THE GUILFORD GAZETTE

Volume 32 No.4

November 2026 Issue

Guilford Central School 2nd Annual Farm and Field Day

BY SARAH ROSOW

On October 6, the entire Guilford Central School community participated in the second annual Farm and Field Day, a one-of-a-kind celebration of local farms and rural life where students learned about Vermont agriculture by participating in six different stations.

At the pie station, volunteers worked alongside Culinary Arts students from the Windham Regional Career Center (WRCC) to lead students in preparing individual no-bake pumpkin custard pies, with ingredients donated by the Brattleboro Food Coop.

At the honey station, Erik Johnson of Putney Ridge Raw Honey taught students about honeybees and showed them equipment from his apiary.

Art teacher Laisa Bellomo-Johnson painted a beautiful background of green hills for the farm mural, and students each added their own hand-drawn feature to the scene.

The dairy station featured three calves from Miller Farm in Vernon, along with maple milk samples and a relay race that required students to sort items into "from a cow" and "not from a cow" categories.

For the tractor and equipment station, Vermont Roadworks and the Guilford Highway Department shuttled over dump trucks, mowers, plow trucks, backhoes, bobcats, and more for students to sit on, examine, and learn about.



Ryan Snow of the Guilford Highway Department and Doug Cheney of Vermont Roadworks teach students about the equipment used for paving, plowing, mowing, digging, and hauling.

The final station, cider pressing with Peter Welch, also solicited voting on names for the school's six new hens who are living on the playground in a coop built by the WRCC Construction Program.

Teacher Molly Sauvain said of the event, "Lots of happy kids. I loved all the connections to Guilford and the people, animals, and plants that live here."

Photos continue on page 3

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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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Ad Questions: You may contact Crystal Washburn at cwasburn951@gmail.com or 802-318-2538. Ads must be paid for in advance. Checks should be made out to Guilford Gazette and mailed to:

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Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program

FROM THE TOWN OFFICE

Tax Season will be here before you know it! The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program assists with federal and state tax preparation, Vermont Homestead and Property Tax Credit claims, Vermont Renter Rebate claims, and more.

Last year, there was great collaboration around this event by the Town Office, BBCC, and SEVCA. One day was focused on education around the Homestead Declaration, the required forms, and the renter's rebate. SEVCA also provided individually scheduled times to help residents file their taxes. This year, the plan is to arrange the educational session the second week of January, then a day of individual sessions in both February and March of 2027.

VITA offers free tax help to:

- Individuals or couples who generally make $69,000 or less
- Senior citizens
- Persons with disabilities
- Active duty military and veterans
- Limited English-speaking taxpayers

How to make an appointment

Visit sevca.org/tax-services and click on "Request an Appointment" to fill out a request form, or send an email to estrasser@sevca.org, or call or text (802) 428-3032. VITA will start taking appointments on January 1, 2027. Please contact them as soon as possible, even if you don't have all your documents yet. Appointments fill up fast, so don't delay! They will be preparing taxes in person, by appointment, at the following locations: Bellows Falls, Brattleboro, Chester, Guilford, Londonderry, Ludlow, Plymouth, Putney, Springfield, Townshend, Westminster, White River Junction, Wilmington, Windsor or virtually. Visit sevca.org/tax-services for more details.

To confirm dates of sessions, or if you have any questions, please contact Elly Majonen at the Guilford Town Office 802-254-6857 x 102 or treasurer@guilfordvt.gov, or Emily Stasser from SEVCA/VITA at estrasser@sevca.org or call or text (802) 428-3032.

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A GCS student pets a cow from Miller Farm in Vernon. The farm also donated samples of maple milk for the festivities. The GCS cafeteria is now serving Miller Farm milk daily.



Students draw features for the farm mural.

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Personalized Wellness Planning



Peter Welch and Steve Damon run the cider station. Students grind and press apples from Green Mountain Orchard and enjoy fresh pressed apple cider.



Between stations, students take a break to play and re-center while working on balance and concentration.

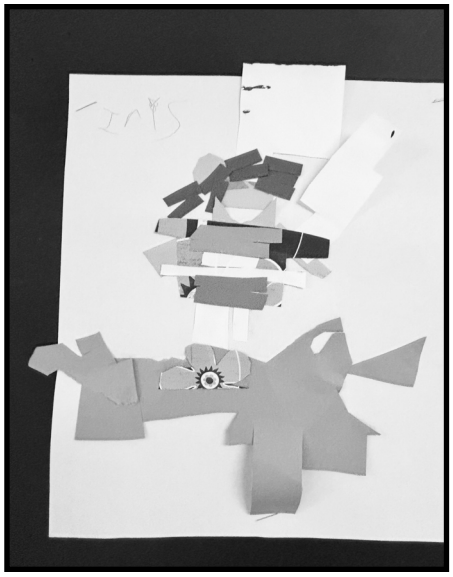


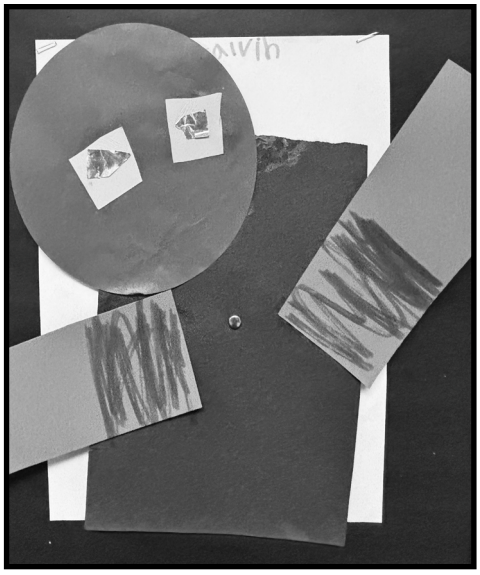
Erik Johnson of Putney Ridge Apiary teaches students about bees and honey equipment.

2nd Grader Art

Long-term Guilford Central School art sub Laisa Bellomo-Johnson shared collage self-portraits by second graders.











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Guilford Takes the Lead in Addressing a County-Wide Problem

BY MIKE SZOSTAK, SELECTBOARD MEMBER

Everyone who lives in or passes through Guilford is dependent upon our roads. We have about 72 miles of gravel roads, making maintenance challenging. The months from November through March are especially challenging, due to unpredictable weather conditions and differing micro-weather patterns concurrently existing across Guilford. Thanks to our road crew, led by Foreman Jim Freeman, and sometimes assisted by retired crew members, we've been able to meet these challenges.

Staffing our road crew has become a critical problem. We were down one road crew member for over a year. With a road crew of five, including our foreman, that's a 20% staffing shortfall. Despite our hiring efforts, we were unable to attract qualified candidates. Finally, thanks to Jim's personal efforts, we were recently able to hire a qualified road crew member. Although that's good news, a number of people on our crew are approaching retirement, so we will soon be facing a critical staffing shortage once again.



A similar staffing problem exists in towns throughout our county and state-wide. Thanks to extensive research by Chip Carter, Guilford Selectboard member, we have adjusted the pay scales for our road crew to be more in line with neighboring towns. Although our compensation and benefits are competitive with surrounding towns, along with a decent work environment, we face a daunting hiring challenge.

We are not only competing with neighboring towns for qualified road crew members, we are also competing with private industry where wages may be higher. What adds to the challenge of this situation is that a Commercial Driving License (CDL) is required to perform most of the road crew tasks. Obtaining this CDL requires an investment from $4,000 to $7,500 for training and obtaining the necessary certifications. Especially with small crews, everyone needs to be able to perform tasks where a CDL is required.

Since this is a county-wide problem, self-defeating when towns compete with each other over a limited pool of potential applicants, Sheila Morse, Guilford Selectboard Chair, took the initiative, along with Erika Elder, our Town Administrator, to invite representatives from other towns and supporting state and county agencies to a meeting to discuss how to resolve this common challenge. The first meeting was held in Guilford on August 25 with 13 attendees, representing six towns, plus Vermont Local Roads Program (VTrans) and the Windham Regional Commission (WRC). Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) is helping coordinate and shape the direction of our efforts. A follow-up meeting was held on September 29 (after this article was written).

We are early in the process of finding ways to collaboratively address this critical staffing challenge, but the enthusiasm and commitment by people from our neighboring towns and agencies makes this effort seem quite worthwhile. Part of the effort will likely be crafting a solution to present to our state legislature and other state agencies. The Selectboard invites the public to present ideas that will help us meet this challenge that is so important to all of us.

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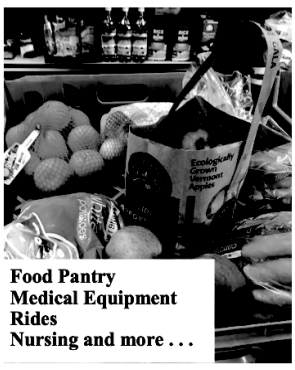
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Call for submissions

February
Love Issue

What do you love most about Guilford?
Send us your short articles, poems, and photos with captions. Send submissions to gazettevt@gmail.com

Or become a sustaining member to show your love and support for our local quarterly newspaper!

❤ Love Is All We Need ❤
A Call for Submissions for Our February Issue!

February's edition of The Guilford Gazette will be our annual Love Issue. We want to know what you love about Guilford.

We invite you to...

❤ Send in a short article (200-400 words) about something you love about living in Guilford.

❤ Send us a photo you've taken of a place in Guilford, with a short caption.

❤ Send us a photo of a couple that's been together for a long time in Guilford (with their permission).

❤ Draw something!

❤ Place an ad in the Gazette to confess your love, romantic or platonic, for anyone.

❤ Any other ideas?

As always, contact the Gazette at gazettevt@gmail.com. We can't wait to spread the love!

Healthy Forests, Stronger Guilford

GUILFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

"Vermont's forests are a cornerstone of the state's identity, culture, and economy."
— Stewardship Guide for Vermont Forest Landowners, Vermont Natural Resources



It's hard to imagine Guilford without its dense forests. Yet 100 years ago our hills were mostly open pasture, cleared by settlers for crops and grazing livestock. As farms were abandoned, woodlands gradually returned. Today, Guilford's forests help define our rural way of life.

Keeping those woodlands healthy and productive requires thoughtful action. We need to care for our forests, limit fragmentation, and plan development sensibly while still encouraging additional housing that is in short supply. State conservation and land-use policies have prompted debate, but local landowners have an essential role to play: the decisions we make about our woods affect the whole community.

Healthy forests provide benefits that reach well beyond property lines. They:

- Support wildlife and a rich diversity of plants, fungi, and animals
- Protect water supplies and water quality
- Store carbon and help slow and absorb stormwater, reducing flood impacts
- Support livelihoods through forestry, recreation, and tourism

The Guilford Conservation Commission helps local landowners find information, resources, and practical support for caring for their woods. We share opportunities through Front Porch Forum and at our tables at Town Meeting and the Guilford Fair. We also maintain a resource cart at the Town Office and provide information on the town website and in the Guilford Town Guide.

Our guided walks explore Guilford's varied natural habitats, drawing on research from the Natural Resources Inventory we helped support. We offer workshops on topics including invasive plants and insects, tree diseases, wildlife, and flood mitigation. For landowners interested in conservation easements, we can help connect them with information and assistance. Our Land Conservation Fund is available to support local conservation efforts.

To receive updates about events and opportunities, join our mailing list by emailing guilfordvtcc@gmail.com.

Free Resources for Woodland Owners

1. Healthy Woods Checkups The Vermont Woodlands Association's Healthy Woods Checkups program offers eligible woodland owners an opportunity to spend two to four hours walking their property with a licensed consulting forester at no cost. Learn more about eligibility and availability at vermontwoodlands.org/healthywoodscheckups.

2. Audubon Vermont's Forest Landowner Assistance Program Audubon Vermont offers educational resources and free expert assistance to help landowners and their foresters explore stewardship options that benefit birds, other wildlife, and the land. Learn more at audubon.org/vermont/projects/forest-landowner-assistance-vermont.

3. Stewardship Guide for Vermont Forest Landowners The Guilford Town Office has several lending copies of this guide, which offers information and practical advice for woodland owners. It is also available online at vnrc.org/forestlandowners/guide.

Whether you own a few wooded acres or a larger forest parcel, learning more about your land is a useful first step toward keeping Guilford's forests healthy for generations to come.

The Guilford Gazette Is Now a Non-Profit

With enormous gratitude to Crystal Washburn, who manages business for us at the Gazette, we are excited to announce that the Guilford Gazette is now officially a nonprofit organization. This means that any donations from you, our readers, are tax-deductible. Thank you, Crystal, for your quick work to make this happen in just a matter of months!

Will You Become a Sustaining Member?

Have you considered becoming a sustaining member of the Guilford Gazette? Our sustaining members help us cover the ever-increasing costs of printing and mailing the paper each quarter. 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. We pay our writers, staff, and the volunteers with gratitude. 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.

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The Guilford Guide Won the Vermont Planners' Association Project of the Year Award

BY JOSLYN MCINTYRE

For more than 30 years, the Vermont Planners' Association (VPA) has awarded recognition to "the work done by people and projects in Vermont that make our state a great place to live." The purpose of the awards is to honor "the best in local, regional, and state planning by citizens and professional planners." This year, the VPA chose *The Guilford Guide* as its Project of the Year.

The Guilford Guide originated at a Guilford Planning Commission visioning workshop in 2023, when a group of volunteers coalesced to do the research, outreach, and writing required to complete the 75-page "owners' manual" for Guilford residents and visitors. One of those volunteers, Rick Zamore, along with Jeannette Tokarz, Guilford Planning Commission Chair, traveled to Winooski on July 29 to receive the VPA award on behalf of the team responsible for *The Guilford Guide*.

The plaque commemorating the award will be hung at the Town Office, where copies of *The Guilford Guide* are available.

The digital version of *The Guilford Guide* is free to everyone on the Town website (guilfordvt.gov) by clicking on the "Did You Know?" link. The online version will be periodically updated to reflect changes at organizations, institutions, and businesses. If you'd like your business to be listed in the digital version of *The Guilford Guide*, please send your information to rick.zamore@gmail.com.



Jeannette Tokarz, Guilford Planning Commission Chair, and Rick Zamore, a member of the Guilford Guide team, receiving the Vermont Planners' Association Project of the Year Award from VPA president Alex Weinagen and Cymone Bedford, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission.

The Windham County Law Enforcement Governance Council: An Update

BY TARA CHENEY, VICE CHAIR, GUILFORD SELECTBOARD AND VICE CHAIR, WINDHAM COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

About two years ago, Guilford voters budgeted $68,000 for regional law enforcement services through the Windham County Sheriff's Office. However, a regional program was not yet sufficiently developed to use those funds for the envisioned level of service. I would like to take a moment to give an update and explain what the Windham County Law Enforcement Governance Council is, why it was created, and what Guilford's involvement means for our community.

The idea of regional policing itself is not new. The Sheriff's Office formally launched its current regional-policing project in 2022, although Sheriff Mark Anderson has been working on the issue for years, along with municipal officials, members of the public, and legislators, including former Windham County Senator Jeanette White. That work eventually led to S.255, now Act 104, signed into law in May 2026, which created the Windham County Law Enforcement Governance Council pilot.

Our Council works directly within that legislative framework. We are not simply creating a policing program on our own. This is a state-authorized pilot, with accountability and reporting requirements, intended to determine whether a regional model can provide more consistent and affordable law-enforcement coverage to rural towns that do not maintain their own police departments.

The Council has adopted shared principles and bylaws. We are now working through perhaps the most important part of the process: determining required service levels, costs, and the distribution of those costs among participating towns. Emergency calls are particularly important to this discussion. We are reviewing existing calls for service throughout the region. Across Windham County, those calls can range from suspicious activity, domestic disturbances, threats and harassment, welfare checks, and motor-vehicle incidents to serious emergencies involving violence or lives in danger.

Because many of Windham County's smaller towns do not have their own police departments, when someone calls 911, the question is not simply whether law enforcement will respond, but how quickly an officer can get there. The regional model is intended to create more predictable law-enforcement capacity for participating towns, with deputies assigned to participating communities who are incorporated into the response system, rather than communities relying solely on distant and unreliable law-enforcement resources.

That is one reason staffing is such a major part of the budget we are developing. The Sheriff cannot responsibly say, "We will provide full-time regional coverage" without knowing how many towns are participating and how much coverage those towns expect. If, for example, ten towns elect to participate in a full-service regional model, the Sheriff can determine how many deputies, vehicles, supervisory personnel, and other resources are required to provide that coverage. From there, we can determine the total cost and develop a fair cost per resident for participating municipalities.

There is also an economy-of-scale component. The more municipalities that participate in a shared system, the more broadly the fixed costs of staffing and operating that system can potentially be distributed. That is one of the reasons it is important to develop the regional plan before giving individual towns a final price. Right now, there is no final price for Guilford or any other town, *but there will be.*

The Council is working toward having a proposed budget by the end of November to give towns a clearer picture of the staffing model, proposed services, overall cost and per-capita amount participating municipalities would be asked to consider. We report directly to the state for approval. This is a pilot program, but we are confident that it will gain the support of the state and surrounding towns to become a permanent regional law enforcement service.

For Guilford, this conversation is ultimately about a very basic question: What level of law-enforcement response should our residents reasonably be able to expect when they need help, particularly when someone's safety or life may be at risk, and how can rural towns provide that service in a financially sustainable way?

As the Council develops the proposal and we approach the proposed budget, I will continue to keep Guilford residents informed at Selectboard meetings.



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Fire Department Stats

July:
4 fire
17 medical calls
2 mutual aid

August:
5 fire
15 medical calls
0 mutual aid

September:
6 fire
17 medical calls
1 mutual aid

Guilford Cooks

BY BETSY BLOCK

Here at the Gazette, we love food almost as much as we love our community. So we thought, why not combine the two into one delicious column called Guilford Cooks, and feature recipes from some of our favorite people—you?!

We're kicking off Guilford Cooks with a Thanksgiving dessert recipe from Jeannette Tokarz, Chair of the town's Planning Commission. In addition to improving our quality of life in so many ways, Jeannette and her family are also food lovers whose favorite holiday is Thanksgiving. Here's what she had to say (very eloquently!) about her family's tradition.

* * * * * * * * * *

"When my oldest son started dating the woman who is now his wife, her favorite meal was (and still is) Thanksgiving. She also loved to spend that day with her family. Rather than force her to choose between the two families, I decided to host our Thanksgiving on the following Saturday. That way, my son and D.I.L. could be with both families *and* have two Thanksgiving meals. And it was easier to run out to buy a missing ingredient!

"Then, when my younger son started dating the woman who is now his wife, she enthusiastically joined the tradition. She's a stellar cook, so for years we (well, mainly she) have been trying out different recipes. We start collaborating in October or November to plan the menu for the day and the weekend. It's usually tweaks on the classics. For a time I lobbied for salmon as the main dish, but have given up and reverted to turkey. It's the better vehicle for mashed potatoes and gravy.

I've started a Thanksgiving recipe folder for those dishes that got rave reviews. We're shameless dessert lovers, so I'll lead with one of our recent favorites.

Maple-Honey Pecan Pie



SUBMITTED BY JEANNETTE TOKARZ

For people who find ordinary pecan pie too sweet, as I do, maple-honey pecan pie is a revelation. My daughter-in-law uses this recipe, adapted from Melissa Clark's NYT Cooking recipe. It uses maple syrup, honey, and brown sugar as sweeteners rather than the usual corn syrup. For more detailed directions, search "Melissa Clark Maple-Honey Pecan Pie" online.

Ingredients

Your favorite 9" pie dough crust
Flour for rolling it out
½ c salted butter
¼ maple syrup
¼ honey
½ c more maple syrup!
3 large eggs
1 T bourbon or another booze
1 t vanilla extract
¾ t salt
1 ½ c pecan halves
Flaky sea salt for the top

Directions

1. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 12-inch circle, then transfer to a 9-inch metal pie plate. Fold over and crimp the edges. Put crust in the freezer for at least a half hour.
2. Place a rimmed baking sheet on the middle oven rack and heat to 400 degrees.
3. Take the crust out of the freezer, line it with parchment, and fill it with dried beans or pie weights. Bake for 10 minutes, remove the parchment and weights, and bake for 10 minutes more. Let cool.
4. Meanwhile, brown the butter in a saucepan until it smells good and nutty. Add maple syrup to the butter and cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture thickens and reduces slightly, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in honey. Let cool at least 10 minutes.
5. Combine sugars, eggs, bourbon, vanilla, and salt in a large mixing bowl.
6. Slowly pour syrup mixture into the egg mixture, whisking constantly so as not to end up with sweet scrambled eggs, and don't forget to add the brown bits—they're the best part!
7. Line your cooled crust neatly with pecans. Carefully pour the filling over the pecans.
8. Place pie plate on the hot sheet pan and bake for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees and continue to bake for another 35 to 45 minutes, until the center of the pie has puffed up and turned golden brown. If the edges of the crust start getting too brown, cover the pie with tin foil.
9. Let it cool on a wire rack, sprinkling with flaky sea salt once it's a bit cooler.

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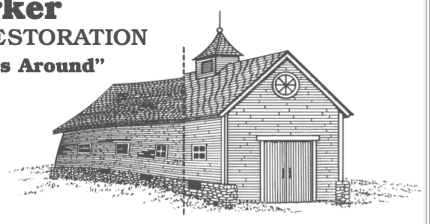

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A New School Playground

BY JOSLYN MCINTYRE

The lilacs are dying and the concrete retaining wall is cracked—not to mention the creep of poison ivy. The good news? The kids at Guilford Central School are getting some exciting playground updates. "The goal of the project is to refresh our playground and complete needed work on infrastructure," says John Gagnon, GCS Principal.

When polled, families, staff, and students asked for additional swings and new basketball poles and nets, as well as an area dedicated to building forts and other freeform play. Sarah Rosow, Farm to School Coordinator at GCS, describes: "We'll open up the edge of the woods as a shaded play area with climbing logs, a mud kitchen, and other natural play features. Eventually we may integrate garden areas."

The failing retaining wall at the gateway to the playground will be replaced with a boulder wall that will double as a sitting and climbing area, along with plantings and stairs that fit better into the natural landscape and slope. "Our focus is to blend our natural landscape into the design of the playground," Gagnon says.

The lion's share of the cost for the playground upgrade was built into the school district's capital plan over the past couple of years. However, once estimates come in for things like paving, excavation, and specific

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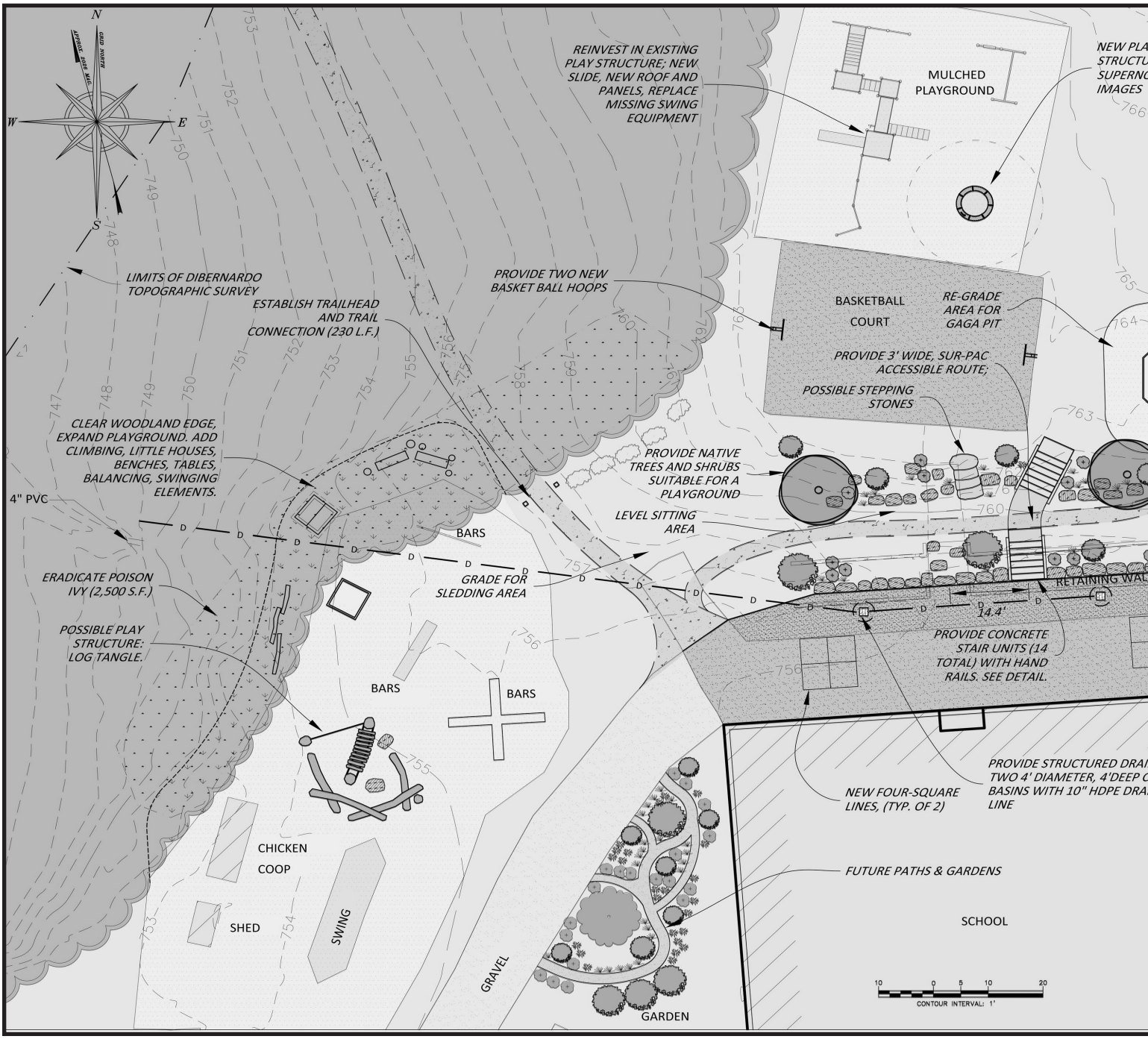
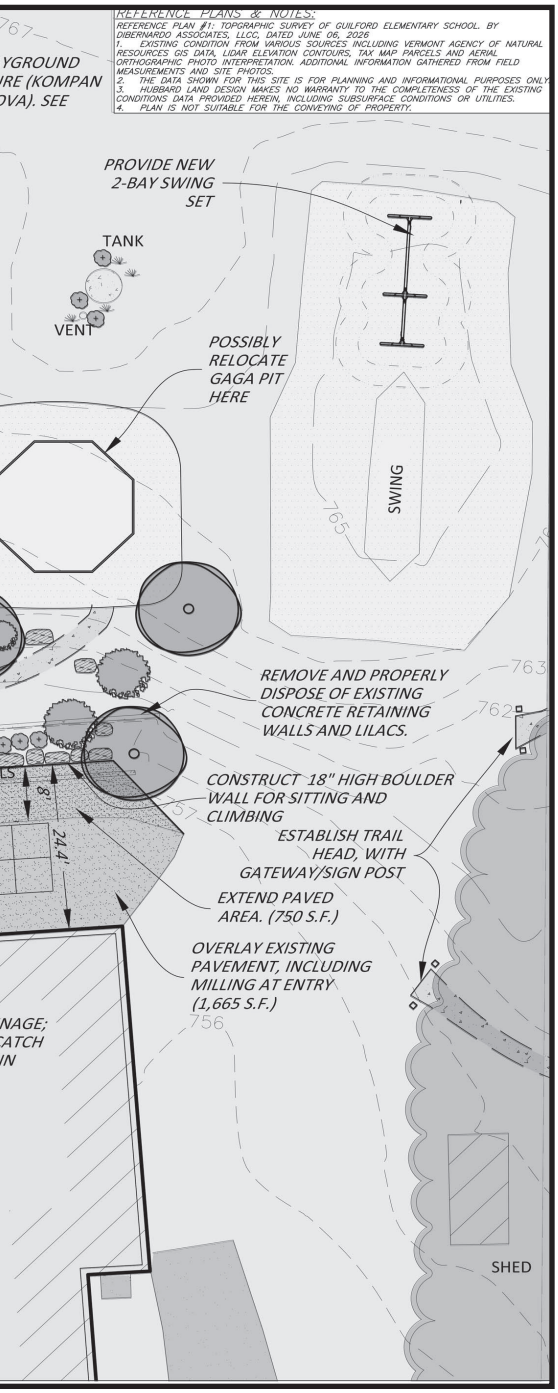


Playground, continued

playground equipment, the school may be doing some additional fundraising. (Stay tuned for opportunities to pitch in.)

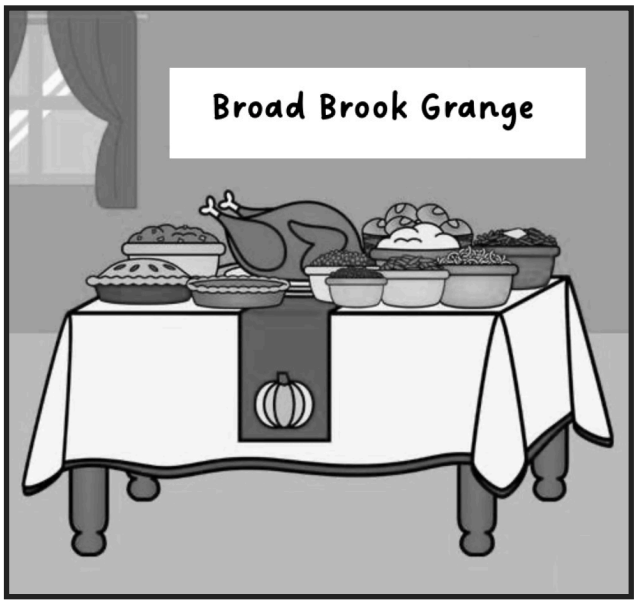
GCS is working with local landscape architecture firm Hubbard Land Design and has a plan underway. Gagnon says, "Adam comes highly recommended by our sister schools, Dummerston and Putney, for his outstanding work."

The hope is to have the playground project largely completed by the end of the school year in June 2027.



A CommunityThanksgiving/Potluck Hosted by Broad Brook Grange

BY DON MCLEAN



Broad Brook Grange will again sponsor a Community Thanksgiving Dinner, on the Saturday before Thanksgiving: November 21 at 5:00 pm. It's a free dinner with a potluck added. The dinner takes place at Broad Brook Community Center.

Grange members roast several turkeys, courtesy of the Guilford Cares Food Pantry, and also provide stuffing, mashed potatoes, and gravy. Those attending are asked to bring an item to share: appetizers or side dishes, non-alcoholic beverages and, of course, desserts. There is no admission charge. All are welcome, including anyone who cannot bring a food item.

With the potential return this fall of COVID and flu, Grange members ask folks to stay home if not feeling well, and self-test if in doubt before coming.

Have a photo you'd like to see printed in the 2026 Town Report?



Submit your photos at Guilfordvt.gov

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7 Questions with Kelsey Burns

BY THAYER TOMLINSON



Kelsey Burns

Kelsey Burns is a lifelong Vermonter who moved to Guilford about 10 years ago. She and her son are proud residents of the old Weatherhead Hollow Schoolhouse.

1. Where are you originally from?

I was born in Lincoln, Vermont and grew up in Addison and Middlebury.

2. When did you come to Guilford and why?

In many ways, I stumbled into Guilford. I had been living in Brattleboro since 2003, but it wasn't until 2017, when I began looking to buy a home, that I discovered Guilford. I found the sweetest little house—the Weatherhead Hollow Schoolhouse—and it was the only home I looked at and the only one I wanted. My son and I moved in just before he started at Guilford Central School. It warms my heart to think that we get to call Guilford home.

3. What was your first impression of Guilford?

I grew up in a small town in Vermont, and although it was special, it wasn't until I came to Guilford that I understood the wonder of small towns. I loved it and knew I was meant to be here.

4. Who was the first Guilfordite you met?

I think it was Norm Covey. He's my neighbor, and I met him soon after moving here. Norm has become my guide to Guilford's history. He actually went to school in my house when he was a boy, and he's shared so many wonderful stories with me—about which room was once the wood-chopping room, how he and his friends planted the now-gigantic pine trees in my yard, and how they used to grow corn in the backyard.

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

It is a quintessential Vermont town. I love that everyone knows everyone and that when neighbors drive by my house and see my door open, I'll get a call to tell me to close the door. I love that older residents tell me stories about going to school in what is now my home. I also feel blessed that my son had the opportunity to spend 8 years at Guilford Central School from pre-K through 6th grade. The foundation that school gave him cannot be matched.

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

For a brief stint I was the lead singer in a band called Hot Syrup!

7. What is your favorite time of year?

I think my favorite time of year is the shoulder season, when summer begins to give way to fall. The mornings are often foggy in the river valley along Weatherhead Hollow, and I love watching the fog burn off as the day emerges. As the weather cools, I naturally slow down—but I'm especially happy this year knowing that all my winter wood is stacked.

Meet the Guilford Free Library (GFL) Friends Group

Throughout Vermont and the U.S., library directors, staff, elected boards of trustees, friends groups, and volunteers together make a team that supports the vital services and programs of libraries. This is more than evident right here in Guilford at our free public library. While you may already know our library director, assistant librarian, trustees, and library volunteers, perhaps you are not as familiar with the Guilford Free Library (GFL) Friends Group.

If you stopped by the library tent at the Guilford Fair in September, you may have learned that the former Friends of the Guilford Free Library is now a newly named, reorganized 501c3: The Guilford Free Library (GFL) Friends Group. In Vermont, there were 52 Friends Groups, and we are now the 53rd!

So…what is a Friends Group? We are created as independent organizations with our own board members and bylaws, but we work collaboratively with the library's board of trustees and director. We support quality library service in the community through fundraising, volunteerism and advocating for the library's programming. We create a budget (with the input from the director) to fund special projects and programs which complement the library's mission. And we also serve as advocates for local, state, and national library issues.

The GFL Friends Group recognizes that Guilford displays a commitment to community in so many ways. To garner support for our library community, we chose to follow suit of so many other Friends Groups across the country and launched an annual membership drive at the Guilford Fair. It was so exciting to see the number of full- and part-time residents who joined the Friends Group during that weekend. For annual dues of either $5/individual or

Continued on next page

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Library Friends, continued

$10/household you, too, can join. Yes, we always welcome volunteers to help with events throughout the year, but membership does not require you to do so. Your annual dues will help us continue to fund complimentary museum passes, special programs, projects, and activities not covered by the library budget or trustees' funding.

How can you sign up? Just stop by the library and fill out your membership form. As the American Library Association states: "Libraries are the cornerstone of the community providing opportunities for all to engage in the joy of life-long learning and connect with the thoughts and ideas of others from ages past to the present."

Please join us in supporting the Guilford Free Library with your $5 or $10 membership. And keep an eye out for more information coming soon to the library website. In the meantime, if you want to get in touch, email us at guilfordlibraryfriends@gmail.com.

Holiday Bazaar at Guilford Community Church

Celebrate the season at Guilford Community Church's Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, December 5 from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. All are warmly welcome!

Browse tables filled with one-of-a-kind handcrafts, unique gifts, delectable sweets, decorated wreaths, and enticing raffle items. Catch up with friends over a cup of coffee or a delicious hot lunch, and enjoy the warmth and good cheer of this community gathering.

Guilford Community Church is fully accessible to people with disabilities.



The "Why I Love My Library" message tree drew attention from kids at the Guilford Fair while the adults signed up for their annual memberships

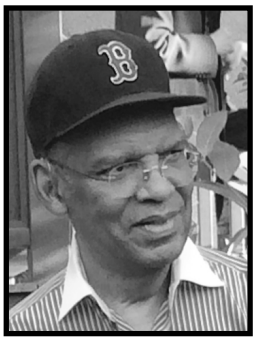
Christmas in Guilford Center

The annual Friends of Music at Guilford Christmas program of music and a story will again be held this season at Broad Brook Community Center. There are two performances: Friday, December 11 at 7:30 pm and Saturday the 12th, at 2 pm. Admission is free with donations welcome.

The program was held at Guilford's historic Christ Church from 1973 until 2020, when the 1817 building was closed to events pending renovations, which are ongoing. In recent years the event has been held at the BBCC.

As is traditional on this occasion, the Guilford Chamber Singers, directed by Tom Baehr, will perform a cappella Christmas music, primarily featuring old lyrics in modern settings.

Also a tradition is a story read by Don McLean. On this occasion, the story will be a chapter from the novel, *New Boy,* a coming-of-age novel published in 2005 by Julian Houston. Don McLean reads the story this year as a memorial tribute to the author, an old friend, who died in September.



Author, Julian Houston

And a third tradition on this program will be an audience sing-along of Christmas carols, concluding the evening.

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Illuminating Winter, Inviting Community

BY JOSLYN MCINTYRE

In the hierarchy of seasons here in southern Vermont, winter is the nadir. As the darkness descends and the icy cold kicks in, we stay home more and see each other less. Uriel Najara, our Town Clerk and a member of the Recreation Committee, noticed this seasonal rhythm after moving here from Southern California and thought, let there be light!

"When winter hits," Uriel says, "all the color goes away. I wanted to make sure that it didn't feel like it was gone forever." In December 2025, he organized the first Guilford Winter Lights Event at Broad Brook Community Center in the heart of Guilford. Circa Winter Solstice, friends and neighbors gathered for warm drinks and snacks, face painting, and a procession with homemade lanterns through a landscape of illuminated wooden sculptures.

The tradition will continue this year!

During the holiday season, a display of light sculptures will adorn the BBCC porch and front yard, and community members are invited to participate in building them. The sculptures will remain lit, and in January, Uriel plans to organize a culminating event of community gathering, storytelling, and celebration.

Last year's theme was "local fauna," with wood-and-light sculptures including a creatively constructed cardinal, beaver, deer, and fox. This year, the theme will be "waterways," another important aspect of natural life in Guilford, where three watersheds converge, the Broad Brook Flows through, and we are fortunate to have access to Sweet Pond, Weatherhead Hollow Pond, the Timber Dam, and multiple unofficial swimming holes and personal ponds. What might the display look like? Uriel pictures perhaps a path through the BBCC grounds lit by blue lights, and along this "river," last year's animals will be invited back to the ecosystem of illumination—with new sculptures, lanterns, and works of art built from natural materials including found wood, metal, and, of course, lights.

Ultimately, Najara imagines adding to the inventory of artworks every year. He says "My dream would be that, through this festival of lights, we will add to the story. In five or ten years, you'll be able to see the life of Guilford represented in the dead of winter, when everything's just sticks. A good reminder that there's so much coming back."

Guilfordites are invited to participate in any of three ways. You can donate lights and materials. You can build your own sculpture. And you can work with Uriel to set up the displays. If you are inspired to be a part of this new winter tradition, contact Uriel at the Town Office at townclerk@guilfordvt.gov or by calling 802.254.6857 ext. 107.





Photo credit: Joslyn McIntyre

It's Hunting Season!

BY THAYER TOMLINSON

Although there are hunting periods for big game in the spring (turkey) and earlier in the fall (bear), November is the peak of hunting season in Vermont for deer, turkey, and late-season bear. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department posts season dates and requirements on its website annually at www.vtfishandwildlife.com/hunt/hunting-and-trapping-seasons.

This year, Youth and Novice weekend for deer is November 7-8; the 16-day deer regular rifle season runs November 14-29. Any Vermont hunters who take a deer (or bear or turkey) must report within 48 hours at a reporting station or by using an online reporting option. The Guilford Country Store is the area's closest reporting station, open every day to allow hunters to record their take in the vestibule.

As a reminder to all of us who live in rural places during hunting season, wear bright colors (preferably blaze orange) when out walking and keep dogs leashed for safety.

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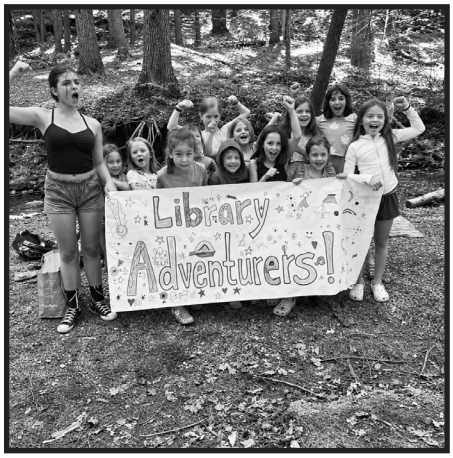
Guilford Free Library 2026 Free Summer Camps

BY AMBER HUNT, TOWN LIBRARIAN

This past summer, the Guilford Free Library offered three 1-week morning camps during the month of July. As always, camps were free for Guilford kids, funded by a grant from Vermont Humanities and the Town of Guilford



D&D and Storytelling Camp



Library Adventure Camp



Library Explorers Camp

Things to do in Guilford

BY THE GUILFORD RECREATION COMMISSION

The Guilford Recreation Commission offers so much in the way of ongoing programming and events. Two notable new programs:

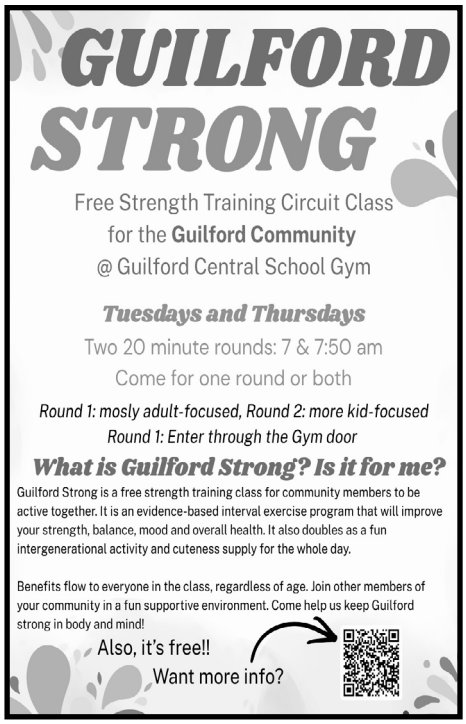
Guilford Strong brings a free strength training circuit class to the entire community at the Guilford Central School gymnasium, every Tuesday and Thursday at 7 and 7:50 a.m. There are two rounds—drop in anytime for one or both!

Community meditation is coming soon! This weekly group, held at the Broad Brook Community Center, will be led by Mitchell H., who has practiced and taught yoga asana, meditation, and breathing techniques (including pranayama, breath kriya) to youth, elders, and everyone in between for over two-and-a-half decades.

Scan the QR code for the full calendar or visit guilfordvt.gov/guilford-recreation.

Scan Me for the

Guilford Recreation Calendar



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Photos Around Town and Guilford Fair Photos





Laura Lawson Tucker, above, works the box office while Robert Tucker, left, plays his accordian on stage, for Vermont Mythos, Guilford Center Stage's October play





A chorus sings at Friends of Music at Guilford's 60th Annual Labor Day Weekend



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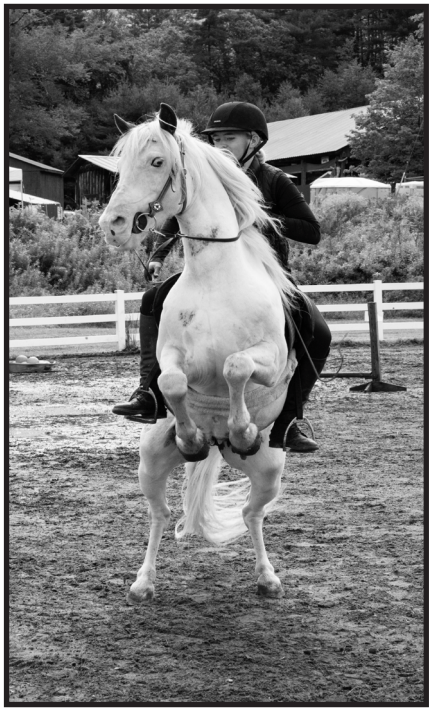
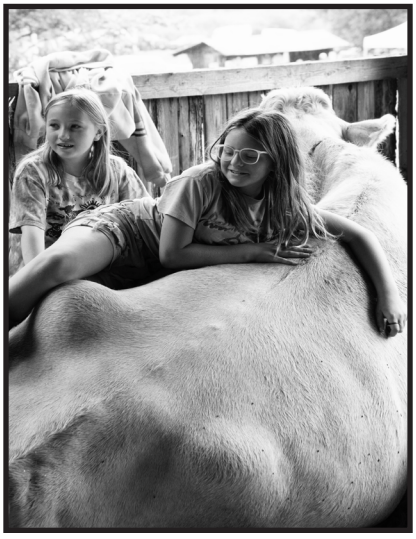
Thank you to Joshua Farr for sharing these incredible photographs, and thank you to all who made the 2026 Guilford Fair such a huge success: The Fair Association, all the volunteers, the vendors, and everyone who came and enjoyed themselves at the fair this Labor Day Weekend!











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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*.

Jonah August Kass Johnson, 10 pounds 3 ounces. Born October 3, 2026 to Ada Brown and Gabriel Kass-Johnson.

Sylvia Morse, born in Brattleboro in 1926, celebrated her 100th birthday in July

Cathi Hodnicki and **Roger Wilken** married sixty years ago on November 4, 1966. After visiting Babci Hodnicki, they watched The Glenn Miller Story with high school buddies and spent the night in a converted barn in Vernon. On a beautiful sunny morning they awoke to the duet of the Bach cantata "Jesu der du meine seele," now known as the Wedding Music.

Cheryl Lyn Pichette, 78 died unexpectedly in the emergency department at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital after being stricken ill at her home. Donations to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105, stjude.org. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

David Nelson Wright, Sr., 76, died in July at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center following a lengthy illness and prolonged hospitalization. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com



Jonah August Kass-Johnson, born to Ada Brown and Gabe Kass-Johnson

Did You Catch Guilford on Vermont Edition?

BY JOSLYN MCINTYRE

In case you missed it, the Vermont Public Radio program *Vermont Edition* featured Guilford in its July 2026 "Town by Town" episode. Vermont Edition devotes nearly an hour to a single Vermont town each month, and Guilford was fortunate to be randomly chosen this past summer. Host Mikaela Lefrak interviewed Chuck Collins (a trustee with the Guilford Historical Society and co-owner of Springs Farm), Verandah Porche, (poet, essayist, former Selectboard member, and author of Broad Brook Anthology), Susan Bonthron (co-founder and former managing editor of this paper), Ada Brown (executive director of the Broad Brook Community Center), and Dave Snyder (owner of Guilford Sound). You can find the episode at www.vermontpublic.org/show/vermont-edition.



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Paintings of People & Pets
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evelyn.vermont@gmail.com



4th Annual BBCC Artisan Craft Market

Get a head start on your holiday shopping while supporting local artisans at the Broad Brook Community Center's 4th Annual Artisan Craft Market on Saturday, November 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This year's market welcomes many returning artists alongside several new participants. Browse jewelry, pottery, stained glass, soap, painted eggs, felted garlands, salves, tinctures, decorative lanterns, textiles, Indian handcrafts, needle-felted décor, and more.

BBCC will also sell tickets for the Flourishing Guilford Raffle, featuring three prizes: a $1,000 credit at the Guilford Food Hub, a $500 CSA membership to Hermit Thrush Homestead, and a $200 Guilford Country Store gift card. Winning tickets will be drawn at the close of the market. Winners need not be present to claim their prizes.

A silent auction will offer the chance to take home a unique piece of Guilford history: one of BBCC's historic four-seat wooden benches. All proceeds from the raffle and silent auction directly support the community center.

When you're ready for a shopping break, head downstairs to the Broad Brook Cafe for soups, snacks, and beverages.

Join us for a day of handmade treasures and community connection at the Broad Brook Community Center, 3940 Guilford Center Road, Guilford, VT. For more information, visit broadbrookcommunitycenter.org.

Annual Children's Craft Fair at the BBCC

Each year, young artisans from Guilford and surrounding towns gather to showcase their creativity and handiwork at the annual Children's Craft Fair. From delicious baked goods and handcrafted candles to custom jewelry and homemade slime, the fair highlights the hard work and imaginative talents of our local youth.

Join us on Saturday, December 5 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Broad Brook Community Center to browse unique, fun gifts for all ages and support our burgeoning young entrepreneurs.



BBCC Craft Fair
photo credit: Carol Schnabel



Participants at last year's Children's Craft Fair

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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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Drawing by Bay Nilson, age 11