

# Part III

## Other Agencies & Organizations

## **Advance Transit (AT)**

Last year's report talked about the need for increased service on Advance Transit's Green line. The route serves densely populated neighborhoods and other destinations in White River Junction, Wilder, and Hartford Village. It also serves the southern portion of Norwich along Route 5, and connects commuters with employment centers in Hanover and Lebanon. The service was nearing capacity and needed to be expanded. The high productivity and connectivity of the service and net contribution to improved air quality helped the Advance Transit Green Route expansion project to be awarded the only FY 2015 grant for local transit service expansion in the State of Vermont. The funds became available in July and service on the Green line increased from once an hour to once every half hour. Ridership along the route has increased by a third in the first three months of operation.

In order to leverage the grant from VTrans, Advance Transit must provide 20% matching funds or about \$50,000 per year. Not wanting to miss this rare opportunity to improve its services, Advance Transit committed to get service started as soon as possible. Numerous private contributions have been secured and the town of Hanover has committed additional municipal funds to support the service. The majority of the service miles and hours are operated within Hartford and as a result the majority of the ridership is there as well. The largest share of matching funds is being requested in Hartford, but we are asking Norwich to contribute an additional \$2500 for this project.

In 2014 Advance Transit carried 9,014 fixed route passenger trips in Norwich out of a total of 549,866. An additional 95 ADA paratransit trips were provided in Norwich. 319,754 shuttle trips were provided in Hanover and Lebanon.

About AT: Advance Transit is a bi-state regional nonprofit public transportation system headquartered in Wilder. Services include FREE regularly scheduled fixed route bus service, ADA Complementary Paratransit service, park-and-ride shuttles, and Upper Valley Rideshare carpool matching service. Visit our website at [www.advancetransit.com](http://www.advancetransit.com) or call 295-1824 8-4:30 Monday-Friday with service questions. Thank you for your continued partnership and thanks for riding Advance Transit!

*Van Chesnut, Executive Director*

## **Aging In Place In Norwich**

Aging In Place in Norwich (AIPN), is a nonprofit volunteer organization serving Norwich elders since 2009. Our goal is to provide free local services to residents who wish to remain in their homes as they age.

AIPN's leadership is composed of 8-10 board members. We meet monthly to plan and carry out community-based programs, which include volunteer service days for elders, educational forums, free rides to appointments, and sharing information and resources with Norwich elders. This year we held 8 service days, which provided help with household chores, gardening, shopping, and light maintenance. AIPN's volunteer drivers continue to offer free door-to-door rides for elders so they can attend appointments. We also offered rides to anyone needing to get to and from Tracy Hall on Election Day. We are now developing a free "runner" service for elders who are house-bound and need goods and services. A request to AIPN for help through any of our board members is a phone call away and contact information is on our website [www.AgingInPlaceNorwich.org](http://www.AgingInPlaceNorwich.org).

AIPN sponsors social events for elders, such as Chi Kung at Tracy Hall, and volunteer/recipient receptions at the Norwich Historical Society, which has generously offered its home for many AIPN events. Recently we sponsored free public forums on the Vermont Death With Dignity Law, Fraud Prevention For Savvy Seniors, Gun Safety In The Home led by Chief Robinson, and Faces Of Norwich, a photo essay project with Chad

Finer. We currently are partnering with the Norwich Police for "Project Good Morning," a Monday-Friday telephone call service with elders to improve their safety and social support.

We serve Norwich elders entirely through donations from individuals, charitable groups, and local organizations. AIPN does not request financial support from the town of Norwich.

We look forward to continuing cooperation with the Selectboard and Town Manager, and townspeople who have enabled us to bring together caring volunteers and Norwich elders.

*Don McCabe, AIPN President*

### **American Legion Lyman F. Pell Post 8**

The American Legion membership is made up of eligible veterans whose dates of service are controlled by Congress. Post 8 also has numerous members who are currently serving on active duty in the US Military. We actively support veterans' issues such as access to the Veterans Hospital, veterans' employment rights and end of life care and funerals. In the town of Norwich we insure each veteran's grave has an American flag displayed next to the headstone during the summer months. We actively support Scouting and "Children and Youth" programs.

We organize and participate in the annual Memorial Day observance. In 2014 we were joined by a number of other Town organizations and the Marion Cross School. If you have a group that would like to participate in the parade please contact us. All we ask is that you remember what the day is all about.

We have started to gather names for a new memorial that will be placed at the Town Hall. If you know the name of a veteran, with a connection to the town of Norwich, who has served in the military sometime between 1975 to present, please contact us with that name. They deserve to be honored!

In closing, we would like to thank the town of Norwich for your continued support. Feel free to drop by the Post on a Thursday evening for an exciting game of cribbage. Or if you are a veteran our meetings are held on the first Monday of each month. Meetings start at 7 p.m. and you do not have to be a member to attend. You will always be welcome.

*Jim Harlow, Commander (802-785-2512)*

### **Child Care Center in Norwich**

The Child Care Center in Norwich is a nonprofit organization founded in May 1971 for the purpose of providing high-quality, affordable, child care services for families of the Upper Valley. In September of 2009, the program expanded in order to provide after-school care for Norwich children. The Child Care Center is a social service agency as described in 24 V.S.A. § 2691.

The Center provides child care to 70 children ages six weeks through six years and 35 after-school children in grades kindergarten through sixth. We have been accredited by The National Association for the Education of Young Children since 1996. The Center also offers inclusive programming for children with special needs who are referred by local school districts. Tuition for preschoolers is on a sliding fee scale based on family income; need-based scholarships are also available. Additionally, tuition subsidies are available through the state of Vermont for low-income working families and we receive funding from the United Way. In FY14, we served 76 children from the town of Norwich. Five Norwich children were awarded partial scholarships totaling \$5,606. The Center awarded a total of \$21,690 in scholarships and 77% of Norwich families receive discounted tuition because of the organization's sliding fee scale.

The staff and board are committed to a Center rich in diversity of families and children, both culturally and economically. We believe that, to a large extent, the strength and quality of our program is derived from the broad experiences of our families and staff.

*Allison Colburn, Executive Director (649-1403)*

### **Connecticut River Joint Commissions (CRJC): Upper Valley Local River Subcommittee**

The Upper Valley Subcommittee of the CRJC consists of appointed volunteers from the Vermont towns of Hartford, Norwich, Thetford, Fairlee, and Bradford, and the New Hampshire towns of Lebanon, Hanover, Lyme, Orford, and Piermont. We meet every two months in Thetford to discuss and act on a variety of river-related issues. In a sampling of recent work the Subcommittee:

- Reviewed and commented on a wide range of regulatory applications, including river shoreline stabilization, stormwater management, tributary bridge and interceptor sewer repairs, and private waterfront structures.
- Participated in the Wilder Dam federal re-licensing process, commenting at public meetings.
- Assisted with the town of Lyme's riverbank stabilization efforts by coordinating meetings and site visits between the Town and NHDES.
- Issued the 2013 Update of the Connecticut River Recreation Management Plan (a publication that reports on existing and future recreation opportunities) for the Upper Valley Region.
- Assisted Jonathan Loos, a graduate student at Plymouth State University, in his study of flooding impacts along rivers, as well as provided guidance to Jamie Sydoriak, another PSU student, in her study of grassland birds in the valley.

If you have an interest in learning more about the Subcommittee or participating as a member, please contact Pat Crocker at [pat.crocker@crjc.org](mailto:pat.crocker@crjc.org) or by calling (603) 448-1680.

### **ECFiber (East-Central Vermont Community Fiber-Optic Network)**

ECFiber is a nonprofit municipal joint venture of 24 towns, formed by Town Meeting votes in 2008. Reliable high-speed Internet connectivity has become essential to business and education on every scale and at every level. ECFiber's goal is to provide true, future-proof broadband service to every residence, business, and civic institution in our member towns – especially where commercial providers have chosen not to go.

During 2104, ECFiber added almost 400 customers, finishing the year with about 950 homes and businesses connected, 189 of them in Norwich alone. That growth allowed us to boost our existing speeds and add two more. Symmetrical, consistent-speed Internet service is now available to all customers no matter how far from town, at their choice of 7, 20, 50, 100, or 400 Mbps. Most subscribers also take ECFiber's telephone service, with toll-free long distance calling throughout continental US and Canada, and no extra charge for features such as caller ID. For a map of ECFiber's current service area, please visit [www.ecfiber.net](http://www.ecfiber.net) or contact one of us.

ECFiber service reaches customers in many Norwich neighborhoods through the 38-mile Orange County Fiber Connector, which the Vermont Telecom Authority (VTA) completed last year. Additional VTA projects now in process include another 80 miles in ECFiber territory, allowing us to reach parts of at least six more member towns in 2015.

Under Vermont law, towns can own and operate telecom networks for public use, but cannot use local taxes to fund them. Instead, ECFiber finances construction mainly through the sale of tax-exempt promissory notes. In 2014, we raised an additional \$1.5 million in this way, bringing our four-year total to \$6.3 million from 432 different investors, more than 95% of them local. Nevertheless, throughout our territory roughly 10,000 homes and businesses (including dozens here in Norwich) are still waiting for modern broadband. To reach them more rapidly, we will need larger-scale investment. That's why we are asking voters to support us in reorganizing as a "Telecommunications Union District." The proposed District will not have taxing authority, but because it is otherwise modeled on Municipal Utility Districts, we expect it to be more attractive to institutional investors.

The past year's progress and growth have brought ECFiber from "startup" to a sustainable enterprise. Among the many who have contributed to that achievement, the hard work of Norwich resident Stan Williams (acting CEO) has really made it possible.

ECFiber Governing Board meets monthly, and meetings are open to the public. More information is available at [www.ecfiber.net](http://www.ecfiber.net) or contact your local delegates.

*Irv Thomae (chair@ecfiber.net)*  
*Katie Smith (home.hearth@gmail.com)*

### **The Family Place**

The Family Place supports families with young children through comprehensive programs designed to strengthen positive relationships, teach essential skills, and promote enduring, healthy change for our families and our communities. The upcoming year will mark our 30th anniversary, which reflects our strong commitment to families and communities throughout 36 local towns, as well as our solid track record of success.

Our services are provided to any family with young children, although our particular expertise is in serving those families most in need. While the necessity for family services continues to increase, The Family Place meets that need by providing a family-friendly campus and experienced staff to welcome and assist adults and children alike. The parenting skills that we teach not only help the current generation of young families and children, but will impact generations to come. Our programs include Child Care Payment Assistance, Home Visiting programs, Playgroups, Family Fun Events, Parent Education, Holiday Assistance, Child Advocacy and Therapy, Information and Referral services, a Lending Library, and a wonderful on-site program to assist young mothers and fathers with parenting skills, education, childcare, knowledge of child development, job readiness and life skills.

The Family Place served approximately 76 children in 39 Norwich families last year, through both on- and off-site services. Other residents took advantage of our special events, lending library, website information, and referral services. For more information, please view our website at [www.FamilyPlaceVT.org](http://www.FamilyPlaceVT.org) or call 649-3268.

*Mary L. Smit, MSW, LICSW, Executive Director*

### **Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District (GUVSWD)**

The GUVSWD is composed of 10 Upper Valley towns. It was established in 1992 for the purpose of providing an integrated system for waste management for both solid waste and unregulated hazardous waste through the establishment of recycling and reuse programs, composting and food diversion, and special collections for bulky wastes. In our 22-year history, thousands of tons of recyclables and hazardous waste have been removed from the waste stream through education and diversion programs.

The programs and services the District provides include special collection events for household hazardous waste, electronics, tires, fluorescent bulbs, and other hard-to-dispose-of items. The District also provides outreach and education for students, residents, businesses and technical assistance to member towns. During the 2014 fiscal year the GUVSWD provided direct services to Norwich and its residents including the following:

- It assisted in the recycling and disposal of hard-to-manage materials collected at regional events, including fluorescent light bulbs, used motor oil, and tires.
- 439 GUV residents participated in District-sponsored household hazardous waste events held in Hartford in June and Norwich in September, in which nearly 20,000 lbs. and 3,500 gallons were disposed of.
- District residents also recycled 1,372 tires and over 20,000 lbs. of electronics at our collection events. Many residents also utilized our bulky trash, fluorescent bulb, book, and scrap metal collections.
- The next household hazardous waste day will be held on the first Saturday in June 2015 at the Hartford Recycling Center.

In FY14, Neil Fulton was Norwich's representative to the GUVSWD Board of Supervisors. We thank him for his service. The District's Green Guide will be available at Town Meeting. After that it can be picked up at your Town Clerk's office, District office or on the District's website. Contact the GUVSWD by email at [guvswd@valley.net](mailto:guvswd@valley.net); call us at 296-3688 or visit us on the web at [www.guvswd.org](http://www.guvswd.org).

### **Green Mountain RSVP & Volunteer Center**

The Green Mountain RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) & Volunteer Center, part of the Corporation for National and Community Service Senior Corps, is a nation-wide program for people age 55 and older who wish to make positive impacts in the communities in which they reside. We view our senior population as our most valuable asset in keeping our communities strong through volunteerism.

RSVP has been helping local nonprofit and civic organizations by recruiting and placing volunteers to meet vital community needs. Our goal is to ensure that volunteers contribute their time and talents to programs that have a significant, positive impact on the quality of life in Windsor County. Our volunteers address community concerns that are vital for our senior population and their neighbors. They include supporting Healthy Futures and Aging in Place through food pantry support, meal delivery, and transportation. For instance, in our companionship and wellness program we offer 11 Bone Builder classes throughout Windsor County serving over 400 seniors around Southern Vermont.

Volunteers in the Norwich area have served hours at: area elementary schools, Norwich Public Library, Norwich Historical Society, and Norwich Women's Club projects. Volunteers have served as Bone Builder leaders, benefiting many area residents. RSVP volunteers from Norwich donated well over 873 hours of service over the last year.

You are always welcome to contact us in our Springfield office at (802) 885-2083 and speak to our coordinator Judi Ragnarsson or reach me directly in the Bennington Office at (802) 447-1545. We are more than happy to attend a town meeting to discuss the changes in our program and answer any questions that you may have. Thank you for your continued support.

*Elaine Haytko, Director*

## **Headrest**

For more than 43 years our Crisis Hotline has provided immediate, confidential, and caring crisis intervention services to callers experiencing suicidal thinking, alcohol and drug use, depression, family crisis, child and elder abuse, financial distress, and other challenges. In 2014, we served 7,749 people. Our Hotline is available at no charge to the Norwich residents 24 hours/day 7 days a week, providing immediate assistance, problem solving, and information about community services and referrals.

Crisis is a time-limited opportunity for change. The Hotline is ideally suited to help people fully identify their needs, and match these needs with a plan of action to access appropriate services. Our staff is trained to fully explore with callers the nature of underlying challenges that may be affecting them and to build a caller-centered action plan, increasing the likelihood that the caller will be able to access appropriate community services at the end of the Hotline call. Please know that someone is always here and available to take your call (603 448-4400 or 800 639-6095).

Headrest is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology. We currently are the only Crisis Call Center in New England with this designation. Headrest also provides substance use counseling and a Residential Transitional Living Program. Both of these programs are offered to residents of the Upper Valley.

The Hotline is generously supported by Upper Valley municipalities and donors from those towns, including the town of Norwich. I want to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the taxpayers of Norwich for your past and present support of Headrest.

*Ed Rajsteter, Executive Director (ed.rajsteter@headrest.org; 603-448-4872, ext. 110)*

## **Montshire Museum of Science**

The Montshire Museum of Science is a nonprofit, community-owned and operated institution serving Norwich and surrounding communities since 1976.

More than 320 Norwich households are members of the Museum and many other Norwich residents and their guests are regular visitors. The Montshire offers several benefits exclusively to Norwich residents, including free Museum admission for school groups visiting from Marion Cross School and for groups from the Child Care Center in Norwich. Montshire Summer Camp scholarships are offered to Norwich students through a partnership with the Marion Cross School. The Montshire also serves as an official emergency evacuation site for the Marion Cross School and for the Child Care Center in Norwich.

In 2013, more than 3,400 Museum visits were subsidized by the Museum through complimentary passes issued through Upper Valley Social Service agencies. In January, the Montshire launched the Warm Welcome program offering greatly reduced admission and membership rates for low-income individuals and families in New Hampshire and Vermont. Seven households in Norwich became members, and many other Norwich residents visited the Museum, as a result of this heavily subsidized program.

Norwich-based nonprofits (High Horses Therapeutic Riding Program, the Norwich Business Council, Norwich Energy Committee, and the Norwich Fire Department), and other nonprofit organizations serving the Norwich community benefit from free use of Montshire's Porter Community Room. The Montshire hosted The 19 Days of Norwich, 1% for the Haven celebration for the town of Norwich and the Upper Valley Haven with 270 people attending.

The relocation of the Hazen Trail between Norwich and Wilder was completed in 2013, greatly improving public access at the Norwich end of the trail. The trail crosses property owned by Dartmouth College, the Child Care Center of Norwich, and the Montshire, with

the trailhead just beyond the Montshire's driveway. The Norwich Trail Crew, the Upper Valley Trails Alliance, and numerous volunteers completed the relocation work.

During the year, more than 148,000 people visited the Montshire and more than 12,000 students participated in a school group visit. The Montshire is one of the most popular attractions and educational resources in northern New England, and is recognized nationally as one of the best science centers in the country.

We are pleased and proud to be a part of the Norwich community.

*David Goudy, Executive Director*

### **Norwich Historical Society & Community Center**

As Norwich's official museum, our mission is to preserve and interpret the history of the Town through programs, exhibits and our collections. We have extended our hours on Wednesday and Thursday and are open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Our newest exhibit *Cycles of Change: Farming in Norwich*, a project of the Norwich Historic Preservation Commission in partnership with the Historical Society, opened to rave reviews with photographs by Chad Finer and a video by Ben Silberfarb. A series of public programs is part of the exhibit, funded by the Vermont Humanities Council. We continue to co-sponsor with the Norwich Public Library the Vermont Humanities Council's First Wednesdays program, a popular lecture series held the first Wednesday of each month at the Norwich Congregational Church. We are grateful to the Norwich Lions Club for its continued sponsorship of our annual educational programs with the Marion Cross School.

We continue to work on restoration projects at the Lewis House. We applied to Vermont's Cultural Facilities Program for a grant to replace the unstable gravel walkways at the side and the front of the house with more stable brick. Thanks to a special fund dedicated to collections, we purchased six early oil paintings of the Hutchinson and Loveland families, two of Norwich's most prominent early residents, and mounted a special exhibit of these new additions in early 2014.

The House & Garden Tour and the Norwich Antiques Show draw enthusiastic crowds each year. Special thanks to our many volunteers like Joe Porter who, working for his Eagle Scout badge, organized his Norwich Boy Scout troupe and installed a wooden floor in our Tool Shed, creating new exhibit space. Thank you Norwich!

*Nancy Hoggson, President; Judy Brown, Director*



*Nancy Hoggson and granddaughter Madeleine working at the Norwich Historical Society House and Garden Tour in June. Nancy passed away after a long fight with cancer on January 9, 2015.*

## **Norwich Lions Club**

The Norwich Lions Club was chartered in 1954 as a member of Lions International, a world-wide organization operating in more than 180 countries around the world. Our primary mission is to serve sight and hearing needs through funding and the donation of eye-glasses, with two collection points: one in front of Dan & Whit's and the second in the Town Clerk's Office.

The Club has sponsored the Norwich Fair for the last 26 years, our largest fundraiser. We thank the voters of Norwich for their support of the fireworks display that lit up Norwich skies on the Saturday evening of the Fair. Your generosity helped make the event a financial success and allowed the Club to make contributions of approximately \$22,000 during the course of the current year to several Upper Valley agencies, including The Haven, Red Logan Dental Clinic, Holiday Basket Helpers, Norwich Public Library, SEVCA, Willing Hands, High Horses TRP, Headrest, VINS, Windsor County Partners, COVER, Twin State Soccer and Habitat for Humanity as well as to Norwich families with special needs. The Club places a memory tree at Christmas time on the bandstand.

The Lions Club meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from September to June in the Norwich Public Library community room. We invite you to join us with the goal of encouraging family participation in the tradition of community service. If you are interested in learning more about Lionism, please contact Demo Sofronas (802-649-1536) or Joyce Childs (802-649-1614).

Special thanks go to the Norwich Library for their willingness to provide us with a meeting facility.

*Joyce Childs, President (King Lion)*

## **Norwich Public Library**

The Norwich Public Library (NPL) is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. Operating funds come from the Town appropriation, charitable gifts and library fees. We primarily serve the residents of Norwich; out-of-town patrons pay an annual fee equal to Norwich's per capita tax support. We have over 3,400 patrons and welcome over 60,000 people a year through our doors.

Last year was marked by both great success and great challenge. Among our successes was our very popular and community-building summer reading program. Over 350 people read 4,016 books – a record! We were excited to receive the Hanover Chamber of Commerce's Business Innovator of the Year Award. Over 3,600 people attended our expanded program offerings. Our greatest challenge was the two-month closure of the Children's Room and the Community Room after mold was discovered in September. However, we as a staff were greatly heartened by the supportive response from the community.

NPL received grants from the Norwich Lions Club to purchase two laptops and from the Norwich Women's Club to install an A/V system in the Community Room. The Friends of NPL, through their dedicated efforts, provided funding for the design of our new website, the summer reading program and our online databases Consumer Reports and Mango.

The Library's success is a reflection of the generous support from Norwich residents, our remarkable volunteers (who donated 2,100 hours), our enthusiastic Friends group, and our patrons. On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff, thank you.

*Lucinda H. Walker, Director (649-1184, [Lucinda.Walker@norwichlibrary.org](mailto:Lucinda.Walker@norwichlibrary.org))*

**Norwich Public Library**  
**FY14 Income & Operating Expenses**

FY14 Income	Budgeted	Actual
Town Appropriation	200,000	200,000
Annual Appeal & Fundraising	72,000	75,684
Investment Income	4,200	5,667
Library Income (fees/fines)	5,850	4,250
Grants & Gifts	18,500	24,630
Healthcare Tax Credit	<u>1,000</u>	<u>742</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$301,550</b>	<b>\$310,973</b>

FY14 Operating Expenses	Budgeted	Actual
Salaries & Taxes (FTE 4.62)	195,267	194,741
Health Insurance	24,042	22,105
Building & Ground Expenses	28,750	74,442
Books (includes processing costs)	9,400	10,194
Audio/Visual (includes processing costs)	3,550	3,646
Electronic Databases & Periodicals	2,826	2,042
Library Sponsored Programs (all ages)	950	1,046
Technology (hardware/software/DSL/website)	3,455	3,851
Contracted Services (bookkeeping, janitorial, tax prep)	10,500	12,383
Insurance (property/casualty & worker's comp)	9,700	9,507
Administrative Expenses (office supplies, copier contract)	4,470	5,276
Postage (including interlibrary loan expenses)	2,900	2,437
Promotions (fundraising, advertising, printing, mailings)	4,540	4,028
Professional Development (dues, conferences, mileage)	<u>1,200</u>	<u>1,155</u>

**TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES** **\$301,550** **\$346,853**

\* Deficit due to mold remediation costs

**Norwich Women's Club**

The Norwich Women's Club (NWC), a social and philanthropic organization with over 275 members from Norwich and surrounding towns, is open to anyone interested in Norwich. The Club, which raises a substantial amount of money for the Town, is 100% volunteer run.

Each spring and fall the NWC sponsors a clothing consignment sale ("Nearly New Sale") to fund post-secondary school scholarships for Norwich residents. The successful spring and fall 2014 sales, as well as membership donations, will allow the Club to award scholarships totaling in excess of \$35,000 in May 2015. The NWC is the largest single nonprofit provider of student scholarships in Vermont.

In March, the NWC presented its second annual Norwich Citizen of the Year award to Canny Bensen at its Spring Gala. Net proceeds from this event and donations totaling \$30,708 were distributed from the NWC's Community Projects Fund to benefit the Norwich community. A full listing of this year's community grants can be found on the Club's website: [www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org). The NWC also sponsors summer concerts on the Norwich Green and maintains the beautiful triangle garden next to Tracy Hall.

Annually, the NWC holds many cultural and social events, including museum trips, monthly "Coffee and Conversation" gatherings on Monday mornings at the Norwich Inn, evening wine and cheese gatherings targeted at younger women, a book and author luncheon, fall and spring membership meetings, as well as a December holiday party. For more information about the Club see the website: [www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org). New members are always welcome.

*Deborah J. Hall, President (649-1263)*

## **Southeastern Vermont Community Action**

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) is an anti-poverty, community-based, nonprofit organization serving Windham and Windsor counties since 1965.

Our mission is to enable people to cope with, and reduce the hardships of poverty; create sustainable self-sufficiency; and reduce the causes and move toward the elimination of poverty. SEVCA has a variety of programs and services to meet this end. They include: Head Start, Weatherization, Emergency Services/Crisis Intervention (i.e., fuel/utility assistance, food, shelter), Micro-Business Development, Individual Development Accounts, Tax Preparation, Working Bridges (resource coordination program), VT Health Connect Navigator, Emergency Home Repair, Disaster Recovery, and Thrift Stores.

In the community of Norwich we have provided the following services during FY14:

- **Emergency Services:** 12 households (31 people) received 71 services, valued at \$619 (including crisis intervention, financial counseling, nutrition education, referral to and assistance with accessing needed services)
- **Fuel/Utility Assistance:** 11 households (49 people) received services valued at \$3,991
- **Tax Preparation:** 8 households (10 people) received services & tax credits totaling \$4,130.

Community support, through town funding, helps to build a strong partnership. The combination of federal, state, private, and town funding allows us not only to maintain, but to increase and improve service.

We thank the residents of Norwich for their continued support.

*Stephen Geller, Executive Director*

## **Sustainable Energy Resource Group (SERG)**

SERG is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, that helps Upper Valley towns and residents reduce their energy use. In FY14, SERG provided information, referral and networking services to the Norwich Energy Committee (NEC):

- NEC members attended the annual, state-wide Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network (VECAN) conference for energy committees in December, that SERG helped organize.
- NEC members attended the free annual Upper Valley Energy Committee Roundtable gathering organized by SERG in May.
- SERG assisted NEC with its participation in the Vermont Home Energy Challenge – organized free meetings for participating energy committees attended by the NEC, including one focused on the rollout of PACE financing, provided information and resources to the NEC used in its Challenge organizing, and provided information at a public Norwich Energy Challenge meeting.

SERG also educated and informed Norwich residents by:

- Providing free regular e-newsletters on energy-saving improvements and opportunities to more than 200 Norwich residents – this service is free to anyone who requests it by sending their name and contact information to [SERG@serg-info.org](mailto:SERG@serg-info.org).
- Organizing a free forum on and trail drives of electric vehicles at the Montshire Museum, attended by more than 250 Upper Valley residents, including several from Norwich.

For more information contact SERG Director Bob Walker: 802-785-4126, [bwalker@serg-info.org](mailto:bwalker@serg-info.org) or [www.SERG-info.org](http://www.SERG-info.org).

## **Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC)**

TRORC is an association of thirty municipalities in east-central Vermont governed by a Board of Representatives appointed by each member town. As advocates for our member towns, we articulate a vision for building a thriving regional economy while enhancing the region's quality of life. Our staff provides technical services to local, state and federal levels of government and to the Region's citizens, nonprofits, and businesses.

TRORC assistance in 2014 has included the revision of municipal plans, including the drafting of new flood resiliency elements within numerous town plans in line with state statutory goals. TRORC continues to participate in Local Emergency Planning Committee #12 meetings, as well as assist towns with updates to Local Emergency Operations Plans. Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) updates have been at the forefront of much of our emergency preparedness work, and Norwich's HMP is currently awaiting FEMA approval. We continue to refine goals and actions related to our working landscape management and economic development policies within our Regional Plan and East Central Vermont Sustainability Plan. Procuring grants to assist towns with roadway enhancements, infrastructure inventories, park and ride creation, and downtown and village accessibility are key transportation activities. In 2014, TRORC assisted Norwich with traffic counts on eight roadways, and provided roads management assistance and Better Back Roads grant assistance.

We are committed to serving you, and welcome opportunities to assist you in the future.

*Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director (802-457-3188)*

## **Upper Valley Land Trust**

The Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) is your regional land conservancy helping people protect farmland, forests, waterways, wildlife habitat, trails, and outdoor educational spaces. Since 1986, UVLT has protected 44,845 acres in 45 towns in VT and NH, including 44 properties (2,087 acres) in Norwich. To uphold its permanent responsibility to these lands, UVLT staff visit with landowners, field questions, monitor properties, and train dedicated volunteers who assist with this vital work. More than 930 households and businesses participated in UVLT's conservation work this year, contributing money, time, goods and services to complete 16 new conservation projects and steward the 463 properties we have conserved.

This year, UVLT held training sessions at the UVLT-conserved Milton Frye Nature Area (MFNA), giving volunteer "Land Stewards" opportunities to fine-tune skills to assist UVLT with monitoring conserved lands. We joined the MFNA Committee for an invasives workshop that included the Natural Resources Conservation Service's State Forester. Volunteers contributed 1,100+ hours of service to UVLT in 2014. Youth from Camp Merrowvista joined UVLT to restore habitat at our Norwich Gateway property, bringing energy to the site while removing invasive plants!

UVLT hosts hikes connecting conserved lands and giving participants a feel for places "off the beaten path" as well as right in their own back yards. In the coming year, UVLT will be actively engaged with Norwich community members to discuss conservation options throughout town as well as near the village center, exploring opportunities to protect trails and natural areas for educational and public use.

Learn more about UVLT-conserved land, events in and around Norwich, and support the lasting work of UVLT by visiting: [www.UVLT.org](http://www.UVLT.org).

*Jeanie McIntyre, President (603-643-6626; [www.UVLT.org](http://www.UVLT.org))*

## **Upper Valley Local River Subcommittee Connecticut River Joint Commissions (CRJC)**

The Upper Valley Subcommittee of the CRJC consists of appointed volunteers from the Vermont towns of Hartford, Norwich, Thetford, Fairlee, and Bradford, and the New Hampshire towns of Lebanon, Hanover, Lyme, Orford, and Piermont. We meet every two months in Thetford to discuss and act on a variety of river-related issues. In a sampling of recent work the Subcommittee:

- Reviewed and commented on a wide range of regulatory applications, including river shoreline stabilization, stormwater management, tributary bridge and interceptor sewer repairs, and private waterfront structures.
- Participated in the Wilder Dam federal re-licensing process, commenting at public meetings.
- Assisted with the town of Lyme's riverbank stabilization efforts by coordinating meetings and site visits between the Town and NHDES.
- Issued the 2013 Update of the Connecticut River Recreation Management Plan (a publication that reports on existing and future recreation opportunities) for the Upper Valley Region.
- Assisted Jonathan Loos, a graduate student at Plymouth State University, in his study of flooding impacts along rivers, as well as provided guidance to Jamie Sydoriak, another PSU student, in her study of grassland birds in the valley.

If you have an interest in learning more about the Subcommittee or participating as a member, please contact Pat Crocker at [pat.crocker@crjc.org](mailto:pat.crocker@crjc.org) or by calling (603) 448-1680.

## **Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA)**

During the past year (2013-14) we worked to enhance the health of residents and quality of life in Norwich through trail connections, events, programs, and other trail improvements. This year we:

- Offered the 2014 Passport to Winter Fun program to all Marion Cross School children. Using an innovative package of incentive prizes, outdoor fun and personal achievements, the program encourages youth and their families to adopt healthy and active lifestyles. 310 students participated this year.
- Continued the coordination of volunteers to maintain the King Arthur Trail, a ¾ mile multi-use trail, providing a safe route for bike and pedestrian access from Mill Rd. to the Dresden Athletic Fields.
- Coordinated, in conjunction with Norwich Area Friends of the AT, Family Hiking Day in 2013.
- Supported Town trail building efforts with staff expertise and tools.
- Managed the Vermont Recreation Trails Fund grant to continue the restoration of the Gile Mountain Trail in Norwich. The Phase 3 grant of nearly \$20,000 was approved in October 2014. UVTA has coordinated hundreds of volunteer hours on that project in this fiscal year.
- Consulted with the Norwich Trails Committee on potential trail reroutes of the Ballard Trail and the Hazen Trail and brought volunteers to assist with those projects.
- Actively participated with Norwich Trails Committee members.
- Cleared blowdowns on a number of roads and trails in Norwich to open trails for hikers and skiers.

For more information, contact me at [Russell.Hirschler@uvtrails.org](mailto:Russell.Hirschler@uvtrails.org) or visit [www.uvtrails.org](http://www.uvtrails.org).

*Russell Hirschler, Executive Director (649-9075)*

### **Upper Valley Transportation Management Association (UVTMA)**

The Upper Valley Transportation Management Association is a program at Vital Communities that works to reduce reliance on driving alone. During our eleven years, the TMA and its partner organizations have shown that our rural area can grow four transit companies, develop biking and walking trails, increase park-and-rides, and promote mobility options at the workplace. Volatile gas prices, environmental concerns, and a local commitment to public transit all demonstrate the need for our work.

2014 has been busy. We launched a new program for towns, Smart Commute: Home Edition, and were delighted to have the town of Norwich participate in the pilot phase. The project involved surveying towns' residents on transportation needs, promoting existing transportation options, identifying new infrastructure needs, and some fun events. A particularly exciting event occurred when we organized a bike-bus-car race from downtown Norwich to Dartmouth College. The bikes won with a travel time of just over eleven minutes!

These projects, coupled with our advocacy for transit and park-and-rides, will no doubt lead to another successful year. Thank you for your support.

*Aaron Brown, Transportation Program Manager (802-291-9100, ext. 111  
or [aaron@vitalcommunities.org](mailto:aaron@vitalcommunities.org))*

### **Vermont Department of Health**

At the Vermont Department of Health, we are working every day for your health. With our headquarters and laboratory in Burlington and your district office in White River Junction, we deliver a wide range of public health services and support to your community. For example, in 2014 the Health Department:

- **Supported healthy communities:** Windsor County was awarded Partnership for Success funding to address underage drinking and prescription drug misuse. Windsor County Prevention Partners have been increasing law enforcement response to underage drinking and successfully working with pharmacists, law enforcement, councils on aging and others to collect unused prescription medications so they are no longer in medicine cabinets where they could be misused.
- **Provided WIC food and nutrition education to families:** We served about half of all Vermont families with pregnant women and children to age 5 with WIC (Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program). WIC provides individualized nutrition education and breastfeeding support, healthy foods, and a debit card to buy fruit and vegetables. In Norwich, 19 women, infants and children were enrolled in WIC. The average value of foods provided is \$50 per person per month.
- **Worked to prevent and control the spread of disease:** From January to September in 2014 we responded to 345 cases of infectious disease in Windsor County. In 2013, \$13,079,279.71 of vaccine for vaccine-preventable diseases was distributed to health-care providers statewide; \$955,732 of which was in the area served by this district.
- **Facilitated discussion on opiate addiction:** Following the Governor's Forum on Opiate Addiction, regional meetings took place around the state including 529 in-person participants. The Hartford Region (which includes northern Windsor County and southern Orange County) included 35 people at a District Leadership Team meeting

and continues to meet to plan next steps to address the opiate issue in our area. For more information, contact Substance Abuse Prevention Consultant Claudia Marieb at [claudia.marieb@state.vt.us](mailto:claudia.marieb@state.vt.us).

Health Department staff have been active participants in advising the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Planning Commission's work on incorporating health into the Regional Plan, individual town plans, and into the long-term sustainability planning for the region (<http://ecvermont.org/>). This advice has focused on Health Impact Assessments and citizen engagement for local policies to make healthy choices. Health Department staff have also been active in ReThink Health of the Upper Connecticut River Valley to find ways to promote healthy changes in our health systems (for more information, contact Alice Stewart at [alice.f.stewart@dartmouth.edu](mailto:alice.f.stewart@dartmouth.edu)).

### **Visiting Nurse and Hospice for VT And NH**

Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire (VNH) is a compassionate, non-profit healthcare organization committed to providing the highest quality home health and hospice services to individuals and their families. VNH provides care for people of all ages and at all stages in life, and delivers care to all, regardless of ability to pay.

VNH services reduce costs associated with Town programs for emergency response and elder care. With quality care provided at home, there is less need for costly hospital and emergency room trips. And with VNH support, residents can age in place rather than relocating to a state or local nursing home.

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014, VNH made 1,317 homecare visits to 74 Norwich residents. This included approximately \$59,752 in unreimbursed care to Norwich residents.

- Home Health Care: 936 home visits to 57 residents with short-term medical or physical needs.
- Long-Term Care: 261 home visits to 4 residents with chronic medical problems who need extended care in the home to avoid admission to a nursing home.
- Hospice Services: 94 home visits to 3 residents who were in the final stages of their lives.
- Maternal and Child Health Services: 26 home visits to 10 residents for well baby, preventative and palliative medical care.

Additionally, residents made visits to VNH wellness clinics at local senior and community centers throughout the year, receiving low- and no-cost services including blood pressure screenings, foot care, cholesterol testing, and flu shots.

Norwich's annual appropriation to VNH helps to ensure that all have access to quality care when and where it is needed most. On behalf of the people we serve, we thank you for your continued support.

*Jeanne McLaughlin, President & CEO (1-888-300-8853)*

### **White River Council On Aging Bugbee Senior Center**

The White River Council On Aging, also known as the Bugbee Senior Center, is a non-profit agency committed to providing services to older community members and their families. The Center serves residents from towns that include Norwich, Hartford, Hartland and Thetford. We provide a range of social, transportation, nutrition, enrichment and education programs and activities. All of these programs have the goal of enhancing the health and

independence of our older citizens. If you would like more information about these services, I invite you to give us a call at 295-9068, or stop in to the Center during our hours of operation, 8:00-4:00, Monday through Friday.

During the last year, our agency served over 28,000 meals, including 3,600 to Norwich folks. We provided social service to thirteen different residents and twenty four participated in enrichment programs. The Center provided services of one kind or another to 127 Norwich residents, including Home Delivered Meals, Transportation and Social Services.

Our agency has requested and received from the citizens of Norwich an annual appropriation of \$5,300. This is the same amount requested for a number of years.

We thank you.

*Len Brown, Executive Director (295-9068)*

### **Windsor County Partners (WCP)**

Studies show that children's lives are vastly improved by consistent interaction with caring adult role models. Unfortunately, modern day lifestyles often limit children's interaction with adult mentors. Mentoring programs can help, teaching children new skills, improving school performance, and reducing risky behaviors.

WCP provides mentoring across the county. WCP creates partnerships where mentors are matched with a mentee (ages 8-17). These mentoring partnerships then meet 2 hours a week at least a year, with many partnerships continuing on for additional years. Last year, WCP served and supported 30 community-based partnerships from 10 of the towns in Windsor County. These partners spent 2,677 hours together. Mentored youth learned life skills, provided community service and participated in cultural and athletic activities.

Let's Do Lunch (LDL), our school-based program, currently serves youth ages 5-18 in the Springfield district, though we are exploring expansion to other districts. LDL mentors meet with students to do crafts and play games or sports. In the most recent school year, 20 LDL partnerships spent more than 500 hours together.

To ensure the well-being of children and the success of mentoring matches, there are staffing costs associated with creating and supporting each match. Town funding is critical to helping WCP stay financially viable. For more information, visit our website [www.windsorcountypartners.org](http://www.windsorcountypartners.org) or contact us at [info@wcpartners.org](mailto:info@wcpartners.org) 802-674-5101. WCP thanks the voters of Norwich for their support for the children of Windsor County.

*Jennifer Grant, Executive Director*

### **WISE (Women's Information Services)**

WISE provides confidential and free services to any individual who, because of domestic violence or sexual abuse or stalking, seeks crisis intervention, supportive services, or education. Violence is not the only form of abuse: victims may endure financial, emotional, and psychological abuse and/or controlled isolation.

WISE is the Upper Valley's sole provider of crisis intervention, emergency shelter, and advocacy for victims of domestic or sexual violence, serving 21 towns, and is a leading educator on healthy and safe relationships. WISE's 24-hour crisis hotline's trained advocates will meet victims at emergency rooms, police stations, courthouses, and the Child Advocacy Center. WISE educators are present in middle and high schools in seven school districts.

WISE serves victims, families, and friends by meeting in confidence to plan safety, understand alternatives, and manage the experience. WISE coordinates transitional housing and

other collaborative services. Support group participation, financial seminars, writing groups, and experiential opportunities offer victims empowerment and recovery assistance.

WISE trains law enforcement, court, medical, legal and school professionals, and parents. WISE educators deliver workshops on healthy relationships, media messaging, dating violence, and safety. Professional, community, book and church groups request WISE healthy relationship and safety presentations.

Last fiscal year, WISE served 1,108 individuals, 15 of whom are known to be Norwich residents. We do know that many clients do not disclose residence for personal reasons. WISE remains a very active partner with Richmond Middle and Hanover High School providing on-going student trainings plus a March Intensive course reaching many Norwich youth.

*Peggy O'Neil, Executive Director (603-448-5922, ext. 110)*

### **Youth-In-Action Norwich/Hanover**

Youth-In-Action (YIA) is in its 31st year of providing valuable community service opportunities for high-school aged young people in the Upper Valley. Student enrollment has continued to increase and, in the current 2013-14 school year, there are 573 students enrolled, over a third (around 150) of whom are Norwich residents.

YIA projects are driven by student interest as well as community need. In addition to the projects YIA creates, our volunteers are valuable assets to other Upper Valley organizations. YIA projects can typically be grouped into one of the following categories: community-building events (Santa's elves, 4th of July, Street Fest, Winter Carnival), helping other area nonprofits (such as the Family Place Gingerbread Festival, High Horses, Listen Community Services, The Haven, Alzheimer's Association, The Special Needs Support Center) and YIA generated projects (such as mentoring events like Kids in Motion, Trail Kids, Elves Workshop).

We have provided volunteer support for CHaD and DHMC. Over the past two years our volunteers assisted the Montshire Museum, Norwich Animal Hospital, Norwich Historical Society, the Norwich Library and programs at the Marion Cross School including the Gift Making Festival. We have worked the annual Road Race, The Gingerbread Festival, Wood Bee, and Nearly New Sale, have helped at the Family Place, assisted Norwich residents with emergency snow removal with our Snow Corps and will return as Santa's elves at the Norwich Inn.

Last year, YIA completed over 1200 hours (374 students and other community members contributing to our efforts) of service through our own projects and volunteering for local charities, agencies, private citizens and organizations. We believe that through our service to local agencies and our projects we serve the needs of many Norwich residents by improving the quality of life in the Upper Valley.

For more information please contact Chris Lord at [via@dresden.us](mailto:via@dresden.us) or 603-643-4313.

### **Vermont League of Cities and Towns**

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization owned by its member municipalities and directed by a 13-member Board of Directors comprising municipal officials from across the state elected by the membership. Its mission is to serve and strengthen Vermont local government. All 246 Vermont cities and towns are members of VLCT, along with 134 other municipal entities, including villages, solid waste districts, regional planning commissions and fire districts. Learn more at the VLCT website [www.vlct.org](http://www.vlct.org).

VLCT provides the following services to its members:

- Legal, consulting, and education services. In the past year, VLCT's Municipal Assistance Center (MAC) responded to nearly 3,500 inquiries for assistance from municipal officials. MAC also conducted workshops on the new Open Meeting Law changes and the Public Records Act. We produced new materials to help members comply with the Open Meeting Law and revised our Town Officers Handbook. Additionally, we provided 26 municipalities with legal review of ordinances and policies, financial assistance, and other specialized consulting services. All of our publications may be purchased or accessed free of charge on our website at our Resource Library. The Library also contains nearly 1,000 other electronic documents, including technical papers, model policies, and newsletter articles. MAC has retained the services of professionals in municipal finance, administration, and policing to provide consulting advice to towns.
- Advocacy representation before the state and national governments to ensure that municipalities have the resources and authority they need to serve their citizens. VLCT is a leader in the education property tax debate, enhancing local voter authority in governance decisions, municipal efforts to clean up our lakes and rivers, and securing revenues for town highway and bridge maintenance programs. We also provide a Weekly Legislative Report that details legislative issues affecting municipal government. It is available to all free-of-charge on the VLCT website.
- Purchasing opportunities to provide needed services at the lowest cost. The VLCT Employee Resource and Benefit (VERB) Trust continues to assist towns navigate their way to Vermont Health Connect and to help municipalities not in the exchange to secure health insurance through the marketplace. VLCT Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF) members benefit from broad coverage, excellent re-insurance, and prompt service and claims payments.



*Bill Noble and Jim Tatum Gardens, Norwich Historical Society House and Garden Tour 2014*