you!

Linda Hay

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85 Years of the Guilford Fair (Minus Two)

BY JOSLYN MCINTYRE

When David Franklin was a kid, the Guilford Fair always signified the absolute end of summer. It was traditionally held on the Monday of Labor Day, and school started the next day. He'd take the \$10 he earned for the month doing chores on his dad's farm and spend it all on games. "Then I'd have to go watch horse pulls and things that didn't cost any money."

The Guilford Fair hasn't changed since David was a kid—or since it was first created in 1942, for that matter. We might now have an ATM so fairgoers can grab cash, and the event has grown from one day to two, but there's still a horse pull, calves in Fitch Hall, games for kids, bingo in the shade, and the firefighters' BBQ. These traditions have happened every single year for the greater part of a century.

Except for two.

No event came together in 1945. It was the tail end of World War II—a year of significant transition and wartime restrictions for many public gatherings. But in 1946, the townspeople got together to form the Fair Association and revive the nascent tradition. For years, the fair was held at the farm of Emery and Hugh Evans on Guilford Center Road. But by 1954, the association managed to purchase a plot of land adjoining the Guilford Recreation Fairgrounds, off Weatherhead Road, and the fair has been there ever since.

In 2007, the Guilford Fair went dark again, mainly because of a lack of volunteers and financial donations. This is when David,



along with Belinda Lashway, volunteered to resurrect the event. "I just couldn't not step up," David says. These two were instrumental in keeping Guilford's beloved Labor Day tradition going, and David is still President of the Guilford Fair today.

Another long-time trustee of the Fair Association, Scott Matthes, says, "A lot has changed, but a lot hasn't. The Guilford Fair is the same way it always has been in many respects, and for six or seven people to manage

the entire thing is incredible."

Which brings us to the volunteers. The fair receives no town money and survives solely on sponsorships and gate admissions, so volunteers are the real soul of the Guilford Fair. They set up, they take down, and in between, they "do everything from driving the golf carts around to ticket sales at the front booth to t-shirt sales—it's kind of crazy," Scott says.

Chuck Collins, who organizes volunteers, says, "The fair is an all-volunteer effort, and we depend on Guilford neighbors to pitch in to help. Volunteering for the fair is a great way to work side by side with neighbors to host something inspiring for the town and region."

Community members also volunteer for other town organizations that have a presence at the fair, and those folks are important too. David points out that "If you're volunteering for another organization at the fair, you're not really

volunteering for the fair. But," he adds, "one of the good things about the fair is that so many of our local entities can raise some money there. It helps keep the community stronger."

By the way, this truly is your fair, Guilfordites. If you live in this town, you are officially a member of the Fair Association. Would you consider becoming a volunteer this year? Visit www.guilfordfairvermont.com and click on "Volunteer."



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Planning Commission Update

BY JEANNETTE TOKARZ

For this edition of the Gazette, the Planning Commission is highlighting its work to inform residents of what is happening statewide in the land use planning and housing-creation realms.

This spring, Act 181 was in the news due to concerns regarding the impact of two of its provisions, the “Road Rule” and “Tier 3.” Throughout the period of intense media attention, most outlets focused on those two provisions without digging deeper into Act 181’s other changes. This absence inspired the Planning Commission to create a “Land Use Topics” section on its landing page on the Town of Guilford’s website. The intent of this section is to provide factual information regarding recent legislative acts and statewide initiatives that affect land use, whether by regulating development, reducing regulatory oversights, or encouraging housing growth.

On the webpage there are summaries of Act 250 and Act 181; The River Corridor Act (Act 121), which goes into effect on January 1, 2028; the “30x30” initiative (Act 59); and other legislative acts. You’ll see that the summaries cite the relevant sections of the Act so that readers can more easily refer to the statutory language when desired.

In the Housing section there is also information about steps to consid-

er when creating an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), a housing creation toolkit, etc. There are also links to the Vermont Housing Financing Authority Housing Needs Assessment, Let’s Build Homes, and other sites to provide food for thought as we think through how to address the state’s housing needs.

The Planning Commission is also monitoring a federal-level housing-creation initiative and will update the page once this bill is enacted.

Continuing on the theme of providing robust information to residents, the Guilford Permit Guide is available on the Town website under the “Guilford Info” tab. The Guide provides an overview of local and state permits that might be required for a construction project. Consider reviewing this guide before starting a project to save potential aggravation later.

Our next version of the Town Plan is due in 2030. Under the Strategic Plan 2024 tab, there will be ongoing updates regarding progress made on key goals from our current plan or a discussion of why a goal is on hold at this time.

There’s a lot happening at the Planning Commission! Meetings are on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in person and via Zoom. We encourage residents to attend and welcome your input.

Guilford Volunteer Fire Department Open House

BY WANDA ATOMANUK

The Guilford Volunteer Fire Department held its Open House June 7th. While there were few guests (first sunny day in a while), those who stopped in got to view the equipment, ask questions, and run the fire hose. Our young Guilford citizens got to crawl on equipment and pretend to be fire fighters.

There were hotdogs and the best sugar on snow. Information pamphlets and AM/FM weather alert radios were available from our town Emergency Management representatives, who answered questions.

Our new sign is up and looks great! -The old one had seen better days.

We look forward to seeing you next year with info. Hats for the young future volunteers. See you there.



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Sunday 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

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Fire Department Statistics

March:

6 fire
23 medical calls
1 mutual aid
1 public service

April:

4 fire
29 medical calls
3 mutual aid
2 public service

May:

4 fire
19 medical calls
1 mutual aid
2 motor vehicle

June:

9 fire
15 medical calls
3 mutual aid

Meet the New Assistant to the Town Clerk

BY URIEL NAJERA, GUILFORD TOWN CLERK

Sharon Levenson brings a wealth of professional experience and community involvement to her new role as Guilford's Assistant to the Town Clerk.

Raised on a farm in Leyden, Massachusetts, Sharon developed an early appreciation for animals, nature, green grass, and fresh air. She has proudly called Guilford home since 1999 and says she plans to stay in the house she loves for the rest of her life.

A dedicated volunteer, Sharon serves as a substitute driver for Meals on Wheels, covering the Guilford route, and volunteers monthly at the Brattleboro Senior Center, where she provides blood pressure screenings for members. She also helped coordinate The Moving Wall, the

Vietnam Veterans Memorial traveling exhibit that visited Brattleboro for four days in 2021. The event was both well attended and deeply meaningful to the veterans who came to experience it.

Her commitment to veterans extends beyond Vermont. While serving as Community Outreach Manager for Martial Arts America in Tampa, Florida, Sharon helped organize a Vietnam War 50th Commemoration Partnership event, where 50 Vietnam veterans were honored with commemorative pins recognizing their service and sacrifice.

Closer to home, Sharon is also a volunteer editor for the Guilford Gazette.

Sharon earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from Boston College. Her nursing

career has included leadership and clinical roles as Regional Director of Marketing for a national nursing home organization, where she developed a comprehensive sales training program; lead RN at the Veterans Administration Clinic in Brattleboro; RN at the Brattleboro Retreat and Brattleboro Primary Care; and nurse manager for a grant-funded program at Clinical & Support Options. She retired from Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice as the Memory Care Specialist for a grant-funded dementia care program.

As she begins her new position, Sharon is excited to serve the community she has called home for more than 25 years. She looks forward to assisting her Guilford friends and neighbors in any way she can.

State Representative Update

BY ZON EASTES

I would like to thank the voters of Guilford and Vernon for electing me in 2024 to serve as your state representative for Windham-1. It has been an honor to represent our communities, and, if re-elected, I look forward to continuing that work.

Serving in Montpelier is both demanding and inspiring because it is ultimately about serving Vermonters. Despite how things may sometimes be portrayed in the media or by particularly strong voices, I continue to be impressed by the thoughtful consideration given to every issue before the Legislature. As bills and policy proposals come before us, I am especially grateful to the residents of Guilford and Vernon who take the time to share their concerns, ideas, and experiences. Your input makes me a better representative and helps ensure your voices are part of the conversations that matter most.

During the past biennium, the Legislature took important steps to address some of Vermont's biggest challenges. I was proud to

work with my House colleagues on issues including affordability, taxes, education, health care, workforce development, and homelessness. I was also proud to support legislation aimed at protecting Vermonters from harmful actions by the current federal administration, large corporations, and the emerging challenges posed by artificial intelligence.

With the August primary behind us, we now look ahead to the general election on Tuesday, November 3. This year's ballot includes several important races, and I encourage everyone to make a plan to vote.

As in recent elections, the Vermont Secretary of State will mail ballots to every registered Vermont voter before Election Day. If you are not yet registered, there are several easy ways to do so. You can visit Uriel Najera, Guilford Town Clerk, at the Town Offices, or learn more through the Vermont Secretary of State's voter registration website.

As the election approaches, you may see me out in the community—knocking on doors, attending Windham-1 Meet Ups, visiting schools, or participating in local meetings and events. If you do, please stop and say hello. I always appreciate the opportunity to hear what is on your mind.

Looking ahead, I see important work still to be done, along with

new challenges that will require thoughtful leadership and careful consideration. I remain committed to serving our communities with integrity, diligence, and an open ear. Inspired by the confidence you have placed in me, I hope to earn the opportunity to continue representing Guilford and Vernon in Montpelier.

To learn more about my campaign, visit zoneastesvt.com.

Thank you.

Zon Eastes, State Representative,
Windham-1 (Guilford and Vernon)



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Why Conserve Land?

BY THE GUILFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

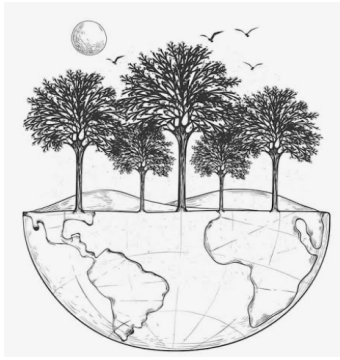
Driving along Guilford's country roads through fields and forests, it is easy to think that there is plenty of undeveloped land in our town and to imagine there always will be. So why do we need to conserve land here?

Scientists have understood for decades that the natural world functions as a whole, with every part dependent on every other part. We have learned that all living beings—human and otherwise—need air, water, food, and shelter to survive. But we also need each other, and our surrounding environments, to maintain the ecological balance that guarantees the survival of all. That ecological balance depends on diversity—of climates, landscapes, waterways, plant and animal habitats, and life forms of all kinds and sizes.

The only way to maintain this essential diversity is to make sure that all these habitats continue to exist—unbroken forest tracts, ponds and lakes, rivers and streams, wild mountaintops, rich bottom land, wetlands, working forests, farmland—all of them working together, none of them overwhelming the rest. Ecologists believe that at least 40 percent of land in any region needs to be conserved for mutual sustainability of the earth's organisms. The only way to ensure that all of these environments continue to exist is to protect them (i.e., conserve them) for ourselves now and for future generations.

Conserving land does not mean removing it from human access or use; in fact, it is a way to guarantee that land will always be there to use and enjoy, and to retain its ecological value to the surrounding environment and all its inhabitants. Land can be conserved in many different ways: by outright sale or donation to a land trust, through conservation easements, through partnerships between groups with different but complementary goals working together.

Conservation easements can be as flexible as



a landowner wishes. For example, a family needing to sell its farm could reach a partnership agreement with a land trust wherein they retain a parcel for future family members to use while conserving the rest under an agricultural easement that would allow another farmer to buy that land at an affordable rate. The land trust would cover the difference in cost between the conserved farmland's value and the original appraised value, allowing the family to benefit from the sale.

Conserving land through agricultural easements in Guilford could help support the development of local CSAs and guarantee future food sources for our town, while also providing tax benefits for landowners. Similarly, easements can be used to preserve working forests, which are essential for Guilford's ecological future.

Public and conserved lands currently make up only 6.2 percent (1581 acres) of Guilford, according to the Windham Regional Commission. Conservation areas in Guilford are predominantly large undeveloped, mostly forested areas with shallow soils, bedrock, wetlands, and steep slopes. They include land owned publicly (by town or state) and private lands with conservation easements that permanently restrict development and protect natural features. The Vermont River Conservancy is currently working with landowners in the Green River Watershed to

conserve additional land.

While rocky land with steep slopes and ridgelines are unsuited for development, they need to be protected because they provide critical habitats and wildlife corridors for many species. Just as humans need roads to get from one place to another, animals need corridors that link habitats together so they can migrate, find new populations for breeding and continuous food sources throughout the seasons. An ongoing focus of the GCC has been to pinpoint critical corridors for all wildlife, from salamanders and turtles to large mammal crossings, and make sure that through signage and conservation efforts these corridors remain viable.

Conserved land provides space for low-impact recreation such as hunting, fishing, and hiking, as well as scenic backdrops in every season, preserving the beauty and rural character of our town. If you are interested in exploring agricultural or trail easements, or conservation of larger tracts of land, please contact members of the Conservation Commission (listed on the Guilford town website). We are gathering resources about land conservation and planning a community forum to provide more information and answer questions you may have.

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Guilford Recreation
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Guilford Historical Society Is Open for the Summer!

BY PAULA MARKS



Historical Society Opening Event Photo credit: Chuck Collins

Our town museum opened for the season on Saturday, June 6. To mark the occasion, we hosted a noon celebration that drew about 90 neighbors and other visitors, with hot dogs, lemonade, popcorn, and Blueberry Haus ice cream served up outdoors. Activities included the opportunity to ring the bell in the Meeting House and to participate in a museum scavenger hunt. Eleven-year-old Liam Eaton of Guilford won a prize in a drawing for those who completed the hunt.

The museum is open every Saturday 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the summer, with the exception of Fourth of July weekend and August 15, when all are welcome to visit our booth at the Windham County History Fair on the Newfane Common from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The last day to visit the museum this summer is August 29. The following weekend, come to the Guilford Fair and visit our booth! Our presence there will be followed by another special event at our annual meeting—please watch for details.



Leah Hurst and Mazie Hunt ring the bell at the Meeting House on the Historical Society's opening day in June.

Happy Birthday to the Guilford Free Library



Joan Hunt

The Guilford Free Library celebrated its 134th year with an afternoon birthday party on a hot, humid Thursday in July. Inside the air conditioned library, the Friends of the Library hosted with cucumber water, lemonade, popsicles, and cupcakes, and folks were invited to stop in and make a birthday card.

By the way, you still have time to complete the Summer Library Challenge! Visit the Guilford Free Library five times before August 29th—checking something out each time—to win a cookie, coffee, or creemee from the Guilford Country Store and enter a raffle for additional prizes



Deb Albright

Milestones



Milestones is a feature in the Guilford Gazette, and we invite you to tell us about important ones: losses, graduations, major achievements, big birthdays, etc. Send all milestones to gazettevt@gmail.com.

- **Jim and Phyllis Erwin** celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 4th.

- **Wynn Victoria Condon** was born to Jillian Patenaude and Kevin Condon on February 17.

- **Edna Acre Ogg** was born to Quinn Elizabeth Conway and Jamison Lockard Ogg on February 24.

- **Jensen Lynde Bettini** was born to Hannah Carlson Lynde-Bettini and Dylan Bradly Bettini on May 25.

- **Huntley Lynde Parker** was born to Whitney Lynde and Kyle Holmquist Parker on June 17.



Jonas Ackerman-Hovis, Willow Sharma, and Kylie Jarvis with Evelyn and Don McLean at the BUHS Awards Ceremony on June 11. The three students won the Guilford Recreation Club and the Bullock Education Fund scholarships. Willow Sharma also won the Grange scholarship.

- **Martha Frances "Frannie" Ann Whipple** died at 87 years old on April 5, surrounded by her family. She and her husband owned and operated Whipple's Rubbish and Recycling, established in 1972 in Guilford.

- **Brenda Lee Sanborn** passed away peacefully with her family around her on May

16, after an 11-year battle with cancer, at the age of 64.

- **Pauline M. Thurber** passed away peacefully at the age of 99 on April 22, 2026.

- **Sonya Ledith Waite** died at the age of 90 on June 25, 2026.



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Guilford-Themed Play Premieres This Fall

BY GUILFORD CENTER STAGE

This October, Guilford Center Stage will present the world premiere of *Vermont Mythos: A Small Town Fable*, a new full-length play written and directed by Guilford playwright Michael Nethercott.

Earlier this year, the theater company's board invited Nethercott—a longtime Guilford Center Stage collaborator—to create a play inspired by Guilford's rich history. As the nation celebrates its 250th anniversary, the project offered a fitting opportunity to reflect on the people and stories that have shaped the town.

"To get off the ground," says Nethercott, "I started researching various historical figures with connections to Guilford. The best known of these would be Ethan Allen, who was sent here in 1783 to quell a rebellion. Then there was playwright Royall Tyler, author of the first professionally staged American comedy, and his wife, Mary, who wrote the country's first child-rearing manuals. by a woman."

Nethercott ultimately drew upon a range of Guilford-connected figures—some well known, others largely forgotten—to create



Michael Nethercott

the play's cast of characters. Some appear onstage, while others are woven into the story through references and legend.

Rather than creating a strictly historical drama, Nethercott chose a more imaginative approach.

"I came up with a concept that drew from

the town's history but ventured in a more fantastical direction. The play explores the human condition and uses a mix of theatrical devices—including a Greek chorus and a mischievous jester—to tell its tale."

Vermont Mythos marks the fifth original production Nethercott has presented with Guilford Center Stage. His previous works include *Spoon River*, *Haunts of the Season*, and *Our Enemy's Cup*.

For more information about *Vermont Mythos*, contact Michael Nethercott at micott@comcast.net.

Performance Schedule

Thursday, October 1 at 7:30 p.m.
Friday, October 2 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, October 3 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, October 4 at 2:00 p.m.

Location: Broad Brook Community Center, 3940 Guilford Center Road, Guilford, VT

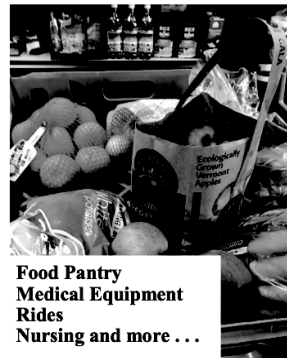
Tickets: \$16 general admission



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An Improvised Feast at Tapalou Guilds

BY JOSLYN MCINTYRE

The day after summer solstice, the farmhouse at Tapalou Guilds held long tables laid with white cloth in anticipation of a community dinner. Buckets of poppies, freshly picked from Hanna Jenkins and Andy Loughney's farm, awaited arranging.

People filtered in from the damp evening, shaking off the rain and shedding their shoes in the barn. We gathered around the butcher block to assess the ingredients we each had brought: freshly picked greens, tender baby bok choy, edible violet flowers, goat cheese, sea salt someone had collected on a trip to Sonoma, homemade spruce tip sugar, fermented black garlic, and chicken from Leaping Bear Farm in Reading.

But what to do with it all?

Jenkins and Loughney, owners of Tapalou Guilds, in partnership with Vermont Wild Kitchen, hosted this free Mystery Dinner for 29 guests in June. It was an experiment, of sorts, to see how a bunch of friends, neighbors, and strangers could work together to

create a meal and forge connections.

We coalesced into culinary action. A few people volunteered to make spice rubs for the chicken while others fired up the grill. Lettuce was washed, kale massaged, bok choy sliced, and black garlic squeezed. Ragan Anderson spearheaded the pesto movement with a coven of enthusiastic young helpers at the blender. She recalls, "The whole thing felt so relaxed and organic, like cooking together with friends—very primal and experiential and natural and all the good feelings of being human."

It was crowded in the kitchen, but that only deepened the sense of cooperation and flow. Hanna joked, "I gripe about one husband in the kitchen, but 20 other people? Totally fine! Funny how that works."

And then it came together. Chicken grilled with five different spice rubs. Amaranth quinoa dosas wrapped around garlic-scape pesto. Bok choy sauteed in spruce sugar. Pan-fried potatoes with herbs. Two lovingly massaged kale salads. Golden paneer with Indian spices. Greens dressed with a basil vinaigrette. Goat-cheese garlic-scape pesto and a magical black garlic puree.

Before we ate, we took a moment to

appreciate the feast we had made. Then, we dove in. While I was astonished at how creamy goat cheese makes basil, the best part of the night was the experience of cooking together, sharing our love of ingredients, and getting to know one another. We nourished our bodies and, at the same time, satisfied our longing for community and togetherness.

"It was like Friendsgiving in early summer rain," said Jaime Durham. "The bustling farmhouse kitchen and kids running around and playing. So lovely!"

Hanna said, "It's so simple, and it feels like a thread weaving deeper human connection. I'm excited to see what this may grow into. I have all kinds of ideas!"

To start, she and Andy plan to host more dinners like this. To be among the first to know about upcoming events, get on their email list at www.tapalouguilds.com. And if you're curious what Vermont Wild Kitchen is up to elsewhere in the state, visit www.vtwildkitchen.org.



Ragan's Garlic Scape Pesto Recipe

I asked Ragan Anderson how she makes her pesto, which is among the best I have ever tasted. Here is her recipe: "A bunch of garlic scapes, extra virgin olive oil, nuts (walnuts are my fave), lemon juice, salt, and goat cheese. I eyeball everything and, most importantly, eat as I go to make sure it's yummy!"



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Guilford Finances: Looking Back to 2024 and Forward to 2028

BY SHEILA MORSE

Those who follow Selectboard (SB) meetings are aware that a 2023 spreadsheet formula error resulted in under-taxing residents three years in a row. While this error complicated the SB's fiduciary responsibilities, Guilford's fiscal health is strong and its policies and programs remain intact, at no additional cost to taxpayers. In the best of all possible worlds, with a total estimated revenue of about \$1,319,000 and estimated expenses of about \$1,050,000 in Fiscal Year 2026, Guilford could see a revenue surplus of ~\$270,000, allowing us to cover 100% of the budgeted \$225,000 transfer to the Asset Fund, and still leaving Guilford with about \$45,000 to transfer to the Reserve Fund. In the face of budget uncertainty, we do not have to borrow funds, increase taxes, reduce service levels, or delay critical projects.

The SB will have more definitive figures to report when the draft professional audit is presented to the SB late this summer.

The August 2022 issue of the *Gazette*, found online at guilfordvt.gov/guilford-gazette, includes a thorough description of the budgeting process. One large challenge to budgeting is that the process starts in November to project income and expenses for a fiscal year that is 8-20 months ahead of expenditures.

In November 2026, the SB will convene workshops to forecast the July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028 income and expenses for municipal and highway operations. As always, the public is invited. Watch for meeting notices at www.guilfordvt.gov or on Front Porch Forum.

7 Questions with Rob Hinrichs

BY THAYER TOMLINSON

Rob Hinrichs is a true Guilford fixture. He came to Vermont over 60 years ago and embodies the spirit of loving all that Vermont has to offer. Known for wearing a warm smile—as well as shorts for 10 out of 12 months a year—many recognize Rob as an avid community volunteer and a beacon of optimism and friendliness.

1. Where are you originally from?

I grew up in Connecticut in a small town about 45 minutes from New York.

2. When did you come to Guilford and why?

I came to Vermont in 1965 to attend Windham College, which is now Landmark. After school, I worked for a builder, Richard Blazej, for a couple years and then got involved in dairy farming. I farmed for 15 years and then had a wonderful career in real estate for 29 years.

3. What was your first impression of Guilford?

I felt like I was home. I loved the open pastures and mature forests and the kind people. I really did feel that I was returning to the land, to my home.

4. Who was the first Guilfordite you met?

It might have been Bill Fitch, a neighbor and farmer. He had been grazing his cows on our pasture when I bought my farm



Rob Hinrichs

in 1968 on Tater Lane. The cows would walk about three quarters of a mile through the deep woods from his house to mine every morning. On hot summer afternoons, they would dawdle in the cool shady woods heading home. I'd shoo them along home so they wouldn't be late for milking. Bill was a great friend and incredibly helpful mentor to me when I

started farming in the mid-1970s.

5. What do you think makes Guilford different from other places?

For me, Guilford is a friendly community where being ready to help each other is clearly felt.

6. Tell us something most people don't know about you.

I like country music. I like to drink a Corona beer after haying when it is hot and dusty outside—and that is the only time I like to drink Corona beer.

7. What is your favorite word?

Kindness.

And bonus question: What is your favorite time of year?

Spring and October. The beauty of the leaves appearing in the spring and then turning colors and dropping in the fall is so wonderful to me.



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One Year of Sustaining Membership

One year ago, we asked for your help in supporting more pages and increasing printing and mailing costs. You did not disappoint! Tremendous gratitude for our inaugural Guilford Gazette Sustaining Members, who have kicked off our first year of this effort with their generous contributions to support our quarterly town paper.

The *Gazette* is a labor of love for the handful of volunteers and many local folks who contribute their thoughts and pictures to every issue. If you are inspired to help us cover the costs of printing and mailing the Guilford Gazette, we invite you to consider becoming a Sustaining Member. Your generous annual pledge of \$100 will go directly (and only) toward printing and mailing costs. Mail a check (or cash or money order) to *The Guilford Gazette*, % the Guilford Free Library, 4024 Guilford Center Rd, Guilford, VT 05301, or email cwashburn951@gmail.com with any questions.

Thank you to inaugural members:

Richard Wizanksy and Akiva Mandell
Elliot Diringer & Lauren Rader
Linda Hay
Sharon Levenson
Rick Drawert
Thayer Tomlinson & Amit Sharma
Benjamin Kligler & Susan Karwoska
John & Amber Hunt
Kelsey Burns
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Martha (Marli) Rabinowitz
Don & Evelyn McLean
Art McEvily & Davida Bagatelle
Christopher Brown & Kristina Magee
Joan Peters
Tom & Gail Nunziata
Anne Rider & Robert Hinrichs
Barbara Belcher-Timme



The volunteer staff of the Guilford Gazette at our single annual in-person meeting at the Country Store (From left: Sharon Levenson, Crystal Washburn, Cathi Wilken, Joslyn McIntyre, Susan Bonthron, Mary Wallace Collins, Carrie Nelson, Evelyn McLean.)

Walking the Town with Guilford Cares

BY LEAH GESSNER

Each year, the Senior Walks Committee vows to find new locations to explore around town. This year, during mud season, we did some serious head-scratching and came up with a new list of five unique monthly walks for May through September.

May found us at Elysian Hills Tree Farm in Dummerston, where we marveled at the enormous stone trees created by a local stone builder. The good news is that it is an easy walk to these inspiring monuments perched along a ridge in a high meadow, and they are open to the public at any time.

In June we gathered for our first intergenerational walk at Guilford Central School to see firsthand how students, teachers, and parents have created an unusual, vibrant outdoor experience. One must only view the front yard of the school from the road



Continued on next page

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Walking the Town, Continued

to suspect that there are many interesting activities going on there. It was a joy to spend time with twelve pre-K student guides and their teacher, Emma Hallowell, walking the perimeter nature trail around the school property and visiting the outdoor classrooms in the “Wildwood Forest.”

Bobbie Fitch Haumann told us about the one-room schoolhouse she attended before the new school was built and fun memories of playing in those woods. She mused, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all the children in the world could have this?”

As of this writing, we are anticipating a walk in July on trails in the Ashworth Forest Block. This parcel of land is named and described in the Guilford Natural Resources Guide. With guidance and permission from the landowners, we will walk some of the open flat woodland trails they have created

on their land. Our guide, Karen Murphy, will help us identify flora and birdsongs and appreciate what we might otherwise miss. (Note: the Guilford Natural Resources Guide is available on the town website at guilfordvt.org)

The August 11th walk will take us out of the woods and onto the road—River Road. We plan to experience a section of this quiet back road on foot. Neighborhood resident Linda Lembke has invited a member of the Guilford road crew to point out special features along the road, talk about what it takes to maintain the many miles of unpaved road, and answer questions you may have wondered about.

Finally, on September 15th, we will head to the Algiers neighborhood on the other side of town. Starting at Guilford Community Church, we will walk to the

Guilford Preservation Inc. (GPI) gate on Partridge Road to view the gardens along Route 5, talk with the growers, then head back to the Community Park. There will be an opportunity to try the labyrinth and have a snack or lunch near or under the shady pavilion. Karen Murphy will lead the walk. Jean Eastman (GPI) and Elizabeth Christie (Guilford Community Park) will be on hand to answer questions about this well-trafficked part of Guilford.

Watch for announcements about the remaining Senior Walks on August 11th and September 15th. For more information about the walks or our other free services and programs, call Guilford Cares (802-579-1350) or email guilfordcaresvt@gmail.com or check our website, www.guilfordcares.com.



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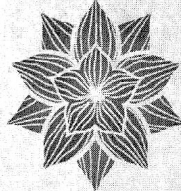
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Semiquincentennial: A mouthful! Say it!

BY VERANDAH PORCHE, JULY 4, 2026

Verandah read this new, original poem at the Guilford Center Meeting House during the July 4th picnic sponsored by the Broad Brook Community Center.

How many syllables? Seven, a lucky number.
How many seasons? A thousand, depending
on how you're counting. What about these—
Christmas, mud, maple, fishing, black fly,
road construction, apple picking, leaf peeping,
hunting, and stick?

A thousand seasons since our founders borrowed,
sketched out, stretched, contended, fumed, and
compromised to solidify the script, and to pledge their
“Lives, Fortunes, and sacred Honor” to this Declaration,
grounded in equality.

The omissions of the father founders make us flinch:
the hearts of missing citizens—
first nations interwoven with ancestral lands,
people of color, free, stolen, and enslaved,
penniless laborers, and every woman.
Self-evident truth is still our work in progress.

*

Each morning I walk among the ancient maples,
peaceable matriarchs in the hedgerow.
Our witness trees caught wind of history—
racist crimes against eloquent Lucy and Abijah Prince,
mischievous of Old Mother Honeywell, resident witch.

Founding fracas of Guilford: Ethan Allen bellowing,
“[U]nless you, the people of Guilford, peaceably submit
yourselves to the authority of Vermont, I swear that I will
lay it as desolate as Sodam and Gomorrah, by God.”

*

During my own seasons here, 232, I've studied
the gentle maples: skirts of silver buckets,
and sap our children slurped from the tap.
Wood frogs in the fire pond, nesting songs;
below them, puffballs bigger than your head.

The terrible year of pear thrips, 1988—
the first foliage crisped, shriveled, then
the maples set out a second crop of stunted leaves.
Remember how those trees held space for us
to stand apart and visit during the pandemic.

*

Spring rains: this banner year leaves flair.
In the staggering heat wave, we shelter
under maple canopies. In this era of no kings,
let us celebrate their ample crowns!

Guilford's 4th of July



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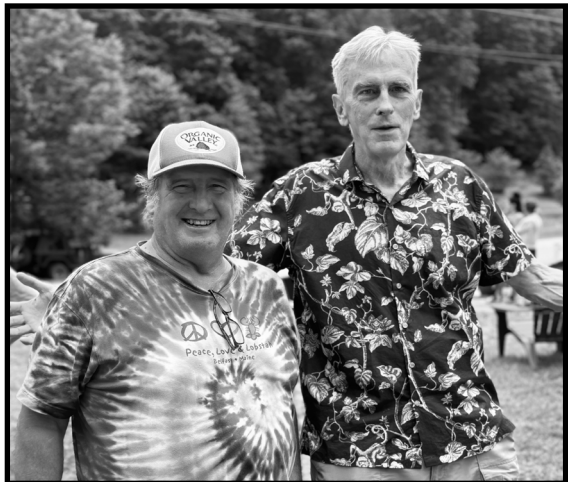
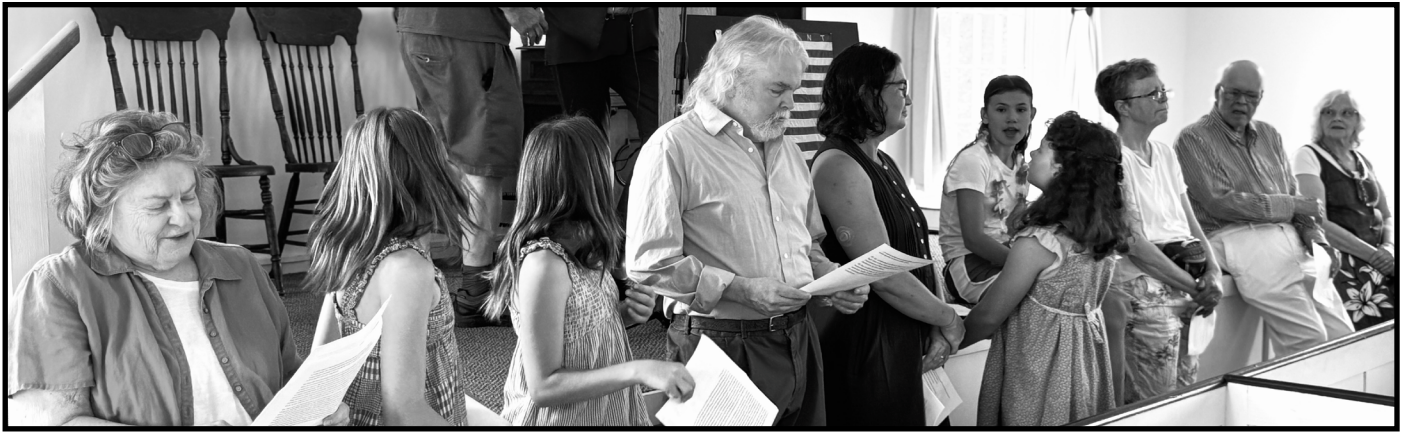
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Odes to Freedom

These poems were written on Juneteenth, an important celebration of freedom in our country. The poets, Guilford children between 8 and 11, were given a prompt to free-associate words that make them think of freedom. What does freedom look like? Smell like? Taste like? Feel like? To these kids, freedom is not just history but real life, every day, in so many ways.

Thank you to the Guilford Free Library for sponsoring the workshop and providing snacks—very important for any poet to be well-fed! And thank you to the Broad Brook Community Center for displaying these poems in the upstairs hall.

Freedom is dance
Freedom is running in fields
Freedom is summer and swimming
Freedom is my pets and doing what I want
Freedom is running free with no one to stop me

Iris Roberts

Down by the river
across from a field
by the hummingbird feeders
next to the flowers
in a hammock I lay
gentle breeze against my face
sun on my back
laying there
free

Bay Maulucci

Freedom looks like
flying birds running in the breeze
freedom sounds like
crunching leaves
freedom tastes like
homemade cookies
and fresh strawberries
freedom feels like a
big warm hug
and sipping out of a mug
freedom smells like
after it rains
and making candy canes
freedom is wonderful

Phoebe McIntyre

Birds fly free through the open sky. Kids play — shouting, singing, making music.
Life, without fear.
The Statue of Liberty tall and proud, a gift declaring our freedom.
The Declaration of Independence, a paper declaring our freedom.
This is freedom.

Leah Hurst

I wish I was free to
jump off of a bridge onto fresh water
I wish I was free to
do whatever I could possibly do
I wish I was free to
swim wherever I wanted to
to be the best person I could
and climb up a tree

Olive Nilson



Freedom looks like...by *Eliza McIntyre*

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Selectboard Update

BY CHIP CARTER

The first months of the 2026 Selectboard year have been busy for members, Town staff, and the many volunteers who keep the town running. Along with the day-to-day work of local government, there has been progress on several projects, policy updates, and local priorities that will continue to shape the year ahead.

Work continues on updating Town policies. The Selectboard completed a revision of the Town's Social Media and Email Policy to reflect changes in communication practices, technology, and Vermont law. The Board created and adopted the Town's first Artificial Intelligence Policy, providing guidance for the use of emerging technologies by Town staff and officials. Updates to the Personnel Policy and a review of correspondence practices are underway.

Several infrastructure projects continue to move forward, including the Slate Rock Road culvert replacement and the Fitch Bridge projects. These efforts require coordination from our Town Administrator, along with Town staff, contractors, state agencies, local officials, and residents. While much of this work happens behind the scenes, it plays an important role in maintaining the roads, bridges, and

infrastructure that people rely on every day.

Public safety is also an important focus. The Selectboard worked with VTrans on steps to improve safety at the intersection of Guilford Center Road and Route 5, securing approval for enhanced signage and pavement markings. The challenges of that intersection are well known to many residents. Working with VTrans, our goal has been simple: improve safety and reduce the risk of accidents at this busy intersection.

Projects and policies are important, but they are only part of the picture. The continued involvement of residents is just as important. To that end, the Selectboard is reaching out to residents to determine best community engagement practices and opportunities.

One of the most notable events of the year was the May 6 Special Town Meeting, which drew nearly 200 people. The meeting brought together neighbors from across town for a thoughtful discussion about an important local issue. At the end of that discussion, voters decided to return Planning Commission appointments to the electorate, with future Planning Commission members to be elected as current terms expire.

The May Special Town Meeting brought together a wide range of opinions. The willingness of so many people to participate, listen,

and engage in the discussion reflected the strong interest many have in Guilford's future.

That strong turnout and thoughtful discussion demonstrated the value of neighbors participating in the issues and decisions that affect us all.

Guilford 2026 Election Dates

August Primary

Tuesday August 11 from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. at Guilford Central School (374 School Road)

Absentee Ballots for the General Election will be sent by the State beginning the second week of September.

Election Worker Training for General Election

Tuesday October 20 at 3 p.m. and Thursday October 22 at 5 p.m. at the Guilford Town Office

General Election (Midterms)

Tuesday November 3 from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. at the Broad Brook Community Center (3940 Guilford Center Road)



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ABOUT THE GUILFORD GAZETTE

This quarterly newspaper, produced by volunteers, aims to bring the community of Guilford together and highlight all the wonderful things happening in our town. We welcome submissions, advertisers, and new volunteers. Email gazettevt@gmail.com. You can also drop paper submissions in the Gazette box at the Guilford Free Library.

Deadlines for article submissions are January 1 for the May issue, April 1 for the May issue, July 1st for the August issue, and October 1st for the November issue.

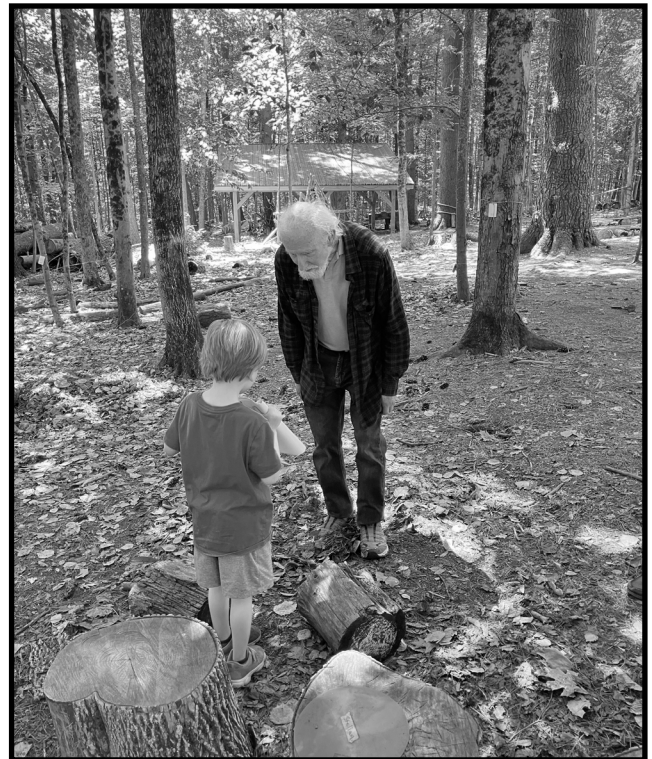
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Richard Austin spends time with a child on a Guilford Cares intergenerational walk.

