

2015 Q1 Issues & Programming WTSA-FM

This is the programming and issues file for WTSA-FM Brattleboro for January through March, 2015. 96.7 WTSA-FM provides local news updates every Monday through Friday at the following times 5:30 6:03, 6:30, 7:03, 7:30, 8:03, 8:30 and 9:03 AM; plus 12:03, 3:03, 4:03, 4:30, 5:03, 5:30 and 6:03 PM; and on Saturday mornings at 6:03, 7:03 and 8:03 AM. In addition, WTSA-FM allows local groups time to record and air public service announcements, and our staff members are regularly involved with local charities. Here are some of the local news items covered during the period. This is not meant to be a complete list, only a representative sample. For additional information, please contact Tim Johnson at (802) 254-4577 during normal business hours, or email tj@wtsa.net.

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Agriculture

January 12: The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets has created a new matching grant program to help agriculture and forest product businesses attend domestic trade shows and expand their presence in other states. The agency is offering a total of \$25,000 in matching funds.

January 13: One of the region's top economic projects, is a urine recycling system for use as fertilizer. Abe Noe-Hayes of the Rich Earth institute says the current use of fertilizer by farmers is not sustainable.

January 28: The U.S. Department of Agriculture is revising the grading standards for maple syrup to match international standards so that consumers have a better understanding of what they are buying.

February 3: A new study claims the Vermont dairy industry brings \$2.2 billion into the state economy each year.

February 4: More than 7,000 northeast dairy farmers stand to get an average of \$4,000 in a proposed settlement with the cooperative Dairy Farmers of America to resolve antitrust allegations.

March 19: Some of Vermont's raw milk producers are calling for less onerous state regulation making unpasteurized milk easier to sell. But a state Health Department official told the House Agriculture Committee on Thursday that would not be a good idea.

March 25: Inspired by the popular "USDA Organic" label, U.S. House Republicans are proposing a new government certification for foods free of genetically modified ingredients.

March 27: Vermont maple syrup makers are inviting people to their sugarhouses for the state's annual Maple Weekend this Saturday and Sunday. A list of participating members can be found on line at VermontMaple.org.

March 30: One of Vermont's first Winter Farmers Markets has completed its ninth season, with more producers choosing to grow and sell produce during the winter months.

March 31: A handful of Windham County food producers are getting state grants to attend regional trade shows.

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Arts

January 14: The author Salman Rushdie, who lived for years under a death threat after his 1988 book "The Satanic Verses" drew the wrath of Iranian religious leaders, is going to be speaking at the University of Vermont.

January 26: Brattleboro Union High School now has its own music video. The BUHS TV lip dup can be seen on WTSA's Facebook page. It was released Friday, after students in the video production classes edited the video, which was shot just before the Christmas break.

January 27: The Vermont Arts Council is holding a series of community forums to discuss the future of arts education in the state. Council Education Program Manager Ben Doyle says the forum comes from the recognition that there's no statewide leadership on the arts. One forum is scheduled in Dummerston on Wednesday. The forums are stemming from a meeting of state educators in September.

February 3: A high school music teacher in Windham, New Hampshire, has received the 2015 Grammy Music Educator award. Jared Cassidy of Windham High School was one of 10 teachers selected as the finalists.

February 12: Brattleboro's 59th Winter Carnival gets underway this weekend. Carnival President Jamie Howard says the series of indoor and outdoor events helps relieve cabin fever for area residents.

February 16: It's all about the dominoes. The Brattleboro Museum and Art Center hosts their eighth annual domino toppling event this evening.

March 10: Aspiring filmmakers have the opportunity to get their short film featured at the Monadnock International Film Festival next month in Keene.

March 13: Keene's annual Pumpkin Festival could be on its last legs. A city council panel has voted to reject the festival's permit request after last year's violent alcohol fueled disturbances.

March 25: A Keene City Council subcommittee will take a second look at whether to allow a permit for the annual Pumpkin Festival this fall.

March 30: Members of the reggae band Inner Circle were involved with a car accident in Marlboro Sunday.

March 31: A new children's book is geared toward helping young people understand about the springtime migration of salamanders.

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Business

January 5: FairPoint and unions officials representing more than 1,700 striking workers have resumed negotiations for the first time in more than a month. Top leaders from negotiating teams met in Washington, D.C., on Sunday. They were brought together through federal mediation.

January 6: A training program for women interested in manufacturing jobs will be offered next month. Vermont Works for Women Coordinator Andi Waisman says the program is meant to help women apply for entry level jobs on an equal footing with men.

January 6: Brattleboro development credit corporation director Adam Grinold says he wishes the region had more time to plan for the closing of Entergy Vermont Yankee. But, he says a great deal of opportunity for the region's future job growth.

January 12: The region's top economic development project is redeveloping a portion of downtown Bellows Falls, known as the Island. The project list was released by the southeast economic strategies group today, and it also includes support for a job board listing openings by employers in southern Vermont.

January 14: The Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce is mounting an information campaign against a proposed 1% local sales tax. An information flyer sent out to chamber members this week.

January 20: Nearly 200 Entergy Vermont Yankee employees received their formal layoff notices on Monday. The final figures will be available later today.

January 22: Members of Congress from Vermont and New Hampshire have called on the Federal Communications Commission to assess the ability of FairPoint Communications to operate emergency communications networks in both states following outages last year.

January 23: Are things going downhill for snowboarding? Industry experts say not so fast. They say it's a sign of the maturing of the sport after a growth spurt in the 1990s and early 2000s.

January 26: Brattleboro area residents are receiving mailings from HomeServe USA Repair Management Corp. in regard to water service line responsibility. Brattleboro's water department says HomeServe is an independent company that offers residential repair coverage plans and is not affiliated with the local utility that supplies water to residents.

January 28: Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee has reduced its workforce to 326 employees. Company officials Tuesday confirmed the moves were made a week earlier, on January 19, following last month's closing of the nuclear plant.

January 28: Brattleboro Savings and Loan is making some changes, which President Dan Yates says are meant to strengthen their base in Windham County. Yates says their Springfield Savings and Loan division was sold, and a new Putney Road branch is being built in Brattleboro's Black Mountain Square.

January 29: FairPoint Communications has agreed to hold public meetings around New Hampshire to discuss its service levels as part of a \$13 million contract to provide Internet and telecommunications services for the state.

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February 2: Gas wars are continuing in Brattleboro with three stations near Interstate 91 exit one selling gas for a \$1.95 per gallon.

February 6: VTel continues its quest to improve wireless internet service in Vermont. The Vermont Public Service Board has endorsed construction of a tower in Wardsboro.

February 11: A small business plan competition is back for the Windham County area, with \$68,000 in prizes to be handed out for new and existing businesses in Windham County.

February 19: FairPoint Communications, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the Communications Workers of America announced that today they have reached tentative agreements on the terms for new collective bargaining agreements.

February 23: Striking FairPoint workers have ratified a tentative agreement that ends a four-month strike by more than 1,700 telecommunications workers in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and Communications Workers of America announced the results of three days of voting on Sunday. Workers will head back to their jobs Wednesday.

February 23: The Vermont Telecommunications Authority wants to know how much people know about a new system that extends cellular phone service to rural areas is working. The authority is kicking off a survey for people in Jamaica, Townshend, Newfane and West Dummerston.

February 25: A letter from 30 Brattleboro merchants is calling on voters next week to reject a proposed 1% local sales tax.

March 2: One of the questions lobbyists hope Vermonters will ask their legislators this week is about a proposed tax on sugared beverages.

March 6: The New Hampshire State Employees Union says workers have ratified a new two-year contract covering about 9,000 employees.

March 9: Vermont Lieutenant Governor Phil Scott and area lawmakers will be in Vernon late this afternoon, for a “Southern Vermont Economy Pitch”.

March 13: Healthcare has become a more important part of the Windham County economy, with the closing of the Entergy Vermont Yankee nuclear plant.

March 16: Windham County lawmakers say the state needs to do better, in helping private companies provide broadband internet to the region.

March 26: The Brattleboro Retreat has received a Governor’s Excellence in Worksite Wellness award.

March 30: Rolls-Royce has purchased R.O.V. Technologies, Inc., a Brattleboro-based business that provides nuclear utility operators with remote visual inspection services for boiling water reactors and pressurized water reactors.

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Education

January 8: Keene State College has received the 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Keene State is the only college or university in New Hampshire to be recognized this year, and one out of four higher education institutions in New Hampshire to ever be selected for the classification since it started in 2006.

January 14: A new report says New Hampshire is falling behind in science, technology, engineering and math education and must take concrete steps to better prepare students for careers in those fields. A task force created by Gov. Maggie Hassan released its report.

January 16: Gov. Peter Shumlin says he wants to outlaw Vermont teachers going on strike, saying labor disputes should be decided instead by a third-party arbitrator.

January 16: A Community College of Vermont student has been chosen by the Brattleboro Rotary Club Gateway Foundation to receive a \$2,500 medical assisting scholarship. Amy Aldridge of Athens has been selected as the first recipient of the Jesse M. Corum IV Scholarship.

January 19: A Brattleboro Union High School student was the second place finisher in an essay contest run by Vermont Senator Bernard Sanders. The contest, geared toward high school seniors' view of the state of the union, was won by Leo Lehrer-Small, a sophomore at Mount Mansfield Union High School. Ryan Taggard of Brattleboro Union High School finished in second place.

January 28: Sovernet has been awarded a contract by the Vermont State Colleges to upgrade a connection at the Community College of Vermont facility in Winooski. Under the terms of the two-year agreement, Sovernet provides primary Internet connectivity for CCV Winooski and backup Internet connectivity for all of the VSC system.

January 29: Dartmouth College students will be prohibited from drinking hard alcohol on campus and will be required to learn about sexual violence prevention each year under reforms announced by the Ivy League school's president.

January 30: Brattleboro Union High School Annual Reports are available at all WSESU Schools, the Superintendent's Office, Brooks Memorial Library, Town Offices in Brattleboro, Dummerston, Guilford, Putney and Vernon, and online at www.wssu.k12.vt.us. A public forum to discuss the proposed FY '16 budget is scheduled for Monday.

February 3: The Leland and Gray Union High School annual meeting takes place tonight. Voters are asked to gather at the high school gym at 7:30. Ballot votes on the annual school budget will take place tomorrow in Brookline, Jamaica, Townshend, Newfane and Windham.

February 5: The Leland and Gray Union high school budget has been approved by voters. 354 supported the proposed spending for next year, and 140 were against the budget.

February 5: Brattleboro Union High School's proposed 2016 budget is down slightly. Windham Southeast superintendent Ron Stahley says numbers are up at the Brattleboro Area Middle School, but student numbers are down at the high school and Windham Regional Career Center.

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February 9: A new president for Marlboro College. Trustees have appointed Kevin Quigley to the position effective July 1. Quigley is currently director of the Peace Corps in Thailand.

February 11: Brattleboro Union High School district voters have endorsed a \$27.8 million budget for next year.

February 17: Veteran Kurn Hattin teacher Tom Fontaine has taken over as acting principal of the school at Kurn Hattin Homes for Children. Fontaine stepped in to fill the position following the passing of former principal and long-time Kurn Hattin educator, Tom Fahneron.

February 17: The Vermont Agency of Education and Vermont Lottery have established a new grant program to get technology into schools in need. Twice a year, K through 12 public schools may apply to receive a cart of computing devices, including 20 devices and a mobile cart.

February 18: The head of Vermont's State Colleges, who also is a former top Shumlin administration official, says the colleges are facing such tough financial times that they may have to look at combining the administrations of two of them. But State Colleges Chancellor Jeb Spaulding says any move to combine administrations at Johnson and Lyndon state colleges is likely years away.

February 21: Vermont's Department of Education will hold seven regional meetings to examine how schools that serve students from historically underserved communities are enjoying the same access to quality educators as those schools with greater privilege. An April 7th hearing will be held at Bellows Falls Union High School.

March 3: On Saturday, Westminster residents voted in favor of keeping the Westminster West School open.

March 3: High school poetry readers from across New Hampshire will compete at four Poetry Out Loud semi-final competitions in March for a chance to represent their school at the state championship.

March 4: Marlboro College has completed funding for the Luis Batlle Chair in Music, the first fully endowed chair at the college.

March 6: The U.S. Department of Education has approved a pilot program in New Hampshire aimed at reducing the reliance on standardized testing.

March 10: New Hampshire's colleges and universities say their latest report shows that they are major contributors to the state's vibrant economy.

March 12: Brattleboro's Saint Michael's school will reopen its high school beginning this fall. Principal Elaine Beam says the Catholic school will admit ninth grade students beginning this fall, and then add a grade per year with a goal of graduating the first class in 2019.

March 16: Keene State College will honor two extraordinary women during the College's commencement ceremony on May 9.

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March 17: A pair of Windham County lawmakers are voicing concern about an education reform bill in the legislature. Newfane's Emily Long says the legislation is calling for a cap on spending, which could hurt smaller communities.

March 18: A program of the Vermont Community Foundation is offering scholarships to help preschool age children attend a child care center.

March 19: Brattleboro's proposed school budget is down slightly, but property taxes are still going up. Town school board chair Jill Stahl Tyler says the operating budget is down point three nine percent, but the state property tax brings the increase to about 2.6%.

March 26: A Brattleboro insurance agent is helping fund an expansion of the driver's education program at Brattleboro Union High School.

March 27: University System of New Hampshire officials have announced additional proactive measures to further tighten procedures and policies to address recent incidents of misconduct on their campuses.

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Energy/Environment

January 2: A New Hampshire company is finalizing a deal to take control of the Carbon Harvest waste-to-electricity system that collects methane at the Windham Solid waste landfill in Brattleboro and uses it to run generators.

January 5: A federal judge has dismissed arguments challenging a 15-turbine wind project authorized in the Green Mountain National Forest. The citizens group Vermonters for a Clean Environment said the approval process for the project was flawed and argued the installation would compromise a federally designated wilderness area.

January 7: Brattleboro Selectboard members have directed their Windham Solid Waste District reps to vote against the annual budget, in part because of concerns about a recycling charge.

January 12: The owner of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant says the fuel has been removed from the reactor and placed in the spent fuel pool. The information was contained in a letter dated Friday from Entergy Nuclear Operations to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

January 13: Entergy Vermont Yankee says it has closed on two lines of credit, which will allow it to minimize use of the nuclear decommissioning fund for placing spent fuel into dry cask storage.

January 15: An Air Quality Alert continues for portions of Windham County as a result of a result of a strong thermal inversion.

January 21: New England's electricity grid operator says natural gas pipeline bottlenecks and retirement of aging power plants could put pressure on the price of energy.

January 29: An atomic safety and licensing board panel has rejected the state of Vermont's request to maintain its radiation monitoring at the closed Entergy Vermont Yankee plant.

February 5: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a license amendment dealing with post-shutdown staffing levels, including staffing for emergency events, at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant.

February 19: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission holds a public meeting tonight in Brattleboro about Entergy Vermont Yankee's decommissioning. The NRC's Bruce Watson says the public should have confidence in federal oversight of the process.

February 24: The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife says the Atherton Meadows Wildlife Management Area in Whitingham has been expanded. The 80-acre addition brings the Atherton Meadows Wildlife Management Area to almost 900 acres just south of the Harriman Reservoir.

March 5: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has endorsed a reduction in Entergy Vermont Yankee's emergency planning zone effective next April.

March 5: The Texas-based energy company that wants to build a natural gas pipeline through southern New Hampshire into Massachusetts has lined up utilities and other entities to transport the gas.

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March 10: Wastewater is a growth issue for many of Vermont's smaller communities. Windham Regional Commission director Chris Company says upgrades, and even replacement of many systems for homes and businesses in village centers need the state's attention.

March 12: New Hampshire's largest utility has agreed to sell its power plants after months of negotiations with state officials, saying it will save customers at least \$300 million.

March 17: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will not allow any more time for Vermont to file its motion to reconsider allowing Entergy to make changes to the emergency planning zone as part of decommissioning the nuclear plant.

March 19: New water quality standards being considered by the Vermont legislature will affect area towns. House transportation committee member Mollie Burke of Brattleboro says beginning in 2017, highway projects will need to obtain permits.

March 23: The New England Youth Theatre has received a \$200,000 grant and low interest loan from the Windham Regional Commission's Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund.

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Healthcare

January 2: At year's end, New Hampshire's work to expand coverage for the uninsured has hit 30,000 residents. Governor Maggie Hassan says the health care expansion plan has provided neighbors, friends and family with access to quality, affordable health insurance.

January 5: Vermont's department of health is reporting regional outbreaks of the flu, and the flu is reported widespread in New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

January 5: Governor Peter Shumlin says the number of uninsured Vermonters has been cut in half, thanks to the state health care exchange. Initial results from the 2014 Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey indicate that about 19,000 of the 43,000 Vermonters without health insurance in 2012, the date of the last annual survey, are now covered.

January 9: 29 demonstrators have been arrested at the Vermont State House after rallying there to let the governor know they're upset with his decision not to ask lawmakers for a plan to pay for a new universal health care system.

January 12: Gov. Maggie Hassan has tapped a county administrator with a long history of working on drug abuse and mental health issues to lead a new initiative. Hassan named John "Jack" Wozmak of Walpole the senior director for Substance Misuse and Behavioral Health.

January 15: Gov. Peter Shumlin has reversed course and is withholding from the media documents that helped shape his decision to shelve his push for a single-payer health care plan.

January 30: Officials overseeing the Vermont Health Connect insurance marketplace say they're on target for getting people ready for tax-filing changes tied to the new program.

February 16: New Hampshire's health and human services commissioner says he is confident that the federal government will allow the state's expanded Medicaid program to proceed as planned. The state is awaiting federal approval for a waiver needed to continue the plan passed by the legislature last year.

February 18: New Hampshire Attorney General Joseph Foster is encouraging all current and former Anthem members to enroll in credit protection services following a recent data breach.

February 23: Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, the Brattleboro Retreat and Grace Cottage Hospital are launching a new community health needs assessment. Based on the data that the hospitals gather, each hospital will develop a strategy to address prioritized health care needs.

February 24: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology economist who made national headlines last year for talking about "the stupidity of the American voter" is a target of a Vermont state audit that suggests the economist may have padded bills for economic modeling work on a proposed Vermont health system.

March 4: Officials say a closer affiliation between Cheshire Medical Center and Dartmouth-Hitchcock will allow more patients in southwestern New Hampshire and southeastern Vermont to receive care closer to home.

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March 11: Vermont's health care reform chief says the cost of the Vermont Health Connect health insurance exchange is projected to grow to nearly \$200 million, and he says a key part of the system won't be functional for the foreseeable future.

March 15: Vermont congressman Peter Welch is pushing for renewal of the Medicare Dependent Hospital money for Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, with the federal money now scheduled to run out at the end of March.

March 18: A family whose 15-year-old daughter died less than two months after attempting suicide while a patient at Brattleboro Retreat has sued the psychiatric hospital, saying it failed to use reasonable care and skill to care for her.

March 20: Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin says his administration has finalized a contract and timeline to deliver long-sought automated “change of circumstance” functionality to the Vermont Health Connect website, and will present a plan to deliver improved customer service to Vermonters.

March 26: Vermont Congressman Peter Welch says the U.S. House of Representatives has approved legislation that resolves a long standing dispute over the reimbursement of physicians participating in the Medicare program.

March 27: A group of nurses in the Vermont Technical College nursing program in Brattleboro have organized a bone marrow donor drive tomorrow in Chesterfield.

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Human Service

January 2: Police say a burst pipe caused the evacuation of an assisted living facility in Vermont on New Year's Eve. Valley Cares Executive Director Susanne Shapiro in Townshend says a 1,000 gallons of water was sent into an apartment on the second floor. As water seeped through the walls and dripped onto the first floor, about 40 residents were evacuated.

January 2: The Brattleboro Area Drop in Center is getting help for building repairs at the 60 South Main Street facility. A grant from Entergy Vermont Yankee will help with the purchase and installation of a new furnace, as well as food shelf revitalization in the form of new storage shelves and upgrades to the walk-in freezer.

January 6: It looks like the annual Project Feed the Thousands food drive will meet its goal. The number of meals collected has topped the 200,000 mark, and co-chair Jeff Morse is optimistic the goal of \$100,000 in cash will also be met.

January 26: The nearly 150-year-old First Baptist Church in Brattleboro is going to be put up for sale. The church board of directors has been struggling with a declining membership and rising costs to heat and maintain the building. Board members met Sunday and voted to move ahead with the sale.

February 11: Isiaha Greene is the Brattleboro Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year. The club's Ricky Davidson says Greene, who plans to attend the University of Massachusetts next year, has been a positive example for others, including his younger brother.

February 24: Vermont Girls on the Run founder and director Nancy Heydinger has been recognized with a national legacy award, for her work to build the organization. The afterschool program helps empower girls to develop physical, emotional and social well-being.

February 27: The state is providing \$375,000 to five community action agencies, including Southeast Vermont Community Action, for fuel assistance grants to help low-income Vermonters stay warm during this difficult winter.

February 27: Brattleboro's noontime Rotary Club is holding its sixth annual "International Film & Food Festival" this Sunday, with proceeds to help a non-profit radio station at the Pine Ridge Indian reservation.

March 3: Hilltop Montessori School of Brattleboro is launching a "Tiny House" fundraiser to benefit the school's financial aid program and Morningside Shelter.

March 5: Numbers are up for youth hockey in Brattleboro, thanks in part to a scholarship program that allows everyone who wants to skate to be involved.

March 11: Senator Jeanne Shaheen used a senate floor speech to remember Keene native Jonathon Daniels, a civil rights activist who was slain 50 years ago in Alabama.

March 11: Thirteen Vermont cities and towns will receive more than \$4 million in grants to make them more resilient, affordable, and accessible.

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March 12: Brattleboro's senior meals program has begun a March fundraising drive. Meals on Wheels volunteer Deb Albright says the program helps provide both nutrition and important contact for people who may live alone.

March 17: How's this for sharing the love? Youth Services of Windham County has received \$26,000 as a recipient in a year end promotion by Subaru.

March 18: The Meeting Waters YMCA is being recognized as a national leader for eating healthy and promoting physical activity.

March 26: Pledge sheets are now available for the 10th annual Marina Plunge for Charity. Plunge organizer Deidre Baker says Big Brothers Big Sisters of Windham County is this year's designated charity.

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Local Government

January 5: Guilford officials say they hope to learn in the spring if they will be able to receive a \$175,000 state grant to help rehabilitate the Vermont community's historic Green River Covered Bridge. Guilford officials are hopeful they'll get the grant that will help pay for a project to restore the bridge's 8-ton weight limit.

January 8: A proposed Brattleboro charter change would allow the use of vote tabulating devices when early votes are cast.

January 13: Brattleboro's Planning Commission will be hosting a series of events in January and February to introduce its comprehensive revision of the town's land use regulations. The zoning and subdivision regulations were last rewritten in the 1980s.

January 15: Brattleboro Public Works Deputy Hannah O'Connell wants area residents to get involved with the Vermont Agency of Transportation's public input about improving access for bicyclists.

January 19: Brattleboro's new town manager starts work tomorrow. Peter Elwell says he's ready to work on the tasks of balancing taxes with community needs. Elwell, a Brattleboro native, has been in town for the past several days holding meetings with town staff.

January 21: Brattleboro Selectboard members say they'll endorse next year's budget proposal next week. But details of a proposed police and fire facility upgrade remain up in the air.

January 23: A charter proposal has been defeated in Newfane. Town Clerk Gloria Cristelli says the proposal failed by a vote of 68 in favor and 323 against. The major provision of the change called for the town clerk and town treasurer to become to positions appointed by the Selectboard.

January 29: A new report from the Vermont Transportation Board says young adults aren't satisfied with Vermont's transportation services. T-Board executive John Zicconi says the end result, is many young adults either leave the state or won't come here in the first place.

February 4: A sidewalk upgrade for the east side of Brattleboro's Main Street remains on track for construction beginning in May. The town's public works director says the town is seeking an additional \$50,000 in state transportation funding to reduce the town's costs.

February 13: Brattleboro Selectboard members agree about most parts of the move toward pay as you throw trash disposal, except for how the education program will be done.

February 13: The chair of Vernon's Selectboard will not be charged for her alleged actions surrounding a drunk driving case by the Windham County Sheriff's Department.

February 18: Brattleboro Selectboard members have approved an information sheet that opposes three charter amendments on the March town-wide ballot.

February 19: A safety upgrade to Brattleboro's Western Avenue-Union Hill intersection will take place this spring, with public works department staff doing the job.

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February 25: Members of Brattleboro Common Sense say their quest to put three charter amendments on the town wide ballot is meant to improve the local democracy.

February 26: Brattleboro is the latest Vermont community to be plagued with frozen water lines. Public works director Steve Barrett says the frost this year is deeper than past years, and service lines under driveways or other areas not covered by snow are getting frozen.

March 4: Four Ballot articles failed last night in Brattleboro.

March 4: Vernon will continue having round the clock coverage by the Windham County Sheriff's department, and the town will hire a full time administrator.

March 4: Wilmington approved a \$2.1 million bond for improvements at the town's wastewater treatment plant.

March 4: This town meeting week, the urgency of Vermont's budget situation is being driven home by area lawmakers.

March 12: Several local recipients in the latest round of Vermont community development grants. Brattleboro is getting \$429,000 that it will loan to the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust for the rehabilitation of 29 units of affordable housing in five rental properties throughout Brattleboro

March 12: This has been one of the worst winters in recent memory for municipal water systems, according to Brattleboro Public Works director Steve Barrett.

March 17: No property tax hike in Brattleboro's proposed municipal budget, but other items, like police and fire improvements, remain on the horizon.

March 17: Brattleboro Selectboard members are being asked to seek state funding for the Green Street retaining wall project. Town officials are recommending the board seek a \$175,000 structures grant from the Vermont Agency of Transportation, and hire Stevens and Associates for engineering services necessary to complete this project.

March 23: Brattleboro town meeting members this past weekend approved both the proposed municipal and school budgets as presented, but rejected a proposed 1% local sales tax.

March 24: It will take longer than expected to finish the Interstate 91 West River Bridge replacement project. The new date, according to Vermont transportation secretary Sue Minter, is November of 2016.

March 25: The City of Keene is continuing their Safe Routes to School partnership with Keene schools this spring.

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Public Safety

January 2: A Bellows Falls man has been jailed for a New Year's Day incident. 38-year-old Brian Mattson was charged with aggravated disorderly conduct, domestic assault and simple assault, after his arrest at a Williams Street Extension residence.

January 2: A Hinsdale man has been charged with 2 counts of simple assault on two young children. 36-year-old Michael Deschaine was arrested on a warrant Thursday. Hinsdale Police opened an investigation December 25 into the allegations.

January 5: Power is back on in much of Brattleboro. Two broken utility poles on Chestnut Street West, caused by a fallen tree, was at least partially responsible for over 2,500 customers being without power for much of the day.

January 6: Jury selection has started in the case of a Saxtons River man accused of killing his wife in New Hampshire on the day she filed for divorce. James Robarge has been held without bail on first- and second-degree murder charges in the June 2013 death of Kelly Robarge.

January 6: Keene Police are investigating a sexual assault which occurred during the evening of December 30th, 2014 at the Keene Cinemas, Key Road. A male 10-year old child reported going into the men's bathroom and was approached by an older male who committed this act.

January 9: The city of Keene wants to continue the discussion about solutions to last October's Pumpkin Festival weekend disturbances. Mayor Kendall Lane and city planner Rhett Lamb say a new web site, Keene.mindmixer.com, has been set up to gather additional public input.

January 14: Vermont State Police wants your help to identify a vehicle involved in striking a pedestrian in Townshend Tuesday afternoon. The incident occurred as the pedestrian was walking on the shoulder of the roadway towards the River Bend Market in the northbound lane of Route 30.

January 15: Authorities say a man has been found dead after a fire at a makeshift shelter in Keene. Police and firefighters responded to a wooded area Wednesday morning where they say a fire at a makeshift shelter had already been extinguished. Authorities found the body of a man inside.

January 17: A Whitingham woman was arrested last night in Bennington after State Police conducted a welfare check on a child at the request of Windham County DCF. During the welfare check, it was learned that the mother, 26-year-old Tiffany Oxely, had an active arrest warrant for failure to appear for a court hearing.

January 19: A Hinsdale man is being held on \$25,000 cash bail after his arrest for alleged possession of child pornography. 42-year-old Dwight Smith was arrested Friday and arraigned in Keene.

January 21: A year after Vermont grabbed national headlines when Gov. Peter Shumlin in his State of the State speech made fighting the heroin and opiate abuse a priority, the state is treating 30% more patients.

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January 22: A Vermont man was arrested in Hinsdale overnight on a fugitive from justice charge. Authorities last evening learned 36-year-old Wayne Keough, Jr., might be at a Chesterfield Road residence in Hinsdale.

January 26: A tragic turn of events for a man who served nearly 18 years in a Vermont prison before his conviction on a charge he killed his wife was overturned has died in a New York state car crash. Suffolk County police say 52-year-old John Grega was pronounced dead at a hospital late Friday.

January 30: A Brattleboro man was taken to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries, after he was struck by a car on Putney Road near North Street Wednesday night. 30-year-old Jesse Cross Nickerson was taken to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital for treatment after the 6 p.m. mishap.

February 4: The unscheduled repair of an overnight water main break on Production Avenue in Keene will require the Public Works Department to shut off water to businesses on Production Avenue and to the entire Farmstead Commons condominium complex on Base Hill Road.

February 6: Keene senator Molly Kelly is pushing a bill to restrict the sale and possession of synthetic drugs in New Hampshire.

February 9: Two cross country skiers reported lost in the green Mountain National Forest were found safe this past weekend. 68-year-old Cindy Guy and 66-year-old Gail Mann of Londonderry were reported missing by Mann's husband Saturday evening.

February 9: An investigation is continuing, but Brattleboro Fire Chief Mike Bucossi says there is a strong possibility that the wrong type of fuel was accidentally used in a kerosene heater, igniting a fire at a Brattle Street apartment Friday night.

February 12: A Massachusetts skier reported lost at Mount Snow has been found safe. 24-year-old Justin LePrevost of Otis had been skiing at Mt. Snow with friends late Wednesday afternoon when he became separated in a wooded ski area.

February 16: A jury in New Hampshire has convicted a man of killing his 42-year-old wife and dumping her body in the woods on the day she filed for divorce. James Robarge of Saxtons River, Vermont, denied killing Kelly Robarge, but the Sullivan County Superior Court jury convicted him Wednesday of second-degree murder.

February 20: Brattleboro Police say Oak Grove School, with 27 students from the YMCA Aspire Program inside, was locked down after a burglary suspect entered the building.

February 24: A Springfield, Vt., man has been charged in Brattleboro with aggravated domestic assault, involving a 3-month-old boy. 34-year-old Clifford Sprague is being held on \$1,000 bail.

February 26: The state Division of Fire Safety says a properly installed and maintained sprinkler system kept damage to a minimum following an investigation into the Tuesday morning fire at Stratton Mountain.

March 3: A Westminster resident has been arrested on manslaughter charges for the fatal stabbing of a Westminster man early Sunday. 38-year-old Lonnie Place is being held without bail.

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March 5: Brattleboro Police say they've identified several suspects in a string of recent burglaries, but their names are not being released at this time because releasing them prematurely would limit investigations.

March 9: Brattleboro Police are searching for a man who robbed the Circle K convenience store on Canal Street last night.

March 11: The Vermont State Police today announced the formation of a Major Crime Unit within its Criminal Division.

March 12: A Brattleboro man has been arrested after his arrest in Hinsdale. 28-year-old Philip Potoine was arrested on an outstanding warrant for identity fraud, willful concealment and false swearing.

March 18: A drug ring that supplied heroin and cocaine to the Keene area has been broken up, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

March 18: New Hampshire State police say 73-year-old Thomas Delmastro of Chesterfield was jailed on two felony counts involving a firearm following a nearly 19-hour standoff.

March 24: Family and friends are now offering a \$10,000 reward for an arrest and conviction in a 2013 Brattleboro fatal pedestrian accident.