

[Hawlemont Regional School, timber farmers to launch wood bank](#)

Bella Levavi, Staff Reporter, Greenfield Recorder Published: 02-23-2024 1:43 PM

CHARLEMONT — Hawlemont Regional School has partnered with Jay Healy of Hall Tavern Farm to establish a wood bank at the elementary school, providing free wood to the broader community.

"I think this will be a great partnership given what the school already does," Healy said. "It will serve as a valuable public service project for the kids and make a significant contribution to the community."

The town recently secured an \$8,894 grant from the Alliance for Green Heat to launch the project. The funds will be allocated to three local timber farmers — Hicks Family Farm, Hall Tavern Farm and Brandon Reynolds Firewood — to purchase 10 cords of wood from each.

The Alliance for Green Heat is a non-profit that advocates for modern wood and pellet heating systems as a low-carbon, sustainable and affordable energy solution, according to its website.

"Hawlemont is thrilled to collaborate with the newly-established wood bank. We encourage our students to take care of themselves and each other; the wood bank will support our community in doing just that," Principal Amber Tulloch wrote in an email to the Recorder.

Due to farmers' inability to obtain sufficiently dry wood at this late stage in the season, wood collection will commence next summer, with the bank set to support the community by next fall when people begin heating their homes for the cold weather.

Hall Tavern Farm has constructed bins capable of holding two cords each to be used for wood storage at the school. When the bank is ready to operate, children at the school will likely participate in a community service project involving stacking the wood. Healy noted that Hawlemont is an ideal location for the bank, due to its central positioning and easy accessibility for residents.

"It's about ensuring that wood reaches people who are less fortunate than the rest of us," Healy said.

He indicated that once the bank is operational, individuals will be able to request wood through the town or the school, with Healy overseeing requests.

Tulloch and Healy anticipate numerous educational opportunities stemming from the addition of the wood bank to the elementary school.

"It presents an opportunity to discuss both renewable and nonrenewable heating sources, their respective impacts, costs, as well as teamwork and empathy," Tulloch wrote.

Healy expressed his hope to host school groups at his timber farm to educate them about the regional timber industry.

Healy expects the initial 30 cords to last approximately two years. "Hopefully, people can keep the momentum going so it can continue in the future," he said.

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