

## Hartford school budget \$14.3M

By Doug La Rocque

The Hartford Central School District has released its proposed budget for the 2023-24 school year with a spending plan totaling \$14.3 million, up 5.265% over the current year.

That translates to a proposed tax hike of 1.9%.

Also on the ballot is a proposal to purchase a single 66-passenger bus at a cost not to exceed \$160,000.

There is one school board position up for election, that being the seat currently held by Ronald Smith. He is also the only person to have filed a nominating petition and thus is the only person on the ballot.

Budget voting takes place on Tuesday, May 16.

## Neighbors

### raceville

Alice Baker/642-0727

Sympathy is extended to the family of William L. Lockwood of County Route 21, our community, who passed away on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at Glens Falls Hospital. Arrangements are being handled by the Robert M. King Funeral Home. A private gathering for the family will be held at a later date.

An estate sale will be held at the Raceville Community House on Butler Road on Saturday and Sunday, May 6 and 7. All are welcome.

Happy birthday wishes to Caroline Baker of Hampton who celebrated her birthday yesterday, May 3.

Saturday visitors of Alice Baker, Butler Road, were Ashley Baker and Nick Nichols of Middle Grove, New York.

A Jack & Jill bridal shower was held for Ashley Baker and Nick Nichols in Corinth, New York, on Sunday, April 30. Attendees from our area were Mr. and Mrs. Dan Baker and sons Daniel and Joe of Stoddard Road, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Baker of Middle Granville (parents of the bride) and Alice and JoAnne Baker of Butler Road, this community.

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# At 16, he's a maple syrup producer

By Doug La Rocque

Keegan Bryant recently turned 16 years old, but the sophomore at Granville High School shows maturity and business acumen well beyond his years.

The Pawlet, Vermont, resident is one of 22 students across New York State to receive the NY Future Farmers of America (FFA) Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) grant which he will use to continue producing maple syrup.

Speaking with the Granville school news column, Bryant said "it's a huge honor to receive the SAE Grant. Using it, I have been able to turn a passion of mine into a fully functioning business because of the support provided by my friends and family and through my experience with the FFA program here in Granville."

In the school's article young Bryant adds "this grant will help me chase my dreams and keep doing what I love."

### It's in his blood

Keegan tells NYVT Media he has grown up in a sugar house and at the tender age of eight constructed his own evaporator and began producing syrup. Over the next eight years that hobby has become a business, complete with its own LLC (still in his father's name because of his age).

He now leases more than 400 acres of maple woods with more than 7,000 taps and just purchased an Army surplus flatbed truck with oversized tires to better get around his extensive acreage. The truck is complete with syrup tanks on the back.

Bryant said he has learned so much from his FFA classes and has been able in turn to bring friends and classmates out to his operation. He said they are curious about the sugaring process and tells NYVT Media it is "exhilarating to be able to both show and explain to them how maple sugaring works." He also thanks his instructor for doing a tremendous job of instilling in him and others a sense of

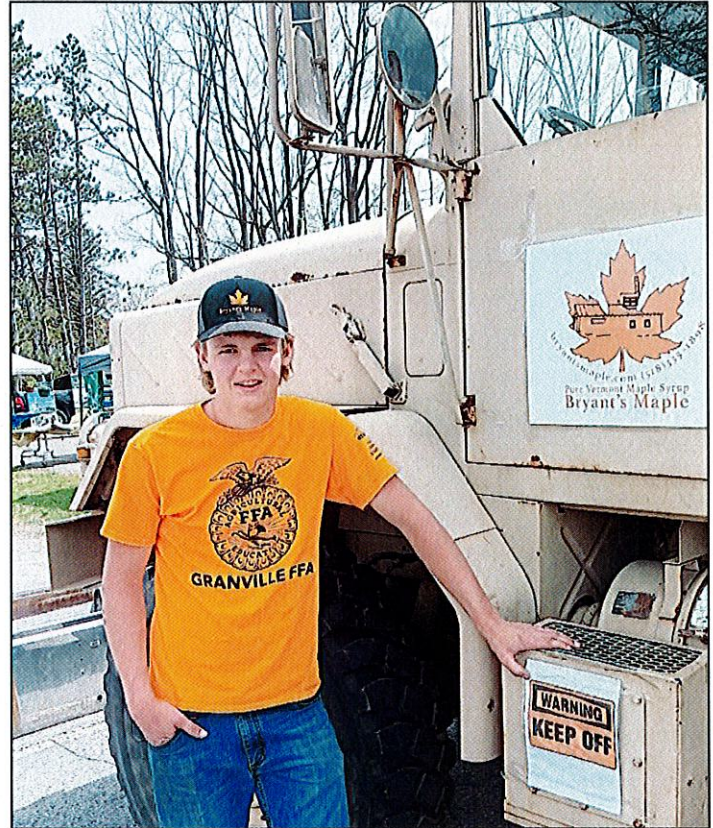


Photo by Doug La Rocque

Keegan Bryant stands in front of the most recent purchase for his fledgling business, a large Army surplus truck.

collaboration.

Keegan sells both retail and wholesale, providing other companies with products to make various maple sugar confections.

Besides doing well with his classes, Keegan is a starter on the school's varsity basketball team. When the sap isn't flowing, Bryant also has his own

landscaping business.

### Another accolade

Bryant has just learned that he has been named a 2023 Vermont Maple Ambassador and will be traveling to St. Albans, Vermont, soon to join others in the program to become acclimated with the job and what is expected of them.

## Slate Valley Center residents show appreciation to OT staff

Residents at Slate Valley Center in Granville created a heartfelt poster to thank the occupational therapy team during Occupational Therapy Month this past April.

The center's therapists are well-liked and are committed to work hands on with the residents to increase their independence in carrying out day-to-day activities. Whether residents are short- or long-term, occupational therapists are key to aspects of daily life, such as reaching in a kitchen, getting in and out of a car and bending to sweep, mop or vacuum.

"This poster really is so special and it comes from the hearts of our residents. It shows that the care we are giving through our OT rehab program is appreciated," said director of rehabilitation Kylie Cavallaro. "Our OT team, who are trained to aid and assist people on ways to overcome their particular problems and various circumstances, have one common goal, and that is helping our residents live more independent lives. These are folks who now need assistance due to a particular injury, illness, mental health issues, a certain developmental delay or even the common realities of aging."

At Slate Valley Center, nearly 44% of the residents are at or above an expected ability to move about at the time of discharge, versus the national average of 40%. Also, almost 18% of the residents see a change in their ability to move, versus the national average of a little over 16½%.



Slate Valley Center's occupational therapy staff with the poster created by the center's residents in celebration of Occupational Therapy Month.