

BUSINESS

connections



Agri-Mark Says Hello to Waitsfield

Gail Greaves works on the Customer Satisfaction Team for Cabot Creamery, one of the Agri-Mark brands



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BUSINESS connections

In an age of more, faster, and newer, quality still counts. No matter what kind of business you run, customers will always appreciate a focus on quality. You can express a commitment to quality in many ways, from the products you offer to the level of service you provide.

In this issue of *Business Connections*, Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT) explores different ways to keep quality in mind, starting with the Business Spotlight on page 3, which features **Agri-Mark**, a dairy farmer cooperative that supports its customers with excellence. Agri-Mark recently moved one of its offices from Montpelier to Waitsfield, and is excited about its new home.

On page 4, we celebrate our own 110-year commitment to quality with a special **tribute to former WCVT owners, Alton and Eunice Farr**. These intrepid business people (who also happen to be my grandparents) kept the company going for 50 years, and started many of the traditions and philosophies that we still adhere to today.

Next, you'll learn about a company that decided to upgrade its technology to better assist customers. Turn to page 5 to see how **HouseNeeds leveraged WCVT's Hosted IP Phone Service** to support its call center with low up-front costs and high scalability.

WCVT's support for the local area helps to enhance the quality of life here. You can **Feel Good About Choosing WCVT** as your provider because it's good for your business and the community; turn to page 6 to learn more. On page 7, catch up on recent and upcoming events in **WCVT in the Community**.

As always, let us know how we can contribute to the quality of your company!

Sincerely,

Gregg Haskin
President & CEO

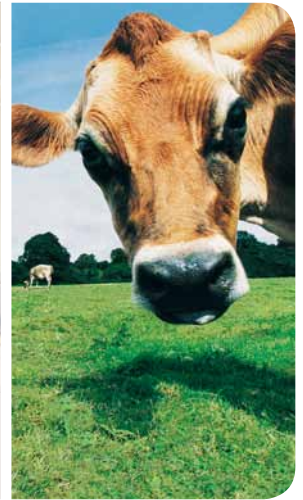
Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Agri-Mark

Relying on technology to stay close to dairy farmers, customers, and coworkers



Agri-Mark has a new home. To accommodate a growing staff, the company recently moved 90 employees from Montpelier and Burlington to a newly renovated location in Waitsfield and is quickly integrating into its new location. Employees are checking out local shops and restaurants along with getting involved in the community.

Not Just Any Cheddar

As a dairy farmer cooperative (co-op), the company is owned by 1,200 New England and New York dairy farmers; 100 percent of profits go back to the farmers. In 1992, Agri-Mark merged with Cabot Creamery; it still uses the Cabot Creamery brand to market some of its products.

The company pays close attention to the quality of its products. Doug DiMento, Director of Corporate Communications at Agri-Mark, says, “We are focused on quality from farm to consumer and it pays off. We’ve had many rave reviews and we recently won the World’s Best Cheddar award at the World Championship Cheese Contest, an international competition that’s held every other year.”

Agri-Mark also strives to be a quality employer and corporate citizen. The company is a B Corporation, which means it exhibits high social and environmental performance.

New Location, New Technology

The new Waitsfield office is one of several administrative, production, and packaging facilities in New England and Vermont. Part of the work that happens in the Waitsfield office is communication—both with farmers and customers. DiMento says, “We communicate via the Internet and smartphones with farmers. This is a very important part of our business, as is responding to our wholesale customers and consumer calls.”

The phone and Internet services provided by WCVT support improved and more efficient communication. Agri-Mark now has Wi-Fi, which they didn’t have in their old building. In addition, the company has high-speed fiber optic service that connects each of its locations and powers teleconferencing services. Their phone system is designed to handle more users, allowing for continued support as their business needs evolve. Agri-Mark also uses Cable TV service from WCVT, allowing employees to watch news while on break.

Being in a rural town isn’t a hindrance because we have the services that WCVT offers.”

—DOUG DIMENTO, DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS, AGRI-MARK

DiMento notes, “Most of our work is done online. We are grateful for reliable, high speed service. We make the best cheddar in the world and we need the Internet to market it. Being in a rural town isn’t a hindrance because we have the services that WCVT offers. And during the renovation, they were helpful every step of the way.”

Kris Merchant, Business Solutions Engineer at WCVT, adds, “We identify with Agri-Mark because they also support their customers with excellence. When we provide reliable services for a customer of this size, we feel like we are not just another vendor, but a partner.”



Happy 110th Anniversary WCVT!

A tribute to the grandparents of present-day president Gregg Haskin

WCVT has proudly served the Mad River Valley region of Vermont since 1904. As technology has changed, so have our products and services. But what hasn't changed is our steadfast commitment to keeping local families and businesses connected to what matters most.

This year marks our 110th anniversary, and we can't think of a better way to celebrate than to take a step back in time and honor Eunice and Alton Farr, grandparents of current WCVT president Gregg Haskin. The Farris managed and helped operate the Waitsfield-Fayston Telephone Company, as it was known at the time.

Alton Farr Restores Phone Service

The following story ran in the *Barre Times* on November 10, 1927:

Repaired Phone By Canoe And Thus Linked Up Mad River Valley with Outside World.

Telephone service to the Mad River Valley was restored last night for the first time since last Thursday's flood. Manager Alton E. Farr of the Waitsfield and Fayston Co. did it by coming from Waitsfield to Middlesex in a canoe, which carried himself and the necessary equipment.

Mr. Farr stopped along the Mad River and repaired the poles and wires for a distance of 12 miles.

The connection between the independent lines and the New England line was broken at Middlesex; but workmen of the latter quickly strung a wire from one of the Burlington trunk lines and thus connected Waitsfield and the Mad River Valley with the outside world.



Eunice Farr: A Brief Biography

Eunice Farr, grandmother of Gregg Haskin, current president, was born in Warren, Vermont on December 13, 1897. When her husband, Alton Farr, died in 1940, Eunice started managing the telephone company by herself.

This was a notable feat in an industry and era clearly dominated by men; Eunice was one of the first women to run a utility company

in the United States. During her tenure, the responsibility to repair, maintain, install, and troubleshoot the entire telephone system fell on her.

Over the years, Eunice developed an advanced level of understanding of every aspect of the telephone business. It was not uncommon for her to be seen performing maintenance on the outside plant. Wearing her house dress and apron, she would venture out in the old truck to untangle lines, replace batteries, or install a new phone for someone. One Valley resident claimed that Eunice even climbed poles but she adamantly denied this.

Eunice remained president of the telephone company until her death in 1965. Many of the philosophies that she developed are still ingrained in the way WCVT operates today.





HouseNeeds

Leverages WCVT Hosted IP Phone Service for Their Waitsfield Call Center

About HouseNeeds

HouseNeeds is North America's leading provider of energy efficient, environmentally friendly, home heating and ventilation products and is based right here in Waitsfield, Vt. The company's local showroom is worth a visit, as it's filled with all kinds of energy saving products, including solar heating systems; pellet, gas, and wood stoves; radiant heat supplies; tankless water heaters; high efficiency boilers; Rinnai gas space heaters; and other related items.

With Hosted IP Phone Service from WCVT, I'm confident that I have both the technology in place to grow with me, and a local provider who is here to support me and my business."

—BRANWELL LEPP, PRESIDENT, HOUSENEEDS

A large part of HouseNeeds' business is online sales through its website at www.houseneeds.com. Visitors to this site will find many of the same items as in the

showroom plus plumbing supplies, HVAC systems, house fans, and repair parts for the equipment HouseNeeds sells.

The Challenge

An existing hardware-based phone system wasn't able to keep up with the changing needs of the company. The old phones needed to be updated with current technology to reduce costs, help employees be more efficient, and serve customers better.

The Solution and Benefits

HouseNeeds worked with WCVT employees Kris Merchant, Nick Sterner, and Todd Garthaffner to design a phone system that could meet its complex needs and replace its older, failing hardware-based system.

HouseNeeds Owner Branwell Lepp says, "We've been a customer of WCVT for many years, so we already had a good working relationship and they had an understanding of what we needed. We wanted the new system to not only replicate existing functionality and work with our existing business processes, but also be flexible and scalable enough to meet our future needs, and most of all, be affordable."

• Low Up-front Costs and Scalability

HouseNeeds made the switch to a hosted solution with very little upfront investment. The new hosted solution provides increased flexibility, and unlike the existing hardware-based system, it can easily grow with the company as needed.

• Future Proofing

"With Hosted IP Phone Service from WCVT, I'm confident that I have both the technology in place to grow with me, and a local provider who is here to support me and my business as my needs continue to grow and change," comments Lepp.

Interested In Learning More About Hosted IP Phone Services For Your Business?

If you are a WCVT business customer and want to learn more about how Hosted IP Phone Service can help your business, please contact Kris Merchant directly at the number below. He will gladly visit your business and discuss your telecommunications needs and the role a hosted solution from WCVT can play:

Kris Merchant, 802-496-8554
kmerchant@wcv.com

Feel Good About Choosing WCVT

Doing business with us is good for your business and the community



WCVT knows your business has options when it comes to choosing a provider for communications services. So we want you to know how much we appreciate your loyal support of WCVT. It's truly a win-win situation when a local business like yours chooses a local provider like us for voice, data, and video solutions:

It's good for your business. No matter what communications challenges you have, you get reliable, cost-efficient solutions from WCVT. Plus, you can count on responsive technical support and customer service from our local staff.

It's good for economic development. WCVT employs area residents and the dollars you spend with us stay close to home. In addition, WCVT is providing the advanced communications services required for economic development and for the very survival of our rural areas.

It's good for community organizations and events. WCVT is actively involved in the communities we serve through membership in local chamber and civic clubs as well as participation in, and sponsorship of, many area events. They include:

- Addison County Chamber of Commerce
- Fivetown Business Association
- Hinesburg Business and Professional Association
- Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Lamoille Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Mad River Valley Rotary Club
- Special Olympics Vermont – Summer Games
- Stowe Area Association

- Vermont Chamber of Commerce
- Vermont Foodbank
- Western Slopes Business Association

It's good for volunteering and donations. WCVT gives generously each year, through volunteer hours and financial donations, to a wide variety of local community organizations.

It's good for area students and schools. WCVT offers a college scholarship program to local high school seniors. As a member of Foundation for Rural Education and Development, we have co-written grants to fund projects aimed at bettering our local communities and technology grants for our rural schools.

Thanks again for choosing WCVT. Good things happen when we work together.

WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

It's now more important than ever to support our local businesses. When you buy local, everyone benefits. Please support the community by doing business with these new neighbors.

- **Elusive Moose** – Waitsfield – 496-6444
- **Food 4 Farmers** – Hinesburg – 482-6868
- **Ironwood Building and Design** – Bristol – 453-6917
- **Landscape Architecture Planning** – Charlotte – 425-5299
- **Lucas Dairy** – Starksboro – 453-7983
- **M and C Family Farm** – Charlotte – 425-2283
- **Poésie Tissée** – Bridport – 758-6836
- **Red Clover Family Dentistry** – Bristol – 453-3911
- **Scott's Home Repair LLC** – Huntington – 434-4448

WCVT in the Community

Being a local business means that our customers are also our neighbors and friends. Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom feels strongly that community involvement isn't just a nice thing to do; it's the right thing to do. Here are some highlights of recent and upcoming activities:



Mad River Valley Blood Drive Collected 61 Pints

Another successful blood drive was held at the WCVT office in Waitsfield on March 25. The Red Cross set a goal of 57 pints and a total of 61 were collected. A special thanks to event organizer Eric Haskin from WCVT — and to everyone who volunteered to assist with the event — as well as those who came out and donated, helping to make this bi-annual blood drive a success.



Addison County Farm and Field Days

August 5 through 9 – New Haven

WCVT will again be exhibiting at the Addison County Farm and Field Days, so make sure to stop by our booth in the Lucien Paquette Building to say hello and pick up some of our famous hats and gliders. The Addison County Farm and Field Days is located off of Route 17 in New Haven and is Vermont's largest agricultural fair. For details and a list of events, visit www.addisoncountyfielddays.com.

WCVT Exhibits at Vermont Business and Industry Expo

May 22-23 – Burlington

Thanks to everyone who stopped by our booth at the Vermont Business EXPO held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center. The EXPO is northern New England's largest business-to-business trade show, attracting over 3,000 business leaders and hosting nearly 200 exhibitors. It's always great to network with our local businesses and fellow exhibitors.

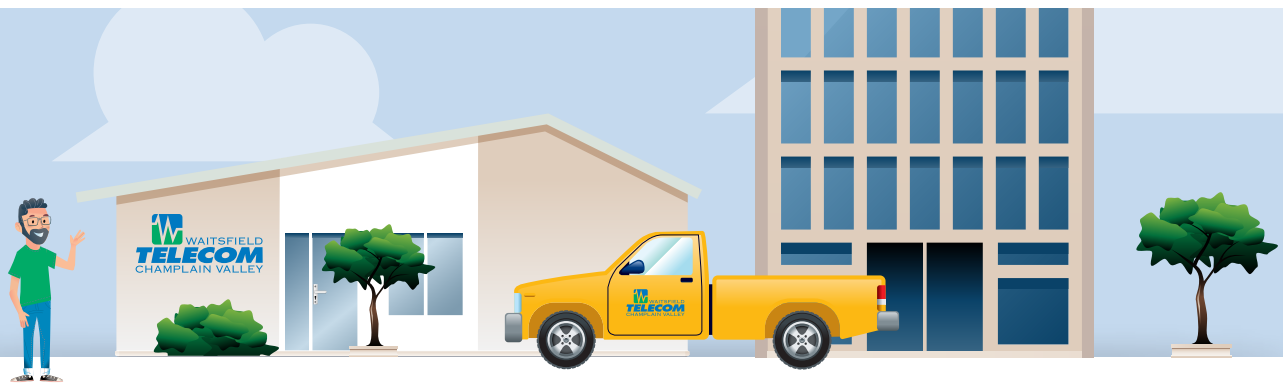


17th Annual Vermont Festival of Arts

August 1 through Labor Day Weekend – Mad River Valley

The towns of Vermont's Mad River Valley play host in August to one of the most diverse festivals in New England. With more than 100 quality arts-related events and activities, the Vermont Festival of the Arts is designed to entertain the soul, enlighten the mind, and energize the spirit. Every visitor will find something to enjoy at this multidimensional, multi-media, multi-age extravaganza. Events take place every day during the month of August and are perfect for mid-week visitors, weekend guests, second-home owners, and local residents. For details and a list of events, visit www.vermontartfest.com.

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom provides each employee with sixteen hours of community service time yearly to be used on local community service projects. If your organization has a project in the making and is looking for help, contact Alan Jones at 496-8328 or ajones@wcv.com to discuss the possibility of WCVT participation.



BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

Ask Goliath. Or the Titanic. Or the Roman Empire.

Sometimes bigger isn't always better. When you're the biggest, it's hard to keep an eye on the little things. That's true for companies, too—when you're a big, national company, it's easy to forget about the people in the communities you serve.

Sometimes, smaller is better. Waitfield and Champlain Valley Telecom is directly involved with the community—from volunteering, supporting local events, serving our neighbors, and great customer service from people you know. All that, and we still provide the world-class technology you expect from the big guys. WCVT has been committed to the people of Vermont since 1904.

Give us a call or stop by today to start the conversation.

800.496.3391



www.wcvt.com