

The following is WTSA-FM's issues and programming statement for October through December 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

October 3

Vermont's agriculture secretary has been named president of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. Chuck Ross was named to the post at the association's annual meeting in North Carolina in September.

October 8

The ongoing federal government shutdown is slowing the transfer of Brattleboro's Robert Gibson River Garden from Building a Better Brattleboro to the Strolling of the Heifers organization. Stroll director Orly Munzing isn't waiting. She's organizing a volunteer meeting tomorrow at the River Garden

October 15

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board has committed \$1.6 million dollars to conserve six farms with nearly 700 acres agricultural land in Windham, Washington and Orange Counties. The board matched \$740,000 in state funds with \$864,000 in federal funding for farmland protection from the Natural Resources Conservation Service

November 4

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets is now listing on its website businesses that have violated consumer protection regulations that it enforces.

November 5

Vermont's organic farming pioneers are being celebrated by the Strolling of the Heifers organization. Stroll founder Orly Munzing says an event is being held Sunday at 4 at the Latchis in Brattleboro with admission by donation.

November 8

Vermont has built a reputation for its handcrafted premium cheeses, pure maple syrup and even craft beers. Now a group of college presidents wants the state to become a national leader in food systems education. Top administrators at the University of Vermont, Vermont Law School and several other schools in the state created the Vermont Higher Education Food Systems Consortium on Thursday.

November 14

A statewide group has honored a Windham County lawmaker. Vermont Business for Social Responsibility has named Windham's Carolyn Partridge as its Legislator of the Year. Spokesman Dan Barlow says Partridge is being recognized for her work to enact a genetically modified food-labeling bill in the Vermont House.

November 15

The Strolling of the Heifers organization is now the owner of Brattleboro's Robert Gibson River Garden. A \$175,000 USDA helped secure the transfer from Building a Better Brattleboro. Stroll founder Orly Munzing says the downtown Brattleboro property will remain a public space, with rental for events. A series of improvements will take place beginning in January.

December 4

Brattleboro's representative town meeting will be asked if they want to take money from a farmland preservation fund, and use it to lower property taxes.

December 16

A Brattleboro group known for its quirky agriculture festival, the Strolling of the Heifers, says its new office already feels like home. Strolling of the Heifers took over the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, which was owned by Building a Better Brattleboro.

December 18

The Vermont Council on Rural Development has presented its 2013 Vermont Community Leadership Award to Orly Munzing, founder and executive director of Strolling of the Heifers.

Arts

October 1

The ceiling has been replaced at Brattleboro's Latchis Theater, and chairs for the main theater are on their way. Gail Nunziata of Latchis Arts says the large space will reopen October 19th, with a benefit by New Hampshire filmmaker Ken Burns.

October brings with it the release of number 24 in a series of Vermont based murder mysteries. Newfane's Archer Mayor has released *Three Can Keep A Secret*, the latest in the series involving fictional detective Joe Gunther.

October 7

Some of the world's most renowned scholars of author Rudyard Kipling will learn more about the years he lived in Vermont, penning some of his most famous works far from the Indian subcontinent where he made his name. About 60 Kipling scholars from the United Kingdom and the U.S. will gather at Marlboro College on Monday and Tuesday.

October 11

A movie about the Vermont captain of an American Cargo ship hijacked by Somali pirates is opening to national audiences. *Captain Phillips* starring Tom Hanks hits theaters on Friday. The movie got an early screen on October 1 in Vermont.

October 17

The Keene Pumpkin Festival takes place Saturday. Organizers are attempting another world records. The 22nd annual festival is geared toward bringing home the world record for the most carved and lit pumpkins.

October 21

Vermont's battle with prescription drug addiction will be profiled in a documentary to be shown in Brattleboro Wednesday night. Filmmaker Bess O'Brien says *The Hungry Heart* points to a lack of resources state wide to deal with the problem

Organizers say a pumpkin festival in Keene has broken a world record for having the most carved and lit jack-o-lanterns in one place. Organizers say 30,581 pumpkins were lit at the same time on Saturday night, breaking a record set by Boston in 2006.

November 1

The second annual Brattleboro Film Festival opens tonight. Co-chair Lissa Weinman says an ad hoc volunteer group runs the two-week festival.

November 5

Brattleboro gets a first look at *Freedom & Unity: The Vermont Movie* beginning this weekend as part of the Brattleboro Film Festival. The six-part documentary was produced by nearly three-dozen Vermont filmmakers and led by Nora Jacobson.

November 14

It's not often you get the subject of a film calling in for a discussion after a showing. That's the case tonight in Dummerston, where Daniel Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon papers to the media back in the 1970's will be available via phone following a showing at the Dummerston Historical Society tonight.

November 21

The Arts Council of Windham County has honored Brattleboro with its annual Friend of the Arts award. The Town was honored for having a Town Arts Committee, securing NEA funding for the Brattleboro Core Arts Project, and establishing policies for public art.

December 4

A painter who created dioramas for the American Museum of Natural History in New York City has died. Fred F. Scherer died Nov. 25 in Townshend. He was 98. His daughter Deidre Scherer, also an artist, told The Associated Press on Tuesday that millions of people have walked by the dioramas and not known who the artists were. Fred Scherer was born in Queens, N.Y., and learned how to paint dioramas — three-dimensional background scenes — from artist James Perry Wilson.

Businesses

October 4

The New Hampshire Employment Security agency says employees who have been furloughed or temporarily laid off during the federal government shutdown may file for unemployment benefits and should open their claim this week.

October 9

Rockingham and Bellows Falls have reached an agreement that clears the way for a railroad company to build a propane facility along Route 5. The towns' agreement with Green Mountain Railroad this week permits installation of three 60,000-gallon propane tanks alongside the tracks in Rockingham.

October 15

More than 700 people have registered to compete for just 10 job openings in the medical coding field. Dartmouth-Hitchcock and Vermont HITEC teamed up to present an orientation session Monday night in West Lebanon.

October 17

Economist Arthur Woolf says Windham County's economy is hurting, in part because of regulatory issues with two major employers. Woolf pointed to the decision of C&S Wholesale Grocers to move its headquarters out of state, and Entergy Vermont Yankee's decision to close as major problems for the current, and future job picture.

October 18

United Nurses and Allied Professionals (UNAP) Local 5086 members have ratified a new two-year contract with the Brattleboro Retreat. 550 nurses, mental health workers, and other staff at the Retreat are covered by the deal, which includes wage increases and incentives, and an expansion of health insurance options

October 22

52 projects will be included in a Southeast Vermont Economic Development Strategy. The completed list will be released for public comment on December 5th at Marlboro College's Ragel Hall.

October 22

Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin wants to maximize the jobs available from decommissioning Entergy Vermont Yankee, and also reuse the nuclear plant site in Vernon for other energy projects as quickly as possible.

October 24

The coming loss of Entergy Vermont Yankee and helping business hurt by tropical storm Irene remain priorities for the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation. Incoming BDCC director Pat Moulton-Powden says they've received one and a half million dollars for small business assistance, and that amount could double.

October 28

Two southern Vermont groups want the Vermont legislature to provide \$2-million for economic development work in the area near Entergy Vermont Yankee. The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and the Southeast Economic Strategies group say they are poised to work on the rebuilding of the Windham regional economy.

November 2

Outgoing Brattleboro Chamber of commerce director Jerry Goldberg has been named the chamber's Person of the Year. The chamber announced that Kate O'Connor would succeed Goldberg as executive director later this month. The Mesabi Group, developers of the Brooks House, was named corporate citizen of the year.

November 11

With less than two months to go, Vermont officials say the state isn't going to reach its goal of having 100 percent broadband Internet service by the end of the year. After years of building both wired and wireless Internet projects from one end of the state to the other, officials say the 2013 goal was just too lofty. But significant progress has been made — officials estimate about 99 percent of Vermonters now have access to broadband.

November 13

Plans to upgrade and continue the revitalization of southern Vermont airport have gotten another big boost after Wilmington's Development Review Board approved a plan that would allow the runway to be lengthened.

November 21

The Vermont Public Service Board has approved a cell tower for Putney and a wireless Internet facility in Wardsboro. The Putney project calls for a temporary wireless telecommunications facility to be located at 7 Bellows Falls Road. Meanwhile, Vtel Wireless will install a wireless telecommunications facility at 378 Newell Hill Road in Wardsboro to expand wireless broadband coverage in the surrounding area.

November 25

A second telecommunications tower has been proposed for Newfane. AT&T is developing its first tower, which is in South Newfane. The Public Service Board approved it in March, amid opposition from some residents who were worried about the impact on property values.

Building a Better Brattleboro has hired a downtown business owner as its part time Downtown Coordinator. Jacob Roberts is the co owner of the Equilibrium Art and Wellness Center, and he has a background in arts administration.

November 27

Developers of the Brooks House say they're making progress in renovating the building's exterior before winter sets in, and spaces are still available for lease in the property.

November 29

More than two-dozen crafts women and men will be opening their studios over the long Thanksgiving weekend in the southeastern Vermont area around Putney. Organizers say the Putney Craft Tour is the oldest in New England.

The post-Thanksgiving shopping day known as Black Friday is here. In response, last year the “Hashtag Giving Tuesday” movement sprang up, aimed at making the Tuesday after Black Friday and Cyber Monday a day of giving. The New Hampshire Food Bank 's Nancy Mellitt was disappointed to see the big retailers opening on the holiday.

December 2

The Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies board has named G.S. Precision as the 2013 recipient of its SoVermont Leadership Award for Excellence in Economic Development.

The owners of the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant and the union representing 226 workers there have reached a contract agreement to avert a lockout.

December 6

The closing of Entergy Vermont Yankee is being viewed as an opportunity as a regional economic development strategy is released. Former house speaker Steven Morse of Newfane says it's a chance for residents to get past a deeply divisive issue.

December 11

About 650 Vermont residents will soon lose their extended unemployment benefits, unless Congress extends the federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation Program. The benefits are set to expire on December 28th.

December 13

A Brattleboro couple has been recognized by the West Brattleboro Association for their donations to a variety of community groups. Amahad and Kat Rashed were named Community Leaders of the Year by the West Brattleboro Association Thursday.

December 17

A popular Vermont restaurant that closed after Tropical Storm Irene flooded it is back in business, and open seven days a week. The grand opening for Dot's Restaurant in Wilmington was held on Dec. 12. Dot's had closed after Tropical Storm Irene left the restaurant and many other businesses on the same street flooded in 2011. Dot's suffered additional damage due to its proximity to the Deerfield River.

December 18

The Harris Hill Committee has restored two historic “Welcome to Brattleboro” signs, which feature a ski jumper. Co-director Liz Richards says the signs help remind people of the mid-February tournament, which this year is likely to gain additional attention as an alternative to the Winter Olympics in Russia.

December 19

Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation director Jeff Lewis says he's enjoyed the past eight years running the regional development organization.

Education

October 4

Vermont's 2014 teacher of the year has been narrowed to three finalists. Vermont's education secretary says the choices are Katy Farber, a 6th grade teacher at Rumney Memorial School in Middlesex; Luke Foley, a grades 9-12 STAR program teacher at Northfield Middle High School in Northfield; and Valerie Gasco, a grades 6-8 special education teacher at Riverside Middle School in Springfield.

October 7

Five Windham County towns are considering whether to consolidate their school boards are delaying a vote on the issue. Brookline, Jamaica, Newfane, Townshend and Windham were supposed to vote Tuesday on articles that would create a unified education district board. But the vote will be held in June instead, because revisions made to an agreement drafted by a five-town study committee weren't approved by the state in time.

October 8

Vermont's Department of Health is bringing together five colleges and the University of Vermont for a symposium on high-risk drinking on campus. The meeting takes place tomorrow at Castleton State College. State Health Commissioner Harry Chen says the aim is to look at programs that are working on one campus that may be replicated at others.

October 9

Students in 52 Vermont schools are going to be taking part in the International Walk to School day. About 12,000 Vermont students are expected to participate Wednesday in organized walking and biking to school events.

October 15

Northfield Middle/High School teacher Luke Foley is Vermont's 2014 Teacher of the Year. The announcement was made by state board of education chair Steven Morse of Newfane at a board meeting today.

October 16

Vermont's Norwich University is promising about \$150,000 in scholarships for military students affected by the federal government shutdown. Officials at the Northfield college say 146 students will be able to continue their education despite the suspension of financial aid through the military tuition assistance program administered by the federal government.

October 21

Vermont student test scores could drop when more rigorous standards take effect and students start taking a new education test in 2015. Vermont schools are already making changes to prepare students for standards that officials say are designed to better equip young people for careers or college.

November 4

Marlboro College is collaborating with the Snelling Center for Government on three new master's degree level courses in management.

Leaders at Brattleboro's Hilltop Montessori School say they've achieved a rarity among private schools: a balanced social economic mix. Head of school Tamara Mount says a generous financial aid policy, plus access to some state and local aid help.

November 11

Brattleboro Union High School is one of eleven Vermont schools that have received national recognition for their energy efficiency efforts. The sought-after Energy Star designation indicates the schools are in the top 25 percent nationally for energy efficiency and have met tough standards for health, ventilation, comfort and lighting quality.

November 12

A senior vice president at Vermont's World Learning has been nominated to join this year's Chief Academic Officers Think Tank at the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, a center of research and policy on higher education. John Lucas is provost and senior vice president for academic programs at World Learning's School for International Training in Brattleboro.

November 14

Vermont is joining with more than 40 other states in adopting a common core of learning. Vermont education secretary Armondo Vilaseca says the subject matter taught in each grade won't be as broad, but the expectations will be higher.

November 20

Public safety and school officials from around Vermont are gathering in South Burlington to discuss strategies for keeping Vermont's educational facilities safe. Nearly 300 members of local school crisis teams, as well as administrators and first responders, are expected at the Wednesday's daylong Statewide School Safety Conference at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center.

November 21

Tomorrow marks the 50th anniversary of president John F. Kennedy's assassination in Dallas. Brattleboro Union High School history teacher Bill Holiday is in Dallas for an official commemoration. He says even today many questions about the shooting remain unanswered.

December 10

Vermont education secretary Armando Vilaseca was back in Brattleboro today, applauding the work to improve student test results at Academy School, and receiving a Founders Award from the Windham Regional Collegiate High School Program.

December 19

Vermont will be receiving \$37-million for early education, as one of six states that have won a race for the top grant from the federal Government. Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin said the grant would be the largest single investment in early childhood education in Vermont's history.

December 20

Five more Vermont colleges will start offering early college programs to high school students starting next year. Vermont Technical College has been offering its Vermont Academy of Science and Technology program for 25 years. Starting next fall, eligible high school seniors can also attend college while finishing high school tuition-free at Burlington College, Castleton State College, Community College of Vermont, Johnson State College and Lyndon State College.

Energy/Environment

October 3

The chairman of the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Commission says the organization is going to honor a 20-year-old agreement that guarantees space for radioactive waste from Vermont in its Texas disposal facility.

October 4

Over 2,000 volunteers are cleaning up the Connecticut River and its adjoining waterways this weekend. The Connecticut River Watershed Council is holding it's annual Source to the Sea Clean Up.

October 7

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has canceled an open house and meeting regarding the Seabrook nuclear power plant because of the federal government shutdown. The commission had planned to hold a meeting in Hampton on Wednesday to discuss concrete degradation at the plant.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is being asked to restrict storage of nuclear waste in spent fuel pools like the one at the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant. The commission heard recently from two authors of a 2003 report saying densely packed fuel pools create a heightened danger of fire and a catastrophic release of radioactivity. They urged fuel older than five years be stored in dry concrete casks.

October 8

Utility crews are restringing lines, and working to get a portion of Route 30 in Newfane reopened. Dorothy Schnure of Green Mountain Power said their crews needed to replace four utility poles damaged by Monday afternoon's thunderstorm.

October 9

Vermont utility companies are wading through their first year of levying surcharges to residential and commercial consumers to help low-income consumers pay their bills. Green Mountain Power initiated the fees this year, after the legislature and state Public Service Board mandated the surcharges. Residential customers of Green Mountain Power pay \$1.50 a month.

October 15

Brattleboro town meeting voters in March approved a property assessed clean energy program, but there continues to be issues with putting the program into effect.

October 16

The federal Government Accountability Office says the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant had the second fewest number of safety violations in the Northeast from 2000 to 2012 among facilities with only one reactor.

October 22

Environmental officials say the region experienced an overall decrease in the number of unhealthy air quality days this year during the summer ozone season. Between April and September 2013, air quality monitors recorded 20 days when ozone levels in New England exceeded levels considered healthy, compared to 29 days during the same period in 2012.

December 4

A nuclear opposition group is expressing concern that its allies could be cut out of a deal between Entergy and Vermont on the future of the state's lone nuclear plant. Top state officials and Entergy have been in talks toward an agreement on decommissioning Vermont Yankee after the plant closes late next year. They've asked the Public Service Board to hold off on ruling on decommissioning until those talks are complete next week.

December 10

A New York federal appeals court says the legality of a tax on Vermont's only nuclear plant is best left up to a state court. But it shot down some of the plant operator's arguments against the tax anyway.

December 13

The Vermont Public Service Board had a split decision when it ruled that a proposed solar project in Brattleboro would need only limited hearings. PSB member John Burke, in a dissenting opinion, said the proposal involves a 15-acre parcel of land, with two thirds of the property subject to earth disturbance.

December 24

An agreement has been reached between the State of Vermont and Entergy Nuclear Vermont Yankee. Entergy's Jim Sinclair says the agreement resolves all ongoing proceedings, if the public service board agrees.

Government

October 1

The federal government went out of business overnight, after congress failed to agree on continued spending. Vermont US senator Bernard Sanders was among those complaining about the house proposal to link funding with a delay in the Affordable Care Act.

October 2

Brattleboro Selectboard members have delayed action on endorsing a smaller skatepark design at the Crowell playground. Chairman David Gartenstien said there might be merit to reopening the process.

October 4

A plan to merge the Vermont village of Bellows Falls with the town of Rockingham in 2014 has hit a delay. The proposal would eliminate the Bellows Falls Village Corporation and the Board of Trustees, which would be turned over to the Rockingham Selectboard. Village services, such as police and fire departments, would continue to be supported by village residents through separate fees or taxes.

October 8

Vermont US senator Bernie Sanders says the US Supreme Court may be ready to further erode the nation's campaign finance laws continues to oppose the Court's Citizens United decision. Sanders today attended oral arguments before the Supreme Court in a case that justices could use to throw out legal limits on contributions by individual donors to political campaigns.

October 10

Officials in the Vermont town that is home to the state's only nuclear power plant are preparing for the loss of property tax money after the plant closes next year. Vernon Selectboard Chairwoman Patty O'Donnell is assuring residents that local services will not be "devastated," but says reductions are inevitable.

October 11

The Vermont Agency of Transportation will remove the temporary lane closures on Interstate 91 in Brattleboro over Columbus Day weekend to accommodate holiday traffic. The temporary closures are associated with construction to replace the Interstate bridges between exits 2 and 3.

October 14

A number of Vermont towns that bought properties made unusable by flooding from Tropical Storm Irene are now trying to decide what to do with that land that will be cleared of structures damaged by the 2011 storm. So far 30 properties have been purchased by cities and towns and another 67 buyouts are in the pipeline.

The team rebuilding the Interstate 91 West River bridge in Brattleboro is using a full array of "Smart Zone" tools, including Portable Changeable Message Signs, Wavetronics radar traffic sensors, and video cameras that will broadcast live data to a public website devoted to the project.

October 15

A group of Vermont business leaders from a Connecticut River community are upset the New Hampshire Department of Transportation isn't moving faster to make repairs to a closed bridge that links the two states.

October 17

The federal government shutdown is over, with action by Congress last night on a spending and debt package. Vermont US senator Bernie Sanders claimed the shutdowns effect went far beyond this furloughed government workers.

October 21

A bridge leading vehicles along Route 100 from Jamaica, Vt., toward Wardsboro is nearly complete as part of the "accelerated bridge" program designed by the state. The bridge had been destroyed as a result of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and a temporary bridge had been put up in its place.

October 25

The Windham Regional Commission is looking for input into its regional plan update. Four public forums will be held in November and December. Planner Cullen Mavis says the WRC is looking for input on housing affordability in the region.

November 6

There will be a new skatepark site selection committee in Brattleboro. Skate park committee chair Jeff Clark made the request, saying the continued debate over a site at the Crowell Lot has made fundraising a tough process.

Tough budget times are ahead in Brattleboro. Selectboard chair David Gartenstien says bond payments on the police and fire upgrades, plus keeping services as is would mean a tax hike too big for many to swallow.

November 7

The New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority has approved a \$500,000 housing grant for the town of Hinsdale on behalf of the Oak Hill Acres mobile home cooperative. The funds will go toward replacement of failing drinking water and septic systems, as well as other infrastructure concerns on the site.

November 18

Work is continuing on the Interstate 91 West River Bridge in Brattleboro, Brent Curtis at the Vermont Agency of Transportation reminds it's illegal to use a cell phone while driving through a work zone.

November 20

Brattleboro Selectboard members have failed in their bid to find a new town manager. Select board chair David Gartenstien announced last night that negotiations with two finalists were unsuccessful.

November 26

More details this morning about Brattleboro's town manager search. Last week, select board chair David Gartenstien said the search was being reopened. Monday, Gartenstien said the town had offered a salary in the range of \$75,000 to \$90,000, but weren't able to reach a deal after meeting with the top candidate.

December 5

Nearly \$1.3-million in housing grants were handed out in Windham County Wednesday. Brattleboro was awarded \$1-million to help the Windham Windsor Housing Trust run a housing rehab loan program.

A half-mile stretch of Route 12A in Alstead has been reopened after being closed since flooding this summer. William Kass at the New Hampshire DOT says the same roadway had been washed out during flooding in 2005 and repaired, but this time the level of work was upgraded.

December 6

As work continues on the Interstate 91 West River Bridge replacement in Brattleboro, the construction team will hold the first in a series of on-site "Trail Talks" December 14.

December 12

A plan to merge the village of Bellows Falls with the town of Rockingham in 2014 has been tabled for now. Bellows Falls Village Trustees rejected the merger proposal by a vote of 3-1 and the Rockingham Select Board voted to rescind its motion to approve the merger.

Health Care

October 1

Vermont's online health insurance marketplace is ready to go. Health Care Reform Director Robin Lunge says officials expect “some bumps” along the way, but they will continue to improve the system.

As the enrollment period opens for new insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act, New Hampshire is still figuring out how to educate consumers about their options.

October 2

Brattleboro Memorial Hospital is working to raise \$3.5-million to complete the funding of it's emergency room project.

October 7

The federal health care overhaul law also brings some changes for dental coverage, but New Hampshire officials say it's unclear how they might impact the state. Dental care is now considered an essential benefit for children whose parents get insurance through the individual or small-group plans. The law doesn't mandate dental coverage for adults, but several options are available in New Hampshire through the new online insurance markets.

October 9

Wilmington area residents are getting an update tonight on the new Vermont Health Connect exchange. Leaders from Southwestern Vermont Health Care and Vermont's new health insurance exchange are holding a public discussion about how the exchanges will affect individuals and small businesses.

October 10

Grace Cottage Hospital has been awarded a \$312,000 three-year federal grant to conduct a diabetes education program. Senior leader Andrea Seaton says Grace Cottage is the only grant recipient in Vermont, and one of 30 nationwide.

New Hampshire officials are warning residents about what they consider a misleading website aimed at people shopping for health insurance under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul law.

October 11

A new generation brings new challenges, and that's why the Brattleboro Retreat has opened a new program for emerging adults with mental health and substance abuse problems. Doctor Deborah McQuade, the unit chief for the new program, says the program was designed from scratch, and was full within two days of its opening.

October 15

While many Vermonters are making their choices under the Affordable Care Act, seniors have their annual chance to change their Medicare supplemental plan.

October 16

One of Vermont's major health insurance companies says it's pulling out of New Hampshire. MVP Health Care serves more than 600,000 members in Vermont, New York and New Hampshire, but just 1% of its members are insured under New Hampshire policies.

October 23

New financial challenges for Rescue inc. the regional emergency medical service is worried that the new health care exchanges will result in lower reimbursements for their service. Trustee Lew Teich, who says the current funding mix keeps the doors open, but fails to meet capital equipment replacement needs.

The effort to market the Affordable Care Act in New Hampshire has been delayed again. New Hampshire Health Plan, the committee overseeing implementation of the health care overhaul known as Obamacare, voted 3-2 on Oct. 9 to award the marketing contract. Executive Director Michael Degnan says the committee didn't include oral interviews in its decision.

November 1

The Vermont Department of Public Safety has conditionally approved the fourth and final marijuana dispensary to be located in Brattleboro. Southern Vermont Wellness, Inc., a Vermont company located in Burlington, would run the dispensary. Once the company satisfies all the state's requirements, the dispensary would open within six months of approval. Additional information will be sent to registered patients and caregivers.

November 4

Cheshire Medical Center has received the Carolyn Boone Lewis Living the Vision award from the American Hospital association. The AHA says the recognition was given for Cheshire Medical Center's work to improve the health of its community through actions that go beyond traditional hospital care. The hospital, and Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center have partnered on a program called Healthy Monadnock 2020, which seek to make a Cheshire County and the Monadnock Region to become the nation's healthiest community by the year 2020.

November 8

They have it in writing. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services says the Brattleboro Retreat is back in compliance with federal funding rules. A three-day re-survey that took place Monday through Wednesday determined the psychiatric hospital "is in compliance with the Medicare Conditions of Participation".

November 13

The state says that 3,138 people have chosen a new health insurance plan through the Vermont Health Connect website. The state released a series of raw numbers Tuesday about the use of the website, which has been plagued with troubles since it first went public on October 1.

November 27

Residents with individual insurance policies through Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield now have until mid-December to renew policies deemed substandard under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul law.

December 2

The state official overseeing the Vermont Health Connect insurance exchange says he notified officials about a mid-October security lapse on its website before telling a legislative committee that such a lapse hadn't occurred. Commissioner Mark Larson has apologized for failing to disclose the lapse when a House member asked about it November 5.

December 10

A federal lawsuit brought in Vermont is bringing about a change in national Medicare practices that advocates say will improve coverage for people in long-term care. Vermont resident Glenda Jimmo was lead plaintiff in the case that challenged what some providers perceived as Medicare's requirement that patients being treated in settings ranging from nursing homes to home health had to be improving in order for their coverage to continue.

December 12

Another insurance company plans to offer health plans under the Affordable Care Act in New Hampshire. For now, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the only health insurance company offering plans through the new online markets required under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul law. But U.S. Rep. Carol Shea-Porter announced Thursday that nonprofit Minuteman Health of Massachusetts has been given federal approval to expand into New Hampshire and form a new program that will offer plans under the law.

December 18

Vermont's fourth medical marijuana dispensary is a go for Brattleboro. The Development Review Board has approved a permit to operate the dispensary, which will be able to sell marijuana to patients on the state's Medical Marijuana Registry.

Human Services

October 2

The region's largest food shelf is worried about a federal government shutdown. Lucie Fortier of the Brattleboro Area Drop In Center says the federal Supplemental Nutrition, or SNAP program, could be threatened if the budget standoff in Washington isn't resolved soon.

October 4

United Way of Windham County names its first annual Partner In Hope Award recipient, Marlboro College and the Marlboro Graduate Center.

October 7

Forty communities in Vermont and New Hampshire have taken advantage of an opportunity to improve their disaster preparedness. The Vermont and New Hampshire Upper Valley Red Cross began offering its disaster shelter initiative a year ago in response to Tropical Storm Irene.

Tickets are now on sale for the third annual Make a Wish celebrity waiter dinner in Brattleboro.

October 21

Vermont's Make a Wish organization got a boost from a weekend fundraiser, and a thank you from Make a Wish parent James Brown.

October 22

A Philadelphia psychologist says therapy may be an important part of reducing homelessness. Dr. Deborah Lupenitz will present a video on her work and lead a panel discussion of area advocates Thursday night at the Brattleboro Retreat.

October 24

With food donations down 18% and federal funding cuts coming November 1, the Vermont Foodbank says Vermonters in need of nutrition assistance are facing a "perfect storm." Foodbank CEO John Sayles says a food aid funding boost passed by Congress in 2009 expires at the end of the month. Households will see benefit cuts ranging from \$11 to \$36 per month.

October 25

Windham County's United Way campaign has reached 30% of this year's \$500,000 goal, thanks to the generosity of several area companies and non-profits.

October 31

Windham County's United Way is making progress toward raising \$500,000 for non-profits in the region, with C&S Wholesale Grocers continuing as a major contributor. The company's Gina Goff says their company and its workers contributed nearly \$44,000 in Windham County, and more than \$1.4-million nationwide.

November 1

A federal reduction in nutrition assistance is already being felt in the Brattleboro area. Brattleboro Area Drop In Center director Lucie Fortier says they've already seen a jump in the number of people needing help from their food shelf.

November 6

For the tenth straight year, eight 12 foot by 12 foot sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt are coming to the Monadnock Region. AIDS Services director Susan McNeill says the quilt itself is the most powerful teaching tool in the fight against AIDS and HIV.

November 7

Volunteers are needed in Windham County to serve as volunteer ombudsmen. Nancy Hood says the volunteers would help assure the quality of care and the rights of the region's long term care residents, and those Vermonters living at home with assistance from Medicaid.

November 15

The annual Project Feed the Thousands food drive is underway, with a goal of \$100,000 in cash and 200,000 meals for the region's food shelves. Brattleboro Area Drop In Center director Lucie Fortier says hunger is a problem year round, but the need is especially great during the holiday season.

November 22

A year-end fund drive to benefit the Brattleboro Boys and Girls Club is underway. Director Beth Baldwin says the contributions help them provide services for a thousand area youth each year.

December 12

Entergy Vermont Yankee and its employees continue to be strong supporters of the annual Project Feed the Thousands food drive. Company employees conducted a \$4,000 shopping spree at the Brattleboro Hannaford's store, and collected another \$2,000 from workers this morning.

December 16

It's a busy time for the Vermont New Hampshire Red Cross. Their Disaster Service Division has been out with ten separate incidents since Thanksgiving, with the latest a family of six burned out of their Putney home Sunday. Spokesman Doug Bishop says local support is a must, for their response to keep up.

December 23

Numbers are up at two programs serving the homeless in Brattleboro. The comments were made at a homeless memorial event Saturday evening in Brattleboro.

December 26

It was all about giving back and saying thanks this Christmas, as three children of Brattleboro breakfast founder Charlie Slate hosted the annual tradition along with Deidre Baker.

Public Safety

October 1

Chesterfield Police are investigating a reported armed robbery Monday afternoon at the J&J Discount store. The suspect entered the store with an unknown caliber blue steeled semi-automatic handgun and demanded money.

The state of New Hampshire is going to be getting federal help to repair damage from summer flooding in Cheshire, Grafton and Sullivan counties.

A Swanzey teen died in a predawn rollover crash in Alstead. New Hampshire State Police identified the victim as 17-year-old Jacob Nash.

October 3

A federal court jury in Vermont has found a 31-year-old man guilty of causing the death of a woman he believed had stolen drugs from him. The jury in Rutland returned the verdict Wednesday in the trial of Frank Caraballo, of Holyoke, for the death of 30-year-old Melissa Barratt, of Brattleboro, on July 29, 2011.

October 7

Vermont residents can now sign up to receive emergency alerts through text messages, e-mail, phone calls or even their game consoles. The Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security on Monday launched Vermont Alert, a website where the public can sign up to receive notifications ranging from weather advisories to alerts from fire, police and other emergency responders.

October 10

Vermont State Police say they have found human remains believed to be a Townshend woman who had been missing for more than a month. Police say a hiker found the body late Wednesday afternoon near Route 11 in Winhall. A red Subaru Forester registered to 59-year-old Helen Holmes was found nearby.

October 14

A Hinsdale man has died from what was a reported domestic dispute last evening. The New Hampshire attorney generals office identified the victim as 26-year-old Dustin Curtiss, and they say he appeared to have suffered at least three gunshot wounds. Curtiss was taken to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, and then to UMass Medical Center in Worcester, Massachusetts where he was pronounced dead.

October 17

Fire damaged a three story seven apartment building at 214 Elliot Street in Brattleboro. Crews took just over two and a half hours to bring the fire under control, according to fire chief Mike Bucossi.

October 21

Take away the term “acting” from the title. The city of Keene has named Captain Mark Howard as fire chief. Howard had been acting chief since the June retirement of former chief Gary Lameroux.

October 21

Windham County sheriff Keith Clark says his office will help with the region's prescription drug take back day Saturday.

October 23

A Guilford man has been charged with possession of child pornography. Justin Bywater was arrested Friday. A shared investigation between the Vermont Attorney General's Office and Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force revealed that Bywater obtained and distributed child pornography over the Internet using peer-to-peer file sharing programs.

October 29

The Brattleboro Police Department wants to upgrade its communication equipment by applying for a \$484,000 state grant.

November 4

A woman arrested in a fatal hit-and-run that killed a man in Keene had been in a relationship with him. Forty-one-year-old Tracy A. Burroughs was arrested Saturday on charges of negligent homicide and leaving the scene of a fatal accident. Police say 48-year-old Keon Ioannou, who had been riding a bicycle, was found dead by medical personnel who responded to the accident on Route 101 shortly before 2 a.m.

November 5

Brattleboro fire chief Mike Bucossi says he's working to wrap up the department's investigation of an October 16 fire at 214 Elliot Street. Investigators, aided by Vermont State Police, have so far not been able to pinpoint a cause. They have said the fire originated in a third floor apartment. The multifamily building is slated for demolition, but an exact date for the work has not been announced.

November 11

Brattleboro police are continuing to investigate a weekend assault and robbery at the America's Best Inn. Just after midnight Sunday the desk clerk was assaulted by an unknown male, who then took the cash register and fled on foot. The clerk suffered minor injuries.

November 12

Traffic on Western Avenue in Brattleboro was blocked for about an hour and a half Monday morning by a motor vehicle pedestrian accident near the intersection with Williams Street. Brattleboro Police say that 40-year-old Eric Tuepker was struck by the side of a flatbed trailer being pulled by a pickup truck driven by 56-year-old Ronald Farrington.

November 15

A Jamaica resident has been jailed on a charge of sexually assaulting a juvenile female. 37-year-old James Shields is being held without bail and will be arraigned later today at Windham Superior Court. On Thursday, the Southeastern Unit for Special Investigations launched an investigation after the victim disclosed that she had been sexually assaulted multiple times over an extended time period.

November 18

A judge has denied a new trial to the nursing home employee found guilty of stealing money from a Brattleboro nursing home resident who died. A jury acquitted Jodi LaClaire of second-degree murder charges in the death of an 83-year-old woman, but did find her guilty of financial exploitation for stealing more than \$3,000 through the use of the victim's ATM card.

December 2

Police in Keene say a man arrested for a holdup at a convenience store could be linked to a number of other crimes. Police say witnesses to the weekend robbery at Romy's Market on Marlboro Street got a license plate number, which led police to 30-year-old Adam Burns of Keene.

December 9

A pedestrian has died in a suspected hit and run in Brattleboro. Police say 64-year-old Eugene Narratt of Maynard, Mass., was struck Friday evening in the area of Western Avenue and Union Street. Authorities say the vehicle reportedly left the scene.

December 10

Pedestrian and vehicle safety remain a priority for town officials in Brattleboro. Interim town manager Patrick Moreland says a public safety campaign includes a free item for pedestrians.

December 12

A man accused of robbing someone he met in an online dating website in New Hampshire has been arrested in Massachusetts. Keene police said 23-year-old Michael Bolio was arrested Wednesday night in Winchendon, Mass., after his photo was distributed to the public.

December 16

Upper Dummerston Road will be used as a detour when Route 30 near the Interstate 91 Bridge is closed this week. Residents of the road remind motorists who are using the detour to pay attention to posted speeds, as joggers and people out walking dogs use the road.

December 18

An overnight fire heavily damaged a 5-unit apartment building at 72 Green Street in Brattleboro. Fire chief Mike Bucossi says heavy fire was showing on the first floor when the first crews arrived at about 2:30 am.

December 19

A judge has declared a mistrial after jurors couldn't reach a verdict in the trial of a man accused of setting a 1989 fire that killed a family of four in Keene. The jury had deliberated since Tuesday afternoon but was unable to reach a unanimous decision. Prosecutors say David McLeod planned, then bragged about setting the fire and should finally be held accountable.

December 23

An autopsy is planned for a Keene man who died in what authorities are calling an apparent homicide over the weekend. The attorney general's office says police were called to a home Saturday night with a request for medical assistance and found 48-year-old David Wheelock dead inside.

December 27

Brattleboro Police and other area departments will take part in a training exercise at Brattleboro Union High School between 8 and 5 today. There will be an increased presence of officers and cruisers near the high school for much of the day.