



Olympic roundup

U.S.A.'s 'Flying Squirrel' wins her second gold, 1B

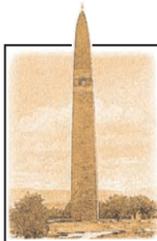
Urban graveyards

Detroit's vacant lands often crime scenes, 1A



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Shires Byway gains funding

NEAL P. GOSWAMI
Staff Writer

BENNINGTON — The Shires of Vermont Byway has received a grant to add signs along the corridor from Pownal to Manchester.

The byway, which stretches about 28 miles, was approved last year by the Vermont Byway Program, part of the Vermont Agency of Transportation. One year later it has received a \$62,224 grant from the Federal Highway Administration in a round of grants announced on Thursday.

Jonah Spivak, a member of the volunteer Shires of Vermont Byway Committee, said grant will be used to fund signs and informational kiosks along the byway route. He said the committee expected to hear about the grant sooner, but federal budgeting delays held it up.

The grant money will allow for the installation of signs where the Shires byway intersects with others. It meets the Molly Stark Byway at Bennington's Four Corners, where Routes 7 and 9 meet. It means the Stone Valley Byway in Manchester where Routes 7A and 30 meet.

See *BYWAY*, page 3A



MASSIVE FIRE IN NEW YORK

Firefighters work on a blaze at at TCI of New York, a transformer recycling company, early Thursday morning in the Hudson Valley town of West Ghent, N.Y. Columbia County officials declared a state of emergency for the town of Ghent Thursday, where residents were being told to remain indoors to avoid noxious fumes spewing over the rural community. Story on page 5A.

AP

Town to start pre-K in fall

DAWSON RASPUZZI
Staff Writer

BENNINGTON — School officials announced Wednesday that public pre-kindergarten will begin in Bennington this fall, although they are still seeking additional private partners to meet the demand.

It had been suspected the new public/private pre-K — in the works for the past year — would begin as classes resume in a month, but now that the district has secured about \$165,000 in grant funding the decision was made official.

The expectation is that through the program all 4-year-olds in town may attend partnering preschools and receive 10 publicly funded hours of preschool per week for 35 weeks.

Karen Burnell, early education director for the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union, said seven preschool providers have partnered with Bennington School District, and she plans to meet with a half-dozen more to discuss partnerships next week. All of the current partners are located in Bennington, although partner-

See *PRE-K*, page 6A

State of the (solar collecting) art

Local business focuses sunlight on energy generation

NEAL P. GOSWAMI
Staff Writer

BENNINGTON — A local couple is hoping a new, innovative, Vermont-made product will help boost solar energy in Bennington County.

Karen Lee, who along with her husband Jim owns Solar Pro in Arlington, said she has partnered with AllEarth Renewables to offer its AllSun Tracker solar electric system to residents and businesses in the Bennington County area.

The system uses GPS and wireless technology to follow the sun throughout the day, which can boost solar energy production by as much as 45 percent more than roof-top installations, according to AllEarth Renewables. The system can produce most of the power used by an average home in New England.

Lee, who moved to the area with her

husband in 2006, said she researched various businesses after settling in. Her interest in solar energy drew them to launch Solar Pro in 2008, but not without some hesitation, she said.

"I was so pleasantly surprised to learn that the sun shines sufficiently in Vermont."

KAREN LEE
Co-owner of Solar Pro

"Quite frankly, I was a little skeptical, coming from Florida, about the benefits in Vermont," Lee said. "I was so pleasantly surprised to learn that the sun shines sufficiently in Vermont."

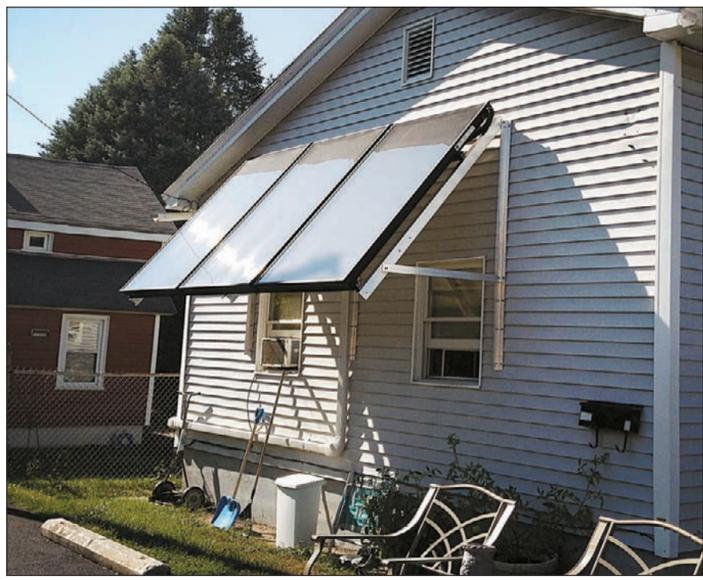
Lee said she wanted to begin offering the tracking system in the area after viewing an AllEarth Renewables map showing where the systems have already been installed. New England is peppered with about 1,000, she said, but none were in Bennington County.

"If you look at the map, Bennington County is empty. I thought, 'We need to fill that up,'" she said.

Lee said the system shifts throughout the day to capture as much of the sun as possible. "It takes advantage of the sun's rays from sun up to sun down every day at the optimal angle."

The system even inclines or declines depending on the season to continue energy production throughout the year. Additionally, the system, which is mounted on a pole, is wind resistant. It has sen-

See *SOLAR*, page 3A



Peter Crabtree

Solar electric systems, like this one in a file photo, can now be completely automated with AllSun Tracker solar electric system.



Law enforcement personnel listen to a discussion on bath salts on Thursday, in Montpelier. Days after a Vermont man's death was attributed to an overdose of designer drugs called bath salts, law enforcement personnel met to discuss the latest drug scourge to hit Vermont.

Vt. bans more drug chemicals

DAVE GRAM
Associated Press

MONTPELIER — Vermont is roughly doubling — to about 170 — the number of chemicals it is banning as ingredients in so-called designer drugs.

That word came Thursday as dozens of state and federal law enforcement officials gathered at the Statehouse to strategize in a war on drugs that has expanded to substances called bath salts and spice.

"Our mission is to reduce the temptation to profit by spreading poison," said Michael Drescher, an assistant U.S. attorney in Vermont who briefed dozens of law enforcement and health officials on the federal government's role in the effort.

Gov. Peter Shumlin two weeks ago signed an emergency state rule designed to bar the sale of 86 chemicals in head shops and convenience stores around the state.

Marketed as benign products — some of the most popular of the items are sold as bath salts and potpourri — and often market "not for human consumption,"

the products are designed to produce a high when smoked, snorted or injected, but to have a chemical makeup that keeps them off state and federal banned drug lists.

"Our mission is to reduce the temptation to profit by spreading poison."

MICHAEL DRESCHER
Assistant U.S. Attorney for Vt.

Sarah Vose, chief toxicologist with the state Health Department, said as states have enacted emergency regulations expanding their lists of banned substances, makers of the designer drugs often alter just one chemical in a mix of them to stay off the banned list.

She said a new emergency rule expected to be enacted this month will add 84 more chemicals to the list of those not allowed to be sold in Vermont, and will try

to get ahead of the game by also banning analogs or derivatives — drugs designed to get around the regulations.

She acknowledged the challenges police will face as they encounter unfamiliar banned substances on the street. Many of the products are mislabeled, leaving authorities to "try to regulate products when we don't know their active ingredients," she said.

Thursday's meeting came just days after authorities announced what they said was Vermont's first death from one of the designer drugs. Autopsy results released earlier this week attributed the June 23 death of Christopher Tsacoyeanes, 28, of Clarendon, to an overdose of three of the chemicals in the class sold as bath salts.

Shumlin, who also addressed the group, said it is now believed bath salts also were a "contributing factor" in a May crash on Interstate 89 in Bolton that killed 29-year-olds Jason Potvin and April Otis

See *DRUGS*, page 6A



Weather
Isolated t'storms
High 87
Low 62

Emily Shaftsbury

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