

# The Fairfax News

January 2009



A publication by the people of Fairfax



Volume 32, Issue 1

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Board Openings

Both the Town of Fairfax Selectboard and the Bellows Free Academy Fairfax School Board will have openings for Town Meeting and petitions (signed by 31 registered voters) need to be returned to the Fairfax Town Office by January 26th if you are interested in having your name on the ballot.

### New

#### Superintendent

With the departure of Armando Vilaseca to the Commissioner of Education position, Franklin West Supervisory Union needed an interim superintendent. They found a former Vermont Superintendent of the Year. Selection on Page 7

#### Mildred's Santa

Fairfax's Mildred Warren has proof that there really is a Santa Claus. Her story on Page 2

#### Bullets Sports

The Lady Bullets host Williamstown on Saturday, January 10th and the #4 Bullets are in the Chamber on January 16th to host South Royalton. January's sports schedule is on Page 3.

#### Alumni Hoops

On Saturday, January 3rd, Bellows Free Academy Fairfax alumni gathered in the high school gym to play some hoops. Photos are on Page 10.

#### Project Graduation

50/50 Raffles, 3-point shots and all concessions at home basketball games benefits Project Graduation 2009 at BFA Fairfax. You can also donate your empties at Minor's Country Store to support this great cause.

#### BFA Ski Race

For the first time ever, a cross-country ski race has been held at Bellows Free Academy Fairfax. Story on page 10.

#### Selectboard Letter

The Town of Fairfax Selectboard has a letter regarding Steeple Market on page 4.

## COMING NEXT MONTH

### Division III Basketball Championships

## Steeple Market Burns Christmas Eve

BY CHRIS SANTEE

### HENRY RAYMOND'S COVER PHOTO



Fairfax firefighters survey the heartbreaking scene at Steeple Market on Christmas Day 2008. The market building with its landmark steeple was formerly St. Luke Church, constructed in the 1870's.

PHOTO BY HENRY RAYMOND

At about 8:00 p.m., on a very windy and cold Christmas Eve, a fire started in the basement of Steeple Market on Main Street in Fairfax. By 8:15 p.m., smoke was coming out through the foundation and out the back door. Fairfax Fire Department was called and backup calls were quickly placed to Georgia, Milton, St. Albans City and Cambridge Fire Departments. With gasoline and propane tanks both in ground and above ground, 40 plus mile per hour winds and wooden structures surrounding the downtown Fairfax landmark, no one wanted to take any chances.

It was quickly discovered the tenant of an upstairs apartment was not at home. Spectators gathered and watched in disbelief.

Firefighters got inside through the basement door, but the smoke was thick and black and the fire was extremely hot. They were forced back outside.

**Steeple Market**  
Continued on page 4

## School Board News

BY BFA FAIRFAX SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR PEG STEWART

The School Board would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year. We would also like to thank all the community members for the support that has been shown to one of our own employees, Michael Theoret, who lost everything in the Steeple Market fire.

2009 is the year for many changes here at BFA and Franklin West, from the superintendent, high school principal, retiring staff and even School Board members. Bruce Chattman has been appointed as interim superintendent for the completion of this school year. A search has begun by the Franklin West Supervisory Union committee for this purpose. A committee is being formed to choose the final candidates for the position of High School principal. This committee will consist of staff, students and community members. The School Board will have two vacancies to be filled in March. A one year term to complete a three year term and also a two year term. Anyone interested in becoming a board member must obtain the necessary petition from the Town office by mid-January. Anyone interested in being appointed to the School Board for two months, please contact any board member by January 12th.

The Woods Trail was completed in the fall and for the first time a Cross Country ski race was held here at BFA. Many thanks again to all the volunteers who have made it possible to engage more of our student body in co-curricular activities. With skiing, basketball and cheerleading, over 300 students in grades 7 through 12 are taking advantage of these activities. A reminder to those with snow mobiles or any powered vehicles, these are not allowed on any school property and that includes the trails, the hills behind the school and the recreation area. It is for the safety of all the youngsters and older students who are sliding and skiing behind the school.

It is after much discussion and reworking that the School Board will be presenting to the community a school budget that is under a 4% increase. This will include all day kindergarten and the return of Tech Ed to the curriculum. We must give much credit to the administration and staff for agreeing to keep everything within our limits. This budget will be presented to the community at a forum on February 16th and again at Town Meeting on February 28th. We can be very fortunate that we are not one of the many schools needing to have two votes for budget approval.

I would like to announce that I will be asking for your continued support as I re-run for the three year term on the School Board.

The next School Board meeting is January 12th, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in the Library.

### Rally for Life

The Annual Rally for Life, sponsored by the Vermont Right to Life Committee, will be held this year on Saturday, January 17th, in Montpelier. Pro-lifers from around the state will gather behind City Hall at 10:45 a.m. to march up State Street to the Capitol for opening remarks on the steps of the State House. A bus will leave Chimney Corners early, call 802-229-4885 for more information or visit [vrlc.net](http://vrlc.net).

## Vermont's Opportunity

By GOVERNOR JIM DOUGLAS

In my travels across the state, Vermonters continue to share their fears and concerns about how we will weather the economic storm that continues to sweep across the nation. There is little disagreement that we are immersed in one of the most challenging financial downturns in contemporary history. Anxieties are high as families, businesses and government look to tighten their budgets and make do with less.

We will need to make some very difficult decisions in our state budget as we assure the most needy are protected, and we continue to provide the core services that are a fundamental responsibility of state government. At the same time, as we make those tough decisions I believe there is also a real opportunity, perhaps even a responsibility, for us to reexamine all facets of how the state does business and delivers services. To succeed will require discipline and determination; but the time for action is now.

In order to avail ourselves of the best opportunities, we will have to come together and work across party lines. New partnerships will need to be built, and current ones strengthened. One of the most important partnerships

**Vermont's Opportunity**  
Continued on page 11

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Fairfax,

One of the many pleasures I get as editor of the publication is meeting people. Over years, some of those people I get to know very well.

One person who I have met has continuously, selflessly given and given his all to the Town of Fairfax.

He's been at every fire scene, spent many hours in preparation of an emergency situation and helps keep us all safe.

My favorite time to see him though was always at Steeple Market on Thursdays for the Prime Rib special.

Of course, I'm talking about Steve Bessette, a man behind the scenes that you may or may not know. If you live in Fairfax, he's looking out for your safety.

This issue's for you, Steve.

Take care and God bless,

*Chris Santee*

## Montpelier Notes

The legislative session is beginning this week. The budget is the big gorilla in the room. Your legislators are being asked to step up to the plate, or to be a pitcher and knock this thing out of the box. The goal is to hit a home run or to get a game ending strike out. If you are ahead and benefiting you want the strike out. If you are behind and losing, you want the home run. As George Will writes in the chapter on pitching in his book "Men at Work" the advice to the pitcher is forever unhelpful. It is "Don't give this guy anything good to hit - but don't walk him." Legislative pitchers of bills are given the same kind of instructions: "Maintain our services, cut the deficit and do not raise taxes." They are asked to pitch around the trouble, the big gorilla at the plate. But pitch they must. There are no open bases to put off the deciding moment for another time, or to shift the responsibility by using local government as a relief pitcher from the bullpen. Nor can we hope for a rain delay and expect the Federal Government to bring in a bonus baby to save the day. But I am hopeful that by using the shared values of our families, friends, and community, the legislature will be able to focus on long term solutions for our common problems rather than short term fixes. We can do it with your input.

I can be reached during the week in Montpelier by calling toll free at the State House 1-800-322-5616, by E-mail at [ggilbert@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:ggilbert@leg.state.vt.us) or at my home answering machine at 849-6333.

*Gary Gilbert*  
State Representative  
Franklin 1  
Fairfax/Georgia

## Montpelier Notes

What makes this upcoming session different others in recent years? Of course, it's the economic concerns. Even Sen. Bill Doyle, who has served as Washington County Senator for 45 years says he has never experienced an economic situation like this one.

Each new session has its own set of issues and challenges. Serious changes have to be made to the state budget, reducing expenses and possibly increasing revenue. Last month's actions by the Joint Fiscal Committee made it certain legislators would face having to make additional reductions in the current FY2009 budget. What was \$40 million in additional cuts now looks like \$70 million. Next year's budget will likely be nearly \$200 million less.

But tough economic decisions are not the only thing facing legislators. Other important questions are how to redefine the role of police in our state including all police services, state police, sheriffs and local departments. The question of bonding for repairing our roads and bridges will involve a change in policy. A policy change this long lasting needs to be well aired in the public view so all understand costs involved. A decision on the nuclear plant re-license application needs to move ahead. Legislators need to make some changes to our child safety laws. Fortunately the Senate Judiciary Committee has done some work that will help move the efforts along.

The legislative session starts this week on Wednesday. The session will be called to order by the Secretary of State, and the first few pieces of business include the roll call of members elect and election of a new Speaker. Since Republican Steve Adams of Hartland has dropped out of the race, it's a sure thing that Morrystown Democrat Shap Smith will be the next Speaker. I am hopeful that the next months will be busy, productive ones with many legislators willing to drop the partisan feelings that often make decision making difficult in Montpelier. I am optimistic that legislators can find the focus to do just that.

Contact me at [cbranagan@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:cbranagan@leg.state.vt.us) or 527-7694. I want to hear from you.

*Rep. Carolyn Branagan*  
Franklin-1, Fairfax/Georgia  
Vermont House of Representatives

## There Really Is a Santa Claus

On Christmas Eve, I had company and soon I found out I had water leaking inside my house. I knew I had bad ice build-up, but no way for me to remove it.

My good nephew, D.J. Leach came down in the pouring rain and wind on his tractor. It was the same time Steeple Market was burning. His son, who just arrived from South Carolina came to run the bucket to put his father on the roof.

All finished, not accepting any pay, both wished me a "Merry Christmas". I cannot express my sincere thanks to both of them.

*Mildred Warren*

## Keep Off River

A young child with a backpack was seen on the edge of the Lamoille River in Fairfax on January 6th.

Parents — Please tell your kids to stay away from the river ice as it is extremely slippery and it doesn't freeze well.

This is a very dangerous situation.

## Vietnam Veteran

Attention all Vietnam Veterans who attended Bellows Free Academy Fairfax. Richard Warren is looking to hear from you to include your name on a plaque at the school. Check FranklinOne.com to e-mail, or call 849-2758 for more information.

## Steeple Update

I spoke with Pierre Menard, owner of Steeple Market on January 6th and the first thing he wanted me to do was to thank you all. The firefighters, the town, and the townspeople for all of your help and support.

Pierre is doing well, as is Mike Thoret, the now relocated tenant of the upstairs apartment.

The clean up should start soon and at this time, there are no decisions to announce.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Pierre and Mike and we understand this will take some time.

FranklinOne.com will have any announcements and we'll have another update here in February.

## The Fairfax News

The Fairfax News and FranklinOne.com are owned and operated by TwoKidsToys.com GWBD

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# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## BFA SPORTS

**Friday, January 9th**  
MS Girls host Peoples  
MS Boys at Peoples

**Saturday, January 10th**  
V&JV Girls host Williamstown

**Monday, January 12th**  
V&JV Boys at Winooski  
MS Boys host Winooski

**Tuesday, January 13th**  
V&JV Girls host Peoples  
MS Girls at Winooski  
Skiing at Lamoyille

**Wednesday, January 14th**  
V&JV Boys at Milton  
7th Boys host Alburg  
7th Girls host Alburg

**Thursday, January 15th**  
V&JV Girls at Richford  
JV2 Boys host Milton  
JV2 Girls host Milton  
8th Girls at Grand Isle  
8th Boys at Grand Isle

**Friday, January 16th**  
V&JV Boys host S. Royalton

**Tuesday, January 20th**  
MS Girls host Georgia  
MS Boys at Georgia  
Skiing at St. Albans

**Wednesday, January 21st**  
V&JV Boys host Richford

**Thursday, January 22nd**  
MS Girls at South Hero  
MS Boys host South Hero

**Friday, January 23rd**  
V&JV Boys at Lake Region

**Saturday, January 24th**  
JV2 Girls host MVU

**Monday, January 26th**  
MS Girls host South Hero  
MS Boys at South Hero

**Tuesday, January 27th**  
V&JV Girls host Hazen  
JV2 Boys at Peoples  
Skiing at St. Albans

**Wednesday, January 28th**  
V&JV Boys at Peoples  
MS Boys host MVU

**Thursday, January 29th**  
JV2 Girls host MVU  
JV2 Boys host MVU

**Friday, January 30th**  
V&JV Boys host Danville

**Sunday, February 1st**  
Skiing at Craftsbury

**Monday, February 2nd**  
JV2 Boys at Lake Region  
JV2 Girls at Lake Region

**Tuesday, February 3rd**  
V&JV Girls at Lake Region  
MS Girls host Winooski  
MS Boys at Winooski

**Wednesday, February 4th**  
V&JV Boys at Hazen

**Thursday, February 5th**  
V&JV Girls at Peoples  
MS Boys host Georgia  
MS Girls at Georgia  
Skiing at Colchester

**Friday, February 6th**  
V&JV Boys host Stowe  
JV2 Boys at Hazen  
MS Girls at MVU

**Monday, February 8th**  
MS Girls host MVU  
MS Boys at MVU

**Tuesday, February 10th**  
V&JV Girls host Northfield

**Wednesday, February 11th**  
V&JV Boys at Northfield  
MS Boys host Peoples  
MS Girls at Peoples

**Thursday, February 12th**  
V&JV Girls host Winooski

**Friday, February 13th**  
BOYS SENIOR NIGHT  
V&JV Boys host Williamstown  
Skiing at Colchester

**Monday, February 16th**  
MS Girls host TOWN  
MS Boys at TOWN

**Tuesday, February 17th**  
V&JV Girls at Enosburgh

**Thursday, February 18th**  
GIRLS SENIOR NIGHT  
V&JV Girls host Richford  
Skiing at Montpelier

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## Thanks to Union Bank

For the second straight year, elementary students from Bellows Free Academy Fairfax and the children of St. Luke Church made cards of thanks and season's greetings for American troops serving in Iraq. A parent/teacher delivers them to *The Fairfax News* and we deliver them to Union Bank in Fairfax (after stopping at the Fairfax Pharmacy to pick up all the candy that Rick Hogle donates). Union Bank sends them overseas.

Special thanks to the kids, Brenda Menard, Rick Hogle and Nikki Allen at Union Bank.

On a sad note, we bid farewell to Nikki Allen, who will be leaving Union Bank on January 16th to pursue a new career. Nikki has served the folks of Fairfax well and she will be missed.



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## Fairfax Town Meeting February 28

Voting by ballot will be March 3rd

On the ballot, there will be three School Board seats, Peg Stewart's, Jeff Loller's and Angela Baker's. Peg will be seeking re-election while Jeff will not and Angela will be stepping down with one year remaining on a three year term.

For the Selectboard, there will be two seats, Bill Ormerod's and Judy Cleary's. Bill will be running for re-election but Judy will not be seeking re-election.

For more information, follow [FranklinOne.com](http://FranklinOne.com).

# FAIRFAX NEWS

## Steeple Market Continued from page 1

Flames fought their way upstairs and came out the third floor door in the back of the building. Firefighters gained access through the kitchen door off the loading dock into what looked like the inside of a blazing woodstove.

The fire continued down the hallway to the base of the steeple and onlookers were saddened to see the flames begin to take the landmark down. The Fire Departments repositioned in preparation of the steeple falling. It burned like a torch in the wind and at about 10:30 p.m., on Christmas Eve 2008, the steeple crashed into the fiery structure. Flaming pieces of the building blew to neighboring structures, but alert firefighters kept the blaze from spreading.

The Country Pantry and Nan's Mobil were open at 10:30 p.m. for firefighter support. The Bessettes shuttled exhausted firefighters to food and water. Many more brought bottled water to the scene.

As Christmas Day dawned, daylight exposed the extent of the tragedy.

Some Fairfax firefighters had been on the scene for over 12 hours. If Santa came, nobody saw him. Dads and moms went home to open presents, but those were solemn celebrations.

Fairfax Fire Chief Dean Potter commented "Not sure if tired is the right word to describe the morning after. I can't thank my firefighters enough for the conditions they endured during the fire. Not only giving up Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning, but the 40mph winds, intense heat, zero visibility on the street (never mind what it was like inside the building), the rain and the water from fire hoses that soaked to the bone. Also thank you to the citizens who brought us coffee and refreshments before the red cross was able to arrive and to Sam for opening his restaurant and operating throughout the night to feed and shelter firefighters who were rehabbing between working shifts.

The mutual aid we received on scene from Cambridge, City of St. Albans, Milton, and Georgia was invaluable. Without the help of our neighboring departments we would

have lost or seen sustainable damage to other buildings as well. To be quite frank it was like being in hell for a few hours when the fire broke through to the roof.

We were able to get all of our mutual aid departments home in time for Christmas morning with their families. Fairfax firefighters were not quite as lucky. Around 1:00 a.m. we released about 8 of our firefighters who do not have young children so they could get warm and sleep to return to the scene around 6:00 a.m. so the Fairfax firefighters with young children could get home to see their kids open presents from Santa. The last firefighters on scene Christmas morning were able to get home around noon.

This is a huge loss for the community and I hope that they will be able to rebuild especially as a consumer who frequented the market almost every morning for coffee, and at least another 4 or 5 times a week for fuel and supplemental groceries. My five year old is already asking where Sunday morning donuts are going to come from now.

Bottom line is that no one was injured or killed. Again thank you to everyone who supported the fire department during this fire."

And thank you Chief Potter and all the Fairfax Fire Department and your families for your tremendous service to and sacrifice for this community.

## Where to Shop?

With the absence of Steeple Market, many Fairfax folks are wondering where to shop. Minor's Country Store will be making additions to their shelves and Aaron and Jeff would like to hear your input. If you're coming off the interstate, go just past the 104A turn and on your left, you'll find Georgia Market, a full line grocery store. Owner Ray Bouffard wants you to compare prices with anybody! Check out their ad on page 3. Nan's is also interested in hearing your shopping needs.

## From the Selectboard

The Fairfax Town Selectboard would like to acknowledge and thank all of the individuals, businesses, public entities that assisted our able Fire Department on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day of 2008.

It would be impossible for this Board to begin to feel the exasperation that all of the individuals felt at not being able to extinguish the Steeple Market fire immediately. As usual all of those individuals that were there assisting the Firemen and all of the Fire and Rescue personnel at the scene or as back up gave "their all". You were successful in your ultimate mission in that there were no serious injuries, no loss of life and you prevented damage to nearby buildings.

Although it is a small consolation at this time, the Fairfax Selectboard hopes that you were able to enjoy the rest of the holiday season as planned.

While there were many individuals that contributed moral support, food, and beverages to the personnel at the fire scene; obviously nobody recorded the names. Therefore please do not feel slighted if your name is not listed.

Thank you to the Fairfax Fire Department and Auxiliary, Cambridge Fire Department, Georgia Fire Department, St. Albans City Fire Department, and Milton Fire Department for your prompt and able assistance. Thanks to Colchester Fire Department covering for Milton, Underhill/Jericho Fire Department covering Cambridge Station, Swanton Fire Department covering for the St. Albans City Fire Station and St. Albans Town Fire Department covering the Fairfax Station there were no breaches in Fire Protection; "True Mutual Aid"!

Thanks to the Red Cross for their 'on the scene assistance' with food and beverages, the Fairfax Rescue Squad, Minor's Country Store for beverages on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and The Country Pantry Restaurant for opening up to allow Fire Personnel a place to warm up, have a bite to eat and drink as well as providing breakfast.

Nan's Mobil stayed open for fuel and the Ted Bessette Family assisted in shuttling personnel/food/beverages.

At the same time we thank the Vermont State Police, the Central Dispatch Center, and CVPS for standing by and assisting as necessary.

Once again thank you for being there! We hope that all have a healthy, safe and prosperous New Year!

*The Town of Fairfax Selectboard*

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Mike Cain

# STEEPLE MARKET



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## Minor's Country Store, Inc. & VT Liquor Outlet

**\* On the eve of December 24th, 2008, the Town of Fairfax suffered a major loss. The fire at Steeple Market saw the loss of a historic building and a thriving business.**

**Our thoughts go out to Pierre Menard and the Town of Fairfax.**

**\* Minor's Country store has been expanding our grocery, produce and meat lines in an attempt to meet the needs of the community.**

**\* We are open to suggestions and will make every attempt to fill your requests.**

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# EDUCATION

## Our Changing Schools

SCOTT LANG, BFA HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

December and January can be difficult months for school board members and administrators in Vermont. There are more meetings, a great deal of research and work outside of those meetings and some real soul searching when it comes to making decisions about a budget to put before voters. So, I hope you'll forgive me for expressing my disappointment in comments by Governor Douglas which essentially blame local school boards for what he describes as spiraling increases in school spending. That is a pretty broad brush being used by the Governor. And it come across as disrespectful to local boards who work hard and pay taxes too.

We've had some late nights and some long and difficult discussions, but the Fairfax Town School Directors have agreed in principle to a spending plan for FY '10. Here are some of the highlights in the program part of the budget.

Kindergarten at BFA will be "full day" beginning in the fall. There is some modest cost for this proposal, and part of that is offset by costs we currently have in the partial day model. This was the longest of the discussions held with the board and with community input at least three board meetings. It was at times, a very emotional discussion. Here's the gist of the pro's and con's.

Supporters of the full day model cite studies that speak of the gains in learning that occur when young children learn the social norms and mores of school, and when they learn in a developmentally appropriate classroom environment. They are less likely to have learning difficulties later in their schooling, less likely to drop out

of school and particularly among our students whose parents are at or just above the poverty level, more likely to experience success in school in the long run. Supporters would argue that in the long run, this is a cost savings measure.

Among those who oppose the full day model, there are concerns about the length of the school day, especially for a less mature five year old. Some question the cost/benefit reality of adding a little more time, especially since Kindergarten is not mandatory in Vermont. Others are concerned that the curriculum will be pushed down and that we will make unreasonable demands on children in order to "fill in" the gaps. Still others question whether adding structure to more of the day for a five year old is really developmentally appropriate. The school board really wrestled with whether this was the right timing given the economic climate, for this change. They decided in the context of the entire budget that it was.

There is a series of interconnected moves in the area of technology. A new position for a network manager will be added at the supervisory union level, and the technician positions at the three FWSU schools will come out of local budgets and into the supervisory union budget. Since we have a Technology Director at the Franklin West Supervisory Union level, it made sense for flexibility and efficiency that all of the technical support positions to be in the FWSU budget.

That really shouldn't look any different to students or staff. But we did not just add on. Previously, the network had been (and actually still is) managed in the individual schools.

Since most of the hardware for the Wide Area Network is located at BFA, one of our teachers has been managing (and with all due respect and gratitude – has built this network) the day to day and longer term networking, hardware and software issues. The fundamental question for us was efficiency – could we manage the network effectively for less money than we would pay on the teacher salary schedule. The answer was yes. The efficiency at the local level is that our teacher – who has been managing the network, will be moving back to the classroom full time. This means that a .67 position in the current budget for a technology teacher in the high school will be cut without compromising course offerings.

As promised, after a year's hiatus for the pre-tech and other tech ed courses, there is a full time teacher in the FY'10 budget. As we worked with colleagues at Center for Technology in Essex, it appeared that the plan for BFA to host a satellite pre-tech program through CTE was not gaining much for our students and was putting a great deal of responsibility on the principal, in return for a modest income source. It just wasn't cost effective in terms of providing more access for BFA students. Many questioned the wisdom of taking the position out of last year's budget, but we have already begun advertising for an "anticipated opening" until we have a voter approved budget.

No matter how you slice it, the budget that you will be voting on will increase less than four percent. More importantly, it supports continued growth of learning opportunities while being respectful of the taxpayers who support our school. Next month, I will highlight more specifically, some

of the dollar amounts in the proposed budget.

Here are a few thoughts for the Governor and others who blame school boards for rising costs. At BFA, enrollment is not declining. In the past five years, all of the budgets presented have been in this same three to four percent range, roughly the increase in the Cost of Living. The cost of state government on the other hand, has risen at a higher level until this economic turmoil caused some cuts – painful cuts to be sure. The administrators and school board have been mindful of the burden that comes with funding schools while responding to the need for student learning to increase as required by state and national mandates.

If anything, school board members should be praised for their careful stewardship of education and costs. I, for one, salute their stewardship and sensitivity to the needs of taxpayers, and the students for whom they advocate.

If you have questions about this piece, or about BFA in general, please call or email me; slang@bfairefairfax.com.

### Water Main Break

Bellows Free Academy Fairfax was shut down on Wednesday, January 7th for the snow/sleet storm and a water main break. Thanks to Randy DeVine, Paul Langelier and the Town of Fairfax for working in the storm to fix the problem.

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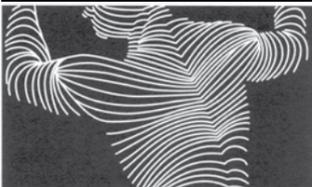
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## High School Exam Schedule

Semester exams will be held for high school students on Thursday and Friday, January 15 and 16, 2009. In a change from the past exam schedules, these will be FULL days of school for high school students, with the exam schedule embedded in the school day. There are two reasons for his change. First, a new law in effect this year requires that school days must be a minimum of five and a half hours long with most students in all grade levels attending. While some area high schools have chosen to ignore this and will be conducting more traditional exams, we believe that it is beneficial for our students to be in school all day. Secondly, we have committed to creating more instructional time for students as borne out by the increase in the number of student days from 175 to 177. Allowing a partial day exam schedule would undermine that effort.

Monday, January 19 there will be no school for all BFA students and staff for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. Second semester will begin on Tuesday, January 20.

## Justin Fleming

Friends of Justin Fleming are asking for some help for a guy who's loved by all who know him. Checks can be made payable to Justin and sent to:

c/o April Mathieu  
31 Mathieu Rd.  
Westford, VT 05494  
Check FranklinOne.com for more.

## Chattman Named Interim FWSU Superintendent

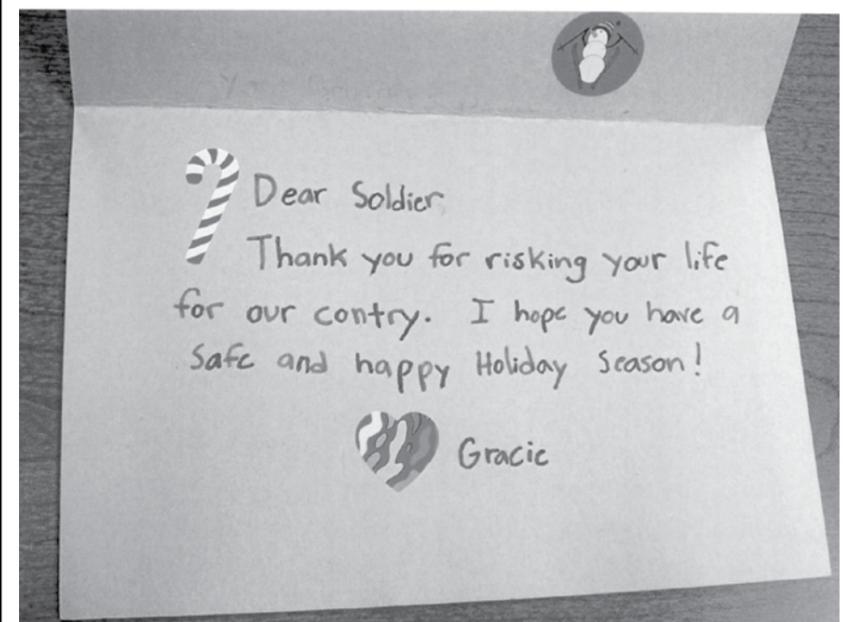
Franklin West Supervisory Union is pleased to announce that it has selected Bruce Chattman (former Superintendent of South Burlington School District) to be its Interim Superintendent starting January 12 through June 30, 2009.

Bruce has an extensive background and is well-respected by his colleagues. He will truly be an asset during this time of transition.

The search for a new Superintendent of Schools to begin July 1, 2009 is already underway and FWSU hopes to have the position filled in the next few months following a comprehensive hiring process.

Armando Vilaseca's last day as Superintendent of FWSU is January 15, 2009.

*Editor's Note:* Bruce Chattman was the Vermont Superintendent of the Year in 2003.



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**News:** A big thank-you to all who donated to light up the Fairfax Christmas Tree and help us raise \$365 for the Fairfax Food Shelf. It was the kids who stole the show, though; filling up the hay rides, sipping cocoa, and engaging in some very serious conversations with a white-bearded guy in a strange red outfit. This is definitely going to be an annual event!

**Featured Member:** Julie M. P. Minor, Esq. writes about:

**What Happens to My Assets?**

To whom your assets are distributed at your death depends upon how you own your assets and the planning you have completed for their distribution.

There are a variety of ways your assets may be distributed; and more than one approach may be used. Some of these methods include:

- Estate Plan Documents:

**Will:** legal document setting out directions for the disposition of *individually* owned real and personal property upon death

**Trust:** fiduciary relationship in which a Trustee holds title to property with the responsibility for managing property for another's benefit

**Intestate Laws:** laws which provide for the distribution of a decedent's assets if the decedent dies without a Will

- Operation of Law:

**Beneficiary Designation:** a written direction that states who is to receive the asset designated

**Right of Survivorship:** the right of a surviving joint owner to assume ownership of an asset upon another joint owner's death

Individually-owned assets governed by your Will or Intestate Laws will be subject to probate administration. Probate is the process by which the administration of estates, testamentary trusts, and guardianships are governed by the judicial system. Probate administration is a matter of public record.

If you wish to control the disposition of your assets, you should execute a *Will*. Even if you do not own any assets in your name alone, you should consider making a Will if there is a possibility a joint tenant or designated beneficiary may predecease you, or if you have minor children.

One method used to distribute assets outside of probate is a *Trust*. There are many types of Trusts. For purposes of this article, I will refer to a *Revocable, or Living Trust*. It is important to note that you are in control of all assets you transfer to your Living Trust. Some of the most notable benefits of a Living Trust are:

- Provides a "vehicle" by which the your assets may be gathered and managed as one fund, without interruption, both during lifetime (including incapacity) and upon death
- Allows you to change the terms of, add to, or withdraw assets from the trust, and to revoke it at any time, until incapacity or death
- Avoids probate, thereby providing privacy
- Avoids the necessity for a guardian for finances in the event of incapacity
- Allows you to decide who will receive your assets, and when and how they will receive them
- Allows the trustee to administer assets for beneficiaries beyond the age of majority
- May reduce or eliminate transfer taxes

**FBPA**

*Continued on page 9*

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**UPDATED DAILY.**

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**FBPA**

*Continued from page 8*

- Can protect a beneficiary with special needs
- Avoids probate in multiple states (if you own real estate in more than one state)

Assets passing outside of probate by operation of law include assets subject to beneficiary designation and joint assets with right of survivorship. Property passing by *beneficiary designation* include: insurance policies, retirement assets, and bank and other financial accounts with transfer (payable) on death designations. Assets owned in joint name with *right of survivorship*, such as real estate or financial accounts, will also pass to the surviving joint tenant outside of probate.

The key to planning for the disposition of your assets is to first understand what assets you own and how you own them, individually or jointly. You should then decide how you wish these assets to be distributed and by what means you wish them distributed. Then, you should follow through with completing the documentation to implement your distribution plan, including a Will, and possibly a Trust, as well as beneficiary designations. Also, remember to review your planning periodically and to update, as appropriate.

Should you wish to discuss estate planning, please contact:

Julie M. P. Minor, Esq.  
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*Happy New Year*

*Are you looking for a New Years Resolution?*

Make this year an easy one.

Make the commitment to yourself and your family to review your life insurance and retirement goals.

*The steps you take this year could make a difference in the future.*



**From VTGrandpa.com  
A Birth**

On the day after Christmas, Tony & Jessica (Hayes) Pouliot of Westford, became the parents of a little girl they named Allysson Yvonne.

Tony & his family run the Pouliot Farm (Formerly The Archie Rice Farm), just outside of Westford on Route 128. Jessica works at The Fairfax Pharmacy and prior to moving to Westford was also on the Fairfax Fire Department along with her Dad, Lucien and brothers Justin & Jordan.

Congratulations Tony & Jessica.

**A Wedding**

Mr. & Mrs. Steve and Joanne Minckler of Sheldon, Vt. are proud to announce the engagement of their daughter, Joanne, to Josh Langelier, son of Paul and Karen Langelier of Fairfax.

Joanne is a billing specialist for Northwest Counseling in St. Albans and Josh is a Law Enforcement Specialist with Homeland Security.

An August 21, 2010, wedding is planned.

**From VTGrandpa.com  
St. Luke News**

As many of you are aware, our church bells (at St. Luke) have been silent for many years now because the components needed to run them were outdated and the cost to repair and replace them would have been equal to buying a new system.

Thanks to the generosity of one of our parishioners, we now have our bells back. Please remember this person and his kindness in your prayers.

The original Carillon was a gift to St. Luke's Parish by the Rainville Family - It used to be used during the Christmas Time to play Christmas Carols as well as the Angelus, Funerals, Before Masses and the Announcement of the deceased at a funeral.

**Ralph Branon**

Ralph P. Branon, 78, of Burlington, died on Friday, Nov. 28, 2008, at his home.

He was born in Fairfield, Vt. on July 14, 1930 the son of the late E. Frank and Mary (Barry) Branon. He graduated from St. Mary's in St. Albans and the University of Detroit as an Architectural/ Structural Engineer, P.E. Ralph served in the U.S. Army from 1955 to 1961. On Aug. 9, 1958, he was married to Mary Theresa "Terry" Moore, in Detroit.

They moved to Vermont in 1960, where Ralph opened his own architectural business. Some of his designs include the Newman Center at UVM, Fanny Allen Phase I, Gifford Hospital, St. Pius X and St. Lawrence Church, along with numerous other design projects in Vermont. He was an avid hunter and outdoorsman, a second generation sugar maker and member of the Sugar Makers Association, and Fourth Degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

Ralph is survived by his wife of 50 years, Terry Branon of Burlington; his children, Mary Theresa Thelen and husband, Chad, of Jeffersonville, Glen Branon and wife, Allison, of St. Johnsbury, Cathleen Branon-Keogh and husband, Pat, of Fairfax, Greg Branon and wife, Karen, of Georgia, Vt., and Ellen Rivait of Burlington; 17 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; his brothers, the Rev. Philip Branon of Newport and Paul Branon and wife, Mary, of Acton, Mass.; his sisters-in-law, Mary Branon of Plattsburgh and Barbara Branon of Fairfield; and by numerous nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his sons, James

and Ralph Branon; as well as his two sisters, and five brothers.

Ralph's family would like to extend special thanks to Kim Fox and the volunteers at the Visiting Nurse Association for the care and kindness given to Ralph and his family during his illness.

A Mass of Christian Burial was to be celebrated on Monday, Dec. 1, 2008, at 11 a.m. in Christ the King Church with interment to follow in Resurrection Park Cemetery. Visiting hours were held on Sunday, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Ready Funeral & Cremation Service South Chapel, 261 Shelburne Rd., Burlington.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Ralph's memory may be made to the VNA-Hospice, 1110 Prim Rd., Colchester, Vt. 05446. To send online condolences to the family, please visit [www.readyfuneral.com](http://www.readyfuneral.com).

**Peter Freyne**

Vermont political columnist Peter Freyne passed away Wednesday, January 7th, in Burlington.

Governor Jim Douglas on Peter: "Early this morning, longtime political columnist Peter Freyne peacefully passed away."

I've known Peter for many years. Peter was a determined journalist who had a way about him that was uniquely his. You knew where you stood with him, a trait that made all public officials examine their positions more closely.

Peter will be missed."

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# JANUARY SPORTS

## Bullets Ranked in Top Four

After a very close loss against Vermont Champion Lake Region, Coach Glen Button was all smiles.

"I thought for the first time out we looked pretty good," he said. "We told the guys before the game that if they controlled the boards and scored in transition then we would be successful and other than that stretch to start the third, I thought we were pretty good. We will be right in the mix by the end of the season and we will contend for the DIII championship."

Since then, the Bullets have won eight straight and are ranked in the top four teams in Vermont according to the Vermont Principal's Association and the Vermont DIII Coaches Poll.

Led by senior Seth Rebeor, who notched his 1,000th point as a Bullet against Winooski, the team is deep and very well balanced. When asked about the group, coach Button responded "This is one of the most focused and determined groups I have had in my 12 years at BFA. We really appreciate all of the fan support we received against Lake Region. The group from DC really had the chamber rocking!"

Josh Woodward has been a crowd pleaser as he battles under the hoop for rebounds and puts it back up for two. He can then block a shot at the other end and knock down a three pointer his next trip down the court. Craig LaPine and Alex DeRaps have hit their share of threes also, extending Bullet leads or closing gaps. Seth Rebeor has been a starter in all Fairfax games since he walked onto the court as a freshman. Rebeor assists or plays excellent defense as often as he scores.

Amit Saini brings a hustle to the court that amazes opponents as he dives into the stands or onto the hardwood. Jeremy Lawrence is fast becoming a highlight clip and put up 17 points while grabbing 16 rebounds in a recent game in the Chamber. Carter Peterson is a beast in the paint reaching in to steal rebounds and passes. Andrew DuPrat swings on the transition fast break and plays in your face defense on the way back down. One

## Cross Country Ski Race in Fairfax

BY REVEREND ELIZABETH AND FRED GRIFFIN

The first cross-country ski race ever held at Fairfax was December 23rd, 2008! This was also our first race of the year and we were encouraged. One the women's side we were without junior Megan Kane, our #1 skier, and the only athlete we have capable of contesting Savannah Kittell-Mitchell, but our depth paid off with her sister Shannon Kane finishing 2nd, freshman Mattie Hayes taking third and juniors Michelle Ambrisco and Larisa Marco in 4th and 5th places.

The duel on the boy's side went into skiing's equivalent of overtime when BFA St Albans and Fairfax were tied after four skiers for each team were in. Ben Pearce was dominating in first place for St Albans, but juniors Kyle Bochanski and Dustin Hayes finished next to each other for second and third. St. Albans placed skiers Nick Smart and John Lavoie in places 4 and 5 but Fairfax followed with juniors Zach Bochanski and Simon Mann-Gow. At the 2.5k mark Fairfax's Kody White trailed BFA's Alex Venuti by 40 seconds but somehow managed to overtake him on the second half of the course to secure the victory for Fairfax by one point.

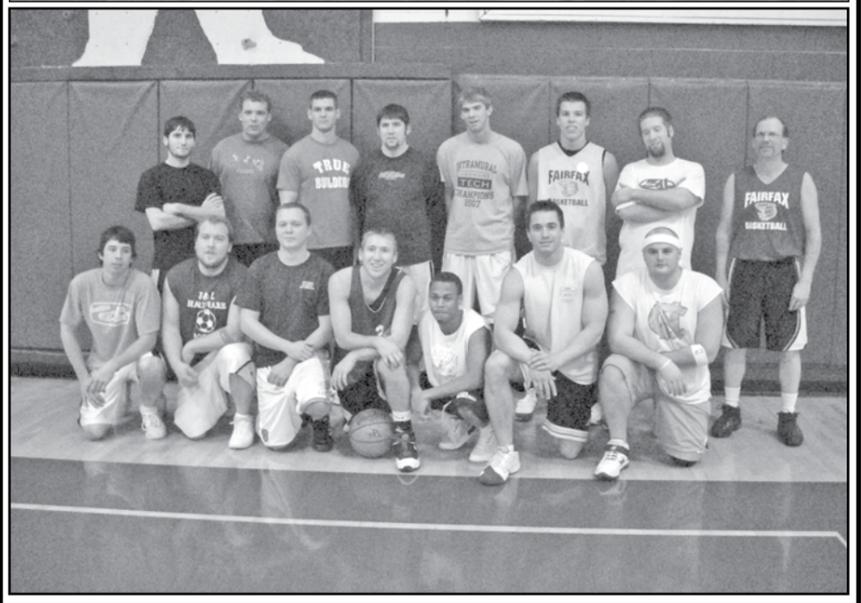
The race was hosted on the new trail system built in Fairfax over the summer and fall by community volunteers. It was a difficult but fair course that held up well to the traffic. The numbers on Fairfax nordic squad took a quantum leap from 34 to 47 this year, with 19 of them never-evers when the season started. We've begun to gel as a team, but from a coaches standpoint moving the sheer number of skiers and equipment from point A to point B remains a challenge.

While we have some talented younger skier the strength of both the men's and women's team lies with our junior veterans. It is far too early to make any predictions but if we continue to work hard and develop our technique while improving our conditioning, we can be competitive in D-2

Many volunteers from among the skiers' parents and community volunteers helped coordinate the race.

5K course Girls: BFA Fairfax: 14

## BFA Fairfax Alumni Basketball 2009



points; BFA St Albans: 28 points; Inc: Lamoille, Oxbow.

Boys: BFA Fairfax: 27; BFA St Albans: 28.

Girls: 1. Savannah Kittell-Mitchell BFA 22:48; 2. Shannon Kane, Fairfax 24:51; 3. Mattie Hayes, Fairfax 25:44; 4. Michelle Ambrisco, Fairfax 26:03; 5. Larisa Marco, Fairfax 26:37; 6. Andrea, Canzano, BFA 26:44; 7. Emma Seneidmuller, Oxbow 27:43; 8. Kate Wells, Fairfax 27:48; 9. Heather Peatman, Fairfax 28:08; 10. Madeline Larrow, BFA 28:27

Boys: 1. Ben Pearce, BFA; 2. Kyle Bochanski, Fairfax; 3. Dustin Hayes, Fairfax; 4. Nick Smart, BFA, 19:29; 5. John Lavoie, BFA, 20:35; 6. Zach Bochanski, Fairfax, 21:10; 7. Simon

Mann-Gow, BFA, 21:38; 8. Robbie Morril, BFA, 22:08; 9. Kody White, Fairfax, 23:01

10. Alex Venuti, BFA, 23:26

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**Vermont's Opportunity**  
Continued on page 11

will be with the federal government as they and we craft long-term recovery plans.

I was buoyed by my recent meeting with the National Governors Association (NGA), President-Elect Obama and Vice President-Elect Biden. I had the privilege as the Vice Chair of the NGA to facilitate a discussion about what a recovery and stimulus package could look like. In a spirited discussion, we all agreed that any solution will require that the states shoulder their fair share of the burden. Together, my administration and the legislature have made some very difficult decisions to reign in spending, and we all know that many more tough choices lie ahead. We will continue to find creative and cost effective solutions to our fiscal challenges, while we work to craft a lean but responsible budget for the coming fiscal year. But as we do so, the federal government must be a partner in our efforts.

We discussed with President-Elect Obama that any recovery package contain funding for infrastructure and Medicaid. Economists and history indicate that new spending in these areas have the greatest chance of abbreviating the financial downturn. With respect to infrastructure projects, we believe new monies are particularly helpful because many of these projects are already planned, ready to go and can provide an immediate stimulative effect. Increasing the federal government's share of Medicaid funding and adding more money for unemployment benefits will help states preserve these crucial safety nets at a time when they are most in demand.

I was particularly struck with President-Elect Obama's challenge to governors to reexamine processes and find new ways to innovate and eliminate "red tape". Here in Vermont, I've issued a similar challenge to my administration. We need to take a serious look at the various permitting processes and find ways to help new growth while maintaining the integrity and character of our natural assets. We will have to examine the taxation and funding mechanisms to realize new efficiencies. And equally important, it is time to scrutinize all our obligations for new efficiencies, from insurance to education, transportation to public safety, economic development to renewable energy.

We have a long way to go before we emerge from this recession. It will require us to push ourselves in different ways, to think differently, and to set aside old beliefs. If we can set aside our differences and work together, we can take advantage of this crisis and bring in a new era of innovation and prosperity for our state.

**Bullets**  
Continued from page 10

guy who won't back down is Jared Hughes, whose no fear attitude is now complemented by a sweet three point shot.

Dustin Lyman, James Minor, Keith Rabideau and Jake Thibault complete the depth on this team that will, as Coach Button said, be right in the mix for the DIII Championship. But the road will be very tough.

Along with another game with defending State Champion Lake Region (8-0) on the road January 23rd, serious competition will be found in Thetford

**Bullets**

Continued on page 12

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**SOME CALCIUM SUPPLEMENT MAKERS ARE ADDING VITAMIN K** due to the belief that low vitamin K levels lead to an increase risk of fractures. There is no proof that the vitamin K supplements decrease the risk of bone breaks. Also of concern is patients taking warfarin must maintain a consistent vitamin K intake. If they add or take away from this then more frequent blood tests are required. Calcium carbonate is the least expensive and most potent calcium supplement. Patients on meds that lower gastric acidity or elderly patients might do better on calcium citrate. Patients not getting enough vitamin D in their diet should take a supplement containing 800 to 1000 IU per day of vitamin D. Taking calcium and magnesium combos can reduce the constipating effect of calcium. Calcium supplements should not be taken within 1-2 hrs of levothyroxine, tetracyclines or bone building agents like Fosamax, Actonel or Boniva.

**WOMEN TAKING ESTROGENS ARE MORE LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM ACID REFLUX.** This includes oral meds containing estrogen alone or in combination with progestin as well as topical creams. Tamoxifen and reloxifene also may increase symptoms. Estrogen relaxes the sphincter at the top of the stomach allowing the contents to reflux into the lower esophagus. Taking the lowest possible dose to relieve symptoms of menopause can reduce the chance of suffering acid reflux.

**THE POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN PLASTICS CONTAINING BISPHENOL A (BPA)** and heart disease and diabetes have many people concerned. People with these conditions are likely to have higher levels of BPA in their urine. This does not prove a cause only an association. Even though the FDA says there is not enough in the plastics to cause these illnesses, some experts argue that even low levels have an estrogenic effect. To avoid BPA read the number in the triangle on the bottom of the plastic you have in you home. If it is a 7 with a PC beside it then it contains BPA. Triangles containing 1, 2, or 4 are BPA free. Soft plastic used for bottle water do not contain BPA as well as most prescription vials.

**CONTROVERSY STILL SWIRLS OVER THE USE OF GLUCOSAMINE AND CHONDROITIN** to relieve osteoarthritis pain. A large NIH study indicates that the combo is not very effective for knee pain and does not slow the progression of the disease. The problem is the study used glucosamine hydrochloride and not glucosamine sulfate. The hydrochloride salt is less expensive but sulfur is important to maintain healthy joints. Perhaps theoretically this explains why the studies results were not encouraging. Patients wishing to try glucosamine should choose one containing the sulfate salt with or without chondroitin. Doses should be 500mg three times daily of the glucosamine sulfate for 8 to 12 weeks. If no benefit is seen after that time then save your money and discontinue the supplement.

**Bullets**

**Continued from page 11**

(6-0), Twin Valley (7-1) in the playoffs and at Hazen (8-1) on February 4th.

The (8-1) Bullets only loss was to Lake Region 64-61 and Fairfax took two three point shots in the final seconds.

The JV Bullets are also very impressive at 7-2 and the future looks bright.

Winooski's road game was re-scheduled for January 12th.

Go Bullets!!!

Next month, we'll feature the girls.

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