

## **WTSA (AM) Issues and Programming – Q1 2013**

This is the Issues and Programming file for WTSA (AM) 1450. The radio station features local news weekday mornings at 6:55, 7:55, and 855. In addition, numerous local groups are allowed time to record and air public service announcements. The radio station also broadcasts Brattleboro Union High School Football, Basketball, Baseball and Softball. The following is a representative sample of the news items aired during the first quarter of 2013. For additional information, contact Tim Johnson at 802 254 4577, or [tj@wtsa.net](mailto:tj@wtsa.net)

## Agriculture

*January 4*

A small business plan competition for the farm and food sector goes statewide. Strolling of the Heifers marketing director Martin Langeveld says information on the competition may be found at [www.strollingoftheheifers.com](http://www.strollingoftheheifers.com). The non-profit is partnering with Vermont Technical College to put on the business promotion contest.

*January 22*

Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin delivers his budget to the legislature Thursday. House Agriculture Committee member Tristan Toleno of Brattleboro is hoping the budget gives additional money to job creation in the farm and food sector.

*February 1*

A statewide small business plan competition is gathering lots of applicants. Strolling of the Heifers marketing manager Martin Langeveld says the deadline to apply is February 5th.

*February 5*

A Brattleboro lawmaker wants to track how global warming is affecting the states agriculture and recreation industries. House democrat Tristan Toleno has submitted legislation calling for a yearly review of climate change on the ski, snowmobile, maple and orchard industries.

*February 7*

The Townshend Farmers' Market is moving. Post Oil Solutions announced Wednesday that the market will be hosted by the West River Community Project on Friday afternoons at the West Townshend Country Store.

*February 21*

The Brattleboro Area Farmers' Market is now accepting applications for new members to vend their products at the Saturday and/or Wednesday Markets.

*February 22*

Contributions and volunteers are needed for a program that uses horses to help children and adults with special needs. Southern Vermont Therapeutic Riding Center director Lorna Young says information is available on line at [winchesterstables.com](http://winchesterstables.com).

*February 27*

A long time area farm equipment dealer is closing. In a statement on the R N Johnson web site, Alan Johnson said their 84-year run is coming to an end. The company lost its John Deere distributor contract last month, and the company exhausted other dealership and financial options.

*March 18*

Vermont senator Patrick Leahy is applauding one of the latest success stories in the Brattleboro area, Commonwealth Dairy. Commonwealth CEO Tom Moffitt told the senator they need a steady supply of milk to keep their booming business going.

*March 29*

This June, Brattleboro will host a quiche cook off. This year's annual Strolling of the Heifers weekend will feature the event Friday June 7. Local celebrity "foodie" judges will select the first, second and third prize winners. Members of the public who taste the quiches at the Robert Gibson River Garden will award a "People's Choice Award."

## Arts

*January 4*

Brattleboro's monthly Gallery Walk takes place tonight, with dozens of venues offering exhibits this evening.

*January 16*

The Vermont Theater Company offers a mid-winter ghost story each of the next two weekends at Hooker Dunham Theater in Brattleboro. Jessica Callahan Gelter directs "The Lady in Black".

*January 22*

Latchis Arts hosts the latest in a series of fundraisers on Saturday. This time it is "Bringing Up Baby," a 1938 comedy starring Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant.

*February 20*

Latchis Arts will hold its own red carpet event Sunday evening, leading up to the Academy Awards in Hollywood. Board member Anne Latchis said the big theater will be open for a screening of the awards show, with admission by donation and a chance to choose the award winners.

*March 8*

The 22nd annual Women's Film Festival begins tonight in Brattleboro, with a showing of "Girls in the Band". Vicky Sterling of the Women's Freedom Center says the two-week festival is one of the center's biggest annual fund raising events. 17 films made by or about women's issues will be shown during the next two weekends.

*March 20*

Brattleboro makes another of those top ten in the nation lists. This time, travel website fodors.com lists Brattleboro among the nation's top ten small towns. The description says Brattleboro has a rich cultural and political history mix with a vibrant contemporary scene.

## **Business**

*January 2*

Three meetings are planned by Building a Better Brattleboro in the next few days. Tomorrow, a membership meeting is scheduled for 8 am at the Robert Gibson River Garden for the purpose of reviewing the proposed work plan for FY 14 and offering input prior to its final approval. On Friday the downtown organization's board of directors will meet to formally approve a work plan and a budget. Monday morning the budget will be up for a vote by BABB members.

*January 3*

Putney Paper has been sold to a New Jersey business. Soundview Paper Company of Elmwood Park, N.J., announced the purchase from APC Paper Holdings on Wednesday.

*January 4*

Vermont's largest electric company says it will ask the legislature to allow the payment of monthly bills by credit or debit card. Green Mountain Power's Robert Dostis admits the company has taken a lot of heat on the matter via its Facebook page

*January 5*

The publisher of Yankee Magazine and The Old Farmer's Almanac has acquired the assets of McLean Communications, which publishes New Hampshire Magazine and other publications. Yankee Publishing Inc. said Friday that McLean would operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of Yankee and remain at its current headquarters in Manchester.

*January 8*

Three Windham County projects are among eight that are being funded by a new state grant program.

State commerce agency spokeswoman Kristen Bourgeois says \$25,000 is headed to the Bellows Falls area development Corporation for work on the island redevelopment, \$22,5000 to the Friends of Algiers Village, and \$10,000 to the Mount Snow Chamber of Commerce for an economic study and parking improvements.

*January 10*

A Keene based construction company is facing accusations of not paying its subcontractors on several recent jobs. The state of Vermont declared Baybutt in default Wednesday of its \$2.6 million construction contract for renovation of the state office building in Brattleboro, clearing the way for its bond company to come in and take over the stalled renovation.

*January 11*

Troubles keep mounting for Keene based Baybutt Construction Corporation. Just a day after the state of Vermont declared Baybutt in default of its contract for renovation of the state office building in Brattleboro, the Selectboard in Rockingham has terminated its contract with Baybutt for renovations to the Rockingham Free Public Library.

*January 15*

Green Mountain Power and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 300 announced today that the Company's 300 union employees voted to ratify a new five-year contract. G M P's Dorothy Schnure says the vote brings all union employees from GMP and the former Central Vermont Public Service together under one contract for the newly merged company.

## **Business**

*January 16*

Brattleboro Selectboard members have for a second time rejected the proposed downtown assessment, and they want Building a Better Brattleboro to revise its proposed budget.

*January 17*

Vermont is poised to make gains in the multicultural tourism market, thanks to a new heritage trail promoted by the state travel and tourism office. Vermont Partnership director Curtiss Reed says it's the latest step toward helping the state grow its market share.

*January 18*

Here's a sign of status in the 21st century. Mount Snow Resort has launched a new free mobile application downloadable on both apple and Android phone systems. Spokesman Dave Meeker says the app is designed to make the resort experience interactive, and highlight their cell phone and internet access on the mountain.

*January 22*

Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin has transferred responsibilities for Connect Vermont to the Agency of Commerce & Community Development. The temporary office created to expand high-speed broadband internet access statewide by the end of 2013, had been run by Karen Marshall, who left to take a job with Vtel.

*January 30*

Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce Director Jerry Goldberg is stepping down at the end of 2013. Chamber president Stephanie Heustis made the announcement at the chambers' annual business meeting.

*January 31*

The Vermont Economic Development Authority has approved 683 thousand dollars in financing to help Coffee Cup Bakery of Burlington purchase Vermont Bread Company in Brattleboro.

*February 23*

Mesabi, LLC, the development company founded to purchase and renovate the Brooks House, announced Friday that it has put the pieces of the financing puzzle in place and is moving forward with the purchase and redevelopment of the Main Street landmark.

*March 1*

Building a Better Brattleboro is seeking proposals about the future of the Robert Gibson River Garden. An information package, plus instructions for submitting ideas, will be available at noon on March 18<sup>th</sup> at Brattleboro.com.

A northern Vermont company says it will begin delivering pressurized natural gas to a pair of area manufacturers. NG Advantage of Milton Vermont says it has signed a contract with Fiber Mark of Brattleboro, a specialty paper manufacturer, and with Erving Paper of Erving, Mass.

*March 7*

The Vermont Public Service Board has approved a 139-foot cellular tower in South Newfane. AT&T has said the tower will provide much-needed service. But the project has faced opposition from some residents who say it will be too close to their homes.

## **Business**

*March 8*

An operator has been found for the newly renovated Guilford Country Store property. Friends of Algiers Village member Anne Rider predicts the store could be open again by mid to late spring.

The Putney Historical society is looking for a new operator for the Putney General Store. The society's Lyssa Papazian says Ming Chou, who has run the property since it reopened, 15 months ago is leaving because of health reasons.

*March 15*

Developers of the Brooks House say they plan to formally purchase the downtown Brattleboro building next month, and have tenants move in by the summer of 2014.

*March 21*

A Brattleboro retailer that specializes in Indian Art is closing. Adivasi has operated on Flat Street in Brattleboro for the past 20 years. In a statement on the company's Facebook page, the Bhanti family said a scarcity of artisans has been compounded by increased costs and tariffs over the last decade,

*March 29*

Concern about the downtown Brattleboro economy, as the Vermont house gives final approval to a \$24 million tax package. Brattleboro rep Mollie Burke was unsuccessful in removing a new tax on clothing items over \$110 from the bill.

## Education

*January 3*

The Brattleboro Union High School Board will hold a Public Information Meeting about next year's Proposed Budget at 6:00 p.m. in the WRCC Cusick Conference Room. The regular meeting, including a vote on the spending plan, will follow at approximately 6:30 p.m.

*January 4*

Brattleboro Union High School board members endorse a 1.8% operating budget increase for next year. Chairman Bob Woodworth says the overall spending increase is under 2%, including a proposal to add \$150,000 into a building maintenance fund.

*January 18*

A Brattleboro Union High School group is sending money to Vietnam to help victims of landmines and bombs that explode years after the nation's war has ended. Faculty advisor Bill Holiday says students for renew is sending one thousand dollars raised by several fundraisers to Dong Ha, in the Quang Tri Province. The money will help improve the home of a woman who lost a leg from a bomb accident.

*January 23*

The police department and school district in Keene, N.H., are starting a program to have police officers visit the schools on a random, but daily, basis as part of their regular patrols.

*January 24*

Guilford is considering closing its middle school. If that happens, seventh- and eighth-graders would attend Brattleboro Area Middle School. School board members are expected to choose between those budgets at a special session scheduled for Sunday afternoon. But voters at Town Meeting will make a final decision in March.

*January 28*

Many parents chose to keep their children home today, after Windham Southeast schools sent out an automated call last night, saying that district schools would be on high alert following a security threat. Windham Southeast superintendent Ron Stahley says there was not a direct threat made, and the additional security is their decision to be extra cautious.

*January 29*

School is open in the Brattleboro area, but the added security measures in Windham Southeast district schools will continue according to superintendent Ron Stahley.

*February 1*

Recess and after school activities have returned, but Windham Southeast superintendent Ron Stahley says entrances to area schools will remain locked in the future.

The Guilford School Board is reaching out to parents, following the decision to send 7th and 8th grade students to the Brattleboro Area Middle School next year.

*February 5*

Vermont governor Peter Shumlin was promoting the value of education during a visit to Academy School in Brattleboro today. Shumlin said he learned the value of hard work, because of his own experience learning to read, and he called on students with learning difficulties not to give up.

*February 12*

Brattleboro Union High School district voters pass a \$27.5 million budget for next year. The budget passed with one amendment calling for additional revenue from the transfer of Guilford middle school students to Brattleboro to be used to lower taxes.

## Education

*February 19*

Brattleboro's World Learning has launched the next step of its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, a social innovation contest, where recent past graduates could win grants for their creative ways of solving world problems.

*March 12*

The Windham Regional Career Center is beefing up its technology courses. Lulu Terwilliger is a senior taking her third year of courses in the STEM, or science, technology engineering and math, field.

*March 18*

Brattleboro's town finance committee is calling on this week's annual meeting to reduce the proposed Brattleboro town school district budget. Finance committee members say the budget plan calls for a 3.5% percent increase, after transfers from reserve accounts.

*March 21*

Brattleboro Union High School continues to be a Vermont leader in the practice of dual enrollment, getting both college and high school credit from course work. Windham Southeast superintendent Ron Stahley says over a third of the high school students are now taking dual enrollment courses, and many institutions of higher learning are accepting them.

*March 27*

The provost and vice president of academic affairs at The College of Brockport in New York has been chosen to be the 10th president of New Hampshire's Keene State College. Anne Huot, who grew up in New Hampshire, will begin her new job on July 1.

## **Energy/Environment**

*January 2*

A federal appeals court in New York has set Jan. 14 as the date for oral arguments in an appeal of a Vermont federal judge's order last January saying the state could not force Vermont Yankee to shut down. Two days later, the Vermont Supreme Court will hear a claim by the anti-nuclear group New England Coalition.

Supporters are laying the groundwork for Brattleboro's move toward voluntary town wide residential compost pick up.

*January 3*

Vermont's Attorney General and Department Of Public Service have asked for a comprehensive environmental review of spent nuclear fuel storage. Attorney General William Sorrell says The NRC owes a legal obligation to the public to engage in a full and thorough review of the environmental impacts of storing spent nuclear fuel at reactors that were never designed to be long-term storage facilities.

Two Vermont state senators are planning to unveil legislation that would call for a three-year moratorium on large-scale wind power projects in the state. Senators Robert Hartwell of Bennington County and Joe Benning of Caledonia County say they've been hearing from many constituents who say there's been inadequate public participation in deliberations over big ridge-top wind power projects to date.

*January 31*

The man known as the father of the fight against climate change says Vermont needs to go faster, in converting to renewable energy. Author Bill McKibben told a joint session of the Vermont legislature he's against a moratorium on large commercial wind projects.

*February 1*

Brattleboro is one of more than 60 communities involved with the home energy challenge. Town energy coordinator Paul Cameron says there are incentives for anyone who makes their home more efficient.

*February 11*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says Brattleboro will receive technical assistance to pursue sustainable growth that encourages local economic development while safeguarding people's health and the environment. 43 communities in 27 states across the country were chosen to receive the assistance through the EPA's Blocks for Sustainable Communities program.

The state panel that regulates utilities is beginning a new round of technical hearings on the future of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant. The Vermont Public Service Board is meeting in Barre next week to hear witnesses on plant owner Entergy Corp.'s bid for a certificate of public good to operate the Vernon reactor until 2032.

*February 21*

The Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant will refuel on schedule this spring. VY's Rob Williams, in an interview with Vermont Business Magazine, could not say, for competitive reasons, when exactly the outage would commence or exactly how long the process would take. But he said the process would entail several weeks' work from the initial "coast-down" to back to full power, and one-third of the fuel rods will be replaced.

## **Energy/Environment**

*February 28*

It's not a moratorium, but it accomplishes nearly the same goals. That's how Vermont Senate Natural Resources Committee member Joe Benning describes a large-scale wind project permit bill that has passed the committee.

*March 8*

Federal regulators say they have found no safety issues at Entergy Vermont Yankee that merit additional inspection, even as 20 nuclear plants across the nation are slated to get additional oversight.

*March 11*

A refueling and maintenance outage is underway at Entergy Vermont Yankee. Spokesman Rob Williams says the outage closed a 493-day operating run for the nuclear plant.

## Government

*January 2*

If you're a Hinsdale taxpayer, the latest quarterly tax bills are still a couple of weeks away from being out. Town administrator Jill Collins says the delay was forced by the transition to a fiscal year, and the information needed for the state department of revenue was still incomplete.

*January 3*

Vermont congressman Peter Welch predicts a series of small steps will be needed for congress to solve the long-term fiscal problems.

*January 12*

Compressor issues at the Nelson Withington skating rink at Living Memorial Park have force the Brattleboro Recreation and Parks Department to close the rink while repairs are being made, according to Recreation and Parks director Carol Lollate.

*January 14*

Are candidates for town-wide office in Brattleboro few and far between? So far, that's the case. Town clerk Annette Cappy says there are very few petitions out for Selectboard and town meeting members.

*February 6*

Vermont US Senator Bernard Sanders says he'll fight against a U.S. Postal Service plan to end Saturday mail delivery. The House last year refused to consider a Senate-passed postal reform bill that Sanders helped draft. The Senate measure to modernize the Postal Service would have changed a 2006 congressional requirement that the mail service pre-fund 75 years' worth of future retiree health benefits over a 10-year period.

*February 11*

Hinsdale Selectboard members hold a bond hearing tonight on plans to build a new police station. Town administrator Jill Collins says only three quarters of the \$1.087 million project would come from bonding, and some past bonding being retired would offset the cost.

*February 13*

Brattleboro town finance committee members are painting a bleak financial picture for the town. Michael Bosworth says the town is without additional revenue to offset hikes in town and school budgets.

*February 19*

Brattleboro Selectboard members, on a 3-1 vote, approved the design for a skate park in the Crowell playground. Adam Hubbard of the skate park committee said the discussions about the siting process have taken away from their goal of having a safe place for children to be active.

*February 26*

A Brattleboro group says it's helping a number of representative town meeting candidates get elected, in an attempt to overturn last October's police and fire bond. Kurt Diems of Brattleboro Common Sense alleges the bond was approved with violations of procedure, and the additions planned go beyond the project's original scope.

*February 27*

The long time town clerk in Vernon is stepping down. Sandy Harris has held the job for 23 years, and she chose not to seek reelection next week.

## Government

*March 5*

Authorities say a man who stood up to speak at his town's annual meeting collapsed and was later pronounced dead at a hospital. John Fuchs of Rockingham was standing up to speak Monday night about the ongoing renovations to the library. Officials say he suffered seizure-like symptoms, dropped the microphone and fell back into his chair.

*March 6*

Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin was in Southern Vermont Tuesday, speaking with voters in Dummerston, Putney, Townshend and Newfane. The Governor told wtsa news he was still worried about how the federal budget sequester would affect Vermont.

*March 13*

The state of Vermont is going to use grant money to help towns buy out five homes destroyed or damaged by Tropical Storm Irene that are ineligible for a federal buyout program. The money will come from a \$21.6 million community development block grant. Deputy housing commissioner Jen Hollar says four of the homes are in Jamaica:

*March 14*

Brattleboro town meeting members are worried about future budgets and increased costs from a police and fire facility upgrade. At an information session last night, town meeting member Steve Phillips asked about budget cuts to keep the town from a huge property tax hike.

*March 18*

A narrow approval for a police station bond in Hinsdale. Town meeting voters approved the bond article by a 155-65 margin, more than the two-thirds margin needed. Hinsdale Police chief Todd Faulkner, after the vote, was confident people had their questions answered.

*March 19*

Drivers in Brattleboro who want to know how the town's roads are doing during mud season this year can now look online. Brattleboro is trying out an interactive, online map on the town's website that shows roads in color code with up-to-date conditions.

New Hampshire transportation planners are being asked to place the Route 119 Hinsdale Bridge replacement on the top of the southwest region's priority list. Hinsdale Selectboard member Mike Darcy is applauding the news.

*March 20*

Brattleboro Selectboard members endorse an eight-year tax stabilization agreement with the new owners of the Brooks House. Developer Bob Stevens says the tax break was critical to their viability.

*March 22*

Alstead wins a \$258,000 housing grant from the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority. The money will be used for infrastructure improvements at the Well Hill Cooperative. The park's water system is in urgent need of a new pump house, water treatment filters, new storage tanks, and distribution piping.

With the cutting of a roll of toilet paper, completion of Brattleboro's nearly \$32 million wastewater treatment plant upgrade was celebrated today. Town manager Barbara Sondag says the work is good news to the town's economic development efforts.

## **Government**

*March 25*

A marathon session for Brattleboro's representative town meeting, more than 13 hours Saturday. Both the town and school budgets passed as presented. Marshall Wheelock was one of many worried about the tax hit from the \$14-million police and fire improvement bond approved last October.

*March 26*

Three new Brattleboro Selectboard members say their task is keeping budgets lean and

raising additional revenue. John Allen, Kate O'Connor and Davis Schoales were sworn in last night. David Gartenstien was elected chair.

*March 29*

Campaign for Vermont founder Bruce Lisman says he's continuing a statewide push to get people involved, and talking about the major issues facing the state. Lisman tells WTSA News his goal is energizing Vermonters in an active discussion, and perhaps developing future candidates for public office.

## Health

*January 2*

Vermont's newest psychiatric facility is ready to take patients. Green Mountain Psychiatric Care Center is set to open and receive patients today. The facility represents part of the state's efforts to reorganize its mental health system following storm Irene in 2011, which flooded and forced the closing of the Vermont State Hospital in Waterbury.

*January 4*

Vermont has won conditional federal approval for its plan to build a consumer-friendly health insurance marketplace, or exchange. Vermont is now one of 17 states to have gotten word from a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that they are on track to have a health exchange ready for business by October 1.

*January 8*

A New Hampshire pediatrician recommends getting an early start on children's oral health. Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center's Dr. Steven Chapman says oral health should begin during a child's regular wellness visits. Chapman suggests fluoride treatments at the 18- and 24-month visits for those children who are at risk.

*January 18*

Officials from Burlington's Fletcher Allen Health Care, the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and other hospitals serving Vermont are joining to announce the creation of the nation's first statewide "accountable care organization."

*January 31*

New Hampshire lawmakers who will play a key role in how the state implements President Barack Obama's health overhaul law are holding their first meeting of the new legislative session.

*February 4*

A new grant will help Brattleboro Memorial hospital and Grace Cottage Hospital collaborate on a breast care education program Townshend. The ten thousand dollar grant comes from the Fanny Holt Ames and Edna Louise Holt Fund.

*February 6*

Brattleboro Memorial Hospital is part of a statewide collaborative geared toward Medicare patients. BMH chief officer Steve Gordon says Medicare patients will not need to enroll in One Care Vermont and their access to services or providers will not change. Medicare patients who access services from the accountable care organization will still be able to seek care from any provider they choose.

*February 18*

The Vermont Environmental Court has sided with the Brattleboro Retreat on a proposal to house patients participating in the psychiatric hospital's Uniformed Service Program. The program brings to Vermont firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians and service members suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. The Retreat wants to use the eight-room Meadowlark Inn to house the patients while they are in Brattleboro.

*February 22*

Layoffs have been announced at Grace Cottage Hospital. According to a prepared statement, the reduction in force is immediate, and is being forced by cuts in various types of reimbursements and increased regulatory expenses. About 10% of the hospital's 154-person workforce will be cut.

## **Health**

*February 25*

Brattleboro Memorial Hospital has hired Brian Richardson as EMS Liaison/Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. His responsibilities will include maintaining and strengthening relationships with EMS first response services and EMS agencies that transport patients to BMH.

*February 26*

Vermont US Senator Bernard Sanders says progress is being made in health care for veterans, but more must be done. Sanders is focused on the goal of eliminating homelessness among past members of the military.

*March 5*

The Brattleboro Retreat has completed a conversion to electronic health records. Chief officer Dr. Robert E. Simpson, Jr., says the move is a crucial component in modernizing patient care and ensuring patient safety. \$2-million was spent on the upgrade.

*March 15*

The Brattleboro Retreat is facing new questions from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Retreat's Peter Albert confirmed a survey last month has prompted a call for corrective action by the regulators.

*March 27*

Members of a Vermont House committee say they're not pleased with the information they're getting from the Brattleboro Retreat about the care of state patients there. Committee members Tuesday criticized the Retreat for slowness to keep the state informed about recent incidents at the facility, including one in which a patient reported improper sexual contact to a staff member, and the staff member failed to report the issue.

*March 28*

A Vietnam veteran and author is calling on fellow vets to seek treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, and to not suffer in isolation. Tom Smith spoke at the Brattleboro VA Comprehensive Clinic Wednesday.

## **Human Services**

*January 21*

A West Brattleboro lot has been renamed in memory of a tenant activist. Byron Stookey says Dave Weaver was a leader in the push to have tenant involvement in the renovation of Westgate, and its becoming tenant owned.

Additional donations are needed for the Windham County Heat Fund. Co-chair Daryl Pillsbury says they are out of money.

*January 24*

Windham County's United Way is again this year offering free tax help for low-income residents in the region. Director Carmen Derby says the program is geared toward people with an income under \$51,000 to make sure they get the maximum benefit available. Free tax assistance will be offered both at the SEVCA office in Westminster and the Marlboro College Graduate Center. You are asked to call 211 and schedule an appointment.

*January 25*

It may be the longest running AIDS support group you've never heard of. The Twin States Network has provided peer counseling and prevention for more than 20 years. Director Jo Schneiderman says they're gearing up for a February 10th fundraiser at the Robert Gibson River Garden in Brattleboro.

*February 14*

A program founded by the noontime Brattleboro Rotary Club gets a six-figure grant. Pure Water for the World, Inc. has received a \$150,000 grant from the Hoehl Family Foundation of South Burlington, to advance the organization's work in Haiti.

*February 19*

Here's a sobering thought: Brattleboro Area Drop In Center director Lucie Fortier says the food donations made during Project Feed the Thousands have been used up, and they are in need of food to help people in need.

*February 20*

The Windham County Humane Society wants you to go from wags to riches. Their sixth annual fundraising auction takes place March 2nd at the Putney Inn.

*February 26*

Brattleboro area convenience stores are being applauded for helping provide healthier choices for shoppers. In the latest online edition of Convenience Store News, the Healthy Retailers program, sponsored by the Brattleboro Area Prevention Coalition in collaboration with the Vermont Department of Health was highlighted.

*February 27*

The Brattleboro noontime Rotary Club is raising money to help a non-profit radio station serving the Lakota Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Club member Ron Stahley says their fourth annual international film and food festival event takes place this Sunday at the New England Youth Theater.

*March 7*

Windham County's United Way is making an appeal to donors to help close out their latest fund drive. Director Carmen Derby says the money goes to non-profits that assist with improving the region's education, income and health, and that includes a pair of local programs begun by United Way.

## **Human Services**

*March 15*

The Marina Plunge for Charity is back, with Brattleboro's Living Memorial Park Snow Sports group the beneficiary. Plunge coordinator Deidre Baker says the group is working on several equipment purchases, including the replacement of the towrope at the hill.

*March 21*

Brattleboro's Morningside Shelter gets a \$2,500 gift, thanks to a dollar campaign begun by a Vermont Housing Finance Agency staff member. Robin Howe worked during the month of February to raise funds for the Shelter after learning about a project called Change the World, in which "change the world" was written on 100 one dollar bills and handed to 100 people.

## **Public Safety**

*January 2*

Sub-zero temperatures will be hitting the area for the next couple of days. Brattleboro fire chief Mike Bucossi is calling on homeowners to make sure their heating sources are well vented and in proper working order.

*January 3*

Fire has destroyed an auto repair shop and left one person homeless in Bellows Falls. The owner of an auto repair shop says he was fixing a car when gas dropped onto a work light, starting the fire on Wednesday.

*January 4*

New Hampshire rescuers have found no signs that the driver of a snowmobile is in Emerson Pond where the machine broke through the ice. Crews say they found the snowmobile and footprints leading away from a hole in the ice in Rindge on Thursday.

The Vermont State Police are investigating a suspicious encounter in Westminster West this morning. Police received a report around 7:20 Friday morning of a male in a red pickup, who pulled up to a juvenile waiting for the bus along Westminster West Road.

*January 7*

Police are investigating an armed robbery at a convenience store in Keene. Officers responded to a report of a robbery at about 5:30 p.m. Sunday at the KM Campus Convenience store.

*January 16*

A Wardsboro man has been charged with aggravated sexual assault involving a 13-year-old girl. Vermont state police arrested 37-year-old Daniel Mager Wednesday. He was held at the Southern State Correctional Center prior to arraignment today.

*January 24*

A Dummerston woman is going to spend three years on probation after pleading guilty to wire fraud charges stemming from allegations she stole jewelry that belonged to her employer on an online auction site. The Vermont office of the U.S. Attorney says 33-year-old Andrea Carrasquillo, also was ordered on Wednesday to pay almost \$20,000 in restitution.

*January 25*

A Swanzey, New Hampshire, man who pleaded guilty to grand larceny stemming from a holdup at a Vermont bank has been sentenced to six years in prison. Police had identified 31-year-old Gerald Clough in the February 2012 robbery of the People's United Bank in Bellows Falls.

*January 30*

Vermont State Police have released the name of the woman who died after her car skidded across a snow-covered southern Vermont road and crashed into a large SUV before catching on fire. State police say 20-year-old Tressa McKinney of Windham was killed Monday afternoon in the town of Jamaica.

*February 1*

A day after the late January thaw, Brattleboro emergency officials continue to monitor area waterways for possible development of ice jams. Town manager Barb Sondag advises anyone living near waterways to be mindful of possible flooding.

## **Public Safety**

*February 4*

Two men are being held for a weekend assault and robbery in Brattleboro. Police say 32-year-old Anthony Gonzalez and 40-year-old Charles Trowell were held following a late Friday night stabbing near Elm Street.

A Windham County lawmaker wants to expand Vermont's criminal threatening law, to cover issues like one a week ago in the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union.

*February 5*

Fire destroyed a first floor apartment at 204 Greenleaf Street in Brattleboro last evening. Fire chief Mike Bucossi says an open flame was left unattended.

*February 6*

Brattleboro Police are investigating a single car accident on Upper Dummerston Road last evening. Police have not released additional information, but we've learned one of the car's occupants died in the crash and the other was taken to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.

The Town of Brattleboro is launching a new campaign to improve safety for people walking and bicycling on Brattleboro's streets and sidewalks. Town manager Barb Sondag says the Town has purchased a large quantity of high-quality reflective leg bands for free distribution.

*February 7*

Vermont State Police have arrested two men for heroin trafficking in the Brattleboro area. 25-year-old Joshua Hartwell of Brattleboro and 32-year-old Julio Davila of Holyoke will be arraigned today. Both men were the subjects of a motor vehicle stop Wednesday on Interstate 91 in Dummerston.

*February 9*

A female pedestrian was reportedly injured after being hit by a car at 5:30 pm on Elliot Street in Brattleboro. Police have not identified those involved.

*February 12*

A Guilford woman has been sentenced to 18 months in prison for embezzling more than \$80,000 from the Algiers Fire District. Federal prosecutors say 52-year-old Sherry Roebuck worked as a treasurer for the district between 2007 and 2011.

*February 14*

A caravan of Vermont AOT workers has returned from Massachusetts. 30 workers, 15 trucks and 15 loaders from the Vermont Agency of Transportation were sent down to Boston, Mass., to help clear massive amounts of snow from city streets and bus terminals after the February 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> blizzard, dumped up to 40" of snow.

*February 19*

A Dummerston woman has died from injuries suffered in a February 7 crash in Guilford. 94-year-old Jean Anderson had been airlifted to the Dartmouth medical center after the crash, and died from her injuries February 10.

*February 20*

A former Vermont state trooper has pleaded no contest to charges that he assaulted two men, believing that they had stolen his canoe. Erick Howley, who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, says he doesn't remember the incident last April.

## **Public Safety**

*February 22*

Prosecutors say a former Vermont college official found dead in his home had embezzled more than \$400,000 over the last few months. Hours after federal prosecutors accused former acting Southern Vermont College President James Beckwith of embezzlement, he was found dead in an apparent suicide. State police said Thursday he was found dead Wednesday at his Londonderry home.

*March 1*

Vermont State Police say black ice conditions caused a roll over accident on Interstate 91 in Vernon this morning. No injuries were reported when a Dartmouth College van left the highway just south of the Welcome Center.

*March 8*

The US Senate Judiciary Committee has approved legislation to ban the practice of straw purchasing and trafficking of firearms. Vermont's Patrick Leahy, the committee chair, was the bill's co sponsor.

*March 11*

Attorneys in the upcoming retrial of a New York man charged with killing his wife in a Vermont condominium almost two decades ago are working with a judge to arrange the details of new DNA tests and finding and interviewing witnesses. Last summer the murder conviction and life-without-parole sentence of John Grega was overturned after DNA testing unavailable at the time of his original 1995 trial cast doubt on his conviction.

*March 15*

A Brattleboro woman says it's unlikely that the Vermont legislature will deal with gun control legislation this year, but she's looking to drum up support for what she calls common sense measures. Ann Braden is the founder of the web site gunsensevt.org.

*March 25*

A Westminster man has been jailed, and will face aggravated assault charges. Vermont State Police say 35-year-old Shannon Ridgeway allegedly struck a fellow employee at the Putney Inn with a mug, and threatened another with a knife.

*March 30*

Vermont state police say a ten year old will face juvenile charges for a burglary at the Museum of Mining and Minerals in Grafton. State police were called to the scene Friday. Upon arrival police discovered broken windows on the front door, and a display case had been damaged inside the Museum. Nothing was found to have been taken from the museum.