

The following is WTSA-FM's issues and programming statement for July through September of 2013. 96.7 TSA-FM provides local news updates every Monday through Friday at the following times: 6:03, 6:30, 7:03, 7:30, 8:03, 8:30 and 9:03 AM; plus 12:03, 3:03, 3:30, 4:03, 4:30, 5:03 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. WTSA-FM also broadcasts Brattleboro Union High School Football games. 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.

Agriculture

July 5

The onslaught of rain this spring and summer has shortened Vermont's strawberry season, flooded some corn and left farmers scrambling to cut hay before the next round of rainfall. Sun has been scarce, as record rains have inundated fields in parts of Vermont.

July 9

A Vermont consumer and environmental group has 60 canvassers in Windham County this week to raise money and promote the group's campaign supporting labeling of foods with genetically modified ingredients.

July 11

Vermont's Agency of Agriculture has suspended the license of a Rutland area pesticide applicator, for misusing a pesticide in treating a residence for bed bugs.

July 13

Congress has gutted a new farm bill. Vermont's Peter Welch says the house republican leaders rewrote a house agriculture committee bill, and many Vermonters won't be happy with the end result.

July 23

Brattleboro's Strolling of the Heifers organization plans to buy the Robert Gibson River Garden from Building a Better Brattleboro. Stroll founder Orly Munzing says their group will look at keeping much of the downtown building public, for use by agricultural and other non-profit events. Munzing did note a couple of changes on the drawing board.

July 26

The US Food and Drug Administration will participate in a public input session in New Hampshire for farmers to comment on proposed Food Safety Modernization Act rules.

August 15

A consumer advocacy group says Vermonters are strongly in favor of labeling foods containing genetically modified organisms. The Vermont Public Interest Research Group launched a statewide petition drive this summer, and the group says it received unprecedented support for labeling legislation.

September 3

The US Department of Agriculture is awarding more than \$123,000 in alternative energy grants to projects in Windham County that convert methane gas into energy and use solar panels to help a dairy farm.

September 20

Vermont congressman Peter Welch was among those speaking out against a house passed bill to cut the federal supplemental nutrition, or food stamp program by four billion dollars.

Arts

July 15

A Vermont historian is writing a book about a short-lived program from 1890 that brought Swedish immigrants to the state to help repopulate its dwindling hill farms.

August 6

The non-profit owners of Brattleboro's Latchis Theater are putting on a final fundraising push in support of overhauling the main theater.

August 12

Farms, barns and food cooperatives are part of a weeklong project to get New Hampshire artists out in the fresh air. The Sharon Arts Center, a division of the New Hampshire Institute of Art, is holding its 8th annual "Paint Out" Monday through Friday.

September 23

The only known copy of a Mary Pickford movie that marked an important turning point in the silent film star's career is being shown in New Hampshire next month, seven years after it was discovered in an old barn. A contractor found the 1911 film, titled "Their First Misunderstanding," and six others while cleaning out a barn ahead of its demolition. He and the property owner donated it to the film department at nearby Keene State College, which has been working to identify and restore the movies.

Businesses

July 1

The new owner of the Mount Snow Airport wants to renovate it to bring more visitors to the region. The airport hasn't been officially closed, but the online FAA information for pilots reports that its runway is deteriorating and encroaching trees make it unsafe.

July 2

A cell tower is planned in the Vermont town of Whitingham, which is expected to improve cell service along the Route 100 south corridor. The Vermont Public Service Board the town select board's request on Friday. The tower would be on town property behind the Highway Department garage, near the town's transfer station.

July 9

A Brattleboro investment group has completed the closing process, and is set to move forward with the Brooks House redevelopment. Mesabi Group member Bob Stevens says construction will begin before the end of July and should take approximately one year.

July 25

A long time Newfane institution has a new owner. Justin Fitzpatrick is now the operator of the Newfane Market, an institution that dates back to 1825.

July 30

Six of the 34 Shaw's supermarkets in New Hampshire will be closing by fall.

August 5

Residents of Wilmington, Vt., were celebrating both blueberries and new businesses this weekend. 40 new businesses have opened in the area since it suffered serious damage in the wake of Tropical Storm Irene two years ago, and local landmark Dot's Restaurant is set to open in the next few months.

August 29

New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan says five companies will be awarded job-training grants to help them train up to 719 workers in new skills. C&S Wholesale Grocers of Keene will receive a \$100,000 grant to train up to 450 employees in updated computer applications and software.

September 3

Windham County is holding its first ever Career Expo in Brattleboro later this month. At least two area employers say it's a chance to reach out to potential job seekers both in the region and outside of the Windham County area.

September 6

Brattleboro is getting some outside help to focus on economic revitalization. Building a Better Brattleboro is hosting a community meeting Monday at the Latchis with a group of development experts.

September 12

One of Brattleboro's newest manufacturers is about to open a second plant on the west coast. Commonwealth Dairy President Tom Moffitt says a 100 thousand square foot plant will open in Casa Grande, Arizona in about six weeks, employing about 100 people.

September 27

An updated southern Vermont economic development strategy won't be released until December. A regional strategy group had planned to release the document in late October, but pushed back the date to include information about the closing of Entergy Vermont Yankee.

September 27

A first of its kind career expo attracted over 500 people in Brattleboro Thursday. The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation's Pat Moulton Powden is calling it a big success, and something to build on for future years.

Education

July 1

Congress wasn't able to reach a deal and so student loan interest rates have doubled. The Stafford Loan's interest rate rises from 3.4 to 6.8 percent -- about three times the interest of regular bank loans right now.

July 2

A Brattleboro private school is helping a local non-profit from a learning project and fundraiser. Hilltop Montessori donated portion of the proceeds from a tiny house raffle to Morningside Shelter. Hilltop board chair Mark Loevy-Reyes.

July 11

There are new stadium lights around Hadley Field At Bellows Falls Union High school, but it's not clear when the school will be able to use them.

July 19

A worldwide home schooling support program based in Brattleboro hopes for additional visibility and growth, with it's planned move to the renovated Brooks House next year.

July 24

Hundreds of New Hampshire teachers are gathering at Keene State College to brainstorm innovations in education and how best to measure their results.

August 10

The Princeton Review has rated Marlboro College tops in the nation for instruction.

August 20

Brooks Memorial Library director Jerry Carbone says it will be a few weeks before his staff is ready to use the new video conferencing equipment paid with a grant from Google. Carbone says the conferencing will be available for use for private individuals, and for programs run by the library.

August 26

Vermont's Head Start programs will serve fewer needy children this year following the mandatory federal budget cuts known as sequestration. Windham County Head Start programs will serve 37 fewer children after losing six of its 70 employees because of the cuts.

September 9

A group that protects one of New England's major waterways wants to integrate its message into school programs. The Connecticut River Watershed Council is promoting River of Words, an environmental art and poetry program aimed at promoting watershed awareness as well as literacy and the arts.

September 18

It's both a fundraiser, and a lesson plan. Students at the Newbrook Elementary School in Newfane are gearing up for a 5k run and walk September 28th, according to organizing committee member Karen Meyer.

September 27

The Vermont Agency of Education says it has picked 27 schools in which to test a new computer based assessment program. The Smarter Balanced Assessment System will replace the state's current New England Common Assessment Program known as NECAP for math and English language arts in the spring of 2015.

Energy/Environment

July 16

New Hampshire health officials are urging people to be mindful of the 90-degree heat predicted this week and to seek out cooling centers to avoid heat-related illnesses. Public Health Director Jose Montero said Monday that heat-related illnesses such as heat cramps, heat stroke and heat exhaustion can come on quickly. Senior Centers in Keene and Charlestown are among those open for cooling.

July 17

New England's regional grid manager is asking residents to conserve electricity as this week's continuing hot, humid weather threatens to strain the power system.

July 19

The parent company of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant confirms company-wide cuts may happen, in an effort to increase efficiency. In a statement, an Entergy spokesperson says the company is finding ways to increase efficiencies in all parts of the business.

July 26

Vermont Yankee nuclear plant officials say two high radiation readings in the reactor building at the Vernon plant were false alarms.

July 31

The owner of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant says the company will cut about 30 jobs by the end of the year.

August 2

Vermont's largest electric utility wants to increase its rates by 2.46 percent on October 1 and as much as 2.5 percent on October 1, 2014. Green Mountain Power on Thursday asked the Public Service Board to approve a two-year rate increase package that utility officials say will stabilize costs.

August 6

Two groups critical of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant want state regulators to consider the financial condition of plant owner Entergy Corp. as they prepare to decide whether to give the plant a new state permit.

August 8

Vermont's largest electric utility and the owner of the state's only nuclear power plant, Vermont Yankee, have settled a lawsuit about the costs of replacing power after the collapse of a cooling tower in 2007 caused the plant to reduce output.

August 15

A federal appeals court has largely upheld a ruling against Vermont's attempts to close a nuclear power plant in the state. A decision Wednesday by the New York-based second circuit agrees with a lower-court decision that federal law pre-empts state laws geared toward closing the Vermont Yankee plant.

August 21

Property owners in Newfane are waiting to hear more about repairs needed to an aging dam that's holding back a 20-acre pond. The state has declared the dam at the pond, known as Grout or Kenny Pond, in poor condition.

August 22

Vermont's first ever community solar array opens tomorrow in Putney. Nick Ziter says the idea behind Sun Farm Community Solar is simple, investors from the original Green Mountain Power territory can get a credit on their own monthly electric bill.

August 27

Entergy Corporation today said it plans to close and decommission its Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station in Vernon.

September 11

Gov. Peter Shumlin and Vermont renewable energy businesses today announced an initiative to provide solar power to 10 state facilities located throughout Vermont, including state office buildings in Brattleboro and Bennington.

September 19

Workers at Entergy Vermont Yankee have found and repaired a steam leak in a high-pressure coolant injection pump at the nuclear plant.

September 23

The Vermont Yankee nuclear plant's owners have taken the first of two formal notification steps to let the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission know the plant is shutting down. An Entergy Corp. executive wrote to the NRC on Monday to submit formal notification of intent to shut the Vernon reactor down in the fourth quarter of next year.

Government

July 1

Brattleboro Selectboard chair David Gartenstien says the new town manager will need to be a strong manager, while making sure community input is part of the process.

New Hampshire's Department of Transportation says a washed out section of Route 12A will remain closed for the next several months. AOT spokesman Bill Boynton says the section near the Alstead-Surry town line had actually been hit several years ago.

July 3

Brattleboro Selectboard members have authorized a short-term fix to the Nelson Withington ice rink. John Allen says he and other board members are still unsure about a longer-term solution.

July 6

Renovations to the Vermont state office complex in Brattleboro are winding down. The state offices currently located on Linden Street will be moving back to their permanent home at 232 Main Street in downtown Brattleboro in late July.

July 26

The US Department of Transportation is making an emergency relief grant of \$1,000,000 to New Hampshire for the damage in Cheshire, Grafton and Sullivan Counties from heavy rains and flooding that began on June 26.

August 10

The first quarterly installment of Brattleboro' Property Taxes is due on August 15th. Payments made after the 15th will have an additional 1% interest added to the unpaid balance. Utility billing is also due on August 15th. Payments made after that date will have an additional 1% interest, as well as an 8% penalty.

August 21

Brattleboro Selectboard members choose DEW Construction as the construction management firm for the police fire upgrade project. Project manager Steve Horton is promising very tight financial oversight on the work.

September 4

A business group is lobbying for repairs to a closed bridge between Vermont and New Hampshire. The Bellows Falls Downtown Development Alliance wants to meet with Gov. Peter Shumlin to discuss solutions to reopen the Vilas Bridge spanning the Connecticut River. The group got the support of Rockingham Selectboard members on Tuesday.

September 18

The town of Brattleboro ended its fiscal year with a small general fund surplus. Town finance director says there was a big surplus in the utilities budget, because revenues were up.

September 20

The town of Rockingham has hired an engineer to assess repairs to the floor of the Hall Covered Bridge.

September 25

Over 20 Hinsdale area residents made their pitch for replacement of the Route 119 Hinsdale bridges. Selectboard chair Mike Darcy said the current structures are not wide enough to cross safely, especially when a tractor-trailer unit is also on the bridge.

September 30

The town of Wilmington is getting a grant of nearly \$158,000 to start digitizing all of its official records and save them from the threat of flooding. Waters from Tropical Storm Irene that ravaged Wilmington in 2011 had threatened documents that were rescued by Town Clerk Susie Haughwout. That happened minutes before other documents that had been left behind were ruined.

Windham County sheriff Keith Clark says he's disappointed by a state Supreme Court ruling that orders the department to reimburse unemployment costs for a fired former employee.

Health Care

July 1

Dartmouth-Hitchcock has signed contracts with three statewide health plans to join New Hampshire's managed care network for Medicaid. The health care provider announced Monday it will work with Well Sense Health Plan, Granite State Health Plan and Meridian Health Plan of New Hampshire to provide coordinated care for eligible Medicaid beneficiaries.

July 8

Vermont's Green Mountain Care Board has ordered two major health insurers to reduce their proposed rates for the first-ever rates for health insurance plans offered through the state's health insurance exchange.

July 16

The Brattleboro Retreat has opened a new wellness program that provides alternative approaches for adults suffering from chronic pain. Doctor James Benton helps manage the new Mind-Body Pain Management Clinic.

July 26

Vermont's Green Mountain Care Board says it is encouraged after completing an initial review of hospital budgets for the coming fiscal year.

August 2

An annual tradition continues in the West River Valley Saturday, with the 63rd Grace Cottage Hospital Fair Day taking place on the Townshend Common.

August 5

Governor Peter Shumlin and Congressman Peter Welch both applauded Brattleboro Memorial Hospital's emergency room expansion this afternoon. Welch said the hospital is providing an example that leaders in Washington should follow.

August 8

Brattleboro Retreat chief officer Rob Simpson said Wednesday's eighth annual golf tournament was all about helping children, providing the materials for recovery that insurance does not cover.

August 10

Only one health insurance company will be offering plans in New Hampshire this fall through the new online markets required by the Affordable Care Act, but a Harvard Pilgrim official says it plans to participate in 2015.

August 21

A Vermont court has struck down the town of Westminster's requirement that a state-licensed residential care home obtain a zoning permit.

September 6

Starting in January, ten of New Hampshire's 26 hospitals won't serve patients who have individual health insurance through Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

September 10

A federal agency says it has stopped payments of money it was to provide under a loan agreement with a Vermont Health Insurance Cooperative set up 15 months ago.

September 11

New Hampshire 's Department of Health and Human Services says an adult from Chesterfield was diagnosed with West Nile Virus last month, but has since recovered.

September 13

New Hampshire individuals looking to buy health insurance through the new online marketplace created by the federal Affordable Care Act will have 11 plans to choose from.

September 14

Pesticide spraying has been recommended near schools, athletic fields, and parks in Keene to reduce the threat of West Nile Virus and eastern equine encephalitis.

September 17

Growth in Vermont's hospital budgets will be lower in the coming year The Green Mountain Care Board says patient care revenue at Vermont's 14 hospitals is budgeted to rise by 2.7 percent in the fiscal year, which begins October 1.

September 18

Brattleboro Memorial Hospital has a budget gap to make up. BMH vice president Mike Rogers says the Green Mountain Care Board has trimmed their submission from a 6.2% increase, to just under 6%.

September 19

The Brattleboro Retreat psychiatric hospital has until October 30 to implement changes in its handling of violent or aggressive patient behavior or risk losing federal funding.

September 20

Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin says he's not worried about a glitch that's popped up in connection with the Vermont Health Connect health insurance exchange. Shumlin told reporters on Thursday that the announcement the exchange would not be able to accept electronic payments until a month after its scheduled October 1 startup was a "nothing burger".

September 23

Representatives of three Windham County hospitals were pursuing wellness, to help reduce health care costs this past weekend.

Human Services

July 8

Southeast Vermont Community Action, the anti-poverty agency serving Windham and Windsor Counties, will be holding a 'Client Representative' election during the weeks of July 8th, 15th and 22nd to fill a vacant seat on its Board of Directors.

July 9

A Brattleboro softball tournament this weekend is a major fundraiser for the Women's Freedom Center.

July 11

Nineteen new units of housing have been built on a former warehouse site purchased by the Friends of Algiers Village.

August 16

Southeast Vermont Community Action is pushing the value of establishing and maintaining good credit. SEVCA's Karen Perberg says an eight week financial fitness class will begin September 11 in Brattleboro, and the program is required for applicants of the individual development account program

August 29

The Monadnock Region United Way says more volunteers are needed for their annual Day of Caring. Seventeen agencies are requesting volunteer help and so far, only 10 teams have come forward to help.

September 16

The Brattleboro Walk In Clinic's 18th annual Walk, Run and Roll event was a huge success this past weekend. Clinic vice chair Bill Monahan says the money is needed to help their cause of offering free medical and dental care Tuesday evenings for those without insurance.

September 25

The Brattleboro Housing Authority has identified a site to replace the majority of the Melrose Terrace senior development. The housing authority has been looking for an alternate site since tropical storm Irene flooded the Melrose complex.

September 26

Scouting in southern Vermont received a boost from a benefit golf tournament yesterday in Brattleboro. The Boy Scout's Green Mountain Council executive Ed Mc Collin says the skills taught are still relevant in the 21st century.

Public Safety

July 1

The former office manager of a well-known southern Vermont law firm has agreed to plead guilty to embezzling \$200,000 from the firm. Federal court documents say Kimberly Wilde has entered into a plea agreement with federal prosecutors in which she agreed to plead guilty to wire fraud and make restitution to the Potter Stewart Jr. Law Firm in Brattleboro.

July 2

New Hampshire authorities say they've received numerous tips but no conclusive answers in the search for a missing woman from the southwestern New Hampshire town of Charlestown. Police say 42-year-old Kelly Robarge was last seen on Thursday.

July 8

New Hampshire authorities say an autopsy has identified a body found in a wooded area in Unity as a Charlestown woman who had been missing for about two weeks. Assistant Senior Attorney General Susan Morrell said the body of Kelly Robarge was identified Sunday from dental records and a distinctive tattoo.

A Saxtons River man accused in his estranged wife's death has refused to waive extradition to New Hampshire. 43-year-old James Robarge has been charged with reckless second-degree murder, according to New Hampshire senior assistant attorney general Susan Morrell

July 14

A man and woman died in a motorcycle crash in Marlboro. State Police say 73-year-old John Brown of Fremont and Clermont, Fla., was driving a 3-wheeled motorcycle that went off the road and hit several trees. The passenger, 72-year-old Leona Miller of Grove City, Fla., died when she was thrown off, and Brown died en route to the hospital.

July 18

The Brattleboro Police Department is warning about a telephone scam targeting seniors. Police say a resident reported being contacted and asked to make an appointment to have a medical system installed.

July 20

A lone suspect is in custody after an attempted bank robbery in downtown Brattleboro. Brattleboro Police were called to Key Bank on Main Street shortly before 10 this morning for a report of a robbery in progress. Police arrested 42-year-old Shawn Arguin, with help from retired Brattleboro Police officer John "Zippo" Frechette.

August 1

Rescue Inc. has a new chief of operations. The Brattleboro-based emergency medical provider announced Wednesday that Drew Hazelton has been appointed interim Chief of Operations, replacing Mark Considine, who will assume new duties within the organization.

August 7

A fatal motorcycle accident in Chesterfield is being investigated. Police say a northbound operator failed to negotiate a turn on Route 63 just north of the Hinsdale town line late Tuesday afternoon.

August 15

A Brattleboro father and his adult son are facing child pornography charges. Police say a search of David and Ralph Schnyer's home Tuesday turned up suspected porn videos and photos on the pair's computers.

August 28

A 43-year-old Vermont man charged with killing his estranged wife has made his first appearance in a New Hampshire court. James Robarge of Saxtons River was arraigned Monday in Claremont District Court.

September 6

Vermont State Police in Brattleboro are looking for a missing Townshend woman. 59-year-old Helen Holmes was last seen Friday morning.

September 16

Keene Police are investigating the report of two strong-arm robberies, which occurred early Sunday morning in the area of Willow Street.

September 28

After five hours of deliberation Friday, a jury found Jodi LaClaire not guilty of second-degree murder, but in a split verdict, the jury found her guilty of stealing the elderly woman's credit card in order to get \$3,000 in cash advances.