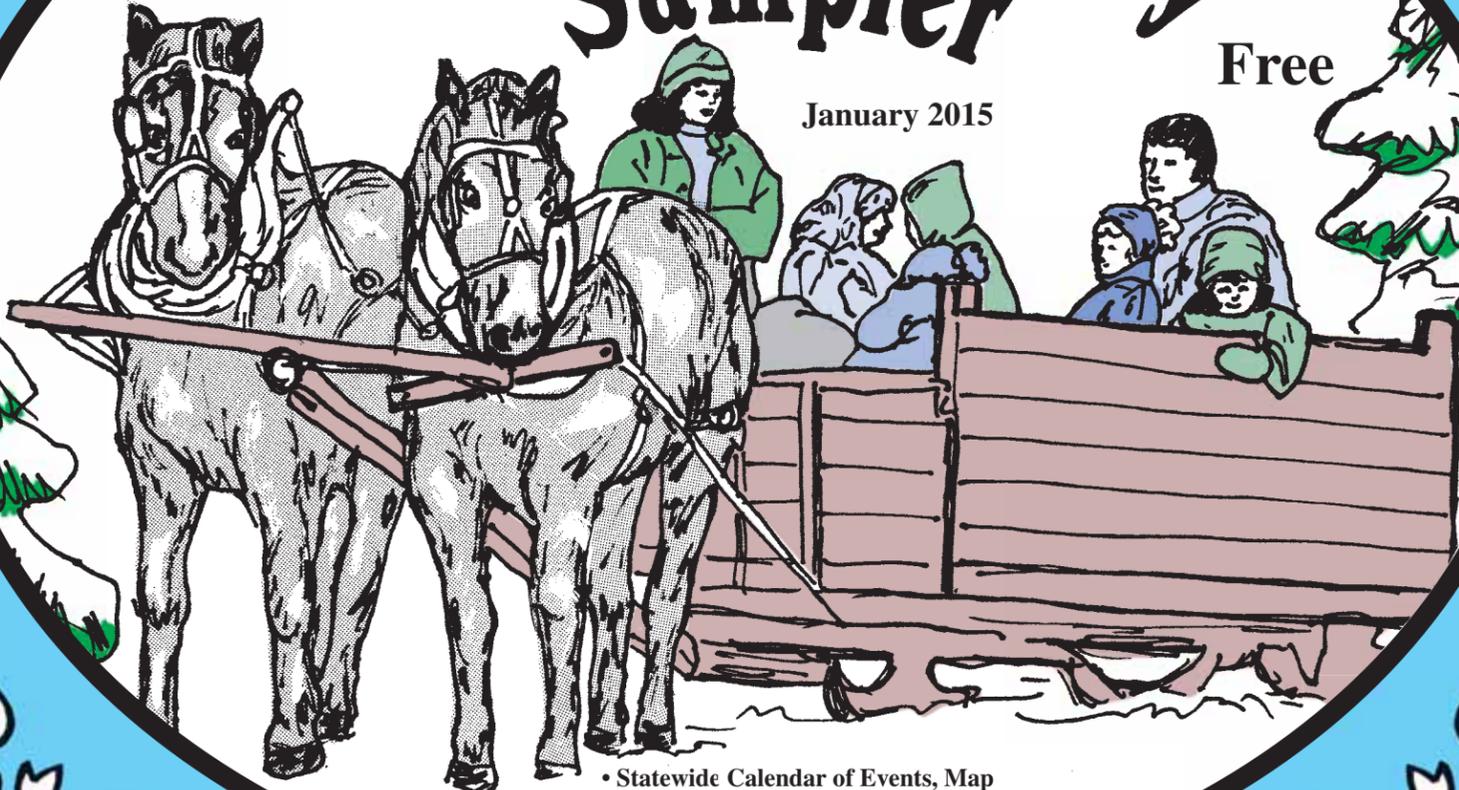


Vermont Country Sampler

Free

January 2015

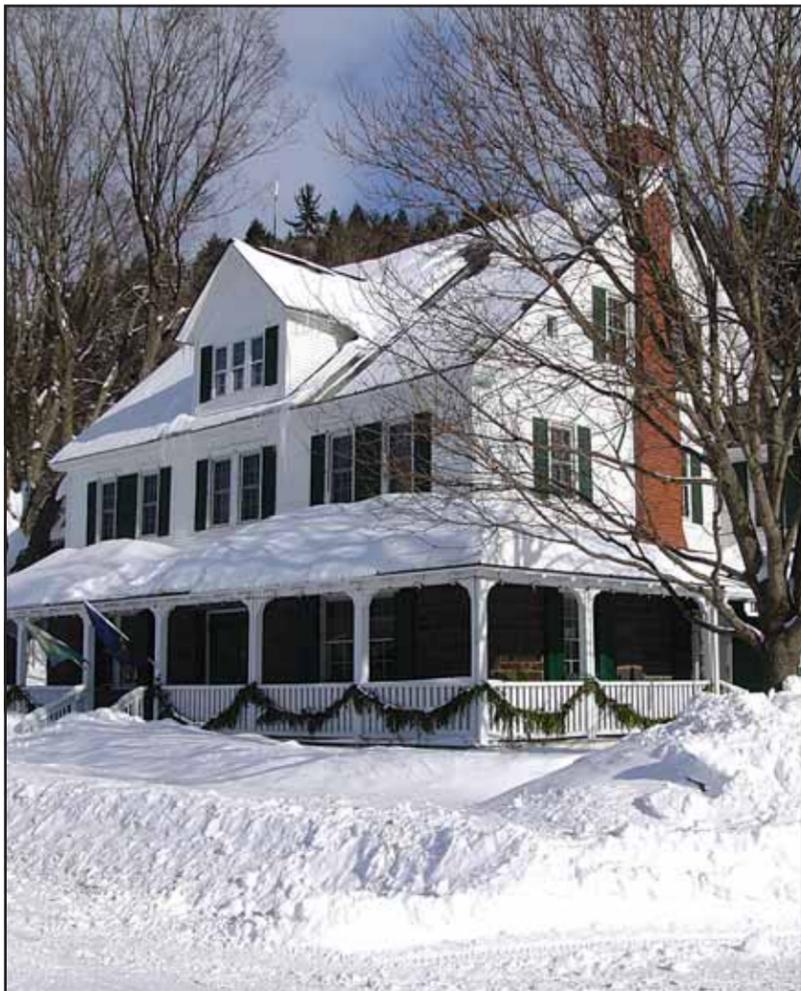


N. Cassidy

- Statewide Calendar of Events, Map
- Inns, B&B's, Dining, Real Estate
- Sights to See, Things to Do
- Plenty of Good Reading!

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January Journal

A Winter Gauge

by Bill Felker

Every landscape is, as it were, a state of the soul, and whoever penetrates into both is astonished to find how much likeness there is in each detail.

—Henri Frederic Amiel

The fallen leaves are coming apart now underneath the snow, letting go of their shapes, dissolving back into the ground.

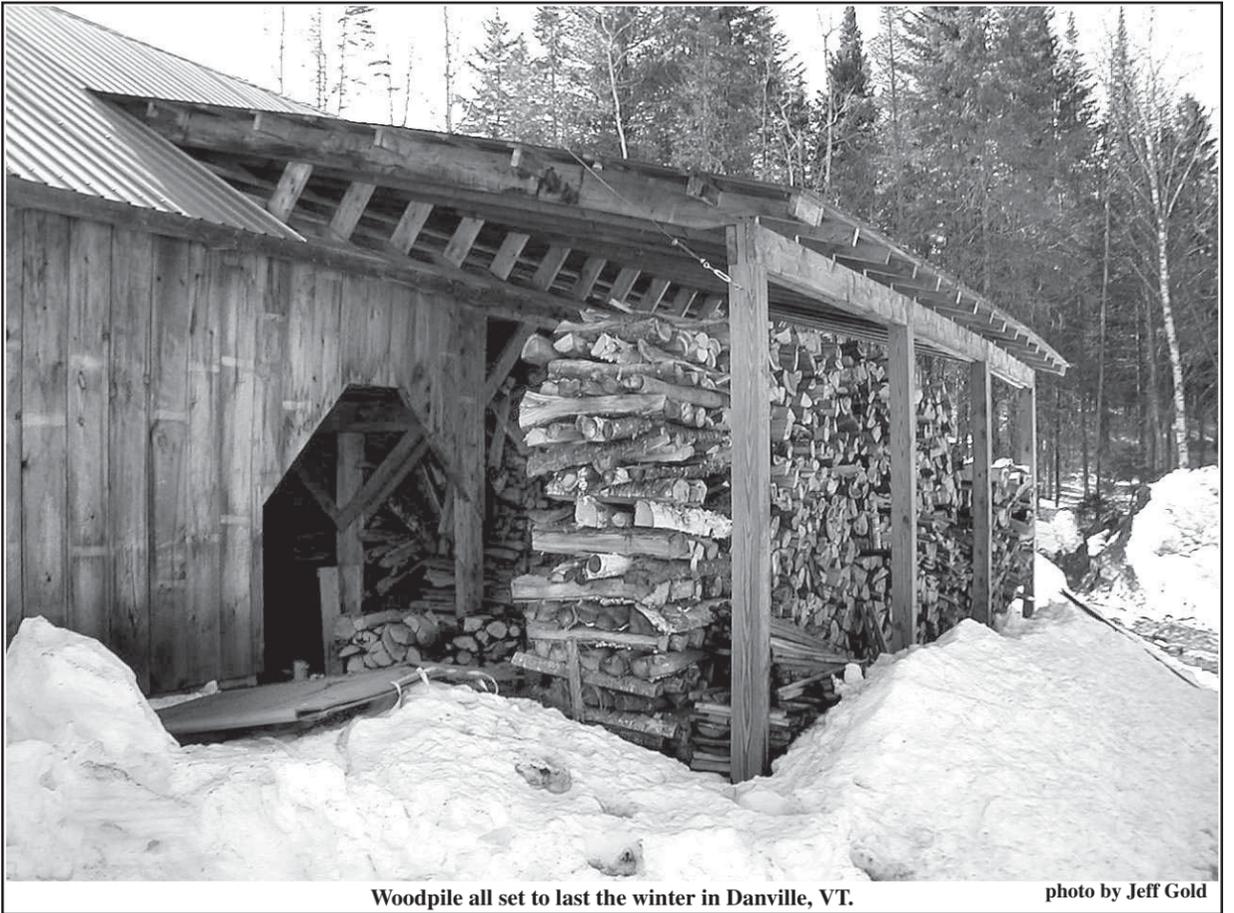
In a thaw or digging through the woodpile, I sometimes find it hard to tell a box elder leaf from a maple or an Osage from an elm.

The leaves accept the weather, their resilience turned to receptivity by the damp and the cold. Their surfaces have become porous and absorbent, some-

times skeletal, offering no resistance to the season. As Middle Winter advances, the breakdown of the leaves parallels the rate at which the sun rises earlier and sets later.

After January 15, night recedes a little better than two minutes every day all the way to early June, the speed of Early Spring's approach matched by the quiet, wise passivity of the aging foliage.

Buried under snow or mud, the leaves watch the universe, and their decay is a plain and easy measure of the tilt of Earth in relation to the sun. The most practical astronomy may be the closest astronomy, teaching that loss is the simplest gauge of rebirth.



Woodpile all set to last the winter in Danville, VT.

photo by Jeff Gold

Bellows Falls, VT

Stone Church Arts Presents a Season of Winter Concerts

A Festival of Mandolin Chamber Music

Saturday, January 18, 3 p.m.

The New England Mandolin Ensemble is in the vanguard of musical groups exploring both newly-composed and nearly-forgotten works for classical mandolin ensemble.

Directed by Prof. August Watters of Berklee College of Music, the ensemble presents an engaging and enjoyable concert experience for audiences of classical music, traditional folk music, and fans of the mandolin, mandola, mandocello, and classical guitar. Tickets \$17, students and seniors \$13.

Russian Duo

Friday, January 23, 7:30 p.m.

Russian Duo is an international project, born out of a love of traditional music and classical elegance. Oleg Kruglyakov, balalaika virtuoso, and Terry Boyarsky, masterful pianist, have teamed up for exuberant performances of soulful, passionate music. Their repertoire draws from Russian folk music, romances, dances, classical music, gypsy melodies and Russian songs. Tickets \$17, students and seniors \$13.

Francesca Anderegg, Solo Violin

Saturday, February 7, 7:30 pm

Lauded for her "exceptional performances" and "fiery interpretation," violinist Francesca Anderegg delivers elegant and impassioned accounts of contemporary and classical music. Her playing has been praised by the New York Times for its "dark, mournful tone" and "virtuosic panache." She has collaborated with the leading musicians of the concert stage, and regularly performs throughout the United States. Committed to teaching as well as performing, she is currently Assistant Professor of Violin at St. Olaf College, and teaches at Interlochen Center for the Arts in the summers. Tickets \$17, students and seniors \$13.

Pete's Posse, Roots Trio

Saturday, February 28, 7:30 p.m.

The well known multi-instrumentalist and troubadour Pete Sutherland, formerly of Metamora and Rhythm in Shoes, has decades of concert touring, teaching and studio production behind him. His all-Vermont "Posse" includes his teenage fiddle protégé, and fellow Clayfoot Strutter, Oliver Scanlon,

and the dynamic accompanist and performer Tristan Henderson, also of Atlantic Crossing and Pipers Den.

Featuring Pete's rootsy songs, the band's original and traditional fiddle music, and a few unique covers. Tickets \$17, students and seniors \$13.

Tim Ray, Solo Piano

Saturday, March 7, 7:30 p.m.

Perhaps best known as long-time pianist for Lyle Lovett, Tim Ray's wide-ranging skills as a soloist and accompanist have afforded him the opportunity to perform with legendary performers from all walks of music. Appearing on over 70 recordings to date, Tim has performed in concert with an extensive list of pop music icons, notably Aretha Franklin, Bonnie Raitt, Jane Siberry and Soul Asylum. His classical credits include solo performances and concerts with Gunther Schuller, the Boston Pops, and the Boston Classical Orchestra. He is currently on the faculty of the Berklee College of Music, has lectured and taught improvisation at Harvard University and MIT, and also conducts workshops and clinics at colleges and high schools throughout the U.S. and Canada. Tickets \$17, students and seniors \$13.

The Michele Fay Band

Saturday, April 4, 7:30 p.m.

The Michele Fay Band is a compelling and captivating ensemble featuring original and Americana music from Vermont. Michele's heartfelt lyrics are woven seamlessly together as she delivers with a crystal clear, authentic voice.

Her backing band is a perfect match for Michele's talent as a singer-songwriter. Doug Reid, on fiddle, provides a sweetness of tone that is brilliant and polished. Michael Santosusso, on upright bass, adds dynamic beat and perfectly matched harmonies. Michele's husband, Tim Price, contributes ideal melodic instrumentals on mandolin and guitar. Tickets \$17, students and seniors \$13.

The Bohemian Quartet

Saturday, April 11, 7:30 p.m.

The Bohemian Quartet was formed in 2005. Violinist, Stan Renard, a composer and virtuoso player with an impressive list of credentials, assembled the group with the idea of preserving the tradition and indulging in the virtuosic playing of classic gypsy music. Renard recruited like-minded friends: Dave Zinno on upright bass, Christine Harrington on cello, and Nancy Richardson on viola. Together they've made a commitment to the genre, and aspired to performing it with both reverence and adventure. Tickets \$17, students and seniors \$13.

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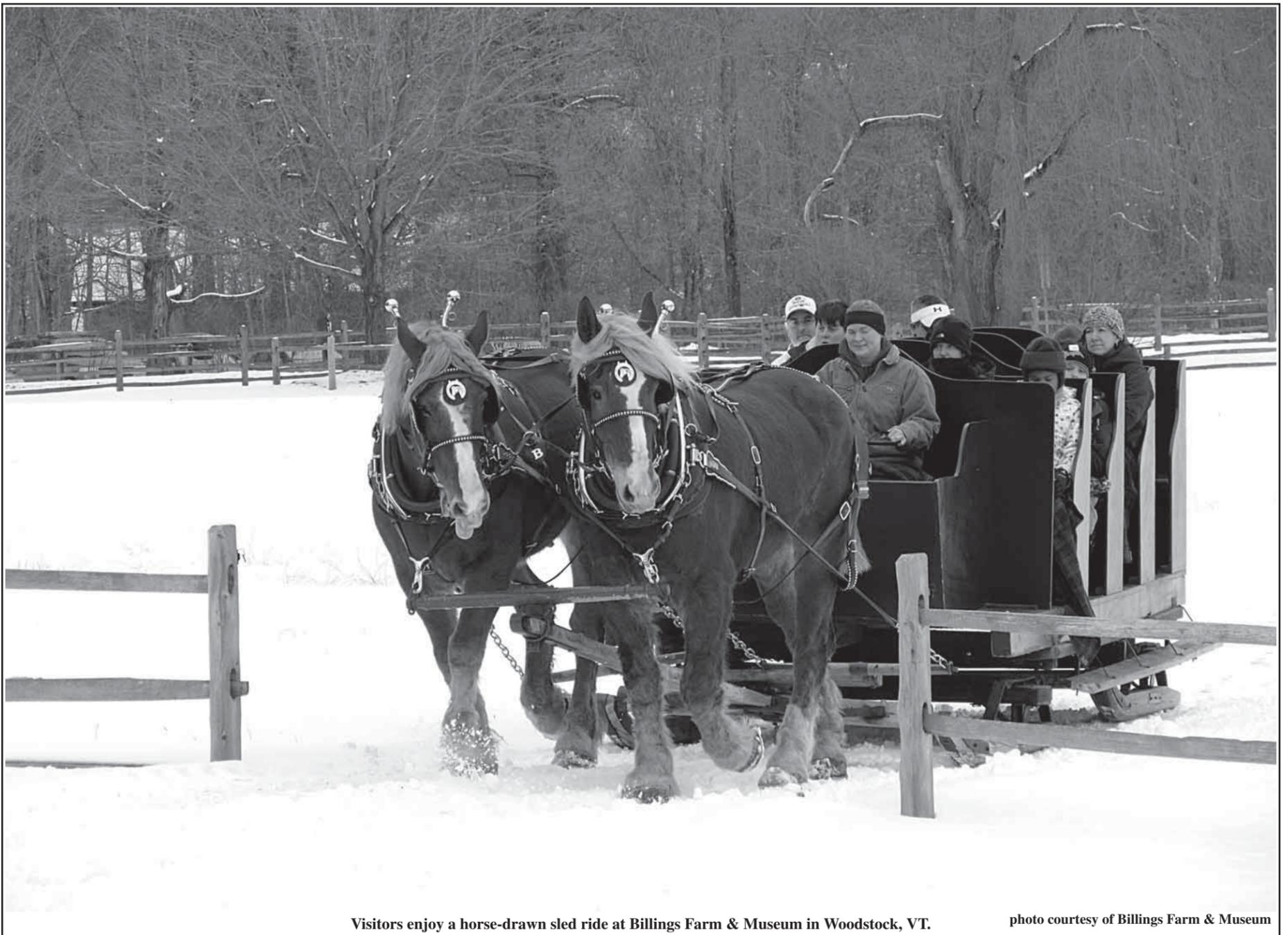
Vermont Country Sampler
January 2015, Vol. XXXI

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Calendar of Events published free of charge. Mail your information to us by the 10th of the preceding month.

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Visitors enjoy a horse-drawn sled ride at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT.

photo courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum

Woodstock, VT

Winter Festivities at Billings Farm & Museum

Billings Farm and Museum in Woodstock, VT has served as a gateway to Vermont's rural heritage since 1983. It is owned and operated by the Woodstock Foundation, Inc. and includes an award-winning operating dairy farm that continues a 142-year tradition of agricultural excellence, offering farm programs and historical exhibits.

Whether you live here or are visiting there is plenty for the whole family to see and do this winter at Billings Farm & Museum.

Sleigh Ride Weekend

January 17, 18, & 19

Horse-drawn sleigh rides, sledding with jack jumper sleds, and programs and activities for all ages plus the award-winning documentary, *A Time for Justice*, will be featured at the Billings Farm & Museum's Sleigh Ride Weekend on Saturday, Sunday, & Monday, January 17, 18, and 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Climb aboard the horse-drawn sleigh and enjoy a scenic ride through the frosty farm fields. Warm up with a visit to the dairy farm for interactive programs including *An Introduction to Milking and Milking the Herd* at 3:15 p.m. each day. In the Visitor Center, enjoy a cup of hot cider.

In observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend, the 38-minute, award-winning documentary film by Charles Guggenheim Productions, Inc., *A Time for Justice*, will be shown on the hour each day from, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the museum's theater.

Sleigh Ride Weekend admission includes sleigh rides, the operating farm, restored 1890 Farm House, activities, and the film.

Frederick Douglass Exhibit

Saturdays and Sundays in January
and Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend

Billings Farm & Museum will host the exhibit, Frederick Douglass, each Saturday and Sunday in January and Martin

Luther King, Jr. Weekend (Saturday through Monday), 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

As a young boy, Frederick Douglass experienced the horrors of life under slavery in the United States. This small exhibition explores his life, in Douglass' own words, and his escape to freedom. The exhibition features images, broadsides, and letters which explore Douglass's early life. Born a slave in Maryland, he made a daring escape to New York City in 1838. Once free, Douglass fought to end slavery and championed civil rights for all Americans. The exhibit Frederick Douglass was developed by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and made possible by a grant from the J.P. Morgan Foundation and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

The Frederick Douglass Exhibit was developed by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and made possible by a grant from the J.P. Morgan Foundation, with the cooperation of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Founded in 1994, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization de-

voted to the improvement of history education. The Institute has developed an array of programs for schools, teachers, and students that now operate in all 50 states, including a website that features the more than 60,000 unique historical documents in the Gilder Lehrman Collection.

Admission to the Frederick Douglass exhibit is included with regular admission to the Farm & Museum.

The operating dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and the restored and furnished farmhouse – plus programs and activities are included in the entrance fee. Admission: adults \$14; 62 & over \$13; children 5-15 \$8; 3-4 \$4; 2 & under, free.

Open daily May 1 through October 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekends November through February, and Christmas & Presidents' weeks, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Farm & Museum is located one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on VT Rt. 12.

Please call (802) 457-2355 for more information, activities and programs and a list of seasonal events, or visit www.billingsfarm.org.

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The Windham Thaw

Magellan braved all seas that roll,
 Commander Peary found the Pole,
 Leander swam the Hellespont,
 But I have tramped across Vermont
 And known far more about rough weather
 Than those three worthies put together;
 And the bitterest weather that ever I saw
 Was what they called, "a Windham thaw;"
 And if you'd learn what that might be,

Listen to me:

The wind comes down from the north-northeast
 At sixty miles an hour at least,
 Bringing a sweep of snow and hail,
 Freezing the milk in the foaming pail;
 Great boughs crack in the hemlock grove;
 Men sit close to the red-hot stove;
 The storm cloud sinks, the storm cloud lifts,
 Horses wallow among the drifts,
 The carter stamps to save his toes,
 Icicles hang from the postman's nose;
 Every blast has a tooth and claw,
 The farm boy's cheek is red and raw,
 Never a rooster dares to crawl,
 Towser cowers beneath the straw,
 The snow whirls up in a williwaw,
 For the devil is beating his mother-in-law,
 And *that's* what they call "a Windham thaw!"

—ARTHUR GUTERMAN
 Arlington, VT

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A stag in the winter woods in Central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

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VAULT Hosts Chocolate Tasting And Artisan Trunk Show

Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 7!

The VT State Craft Center, Gallery at the VAULT, on Springfield's Main Street, will host a trunk show for Rosie's Wonders along with our deliciously popular Annual Chocolate Tasting.

This event is free and open to the public and there will be chocolate for sale. Rosie will be showing her entire line of jewelry, necklaces, bracelets and earrings. Come enjoy Vermont's best artisan chocolate and Rosie's delectable eye candy!

Art making is a source of joy for Rosie Schulick of Brattleboro, VT. We recently

visited her Wonders studio where her joyful nature is reflected in her jewelry. Her necklaces are airy and light with striking semi-precious gems hand-knotted onto silk cord in surprisingly delicate and satisfying arrangements.

Gallery at the VAULT, a Vermont State Craft Center, is located at 68 Main St. in Springfield, VT. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The VAULT offers exhibits, classes, workshops, and items for sale.

For more information call (802) 885-7111. E-mail: galeryvault@vermontel.net. Or visit www.galleryvault.org.

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Misty Valley Books Presents New Voices 2015

Misty Valley Books' 21st Annual New Voices event takes place on Saturday, January 31, at 2 p.m., at the First Universalist Church in Chester, VT's Stone Village. The 21st New Voices will present six promising debut authors to talk about their work. Seating is limited, however, and tickets (\$10) are available at the Bookstore.

New Voices is a program which has attracted national attention, and a number of Misty Valley New Voices—including Dennis Lehane, Colum McCann, Arthur Golden, Gregory Maguire, Jennifer Egan, Alex Berenson, Heidi Durrow and Dr. Eben Alexander—have gone on to considerable fame.

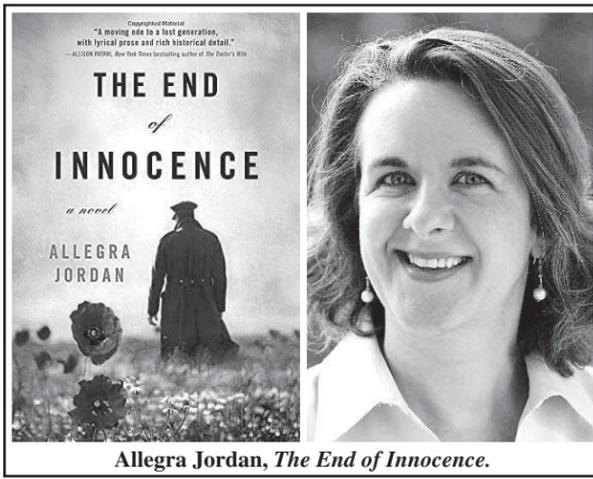
Over the years, New Voices has attracted thousands of loyal readers to hear well over 100 new authors read and discuss their work.

This year's group includes writers whose debut subjects are war, crime, journalism, Appalachia, rock and roll and education. The authors will be introduced to the audience by local community members.

In addition to the readings at the Stone Church, the public is invited to cross-country ski or snowshoe with the authors at Grafton Ponds on Saturday morning (trail fee), meet the authors at a reception at the church after the readings and then have drinks and/or dinner with the authors at the Fullerton Inn, on the Green next door to Misty Valley Books (full-course meal, prix fixe).

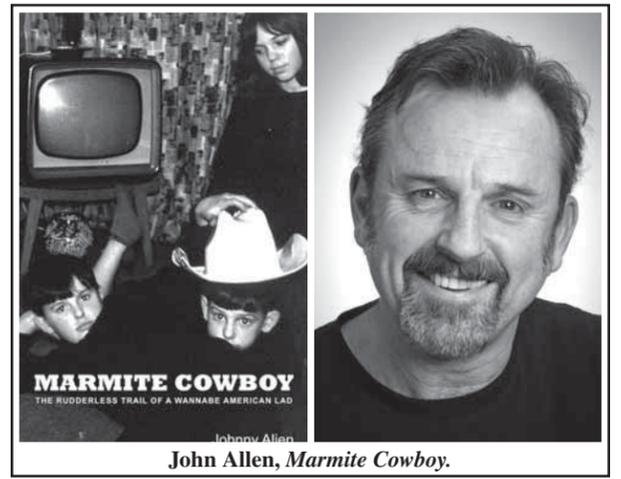
"Over the past two years I have done scores of readings and appearances," writes former New Voice Bruce Bauman (And the Word Was). "The Misty Valley Books New Voices weekend was as rewarding and as well organized as the LA Times Festival of Books or the Miami Book Fair. Those are major productions, with a cast of thousands, and are very much needed and appreciated by all authors and book lovers. But New Voices is exactly what the world of literary fiction and nonfiction is about; and we need more like it."

For more information stop by Misty Valley Books, call the bookstore at (802) 875-3400 or visit www.mvbooks.com or Facebook.



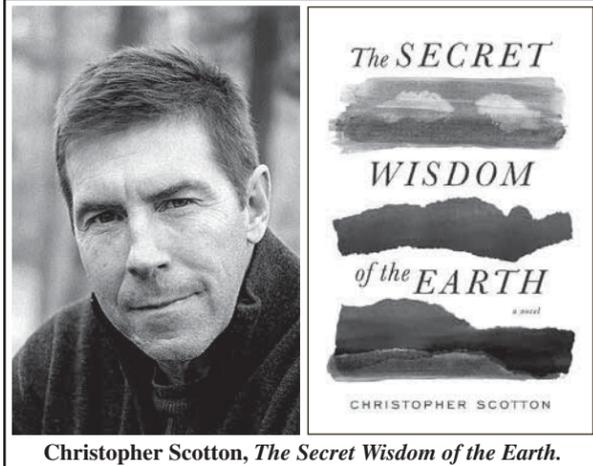
Allegra Jordan, *The End of Innocence*.

"Downton Abbey has found a brilliant successor in this spellbinding tale of love, death and war. The finest war fiction to be published in many years."—Jonathan W. Jordan.



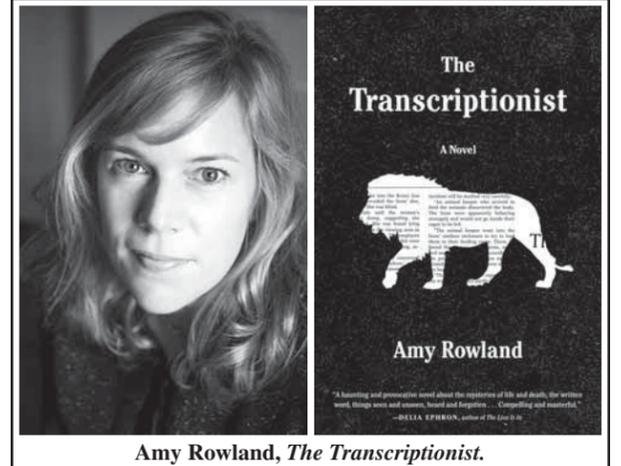
John Allen, *Marmite Cowboy*.

"This is what music is and what art is: everything you like and want and dream vectored through what you are, and John Allen is the genuine article."—William Monahan.



Christopher Scotton, *The Secret Wisdom of the Earth*.

"A novel epic in story and wisdom and all told through the deeply moving voice of the main character, Kevin, who has a heart as vast as the Blue Ridge Mountains he so loves."—Natalie S. Harnett.



Amy Rowland, *The Transcriptionist*.

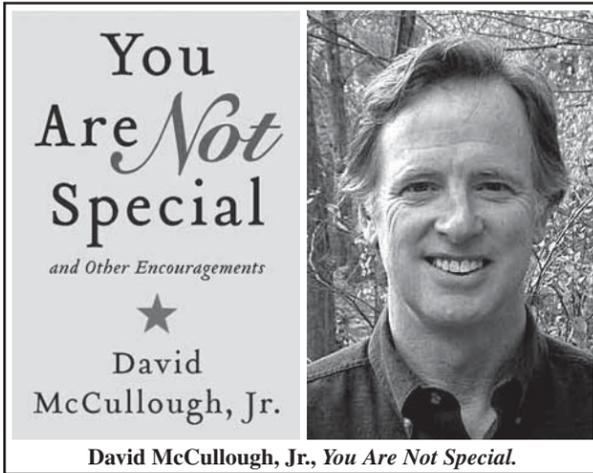
"A haunting and provocative novel about the mysteries of life and death, the written word, things seen and unseen, heard and forgotten...Compelling and masterful."—Delia Ephron.

Hoarded

When you, white, gracious, silvered over with
The silver of age, shall lay your waxen hand
Among a shelf of books and find the one
Made chiefly in your honor, you will say
In the cool, sentimental way
Of ladies who have saved out of their lives
A cameo face, a head of cameo hair
To set them off in opera audiences,
'He loved me once. This poet loved me once.'

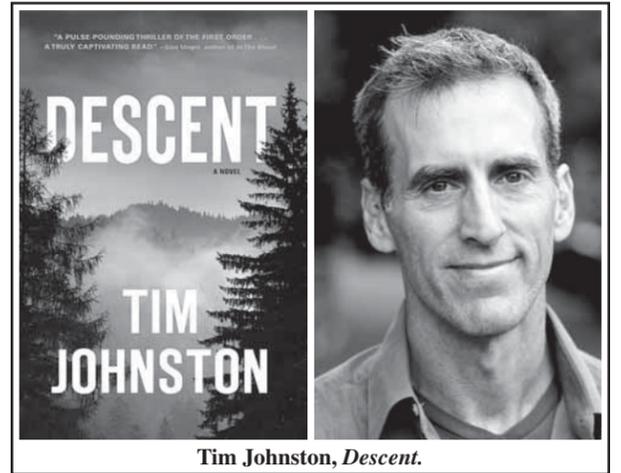
You shall be judged by that, and if you now
Are shrewd enough for thrift of self you'll be
Shrewd enough then to hoard a ruby lie
Among your silver, wax, and cameo:
Shrewd enough then to tell young poets, 'I—
I loved this poet once, and he loved me.'

— JAKE FALSTAFF



David McCullough, Jr., *You Are Not Special*.

"A clear-eyed but affectionate polemic urging kids to stop trying to be perfect and to take chances, even at the risk of failing. A profound celebration of the life well-lived."—Clayton M. Christensen.



Tim Johnston, *Descent*.

"A pulse-pounding thriller of the first order...a truly captivating read."—Lisa Unger.

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The Seasons of January

by Bill Felker

The Week of the Silver River

The sun is in and out over the river this afternoon. The snow shines with silvers, then momentary blues, then grays. The oaks are black against the bright land. The colors around me deepen, lighten depending on the thickness of the clouds and the remnants of fog from one path to the next. The wind doesn't reach here into middle prairie, but I can hear it coming up from the south.

An osage hillside: the yellow wood glows like the flush of expanding spring buds. Below the osage, hardy green chickweed and wild onion, garlic mustard, purple deadnettle, hemlock. The ground is sown with their pointers and dials that prove there is enough time. The new year will never be longer, will never be slower or more simple. I have counted everything before; I know how many days are left, how many days until I can see whatever piece of spring I want.

From the top of the ridge, the river is a path of light. As I walk down and around a sycamore, a sudden patch of fog blurs the divisions between the hills, and the bright curves disappear. The enclosure of whiteness shows both the confinement and the freedom of the valley. I have no landmarks, but there are no limits. There is no other side to the frozen river. The opposite bank is infinitely distant.

The Week of the Whinny of Robins

Under the cold veneer of deep winter, the natural history year quickens. Nighttime excursions of skunks, the occasional appearance of flies, an increase in opossum activity, the occasional passage of bluebirds, and the disappearance of autumn seeds all offer counterpoint to the subdued winter silence and the days of snow. And the arbitrary counterpoint of personal observations complements the seesaw moods of separate Januarys and the different characters of the various years.

A foot of new snow on the ground (twenty-one days now of snow cover), the dogs charged through the drifts. The river was frozen solid above the dam. Sleds came across on the ice as we walked the ridge path. Halfway to the buzzard roost, a long line of geese flew over, heading north, maybe in search of open water. Then at the bend of the river, suddenly the whinny of robins: we had walked into a large flock overwintering. All around us, birds moved through the undergrowth feeding on the honeysuckle berries.

The Week of Middle of Deep Winter

The year seems to pause now, frozen in the middle of deep winter, but natural history and our own mind of spring continue to be the sum of our observations. Since there is no limit to what a person might watch and record, stasis is only in the eye of the beholder. Like every other season, winter accumulates, is the product of the sensations it causes, is only what we see it to be, is all that we see it to be.

Then when the snow melts, the landscape appears part early spring, part late fall, the grass greening in sheltered corners, the fallen leaves darkening in decay. Osage fruits have become speckled with age and the cold. Coralberries are becoming paler, bittersweet hulls almost all fallen, red winterberries all over the ground. Purple deadnettle expanded into mounds beneath the snow. Pussy willows have cracked a little, and multiflora rose buds look ready to open. Snowdrops and crocus have started to push up through the mulch, no matter the cold.

The Week of the Thaw

I stand and look at the woodpile for a while, trying to estimate how much wood is left. I look in the front garden to see if the snowdrops have come up; usually they have, at least a little, their white tips an easy gauge of earliest spring—that is unless they are covered with snow.

I check the pussy willow catkins; sometimes I count how many are opening. That's another way to measure the progress of the year. I check the hellebores: their buds are sleek and soft. I look at the honeysuckle bushes, note whether



Stream meanders through the woods after a heavy snowfall, Bethel, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

any of their berries are left. I finger the seed heads of the New England asters to see if all the seeds are gone. I kick the fat osage fruits to understand how they are doing: they are chartreuse green when they tumble down in October and November, turn yellow and yellow through the fall, start to get mushy in the middle of winter, fall apart in spring.

I find the plants that keep their green through the coldest times: the hellebores, the creeping charley, the chickweed and pachysandra, garlic mustard, mullein, sweet rocket, and sweet William, and I am reassured by their deep color and hardness. I look under the mulch to see if the peony stalks have started to come up. I bend down and scratch the dirt in the rhubarb patch; sometime the first red knuckles of next year's pies are visible.

The Week of Rising Temperatures

On the 31st of January, the sun reaches a declination of 17 degrees 35 minutes, one fourth of its way to spring equinox.

Near this same day, a temperature pivot throws the entire northern and southern halves of the planet into reverse.

And average temperatures start to rise throughout the country. Personal thermometers not only mark that process at home, but almost everywhere. And no matter where the starting point, the interval—the rate of increase—is almost the same in every part of the United States:

During February, for example, the rise in averages at Columbus, Ohio is from 28 to 30 degrees. That interval is matched by Houston's rise from 54 to 56, Memphis' 42 to 45, Juneau's 25 to 27, Denver's 29 to 32, San Francisco's 49 to 51, St Louis' 32 to 35, Chicago's 26 to 28, Bennington's 22 to 25.

These seemingly minor changes measure distance and time as well as temperature. If we actually can't see the days expanding by 90 seconds every 24 hours, even if we can't walk north now through green Louisiana, we still can know for certain that our spring is underway everywhere north of the equator. It will reach us when it should, and we will pick our daffodils in the middle of an ordered sequence that began this January week along the southern beaches.



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A Vermont Almanack for Deep Winter

by Bill Felker

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple tree, while the night thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eve-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast;
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining in the quiet moon.

—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The Marauding Mouse Moon and The Skunk And Opossum Moon

Mice continue to haunt your cupboards and walls throughout the winter, but as deep winter wanes into late winter, the appearance of skunks and opossums in the dark foretells spring to come.

January 4: The Marauding Mouse Moon is full at 11:53 p.m. *January 9:* Lunar apogee, when the moon is farthest from Earth. *January 13:* The moon enters its final quarter at 4:47 a.m. *January 20:* The Skunk and Opossum Moon is new at 8:14 a.m. *January 21:* Lunar perigee, when the moon is closest to earth. *January 26:* The moon enters its second quarter at 11:48 p.m.

The Sun

Perihelion, the point at which the earth and the sun are closest to one another in 2015, occurs on January 3 at 9:00 p.m. The Sun enters its sign of Aquarius on January 20, foreshadowing the subseason of late winter.

The Planets

Venus, moving retrograde into Capricorn, remains the evening star in the far west this month. Mars is also an evening star moving with Aquarius just a little to the southeast of Venus. Jupiter continues to travel with Leo, rising after dark and lying in the far west before dawn. Saturn moves retrograde into Sagittarius coming up just before the sun.

The Stars

On winter nights, the sky offers the brightest stars of the year, Orion high in the south, the Milky Way streaming from the southeast to the northwest, the Great Square setting due west, Leo rising due east. When it's time for morning chores, the heavens prophesy a warm night in June, the stars in their evening early summer positions: Leo setting in the west, Aquila rising in the east, bright Arcturus and the Corona Borealis overhead.

The Shooting Stars

Look for the Quadrantid Meteors in the northeast after midnight on the 1st through the 5th. On the 3rd and 4th, you might see up to 40 shooting stars in an hour.

Winter

Have you seen a blue jay flash through a snowstorm?
Have you seen the red-flecked head of a woodpecker
In snow-trimmed trees?
Have you seen dark sledges of felled tree-trunks
Drawn by steaming horses,
When the woodman takes an axe
And breaks open the frozen water for them,
And they drink at the trough?
I have.
And I have seen an antlered stag
Move slowly across the sloping field
Till the snowflakes gathered around him,
And I could see nothing but snow.



—ANN HINCHMAN



Sheep and goats out in a winter barnyard in Williamstown, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Meteorology

If strong storms occur this month, weather patterns suggest that they will happen during the following periods: January 1–2, 8–12, and 19–24 (the transition time to Late Winter).

The new moon on January 1 and full moon on January 15 are likely to intensify the weather systems due around those dates.

Peak Activity Times

For Livestock, Fish, Game and Dieters

Fish, game, livestock and people tend to feed more and are more active as the barometer is falling one to three days before the weather systems that arrive near January 1, 5, 10, 15, 19, 25, 31.

Fishing and hunting may be most rewarding and dieting could be most frustrating near these dates at midday when the moon is new, in the afternoon and evening when the moon is in its first quarter, at night when the moon is full and in its third quarter, in the morning when the moon is in its fourth quarter.

Weather Trends

The season of Deep Winter begins January 1. This season has six to seven significant cold waves, and it lasts from New Year's Day through around the 25th of January. Average temperatures in this season are the lowest of the year everywhere in North America. If strong storms occur this month, weather patterns suggest that they will happen during the following periods: January 1–2, 8–12, and 19–24 (the transition time to Late Winter).

New moon on January 20 (with perigee on the 21st) and full moon on January 4 are likely to intensify the weather systems due around those dates. The coldest January days usually fall between the 7th and the 10th, as well as between the 15th and the 18th.

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In the Grasp Of a Northeaster

circa 1917

by Jessie L. Bronson

It was midwinter. The green of the Vermont hills had long since been laid to rest in its winding sheet of snow. Winter schools were in session and one of Vermont's daughters was teaching a little country school away on the hill tops, boarding in a big farm house a little more than a quarter of a mile's climbing from the school. Came a northeaster and blew all the night, howling and raging in fiendish glee over the wide sweep of hills, a veritable Walpurgis Night of the snow demons.

We woke to a Whittier morning with its chill embargo of snow, a snowbound world indeed. But so snug and secure had we been in our beds in the staunch farmhouse to leeward, that we did not realize quite what traps the demons of snow and wind had been setting for us. The farmer started early for town in his cutter but soon returned having narrowly escaped a smashup but a few rods away, in collision with treacherous hard packed drifts. No cutter could get through till the big roller and shovel had tunneled the drifts. But the teacher and

**"A monster drift, hardpacked and icy,
swallowed up the big horses, all
but the tips of their ears."**

her small girl charge of eight years must be gotten to school.

A bob sled and the heaviest pair of horses were put into requisition and seated on a box on the bob with fur robes packed about them, the two passengers finally made their start, the farmer himself guiding and assisting the horses to force a passage through the drifts. Half way to the school house we met Waterloo. A monster drift, hardpacked and icy, swallowed up the big horses all but the tips of their ears. Not yet had the storm spent its fury.

The northeaster had but rested a little then renewed his grip and we were facing him. A bitter freezing wind lashing our faces, a blinding whirl of snow coming in icy flakes sharp as needles froze and stung cheeks and ears and left eyes smarting. The big noble horses born and bred in the hills, toughened and seasoned by many strenuous winters of logging for the first time in their faithful lives lost courage and refused longer to struggle against the elements, drooped their big fine heads and resigned themselves to whatever end awaits the valiant in horseland.



photo by Melissa Carll

Timothy Hughes-Muse, farm manager, drives the draft horse team at Merck Forest and Farmland Center in Rupert, VT.

All the methods usual and unusual, voice, lines, whip coaxing, commanding, cajoling, petting, even as a last resort a kick and a curse, could not prevail to persuade them to struggle longer with the mighty drift that was likely soon to become their grave.

Teacher and pupil were suffering acutely from the cutting cold the child now crying bitterly, the teacher so stiffened as to be unable to get off the sled without assistance when it was decided that for reasons both of safety and help, the two passengers must exert themselves to get back to the farm house on foot. Half dragging the crying child the teacher who fortunately happened to be tall, plowed her way through the snow and reached the cheering warmth of the farmhouse kitchen to meet the exclamations of its occupants and anxious questionings as to the peculiar appearance of her right ear, the one that had been to windward. Upon examination by the fingers it fell to cracking so was rightly considered frozen and treated accordingly.

Meantime the hired man had been dispatched to the scene of conflict armed with two shovels with the aid of which man and beast and bob sled were all rescued and a navigable high-

way opened up to the school house. After which, and after teacher and pupil had been thawed and treated and warmed and dried and changed and Jamaica gingered by sympathetic hands, a fresh start was made which landed teacher and pupil at the school house at eleven o'clock in time to greet two other contingents from other parts of the neighborhood.

One other patriotic father had ventured to run the gauntlet of the storm and arrived at the school house with his two children intact but with a broken cutter. The third party was a small boy of seven living a distance from school, an only son, now dear boy gone to join the People on the Other Side. His father had attempted to get through with a horse and cutter but found it impossible, but found it equally impossible to persuade the small boy to turn back. He reached the schoolhouse towards noon, a sight to behold for snowiness, and after heat was applied drippiness, and so weary as to be fit for little but to doze and inertia the rest of the day, but oh, so proud and happy that he had not broken his record of not a day missed!

Of such staunch and sturdy stock were and are these Vermonters, some of them!

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'Tis' the season for sweaters, carols, mugs of hot cider, and...one (and two) horse open sleighs!

The Merck Forest sleighs will run this winter, starting just before Christmas, on December 20 and running through March. With ample snow and great views, a sleigh ride is a wonderful way to see Merck's farm and

forest and fields. This year, we are offering both a group sleigh and the sweetheart sleigh.

Group sleighs seat up to twelve people and cost a flat rate of \$185 for your group. The sweetheart sleigh seats two and costs \$150.

Both sleighs travel through the forest and around the farm—on a clear day, you'll

be afforded wonderful views. Wool blankets are provided for extra warmth, and hot drinks and a cozy fire are available in the Visitor Center at the end of the ride.

For more information on the sleigh rides and how to

reserve your sleigh, please call the Visitor Center at (802) 394-7836.

Merck Forest and Farmland Center is located at 3270 Rt. 315 in Rupert, VT, southwest of Manchester, VT. (802) 394-7836. Visit www.merckforest.org.



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Cleaning Bird Feeders

And January Gardening Tips

by Charlie Nardozi, Horticulturist
and Leonard Perry,
UVM Extension Horticulturist

Cleaning bird feeders, giving your houseplants proper water, and checking your inventory of seeds and supplies are some of the gardening activities for this month.

It's midwinter, and birds have been visiting your feeder for months. However, unless you've been cleaning your feeder regularly, it could be making some of these wild birds sick. To minimize the spread of disease, empty and disinfect the feeder monthly with a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. Clean droppings off the perching area and make sure your bird food isn't moldy. If you don't like to use bleach, a household disinfectant cleaning product such as Lysol works too, diluted half with water. Allow to soak for 15 minutes, then rinse thoroughly.

Indoor tree and houseplant care

If your indoor fig (*Ficus*) tree is starting to drop leaves, it may be due to your watering schedule. This includes the common Benjamin fig and rubber plant. Don't over water, and don't let the plant stand in a saucer of water for an extended length of time or its roots may be damaged. On the other hand, don't let soil dry out completely either. Try to keep the soil evenly moist, watering thoroughly and then allowing the excess water to drain. Wait until the soil dries out slightly to the touch before watering again.

If your houseplants are growing tall and leggy, they probably need some supplemental light. Use lights to help compensate for short days. You can use fluorescent tubes, or most any spot lamp. Best are those listed as "full spectrum" or "daylight" or similar wording. I like to use light fixtures that clamp onto a bookcase or similar extending surface. Place the lights four to six inches above the tops of the plants, and keep them on for about 16 hours a day using a timer available at hardware or home stores.

Propagating African violets

African violets make great houseplants and will flower in winter if given supplemental light as noted above for leggy houseplants. To propagate new plants, take a leaf cutting, dip the cut end in a rooting hormone powder, and stick the cutting in a pot filled with vermiculite or sand. Cover the pot with a perforated clear plastic bag and keep the soil moist. In a few weeks you'll have new plants.

Time for seed-starting

It's time to dust off the seed-starting equipment. Take inventory of trays, pots, and six-packs from past years and discard any that are cracked. Reduce risk of disease by soaking them in a solution of 10 percent bleach and water, or half-strength household disinfectant, then air dry.

Do a germination test on stored seeds to see how viable they are. Place 10 or 20 seeds between two sheets of moist paper towel and tuck into a loosely tied plastic bag. Place in a warm area, and check every few days. If germination is less than 80 percent, consider purchasing new seeds of that crop.

Seed catalogs—your winter vacation

Winter is the time you'll get seed and plant catalogs in the mail if already on lists, or look for such in magazines and online to order. Looking through these, and through websites online, is a great way to spend many hours during our short winter days and long cold nights. Look for new introductions

Interlude

I'll dream the northern winter through,
And hope to waken in the spring
When that first faint soft twittering
Comes in my elm beside the way,
When piles of snow slip fast, and gray
Of winter turns to sunny hours,
And little buds swell full to flowers,
And roses bloom, for they too slept
And waited while the winter crept
Upon them in their blooming prime.

So I shall sleep through winter time
And wake, earth's nectar in each vein
When Spring comes winging North again!

—NELLIE S. RICHARDSON
Springfield, VT, 1936



A Vermont farm all tucked in for the winter.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

but, as for any plants, make sure they'll be hardy in your area unless annuals. Most these sources discuss hardiness and show the hardiness zone map, which you also can find online at www.planthardiness.ars.usda.gov. You can see online, too, how some of the newer annual flowers have performed in Vermont at pss.uvm.edu/ppp/aaswp.html.

Charlie Nardozi is a nationally known horticulturist, author, gardening consultant, and garden coach. Visit CharlieNardozi.com. For more information about Dr. Leonard Perry go to Perry's Perennial Pages at pss.uvm.edu.

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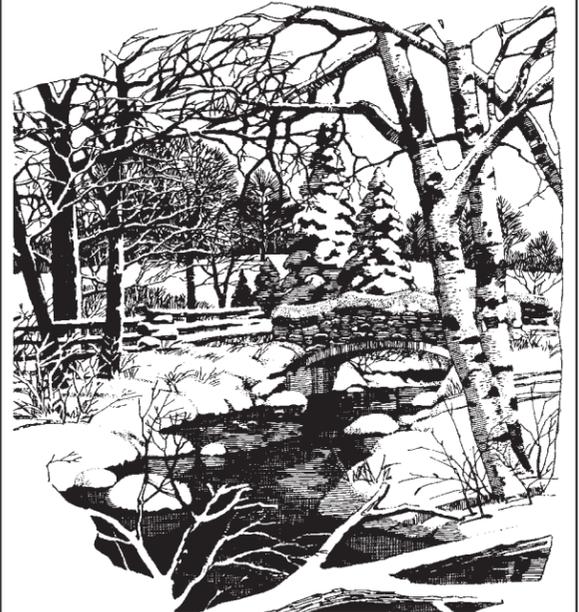
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Vermont Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

Ice Fishing Safety Tips

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department has some ice fishing tips for those of you who will be going ice fishing this winter.

“Once we have sustained cold weather to form good ice, ice fishing can be safe and a lot of fun,” said Col. David LeCours, Vermont’s Chief Game Warden, “but when we go onto the ice, we need to use good judgment and observe several safety precautions.”

- Leave your car or truck on shore. Every year several motor vehicles go through the ice on Vermont lakes, and people have drowned as a result.
- Leave information about your plans with someone—where you intend to fish and when you expect to return.
- Wear a personal floatation device and don’t fish alone.
- Ice varies in thickness and condition. Always carry an ice spud or chisel to check ice as you proceed.
- Be extremely cautious crossing ice near river mouths, points of land, bridges, islands, and over reefs and springs. Current almost always causes ice to be thinner over these areas.
- Avoid going onto the ice if it has melted away from the shore. This indicates melting is underway, and ice can shift position as wind direction changes.
- Waves from open water can quickly break up large areas of ice. If you can see open water in the lake and the wind picks up, get off!
- Bring your fully-charged cell phone with you.
- Carry a set of hand spikes to help you work your way out onto the surface of the ice if you go through. Holding one in each hand, you can alternately punch them into the ice and pull yourself up and out. You can make these at home, using large nails, or you can purchase them at stores that sell fishing supplies.
- Carry a safety line that can be thrown to someone who has gone through the ice.
- Heated fishing shanties must have good ventilation to prevent deadly carbon monoxide poisoning. Open a window or the door part way to allow in fresh air.

For more information contact the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department at (802) 828-1000 or visit www.vtfishandwildlife.com.



Fish & Wildlife Technician Joel Flewelling and his son with a Northern Pike on Lake Champlain. photo by Shawn Good

Vermont’s New Free Ice Fishing Day

Always wanted to go ice fishing but couldn’t find a good excuse to get away? The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department has found that excuse for you: a “free ice fishing day” on the fifth Saturday in January.

Saturday, January 31, 2015 is Vermont’s free ice fishing day—a day when anyone, resident or nonresident, may go fishing without a fishing license.

Vermont’s premier fishing destination, Lake Champlain, offers many ice fishing opportunities. Quality fishing for many species is easy to find on this 120-mile long lake, including landlocked salmon, lake trout, northern pike, yellow perch, white perch, walleye, and crappie.

“Lake Champlain attracts twice as much fishing activity during the winter as during the summer, particularly in the northern third of the

lake,” said State Fisheries Biologist Brian Chipman. “The plentiful yellow perch is the mainstay of the winter fishery, but many ice anglers also find good fishing for other species.”

Traditional northern pike hotspots include Lake Champlain’s Kelley Bay, Missisquoi Bay, Dillenbeck Bay, Carry Bay, Keeler Bay, St. Albans Bay, the shallow flats south of the Sandbar Causeway between Milton and South Hero, and the area south of the Champlain Bridge from Addison to Benson.

Later, as more ice forms, landlocked salmon can be caught in the Inland Sea north of the Sandbar Causeway. There is no closed season for trout and salmon on Lake Champlain.

If cold weather provides good ice on the deep-water areas of the lake, lake trout

will be found off the west shore of Grand Isle and in Outer Mallets Bay, Shelburne Bay, Converse Bay, and Button Bay south to the Champlain Bridge. While walleyes can show up anywhere in Lake Champlain, the most consistent winter action can be found in the southern end of the lake off Benson and Orwell, as well as the northern end in Swanton and Alburg.

Vermont’s ice fishing season for trout, salmon and bass starts January 17 and continues through March 15 on 40 large Vermont lakes. For a list of those lakes, go to the 2015 Vermont Guide to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping, available where licenses are sold and at www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

To locate places to stay

and help on the latest fishing activity, go to the Vermont Outdoor Guides Association website (www.voga.org) and click on “ice fishing.”

An Internet search for Vermont Ice Fishing also will yield helpful information from several websites.

If you would like to learn more about ice fishing, attend the free ice fishing festival held January 31 at the Larabee Point Fishing Access Area on Lake Champlain in Shoreham. Vermont Fish & Wildlife staff and volunteer ice fishing enthusiasts will be there 1-4:30 p.m. to help everyone learn this unique and popular type of fishing.

For info contact Nicole Corrao at (802) 318-1347 or Nicole.Corrao@state.vt.us. www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

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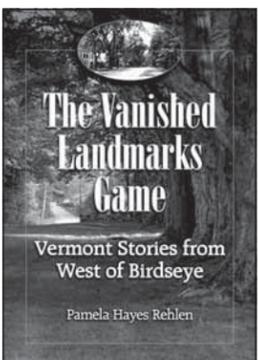
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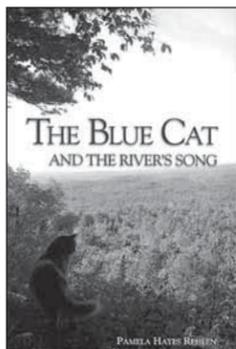
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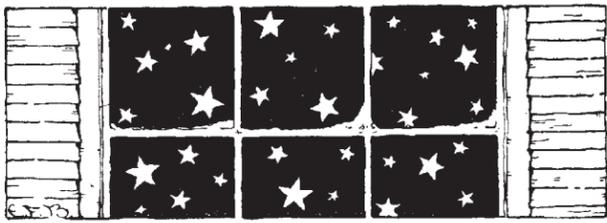
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After-Christmas-Time

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

After-Christmas-Time is a period which for me has three distinct stages and lasts at least through the month of January. The first stage is Immediately-After-Christmas-Time, which is Boxing Day.

I never knew about Boxing Day before I married my husband, whose mother was born and brought up in Victoria, British Columbia. She was Swiss, but as culturally British as all her Victoria, Canadian neighbors. Everyone took this holiday seriously.

On Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, additional gifts are exchanged, additional visits are made, and additional food is eaten. Now, when my husband and I go to Montreal to celebrate New Year's, we find that Boxing Day has become the justification for weeks-long, city-wide, after-Christmas clearance sales.

In Castleton, VT, this day is just a very quiet time of either let-down or relief. Castleton State College students are gone before December 25th, and the college is on vacation into January.

Last year on Boxing Day, I sat in our front parlor, where we always put up the tree, a room which was still littered with crumpled Christmas wrappings. This parlor is a many-windowed, ill-insulated room, not much used when there's a spike in the price of heating oil.

I was reading an Everyman Library book of Christmas poems. I'd had a lunch of leftover goose and had wrapped up—to take along to Montreal later in the week—Mrs. Teeterman's almond cherry fruitcake, a treat made every Christmas by our sometimes-chef and store wine expert, Rob Staudter.

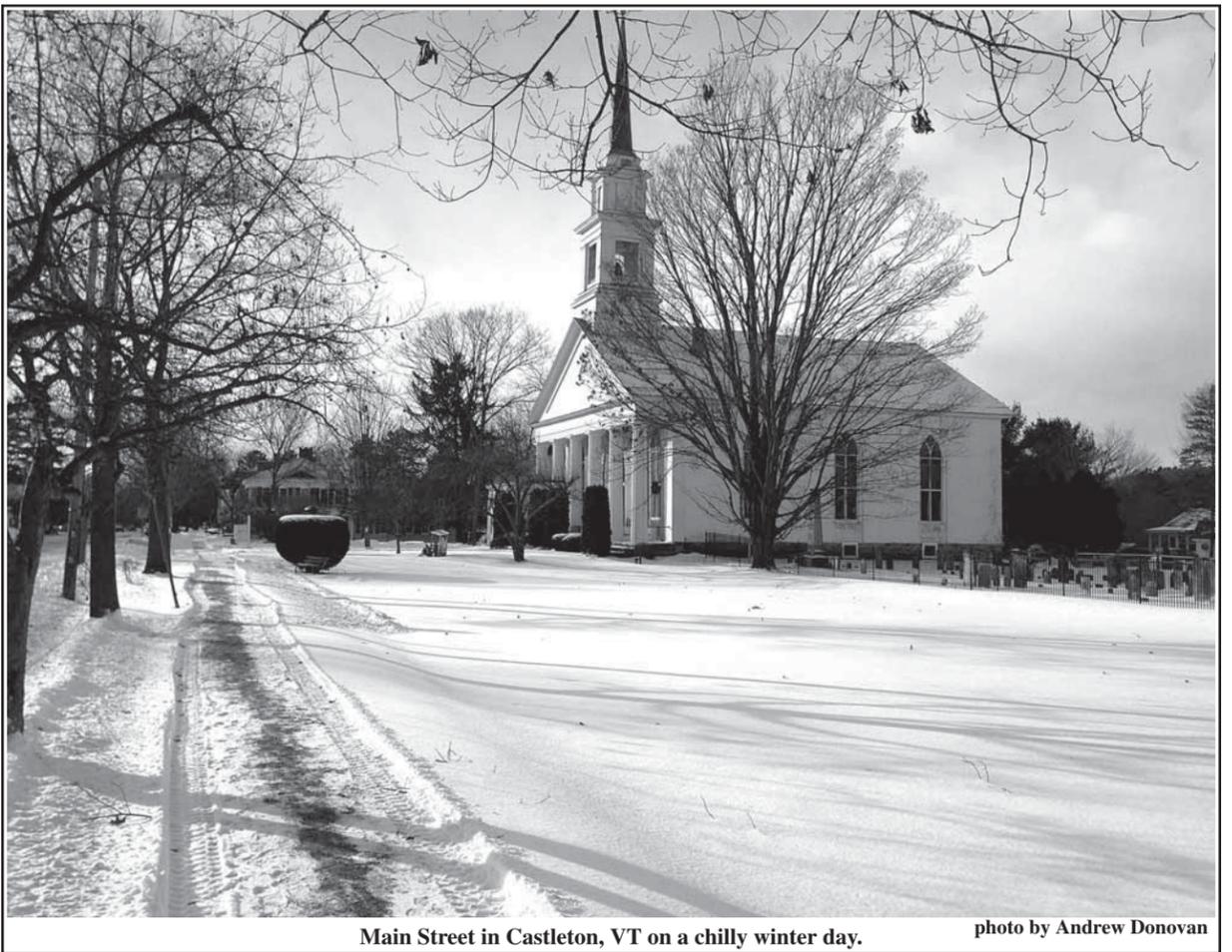
After the poems, I headed out for a walk through deserted Castleton. There was almost no snow, and it wasn't terribly cold. In-her-eighties Eileen Coburn was walking, too. I didn't run into anyone else except, later, coming back on the rail trail, a woman who kept shouting commands to her big black dog, Nico.

The town atmosphere was pure 'end days,' as if a nuclear device had been detonated in Rutland. But it wasn't unpleasant. Immediately-After-Christmas is always like this.

I thought how, in contrast, on Christmas Eve, the Federated Church across the street from us, with a new crèche out on the snow-skimmed front lawn, had been full of people, and candle light, and the grand music of organ and choir. When the Christmas service was over, as people poured out down the church's wide slate steps into the night, sexton Ray Ladd had rung the bells so that their wild, happy clanging filled the town.

Down the street, for what would once have been a Midnight Mass—now scheduled well before midnight—Saint John's parishioners' cars lined both sides of the road.

But on Boxing Day, churchgoers no longer filled Castleton. Our store was quiet. The diner was one of the only eating places open, and a few customers sat along the counter, each in a private world.



Main Street in Castleton, VT on a chilly winter day.

photo by Andrew Donovan

For me, the second stage of After-Christmas-Time is my husband's and my New Year's trip to Montreal. Even in this big city, at first it's eerily quiet. Our favorite restaurants are closed, the owners skiing in the Laurentians or gone home to France. But slowly the atmosphere changes. American kids start flooding into town and packing the hotels. Glittering celebratory paraphernalia is hawked on the streets.

Presently, it's the final stage of After-Christmas-Time. It's cold and bleak. The magical holiday feeling is past.

The Catholic Church teaches that the 25th is the first, not the last, day of Christmas, and that the joy of Christmas continues until the Feast of the Epiphany on January eighth.

At least in theory, this extends the season of celebration. But finally, even for Catholics, there's a real let-down sense that Christmas is over.

I thought eighty-nine year-old Bun Stockwell captured it memorably. He was a slate roofer, a small, fine-featured man, a long-time resident of Fair Haven, VT. When he was young, he sometimes did chores for my grandfather. The last few years, he came into Castleton a lot because his son was dating our diner cook.

Bun loved to be with people and tell stories and reminisce. He had a high-pitched, nasally voice, oddly-adolescent. It always struck me that no one anymore was part of the world he remembered and about which he wanted to talk.

But he was persistent. Sitting with a group of men in a booth at the Birdseye Diner, I overheard him telling them about filling the farm feed box for his father when he was a boy. He was remembering the local agrarian life of long ago, its ups and downs and busy seasons and long slow periods.

Finally, with a sigh of resignation, summing up After-Christmas-Time, he said—and I could hear in his voice all the old Vermonters who always took it as it came and didn't expect much excitement and didn't experience many treats—"You know, there's just not much going on this time of year."

*Pamela Hayes Rehlen has written all of her life and lived most of that life in Castleton, VT. She is the author of many stories, articles, essays and magazine features and of two books, **The Blue Cat and the River's Song** and **The Vanished Landmarks Game - Vermont Stories from West of Birdseye**, available at the Castleton Village Store and a number of Vermont bookstores.*

"After-Christmas-Time is a period which for me has three distinct stages and lasts at least through January"

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in which for more than forty years
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Oh, to get up on a cold winter morning,
start the tea water, then make
a fire and while the tea steeps, add some
logs to what's already going,
then stand beside the big old Round Oak
stove, and feel the warmth
radiating out from its cast iron into
the room and me, while I drink
my tea and daydream
watching out the window.

Oh, Round Oak stove made by the Estate
of P.D. Beckwith in Dowagiac,
Michigan, more than 100 years ago,
finally, now I sing your praises.
I praise your great gift to us
over all these years.

—David Budbill

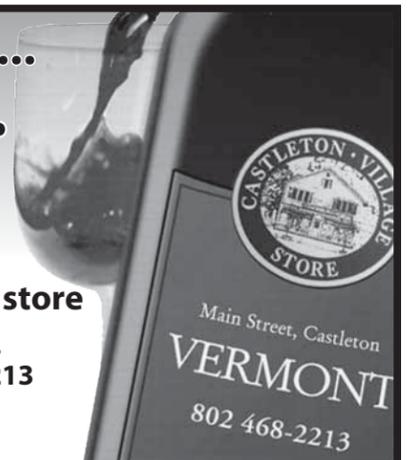


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Little Things

Within me there are sleeping many things
That I know nothing of—and yet they may
At some chance word take sudden fleeting wings
And fly into the glaring light of day.
Some soft sweet strain could well arouse in me
Emotions that I knew not I possessed,
Music might touch a chord of ecstasy
And leave me with a new mood all obsessed.
An unexpected meeting—some new sight—
Could bring to being still unknown desires
And either turn my path toward the light
Or snare my feet in unsuspected mires.
Why is it no one ever truly sings
The whole of life depends on little things.

—DOROTHY QUICK
1932



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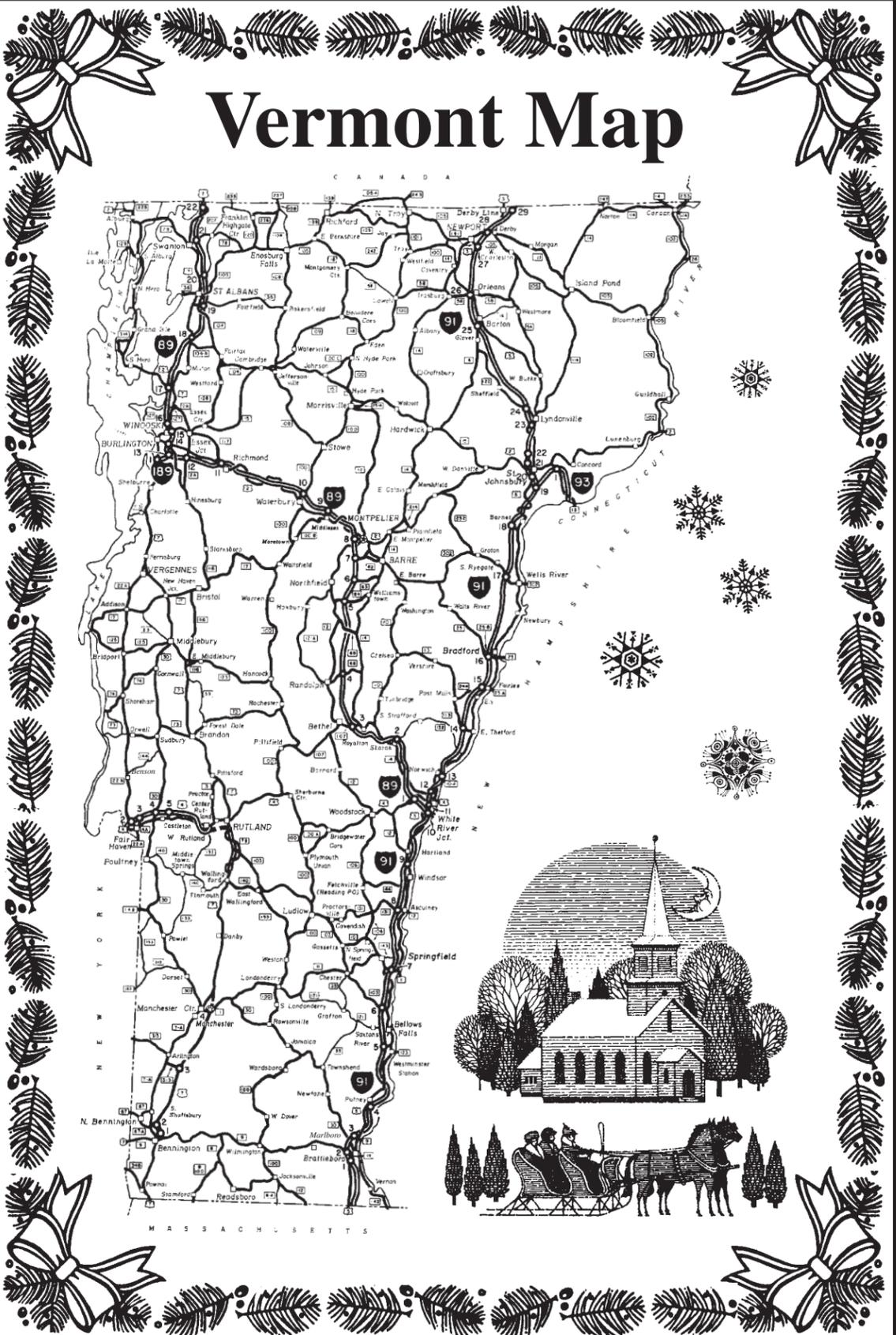


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Green Mountain Club Killington Section Winter Outings

Winter is a great time to get outdoors for some exercise and fresh air. The Green Mountain Club Killington Section offers winter hikes and snowshoe outings. Newcomers and non-members are welcome and it is free. Bring drinking water and a lunch. Wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the weather and be prepared for weather changes.

Unless otherwise noted, all trips leave from Main Street Park, near the east end of the fire station off Center Street in Rutland City. Call the leader if you have any questions. For more outings and information visit www.greenmountainclub.org. Here are a few opportunities.

Saturday, January 10, 10 a.m. Churchill Scott Shelter, Killington, VT. We will hike south on the Appalachian Trail/Long Trail to the shelter. Snowshoes and/or traction devices may be needed. Four miles, difficult. Leader: Herb Ogden, (802) 293-2510.

Saturday, January 17, 10 a.m. Mystery Hike, Dorset, VT. A short climb – two miles, 500 foot elevation gain, up a ridge on old roads. Skis, snowshoes or traction devices may be needed, and there is an option to add distance. Leader: Peter Grace, (802) 492-3529.

Sunday, January 25, 9 a.m. Snowshoe, Grizzle Ocean, Chilson, NY. Visit a remote pond in the Pharaoh Lake Wilderness. Snowshoes may be needed. Four miles, moderate difficulty. Leader: Allison Henry, (802) 775-1627.

Saturday, January 31, 10 a.m. Snowshoe Outing, Lily Pond, Bomoseen, VT. Snowshoe or ski to a pretty beaver pond, past historic slate quarries and otter slides. 3.5 miles, moderate difficulty. (Better weather date, Sunday, February 1). Leader: Sue Thomas, (802) 773-2185.

Saturday, February 7, 10 a.m. Snowshoe, Shrewsbury, VT. Join us for a moderate snowshoe jaunt in the Shrewsbury area. Location will be chosen by weather conditions. Leaders: Gerry & Cheryl Martin, (802) 492-2244.

Saturday, February 14, 10 a.m. Annual Winter Hot Dog Roast. Location most likely at one of our State Parks that will provide an easy hike and a safe place to build a fire. Bring your own beverage and what you would like to roast. Chips, cookies, condiments and firewood will be provided by leaders. Call for location details. (Better weather date, Sunday, February 15). Leaders: Vivian Bebee & Larry Walter, (802) 775-3855.

Saturday, February 21, 9 a.m. Wallingford Pond, Wallingford, VT. Explore trails and old roads in the area, with an option to continue on to Wilder Mountain, if conditions permit. 4.5 miles, moderate difficulty. Leader: Sandy Bragg, (802) 492-2143.

Saturday, February 28. Area Snowshoe, Poultny, VT. Join us for a moderate snowshoe trek through woods and fields. Leader: Diane Bargiel, (413) 687-1109.

Sunday, March 8, 9:30 a.m. Gile Mountain, Norwich, VT. A short hike, but a grand payoff: a fire tower with views of the Connecticut River Valley, Mts. Ascutney and Cardigan and long views to Killington, Camel's Hump and perhaps even the White Mountains on a clear day. 1.4 miles, 413 foot elevation gain. Leaders: Vivian Bebee & Larry Walter, (802) 775-3855.

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Vermont Country Calendar

See the end of the daily event calendar for ongoing activities, museums, exhibits, and galleries, community dances and music, horseback riding and wagon rides, and recreation and nature centers.

DAILY EVENTS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

Merry Christmas

ENFIELD, NH. Christmas Lights Display. 5-9 pm. Free. La Salette Shrine, 410 Rt. 4A. (603) 632-7087. www.lasaletteofenfield.org. Through December 31.

WINDSOR. Christmas Dinner. Free, everyone welcome. 12-2 pm. Old South Church, Main St. (802) 674-6032.

WOODSTOCK. Hand-in-Hand Community Meal. All are welcome. Free, donations accepted. Every Thursday, 5-7 pm in the Social Hall of the North Universalist Chapel Society, 7 Church St. (802) 457-2557.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26

BENNINGTON. 2nd Annual Festival of Tiny Trees. And exhibit of vintage tree topper angels. Museum shop. Admission \$2 for children three and older, \$4 adults and \$10 families. Open Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 pm and every afternoon between Christmas and New Year's Day. The Dollhouse and Toy Museum of Vermont, 212 Union St. at the corner of Valentine St. (802) 681-3767. www.dollhouseandtoymuseumofvermont.com.

PUTNEY. "An Almost Victorian Christmas" with Sandglass and Friends. Shadow puppets and sock puppets. Tickets \$9. 3 & 7 pm. Sandglass Theater, 17 Kimball Hill. For tickets call (802) 387-4051. sandglasstheater.org.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27

RUTLAND. 115th Annual Christmas Bird Count. The bird count is a citizen science effort to help biologists keep tabs on where birds are wintering and to monitor for possible changes in bird populations. Contact: Roy Pilcher at shamwariVT@aol.com. www.vtfishandwildlife.com. ebird.org/content/vt.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 753-7269. vtfarmersmarket.org. Through May 2.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 1.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

ARLINGTON. Messiah Sing-a-long. 3 pm. St. James Episcopal Church, Rt. 7A. (802) 375-9952. www.stjamesarlingtonvt.org.

CABOT. Breaking Up Christmas Dance. Cajun Solstice Dance with the Green Mountain Playboys featuring Katie Trautz. Admission by donation. 3-5:30 pm. Willey Building at Cabot Town Hall, 3014 Main St.

MANCHESTER. Family Holiday Concert. Join the interactive family singalong. Instruments provided for all guests. Cookies, tea, and children's drinks & cash bar. \$15 pp, children under 2 free. 4-6 pm. Wilburton Inn, Rt. 7A. Please RSVP to (802) 362-2500.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31

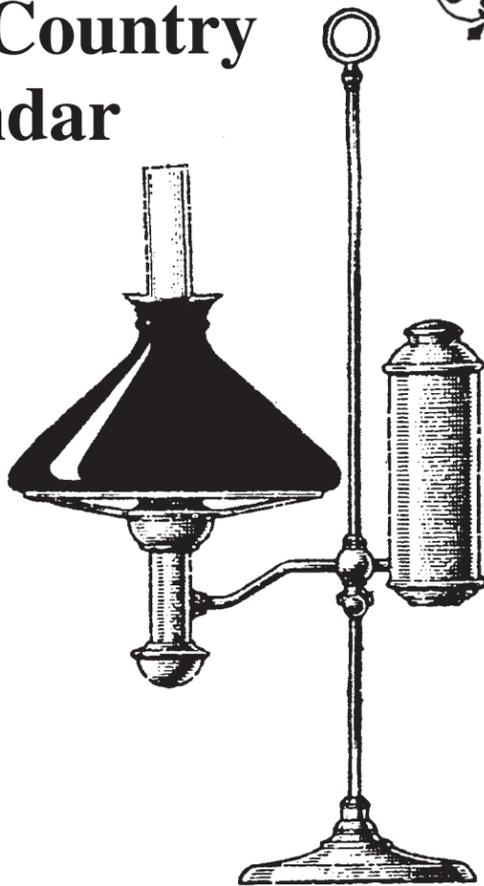
BELMONT. New Year's Eve at Star Lake. Welcome in the New Year with good friends, good cheer, fireworks, a bonfire and skating. Co-sponsored with the Mount Holly Sno*Drifters. Free! 9-11 pm. (802) 259-2562. mounthollyvt.org.

BURLINGTON. First Night Burlington. A celebration of the New Year, presenting more than 100 performances of music, dance, theater, comedy, and other performing arts in up to 20 venues in downtown Burlington on New Year's Eve. 2 pm to 12 am. Admission is with a First Night button. (802) 863-6005. www.firstnightburlington.com.

CHITTENDEN. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 30-minute rides Wednesday through Sunday. \$30 for 15 years and older, \$20 for 4 - 14 years, 3 and under free. To reserve, call (802) 483-6089 from 9 am - 5 pm or after hours call (802) 483-2311. Mountain Top Inn & Resort, 195 Mountain Top Rd. mountaintopin.com. Through March.

MANCHESTER. Manchester Music Festival New Year's Eve Concerts. Family concert at 4 pm—tickets: adults \$13; 18 and under free. Full concert at 6 pm—tickets: adults \$30; 18 and under \$13. At the First Congregational Church, 3624 Main St. For tickets or information call (802) 362-1956. www.mmvt.org.

NORWICH. Special New Year's Eve Contra Dance with Cuckoo's Nest, Guest Musician Amy Cann. Ruth Sylvester, caller. Potluck finger food at the break and singing at midnight! Admission \$15, students \$10, under 16 \$5, seniors by donation. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. 8 pm, beginners session 7:45 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4607. rbarrows@cs.dartmouth.edu. Every fourth Saturday.



RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 753-7269. vtfarmersmarket.org. Through May 2.

SO. BURLINGTON. Symphony Gala. The Vermont Symphony Orchestra and the Champlain Valley Friends of the VSO will host a New Year's Eve festive affair. Tickets are \$175 per person, \$225 for Silver Patrons or \$325 for Gold Patrons. 7:30 pm. Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center. (800) VSO-9293 x 16. amy@vso.org. www.vso.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. 22nd Annual First Night. A New Year's Eve celebration of the arts. More than 220 entertainers performing at 18 venues. Street entertainment, free pancake supper, fireworks, food, free shuttle. Button admission \$13, \$20. 4 pm - 12 midnight. (802) 748-2600. info@catamountarts.org. catamountarts.org. firstnightstj.com.

STOWE. James Taylor to Perform in a Benefit Concert. 8:30 pm. For tickets call Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center. (802) 760-4638. sprucepeakarts.org.

WARREN. New Year's Eve Celebration and 5th Annual Dog Parade. Featuring K9 Couture Bark in the New Year with your K9 friend wearing his/her most festive costume or just a furry coat. The night rolls on with a torchlight parade, fireworks, live music and more. Sugarbush Resort, 1840 Sugarbush Access Rd. (800) 537-8427. www.sugarbush.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides. Holiday programs, make historic ornaments. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 1.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1

BARNARD. Guided Nature Walk. Celebrate New Year's with a 1.5 hours, easy guided nature walk in Silver Lake State Park. Meet at 1 pm at the Town Clerk Office parking lot in Barnard, 100 yards from the park entrance. (802) 249-1230. www.vtstateparks.com.

COLCHESTER. The Fifth Annual New Year's Day Performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Conductor Daniel Bruce leads the Green Mountain Mahler Festival orchestra and chorus, with four local vocal soloists. Tickets \$25 adults, \$20 seniors, \$10 students. 3 pm. Elley-Long Music Center, St. Michael's College. www.flynnitix.org. www.vtmahler.org.

GRAFTON. Grafton Ponds Outdoor Center Dog Sledding. Three rides daily January 1-3, then on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays through March. Fee \$175 per sled, 330lb. limit, adult must be present. To book your ride call (802) 843-2400. www.graftonponds.com.

RUTLAND. Free Family Hike on Bald Mountain. Hike is approximately 3.5 miles with some steep climbing in Aitken State Forest. Meet at 11 am meet at the Frontage Road, just to the southeast of the Rutland fire station, Route 7 & Center St. (802) 249-1230. vtstateparks.com.

SHELBURNE. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 20-minute rides from the Welcome Center (weather permitting). Fee: \$10 adult, \$8 children, 2 and under free. 11 am - 2 pm, first come, first served. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.

STATEWIDE. January is Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month in Vermont. Beginners can get a full beginner's package with lift access, instruction and equipment for just \$29, non-holiday in January. Must purchase in advance. Go to skivermont.com/learn. Through January 31.



Rutland's Vermont Winter Farmers Market is Here!

Once again we move out of the dark time of the year. The days are getting longer as we are sustained through the cold by the abundance of the Earth. And that abundance is offered to us at the Vermont Farmers Market at the Vermont Farmers Food Center at 251 West St. in Rutland every Saturday from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. and Wednesdays from 4 p.m. till 7 p.m.

Winter doesn't mean a vacation for our farmers. They harness the power of the sun in great greenhouses that provide leafy greens and other hothouse vegetables, as they care for the root vegetables—potatoes, carrots, parsnips and turnips dug in the autumn. Winter squashes of all varieties are piled high in boxes and baskets. Crisp apples are available each week for baking pies and making fresh apple sauce. And don't forget the shelves of canned, preserved, dried or frozen fruits and vegetables. Sauces and salsas, BBQ and spicy, jams and chutneys, relishes and condiments and all things maple are at the ready for your winter table.

At the Winter Farmers Market we can warm our bodies inside and out. Wool, silk, felt and Alpaca yarn are crafted into beautiful hats, cozy mittens, snuggly scarves and neck or wrist warmers keep you toasty during work or play. Tea, coffee and warm cider are waiting to warm you. Don't miss your chance to get some local honey whose golden glow and health giving properties

will bring back the warmth of the summer sun. Check out the international array of food that is hot and delicious and just what we need to warm and fill our bellies on a cold winter's day.

Natural, organic, grass-fed, and free range is what to look for when buying meat or eggs and there is plenty of it at the Winter Farmers Market. Fruit wines, sparkling juices and local rye whiskey pair well with artisan breads and cheeses. Mushrooms raw, marinated or as chaga tea bring edible and medicinal fungi into the limelight. Of course there's always home baked treats. Lots of gluten-free choices too!

Peruse the handcrafted pottery, slate products, and jewelry for unique and beautiful trinkets and household items to share and enjoy. Wooden bowls, utensils and cutting boards offer beauty and durability. And try out some homemade soaps and shampoos, lotions and lip balms made from scratch.

We thank the farmers and crafters and artisans for their toil, they in turn thank us for our patronage. Come celebrate with us at the Vermont Farmers Market Saturdays and Wednesdays in downtown Rutland. We'll be there waiting for you. Thanks for stopping by!

The Vermont Farmers Market is located at 251 West St., downtown Rutland, VT. (802) 753-7269 or visit www.vtfarmersmarket.org. On Facebook.



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Vermont Country Calendar

(January 1, continued)

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides. Holiday programs, make historic ornaments. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3

COLCHESTER. Annual Twelfth Night Celebration. Dancers leap, pipers pipe, instruments sing and voices ring in a collaboration of artistry, beauty, and joy. Adirondack Ballet Ensemble under the direction of Kathy Koester. By donation. 6:30 pm. Chapel of Saint Michael the Archangel, St. Michael's College. (802) 862-9161.

CRAFTSBURY. Concert with Jeremiah McLane and Timothy Cummings. Admission \$10 adults, \$8 students and seniors. 7:30 pm. The Music Box, 147 Creek Rd. (802) 586-7533. themusicbox.org. jeremiahmclane.com.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 2.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Tour the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. Warm up with a cup of spiced cider. See the exhibit, *Frederick Douglass*. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. billingsfarm.org. Also January 4, 10 & 11, 24 & 25, and 31.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

ENOSBURG FALLS. Featured Artist Reception. 1-3 pm. Open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm. Sunday 10-2 pm. Artist In Residence—a Cooperative Gallery, 321 Main St. (802) 933-6403. info@artistinresidencecoop.com. artistinresidencecoop.com. First Sunday of every month.

RUTLAND. Opera Theatre of Weston presents: *The Secret Garden* by Nolan Gasser. Opera for Kids program with a specially condensed and narrated version for children. Tickets: \$15-\$30. 2 pm. Paramount Theatre. (802) 824-3821. www.operatheatreofweston.com. otw@sover.net. www.paramountvt.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Tour the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. Warm up with a cup of spiced cider. See the exhibit, *Frederick Douglass*. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. Also January 10 & 11, 24 & 25, and 31.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays through May 2.

RUTLAND. First Wednesdays Humanities Lecture Series—Rowing Against Wind and Tide: The Journals and Letters of Anne Morrow Lindbergh. Author Reeve Lindbergh discusses collecting four decades of her mother's previously unpublished diaries and letters. Free. 7 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. www.vermonthumanities.org.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Upper Valley Seed Savers meet on the second Thursday of the month at 5 pm at Upper Valley Food Coop, through the winter. Our mission is to further knowledge about seed saving and to work on projects that will help develop a body of locally-adapted open-pollinated vegetable seeds. For information, or if you can't come to meetings but would like to receive a monthly email with our minutes which contain information on our projects, please contact Sylvia Davatz at sdav@valley.net or call (802) 436-3262.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

RUPERT. Moonlight Owl Walk. Join naturalist Patty Wesner on a walk to listen for courting owls. Open to families. You may want to bring a flashlight for the walk out to the site. Fee: \$5. 8 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org

STATEWIDE. Ski and Ride for \$29. Many Vermont ski resorts will be offering beginner lesson for the entire month of January, excluding holiday periods, for just \$29 for beginners only. Includes a full day beginner lift ticket, full day equipment rental (skis or snowboard), and a lesson with a professional instructor (lesson duration varies by resort). One beginner package per person. (802) 223-2439. www.skivermont.com.

TUNBRIDGE. Ed Larkin Contra Dancers Open House. \$8 per person. Refreshments at intermission. 7:30-10 pm at the Tunbridge Town Hall, Rt. 110. For info e-mail clydo46@gmail.com. Second Fridays through May.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

BRATTLEBORO. Concert Choir Performance—Verdi's Requiem. Double chorus, symphonic orchestra and soloists join forces in this opulent tour-de-force. Tickets \$15-\$10. 7:30 pm. Latchis Theatre, 50 Main St. (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org. www.bmcvt.org. Also January 11.

COOKEVILLE. Corinth Coffeehouse: Guingette with Ed Eastridge. 7-8:30 pm, then open mike from 8:30-10 pm. At the Corinth Town Hall, 1387 Cookeville Rd. For information call Dave Richard at (802) 439-5980. darichard@tops-tele.com. Also February 14, March 14 & April 11.

NORWICH. Contradance with Northern Spy and caller David Millstone. No partner necessary. Beginners and singles always welcome. All dances taught and called. Please bring a change of clean shoes for the dance floor. Admission \$8 (Students \$5, under 16 free). 8 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4607. rbarrows@cs.dartmouth.edu. Second Saturdays.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 2.

RUTLAND. Rutland Area Flea Market. Indoors, year-round, clean & friendly! Cozy cafe offers refreshments and light lunch. 9 am - 3 pm. 200 West St. corner of Forest St. (802) 770-9104. On Facebook.

STATEWIDE. Winter Trails Day—Free Nordic Skiing and Snowshoeing. Learn cross country skiing or snowshoeing at one of Vermont's Nordic ski areas. Participating areas include Blueberry Lake in Warren; Craftsbury Outdoor Center in Craftsbury Common (www.craftsbury.com); Ole's Cross Country Ski Center in Waitsfield (www.olesxc.com); Mountain Top Inn & Resort in Chittenden (www.mountaintopinn.com); Woodstock Nordic Center in Woodstock (www.woodstockinn.com); Smugglers' Notch Resort in Smugglers' Notch (www.smuggs.com); Rikert Nordic Center in Ripton (www.rikertnordic.com); Strafford Nordic Center, Strafford (straffordnordicskiing.com); and Jay Peak Nordic Snowshoe Center in Jay (www.jaypeakresort.com). For more information go to www.snowlink.com.

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Send us your community or church events & we'll list them free of charge in our calendar.
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Vermont Country Calendar

STOWE. 7th Annual Ladies Nordic Ski Expo: Taught by Women. Just for Women. Some of the region's best instructors. A delicious lunch and the après-ski wine, cheese, and chocolate tasting are sure to be a hit for skiers coming in from the cold. Registration fee is \$90, late registration is \$105. Held at Trapp Family Lodge. To register go to www.skireg.com/ladies-nordic-ski-expo.

WESTON. Opera Theatre of Weston presents: *The Secret Garden* by Nolan Gasser. Opera for Kids program with a specially condensed and narrated version. Admission. 2 pm. Weston Playhouse, 703 Main St. (802) 824-3821. operatheatreofweston.com. Also January 11.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Tour the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. See the exhibit, *Frederick Douglass*. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Also January 11, 24 & 25, and 31.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

BARRE. 9th Annual Montpelier Antiques Market. Up to 24 Dealers in a relaxed setting offering primitives, furniture, art, toys, books, photos, and ephemera from the New England area. Admission: early buyers \$5 (8 am), general public \$2 (9 am). Open 8 am - 1:30 pm. Canadian Club, 414 E. Montpelier Rd., Rt. 14. (802) 751-6138. www.montpelierantiquesmarket.com. Also January 25, February 8 & 22 and March 8 & 22.

BRATTLEBORO. Concert Choir Performance—Verdi's Requiem. Double chorus, symphonic orchestra and soloists join forces in this opulent tour-de-force. Tickets \$15-\$10. 3 pm. Latchis Theatre, 50 Main St. (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org. www.bmcvt.org.

NORWICH. Contradance with Northern Spy, caller: David Millstone. No partner necessary. Beginners and singles always welcome. All dances taught and called. Please bring a change of clean shoes for the dance floor. Admission \$8 (students \$5, under 16 free). 8 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4607. rbarrows@cs.dartmouth.edu. *Second Saturday dances continue through June 2015.*

WEST PAWLET. Pancake Breakfast. Sponsored by the West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Dept.. Menu includes pancakes of several varieties including regular, chocolate chip, blueberry and cranberry as well as waffles, our world-famous home fries, scrambled eggs, sausage and bacon. Coffee, tea, milk and orange juice. \$8 for 12 years and up, \$5 for 5-12 years and free to children under 5. 7:30-11 am. At West Pawlet Fire House, 2806 Rt. 153. (802) 345-4312.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. Also January 24 & 25, and 31.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

BURLINGTON. Author Appearance: "What's the Use of Stories That Aren't Even True?" Salman Rushdie kicks off Vermont Reads 2015. The Vermont Humanities Council has selected Rushdie's novel *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* for its 2015 Vermont Reads program. Free. 5 pm. UVM's Ira Allen Chapel. (802) 262-1355. www.vermonthumanities.org. www.vtreads.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. Doug Patac. (802) 753-7269. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays through May 2.*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

MONTPELIER. Fifth Annual Winter Folk Music Festival—"Spice on Snow"! Hosted by The Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture. Performances by Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, The Revelers, Corey Porche, Jeremiah McLane and Ariel Friedman, Jon Gailmor, the Green Mountain Playboys, The Starline Rhythm Boys, The Rear Defrosters, Two Cents in the Till, the Zeichner Family Band, the Ollabelles, Brett Hughes and Kati Wright and more. In various locations in downtown Montpelier including: Bethany Church, Skinny Pancake, City Hall, Charlio's World Famous, Sweet Melissa's, Capitol Grounds, Bagitos, North Branch Cafe, and the Summit School. All-weekend passes or by the day. (802) 917-1186. www.summit-school.org. *Through January 18.*

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

FAIRLEE. 19th Annual Vermont Grazing and Livestock Conference. More than 350 farmers and agricultural providers from six Northeast states. At Lake Morey Inn. (802) 656-5459. uvm.edu/pasture. Also January 17.

MONTPELIER. Fifth Annual 'Spice on Snow' Winter Music Festival. Our featured performers will be Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, plus Louisiana Revelers and our local Cajun band the Green Mountain Playboys. Cooking and music workshops, dances and concerts all weekend long! At venues in downtown Montpelier. For updates and ticket sales go to www.summit-school.org. *Through January 18.*

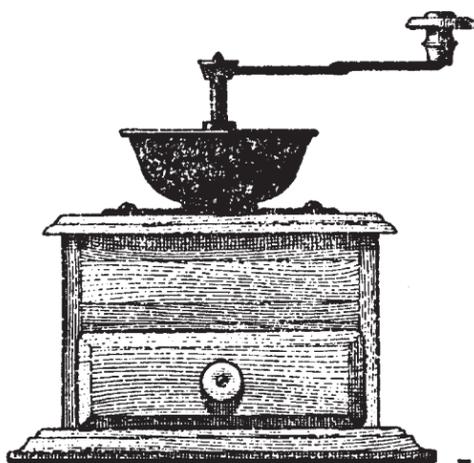
RUTLAND. Performance: Dark Side of the Moon. Pink Floyd's masterpiece roars to life onstage with Classic Albums Live, featuring a massive band of talented musicians and amazing lighting effects. Tickets \$29.75-\$35.75. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

WOODSTOCK. Third Friday Contra Dance. Join The Old Sam Peabody Band with caller Delia Clark. Dance workshop for instruction at 6:45 pm. Dance with pot luck dessert break 7-10 pm. Admission \$8, kids and seniors by donation. The Little Theater, 54 River St. (802) 785-4039. hoffmanathome@gmail.com. Facebook/OldSamPeabody

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

BRANDON. Birding Expedition: Winter Regulars and Rarities in the Champlain Valley. Meet at 8 am in the parking lot behind the Mobil station on Rt. 7. (802) 775-3461. www.rutlandcountyadubon.org.

BRANDON. Concert: Russian Duo. Tickets: \$15, pre-concert dinner available for \$20. Reservations required for dinner, starting at 6 pm. Venue is BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Rd. (802) 465-4071. info@brandon-music.net. www.brandon-music.net.



English Nursery Rhyme

~ circa 1764 ~

They hang the man and flog the woman
That steal the goose from off the common
But let the greater villain loose
That steal the common from the goose
The law demands that we atone
When we take things we do not own
But leaves the lords and ladies fine
Who take things that are yours and mine

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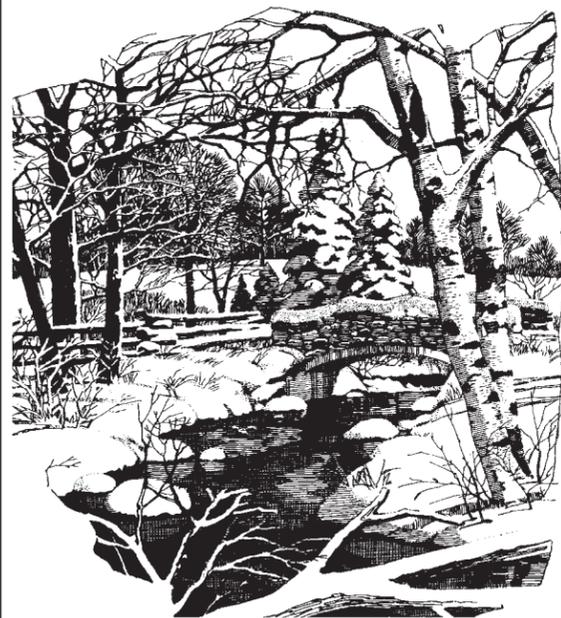
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Vermont Country Calendar

(January 17, continued)

GROTON. Groton Growers' Winter Farmers Market. Every third Saturday, 10 am – 1 pm at Groton Community Building Gym. Mary Berlejung and Sandi Adams. (802) 584-3595 or (802) 633-3031. grotongrowers@gmail.com. www.grotongrowers.org. *Third Saturdays through May.*

MONTPELIER. Fifth Annual 'Spice on Snow' Winter Music Festival. Cooking and music workshops, dances and concerts all weekend long! At venues in downtown Montpelier. For updates and ticket sales go to www.summit-school.org. *Also January 18.*

QUECHEE. VINS Winter Wildlife Celebration. Admission. 10 am - 4 pm. Vermont Institute of Natural Science Nature Center, 6565 Woodstock Rd., Rt. 4. (802) 359-5000 x 223. vinsweb.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 2.*

RUTLAND. Rutland Area Flea Market. Indoors, year-round, clean & friendly! Cozy cafe offers refreshments and light lunch. 9 am – 3 pm. 200 West St. corner of Forest St. (802) 770-9104. On Facebook.

RUTLAND. The Merry Widow—Live in HD from the Metropolitan Opera. Tickets \$20. 12:55 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Presentation: "Hatching birds and eating bugs—Peace Corps, Mexico." Michael H. Blust, Prof. Emer., Green Mt. College took early retirement and went to Mexico as a Peace Corps Volunteer. He has returned and will talk about his experiences, the great food he ate, and the marvelous birds he saw. Sponsored by the Rutland County Audubon Society. 7 pm. Fox Room, Rutland Library, 10 Court St. (802) 747-4466.

SHELBURNE. Celtic Winter Gathering. Playing Irish Music for Dancers workshop with Pride of New York 12-1 pm. All Souls Interfaith Gathering, 291 Bostwick Farm Rd. (802) 985-3819. allsoulsinterfaith.org. *Also January 18.*

STOWE. Stowe Winter Carnival. Over 15 family and competitive sporting events. Ice carving demonstrations and competitions, and ski races, snow golf and snow volleyball. Participant entry fees for sporting events. (802) 777-5510. stowewintercarnival.com. *Through Jan. 25.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Sleigh Ride Weekend. Horse-drawn sleigh rides, sledding with jack jumper sleds, and programs and activities for all ages. See the *Frederick Douglass* exhibit. Visit to the operating dairy farm. Enjoy hot cider in the Visitor's Center. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also January 18 & 19.*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: A Festival of Mandolin Chamber Music. Boston Mandolins and the New England Mandolin Ensemble explore both newly-composed and nearly-forgotten works for classical mandolin ensemble. Tickets: \$17/\$13. 3 pm at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. (802) 463-3100. www.immanuelretreat.org.

BURLINGTON. Performance: Johannes String Quartet. Program includes Beethoven and Bartok. Tickets \$40. 7 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

MONTPELIER. Fifth Annual 'Spice on Snow' Winter Music Festival. Cooking and music workshops, dances and concerts! At venues in downtown Montpelier. For updates and ticket sales go to www.summit-school.org.

SHELBURNE. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 20-minute rides from the Welcome Center (weather permitting). Fee: \$10 adult, \$8 child, 2 and under free. 11 am – 2 pm, first come, first served. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org. *Every Saturday and Sunday through March 1.*

SHELBURNE. Celtic Winter Gathering. All Souls Interfaith Gathering, 291 Bostwick Farm Rd. (802) 985-3819. allsoulsinterfaith.org.

STOWE. Stowe Winter Carnival. Over 15 family and competitive sporting events. Ice carving demonstrations and competitions, and ski races, snow golf and snow volleyball. Participant entry fees for sporting events. (802) 777-5510. stowewintercarnival.com. *Through January 25.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Sleigh Ride Weekend. Horse-drawn sleigh rides, sledding with jack jumper sleds, and programs and activities for all ages. See the *Frederick Douglass* exhibit. Visit to the operating dairy farm. Enjoy hot cider in the Visitor's Center. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also January 19.*

MONDAY, JANUARY 19

BARRE. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Program—*Liberty's First Crisis*. In both the book and the talk, Charles Slack tells the story of the 1798 Alien and Sedition Acts. Free and open to the public. 7 pm at the Vermont History Center, 60 Washington St. (802) 828-2180. amanda.gustin@state.vt.us. www.vermonthistory.org.

MONTPELIER. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Program—*Liberty's First Crisis*. In both the book and the talk, Charles Slack tells the story of the 1798 Alien and Sedition Acts. 12-1 pm at the Vermont History Museum, 109 State St. (802) 828-2180. amanda.gustin@state.vt.us. www.vermonthistory.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Sleigh Ride Weekend. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

BURLINGTON. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. ECHO will open its doors for \$4 admission as part of a community-wide celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Events include family-friendly programming honoring Dr. King's legacy. Free with admission. 10 am - 5 pm. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center/Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, One College St. (877) 324-6386. www.echovermont.org.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21

CASTLETON. Mercy Killers presented by The Stella Adler Studio and Harold Clurman Lab Theatre. Tickets adult \$15, senior/child \$12, children under 12 \$10. Soundings Lunchbag Workshop at 12:30 pm. Concert at 7 pm. Casella Theater, Castleton State College Fine Arts Center. (802) 468-1119. www.castleton.edu/casellatheater.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays through May 2.*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

RUTLAND. Performance: The Buddy Holly Story. Part biography, part rock 'n' roll concert, this musical is a toe-tapping, hand-clapping celebration of the life and music of Buddy Holly. Tickets \$39.50-\$44.50. 7:30 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.



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Vermont Country Calendar



RUTLAND. Theatre Sportz. Improvisational theatre as a competition. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. In the Brick Box, Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org. *Through January 24.*

WEST RUTLAND. West Rutland Marsh Monitoring Bird Walk. To date 145 species, from Least Bittern to Rusty Blackbird, have been recorded at this Important Bird Area (IBA). Meet at the West Rutland Price Chopper parking lot at 8 am. For more information call leader Roy Pilcher at (802) 775-3461. www.rutlandcountyadubon.org.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

BARRE. Vermont Burlesque Festival. Hosted by The Logger, Rusty DeWees, this three-hour event promises a total of 20 acts! Tickets: \$25-\$30. 8 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: Russian Duo. Oleg Kruglyakov, balalaika virtuoso, and Terry Boyarsky, masterful pianist. Tickets: \$17/\$13. 7:30 pm at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. (802) 463-3100. www.immanuelretreat.org.

RUTLAND. Theatre Sportz. Improvisational theatre as a competition. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. In the Brick Box, Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org. *Also January 24.*

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. 19th Annual Heritage WinterFest. Saturday, guided snowshoeing nature walk at Smugglers' Nordic Center, and sleigh rides, children's story hour, a lasagna dinner, family contra dance, bonfire and fireworks in Jeffersonville. Smugglers' Notch Resort Nordic Center and Sterling Ridge Inn. (802) 644-8851. smuggs@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com. *Through January 25.*

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance. Admission \$9, \$7 for teens, 12 and under free. Refreshments available. 8 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 446-2928. Tinmouthvt.org. *Every fourth Friday.*

WESTMINSTER. Classical Concert. The Windham Orchestra's 45th Season. Program includes Jacob Mashak, Grainger, and Vaughn Williams. 7:30 pm. Kurn Hattin. For tickets call (802) 257-4523. www.windhamorchestra.org.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24

BRANDON. Concert: Zak Trojano. Tickets: \$15, pre-concert dinner available for \$20. Reservations required for dinner, starting at 6 pm. Venue is BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Rd. (802) 465-4071. info@brandon-music.net. www.brandon-music.net.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers' Market. Saturdays, 10 am – 2 pm. At River Garden, 153 Main St. Sherry Maher, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postsoilsolutions.org. www.postsoilsolutions.org. *Every Saturday through March 2015.*

BURLINGTON. Concert: Vermont Symphony Orchestra Masterworks. Elena Urioste performs Elgar's Violin Concerto. Tickets \$16-\$61. 8 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

JEFFERSONVILLE. 20th Annual Smugglers' Notch Primitive Biathlon. More than 200 entrants using muzzleloading rifles and snowshoes. Starting at 8 am at Sterling Ridge Resort and Log Cabin. Call weekdays, (802) 644-8232; evenings and weekends, (802) 933-4880; e-mail, info@primitivebiathlon.com; or visit www.primitivebiathlon.com. *Also January 25.*

NORWICH. Contradance. Music by Cuckoo's Nest, with Ruth Sylvester caller and guest fiddler Franklin Heyburn. Please bring a pair of clean, soft-soled shoes for dancing. All dances taught. Admission \$5, under 16 free. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. 8 pm. At Tracey Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4607. *Continues on fourth Saturdays.*

PUTNEY. Concert: Dustbowl Revival, a Venice, California-based roots collective that merges old school bluegrass, gospel, jug-band, swamp blues and the hot swing of the 1930s. JD McCliment's Pub will provide a beer and wine cash bar. Tickets: \$16 Advance, \$18 At the Door. 7:30 pm. Next Stage, in the former United Church at 15 Kimball Hill. (802) 387-0102. www.nextstagearts.org. twilightmusic.org. www.dustbowlrevival.com.

RANDOLPH. Winter Pride Performance: M or F? Annual winter benefit. Tickets: \$17 advance, \$20 day of show. 7:30 pm. Related presentation by a celebrity introducer in the Esther Mesh Room at 7 pm, talkback and reception following the performance. 7 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71-73 Main St. (802) 864-5741. www.chandler-arts.org.

RUPERT. Intro to Lightweight Winter Backpacking Course. Winter backpacking pros, Tim Jones and David Shedd of Easternslopes.com, will show participants the lightweight gear, clothing, and accessories for safe, easy, comfortable winter camping. Fee: \$75. 12 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 2.*

RUTLAND. Rutland Area Flea Market. Indoors, year-round, clean & friendly! Cozy cafe offers refreshments and light lunch. 9 am – 3 pm. 200 West St. corner of Forest St. (802) 770-9104. On Facebook.

RUTLAND. Theatre Sportz. Improvisational theatre as a competition. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. In the Brick Box, Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Classical Concert: Gleb Ivanov, Pianist. Tickets \$20-\$10. 7:30 pm. In the Brick Box, Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountvt.org.

SHELBURNE. Saturday Mornings on the Farm. For ages 5-12. Farm chores and fun, plus bagels and hot chocolate. Grooming and walking donkeys, checking coop for chicken eggs, feeding and caring for barn cats. Fee: \$25. Pre-register. 9 am – 12 pm. One Mitten Farm, 1631 Bay Rd., near the entrance to Shelburne Farms. (802) 825-1182. onemittenfarm.com. *Every Saturday.*

SHELBURNE. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 20-minute rides from the Welcome Center. Fee: \$10 adult, \$8 child, 2 and under free. 11 am – 2 pm, first come, first served. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-8686. shelburnefarms.org. *Every Saturday & Sunday through March 1.*

The North Wind Doth Blow

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then, poor thing?
He'll sit in a barn, to keep himself warm,
And hide his head under his wing, poor thing.

—ANON.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(January 24, continued)

SHELBURNE. Shelburne Winterfest 2015. Sledding, sleigh rides, crafts, music, and delicious food. Wagon and sleigh rides \$2/person. Dog sled rides by Thesewoods Kennels, \$5 for 10 and under, \$8 for over 10 years. Sledding on the hill behind the farm barn (bring your own sleds and toboggans, no metal runners). Free admission. 12 noon - 3 pm. Farm Barn Courtyard, Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-9551. www.shelburnefarms.org.

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. 19th Annual Heritage WinterFest. Saturday, guided snowshoeing nature walk at Smugglers' Nordic Center, and sleigh rides, children's story hour, a lasagna dinner, family contra dance, bonfire and fireworks in Jeffersonville. Primitive Biathlon on Saturday and Sunday at the Sterling Ridge Inn. Spectators welcome. Smugglers' Notch Resort Nordic Center and Sterling Ridge Inn. (802) 644-8851. www.smuggs.com. *Through January 25.*

SPRINGFIELD. Workshop: Winter Landscape in Pastel. Instructor: Robert Carsten. Fee: \$80. 9:30 am - 4 pm. Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. www.galleryvault.org.

STOWE. Stowe Winter Carnival. Over 15 family and competitive sporting events. Participant entry fees for sporting events. (802) 777-5510. stowewintercarnival.com. *Also January 25.*

WEST RUTLAND. Concert: Caitlin Canty. Full Bar serviced by Palms Restaurant. Tickets: \$12 pre-sale, \$15 at door. Doors 6:30 pm, Music 7 pm. West Rutland Town Hall Theater, 35 Marble St. www.westrutlandtown.com. caitlincanty.com.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Tour the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. Warm up with a cup of spiced cider. See the exhibit, *Frederick Douglass*. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Also January 25, and 31.*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

BARRE. 9th Annual Montpelier Antiques Market. Up to 24 Dealers in a relaxed setting offering primitives, furniture, art, toys, books, photos, and ephemera from the New England area. Admission: early buyers \$5 (8 am), general public \$2 (9 am). Open 8 am - 1:30 pm. Canadian Club, 414 E. Montpelier Rd., Rt. 14. (802) 751-6138. www.montpelierantiquesmarket.com. *Also February 8 & 22 and March 8 & 22.*

BRATTLEBORO. Classical Concert. The Windham Orchestra's 45th Season. Program includes Jacob Mashak, Grainger, and Vaughn Williams. 3 pm at the Latchis Theater. For tickets call (802) 257-4523. www.windhamorchestra.org.

JEFFERSONVILLE. 20th Annual Smugglers' Notch Primitive Biathlon. More than 200 entrants using muzzleloading rifles and snowshoes. Presented by the Smugglers' Notch Area Chamber of Commerce, and sponsored by the Green Mountain Rifle Barrel Company of Conway, NH and The Ancient Ones of Maine. Starting at 8 am at Sterling Ridge Resort and Log Cabin. For more information call weekdays, (802) 644-8232; evenings and weekends, (802) 933-4880; e-mail, info@primitivebiathlon.com; or visit www.primitivebiathlon.com.

MONTPELIER. Ice on Fire Winter Festival. Parade at 2 pm, storytelling, winter games, songs, readings, outdoor theater, bonfire at 5 pm. Warming hut serving hot chili, hot chocolate, and cider. Bring x-c skis, snowshoes, and sleds. Admission \$3 adult, \$1 child, \$5 family. 2-5 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. www.northbranchnaturecenter.org.

NORWICH. English Country Dance. Music by Trip to Norwich. Calling by Chris Levey. Admission: \$8 adults, \$4 ages 25 and under. 3-6 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4121. engineering.dartmouth.edu/~d26745m/localECD. *Also February 22, March 29, April 19.*

RUTLAND. Vermont Symphony Orchestra Concert: At an Early Age. Gabriela Lena Frank's "Elegy to the Andes", Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony, and Elgar's Violin Concerto. Tickets \$9-\$32. 3 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. 19th Annual Heritage WinterFest. Primitive Biathlon on Saturday and Sunday at the Sterling Ridge Inn. Spectators welcome. Smugglers' Notch Resort Nordic Center and Sterling Ridge Inn. (802) 644-8851. smuggs@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com.

STOWE. Stowe Winter Carnival. Over 15 family and competitive sporting events. Ice carving demonstrations and competitions, and ski races, snow golf and snow volleyball. Participant entry fees for sporting events. (802) 777-5510. stowewintercarnival.com. *Also January 25.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Tour the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. See the exhibit, *Frederick Douglass*. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also January 31.*

TUESDAY, JANUARY 27

ESSEX JUNCTION. 84th Annual Vermont Farm Show. Champlain Valley Expo, 105 Pearl St. (802) 461-8774. vtfarmshow.com. *Also January 28 & 29.*

RUTLAND. Program: Watching Birds and Eating Bugs in Mexico. Early retirement and Mexico! A time for learning about how people in rural Mexico interact with their natural environment and helping them adjust to a changing world. Returning retired Green Mountain College Professor and RCAS Board Member Mike Blust talks about his recent experience as a Peace Corps volunteer. 7 pm. Rutland Free Library, Fox Room, 10 Court St. www.rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28

ESSEX JUNCTION. 84th Annual Vermont Farm Show. Consumer Night. Family-friendly, see a variety of animals! Champlain Valley Expo, 105 Pearl St. (802) 461-8774. vtfarmshow.com. *Also January 29.*

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays through May 2.*

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30

HANOVER, NH. Performance: Oliver Mtukudzi and the Black Spirits. One of Africa's most beloved musical ambassadors, Zimbabwe's "Tuku" concocts his own ecstatic, irresistibly danceable blend of African music, backed by a band playing both modern and traditional instruments. Tickets \$17-\$30. 8 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2422. www.hop.dartmouth.edu.

JAY. Farmers' Appreciation Day. Free skiing and riding for local Vermont farms. Four free lift tickets per farm. Rentals for just \$10. 8 am - 5 pm. New Stateside Day Lodge at Jay Peak Resort. Luke Sussdorff: (802) 327-2596, lsussdorff@jaypeakresort.com. jaypeakresort.com.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31

BENSON. Down Home Ice Fishing Derby. All Vermont waters and Lake Champlain. Fish: all legal species. Check in at the Benson Town Office on Stage Rd. 5 am - 6:30 pm. Contact Thomas Bartholomew, Benson Fish & Game Club, (802) 537-2468. tbarthol@shoreham.net.

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Pomainville Wildlife Management Area Sees Broad Expansion

A central Vermont wildlife management area popular with birders and waterfowl hunters has nearly doubled in size, thanks to a donation of land by the Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO).

The Pomainville Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Pittsford, VT, has added two sections of land that will increase the total area from 360 acres to 572 acres. The additions include a small section of floodplain forest along Otter Creek and a large

parcel of softwood forest on the east side of Route 7.

The WMA was originally purchased by Ducks Unlimited in 2004 and was donated to Vermont Fish & Wildlife a year later. The lands were purchased in order to create a forested buffer along Otter Creek and to restore 46 acres of formerly drained wetlands, the largest wetland reserve project ever completed in Vermont at that time.

"The grasslands at Pomainville WMA are beloved

by birders looking to spot grassland birds such as bobolinks," said Jane Lazorchak, land acquisition coordinator for Vermont Fish & Wildlife. "The new additions to the WMA include a large area of important deer wintering habitat, which also serves as a travel corridor for wildlife looking to cross Route 7. There is also seasonally flooded forest along Otter Creek that supports nesting wood ducks and other wetland wildlife such as otters."

The restoration project along Otter Creek has turned what were at one time seasonally flooded hayfields

into productive wetlands and natural fish ponds. The increase in fish provided by these natural ponds benefits local anglers, and additionally serves to keep mosquito numbers down.

"These ponds are just incredible in terms of the amount of fish they produce for the Otter Creek system," said Shawn Good, fisheries biologist for Vermont Fish & Wildlife.

For more information contact the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department at (802) 377-2628 or visit www.vermontfishandwildlife.com.

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Vermont Country Calendar

BRATTLEBORO. 8th Annual Northern Roots Traditional Music Festival. Daytime participation and performance activities, including workshops, panels, mini-concerts, pub sessions, dance band prep, and a family dance. Evening performance featuring musicians representing the best of the northern musical traditions. Admission. 12 noon – 10 pm. New England Youth Theater, 100 Flat St. (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org. www.bmcvt.org.

CHESTER. 21st Annual New Voices. Come hear newly-published authors: Allegra Jordan, *The End of Innocence*; Tim Johnston, *Descent*; Amy Rowland, *The Transcriptionist*; Christopher Scotton, *The Secret Wisdom of the Earth*; John Allen, *Marmite Cowboy*; David McCullough, Jr., *You Are Not Special*. Admission \$10. 2 pm. At the Stone Church, 211 North St. Also cross-country ski or snowshoe with the authors at Grafton Ponds (fee Saturday morning, meet the authors at a reception after the readings, and have dinner with them at the Fullerton Inn. (802) 875-3400. www.mvbooks.com.

CHESTER. Monthly Community All-You-Can-Eat Buffet Breakfast. Eggs, home fries, sausage, bacon, pancakes, real Vermont maple syrup, toast, and beverages. \$7 donation at the door. 8-10 am. Also Monthly Square Dance and Rounds. Refreshments on sale in the kitchen. \$5 donation at the door. 7-11 pm. Gassetts Grange, junction of Rt. 10 & 103N. (802) 875-2637. Monthly on first Saturdays.

NORTH BENNINGTON. Winterfest & Penguin Plunge. Events throughout the day. Penguin Plunge at 11 am, After-Plunge party at Vermont Arts Exchange, 11:30 am – 2 pm, \$1 admission. Ice sculpture competition. Indoor winter carnival at Village School of North Bennington. Children's Story and Activity at Park McCullough Library at 10 am. Drink & food specials at Kevin's Sports Pub & Restaurant. 8 am – 10 pm. (802) 447-1163.

PUTNEY. Winter Sunshine Series Performance: *Three Little Pigs*. Presented by WonderSpark Puppets. Tickets \$8. 1 & 3 pm. Sandglass Theater, 17 Kimball Hill. For tickets call (802) 387-4051. sandglasstheater.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 2.

RUTLAND. Les Contes D'Hoffman—Live in HD from the Metropolitan Opera. Tickets \$20. 12:55 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland Area Flea Market. Indoors, year-round, clean & friendly! Cozy cafe offers refreshments and light lunch. 9 am – 3 pm. 200 West St. corner of Forest St. (802) 770-9104. On Facebook.

SALISBURY. Lake Dunmore Ice Fishing Derby. Fish: rainbow trout, small/largemouth bass, landlocked salmon, lake trout, northern pike. Separate kid's division. \$20 adults, \$10 kids 12 and under. Check-in at Lake Dunmore Kampersville Store. Fish all of Lake Dunmore. 6 am Saturday to 3 pm Sunday. Holly Hathaway, (802) 352-4501. hollyvt2005@yahoo.com. Also February 1.

SHELBURNE. Saturday Mornings on the Farm. For ages 5-12. Farm chores and fun, plus bagels and hot chocolate. Grooming and walking donkeys, checking coop for chicken eggs, feeding and caring for barn cats. Parents welcome to stay or drop off. Fee: \$25. Please pre-register. 9 am – 12 pm. One Mitten Farm, 1631 Bay Rd., near the entrance to Shelburne Farms. (802) 825-1182. onemittenfarm.com. Every Saturday.

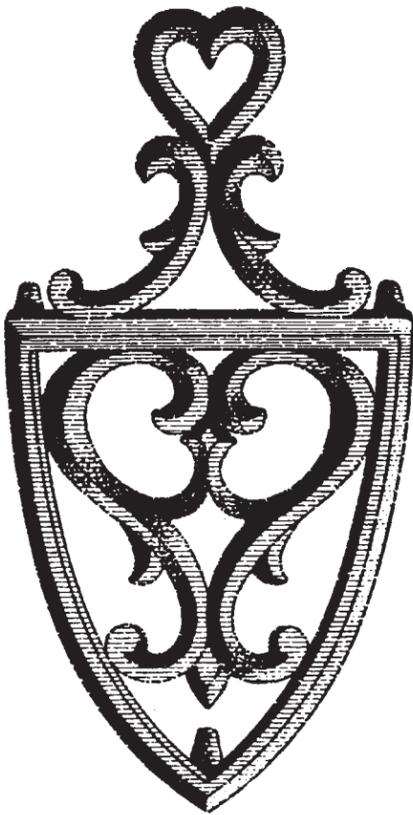
STATEWIDE. Free Ice Fishing Day. A day when anyone, resident or nonresident, may go fishing without a fishing license. Vermont's ice fishing season for trout, salmon and bass runs from January 17 through March 14 on 40 large Vermont lakes. For a list of those lakes, go to the 2015 Vermont Guide to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping, available where licenses are sold and at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. For more information, contact Nicole Corrao, (802) 318-1347. Nicole.Corrao@state.vt.us. www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Tour the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. Warm up with a cup of spiced cider. See the exhibit, *Frederick Douglass*. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

CHITTENDEN. 10th Annual Paintball Biathlon. Featuring the children's BKL race. Competition combines cross-country skiing and shooting at targets. Advance registration required. Admission. Mountain Top Inn & Resort Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Center, 195 Mountain Top Rd. (802) 483-6089. stay@mountaintopinn.com. www.mountaintopinn.com.

HANOVER, NH. Performance: "Spot" by Theater Terra. The mischievous but sweet pup from the hit book series comes to life in charming new production using large-scale handheld puppets. Recommended for ages three and up. Tickets \$13-\$23. 3 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2422. www.hop.dartmouth.edu.



SALISBURY. Lake Dunmore Ice Fishing Derby. Fish: rainbow trout, small/largemouth bass, landlocked salmon, lake trout, northern pike. Separate kid's division. \$20 adults, \$10 kids 12 and under. Check-in at Lake Dunmore Kampersville Store. Fish all of Lake Dunmore. To 3 pm Sunday. Awards at the store at 3:30 pm. Holly Hathaway, (802) 352-4501. hollyvt2005@yahoo.com.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

BENNINGTON. Walloomsac Holiday and Winter Farmers Markets. January through April, first and third Saturdays, 10 am – 1 pm. at First Baptist Church, 601 Main St. info@walloomsac.org. On Facebook.

BRADFORD. Farmers Market. Second and fourth Saturdays from 10 am – 2 pm. Grace United Methodist Church. Iris Johnson, (802) 222-4495. hellobradfordfarmers@gmail.com. facebook.com/bradfordfarmersmarket. Through April.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers' Market. Saturdays, 10 am – 2 pm, through March. At the River Garden, 153 Main St. For info call Sherry Maher, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. www.posttoilsolutions.org.

BURLINGTON. Winter Farmers' Market at Memorial Auditorium, corner of Main St. and S. Union. 10 am – 2 pm every other Saturday, starting November 8 through April. Chris Wagner, (802) 310-5172. info@burlingtonfarmersmarket.org. burlingtonfarmersmarket.org. January 3, 17, 31; February 14, 28; March 14, 28; April 11.

CHESTER. Monthly Community All-you-can-eat Buffet Breakfast. Eggs, home fries, sausage, bacon, pancakes, real Vermont maple syrup, toast, and beverages. \$7 donation at the door. 8-10 am. Also Monthly Square Dance and Rounds. Refreshments on sale in the kitchen. 50/50 tickets on sale; drawing held for free admittance for the next month's dance. \$5 donation at the door. 7-11 pm. Gassetts Grange, junction of Rt. 10 & 103N. (802) 875-2637. Monthly on first Saturdays.

CRAFTSBURY COMMON. Community Dinner. We gather for a free community supper. Really; it's free! We have a great time with old and new friends. The food is great; the fellowship is wonderful—and you don't have to wear fancy clothes! 6 pm. United Church of Craftsbury, 7 Church Lane. (802) 586-8028. Continues on third Wednesdays.

DORSET. Dorset Winter Farmers' Market. We accept EBT and debit cards. Sundays from 10 am – 2 pm at J.K. Adams Kitchen Store and Factory on Route 30. Carol Adinolfi. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com. www.dorsetfarmersmarket.com. Open Sundays through May 5.

FAIR HAVEN. Breakfast Buffet. \$7 adult, \$3.50 children. 8-11 am. Sponsored by the American Legion Post #49, 72 S. Main St. (802) 265-7983. Continues monthly second Sundays.

GRANITEVILLE. Rock of Ages Visitors Center. Visit our new website and online store offering handcrafted stone products, cheese trays, clocks, lazy Susans, wine chillers and jewelry. Order custom granite house plates, desk plates and street number plates. Rock of Ages Visitor's Center, 558 Graniteville Rd. (802) 476-3119. rockofages.com. rockofagesgiftshop.com.

GROTON. Groton Growers' Winter Farmers Market. Every third Saturday, 10 am – 2 pm at the Groton Community Building Gym, Route 302. Mary Berlejung and Sandi Adams. (802) 584-3595 or (802) 633-3031. www.grotongrowers.org. Third Saturdays through May.

Winter Art Mart at Compass Music and Arts Center

It's that time of year again! Compass Music and Arts Center in Brandon, VT is presenting their 2nd Annual Winter Art Mart from January 16 through March 29. An opening reception will be held on Friday, January 16 from 5-7 pm.

Watercolor artists, Lyn DuMoulin with her winter scenes, and Maurie Harrington with her idyllic Vermont skiing depictions will be included in the show. The award-winning fabric

artist, Judith Reilly presents her unique fiber designs and Gayl M. Braisted will exhibit her detailed, architectural watercolor paintings of Vermont buildings and landscapes.

The photography of Andrew David Christie will also be featured.

The Compass Music and Arts Center is located in Park Village at 333 Jones Dr. in Brandon VT. (802) 247-4295. www.cmacvt.org.



January Classes

Jan. 7: Serger Class
Jan. 13: Beach Wall-hanging
Jan. 14 & 28th Embroidered Landscape - Goin' Fishin'
Jan. 21: Sweatshirt Upcycle
Go on our website for events, updates and classes.

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Sunday by appointment



AFTER DARK MUSIC SERIES presents

Saturday, February 28, 7 pm

Chris Smither

Chris Smither, honing a synthesis of folk and blues for 50 years, is truly an American original. Having released a series of timeless records since the early 1970s, Chris' newest release, Still On the Levee, is a career-spanning retrospective double CD. Recorded in New Orleans, with special guests including Allen Toussaint and Loudon Wainwright III. Reviewers and fans from around the world agree that Chris is a profound songwriter and a blistering guitarist. Chris melds the styles of his two major influences, Lightnin' Hopkins and Mississippi John Hurt, into his own signature guitar sound.

\$27 advance, \$30 door.

Doors open at 6:30 with first come, first seated
Concert held at the Town Hall Theater
Corner of Merchants Row & South Pleasant Street

Cabaret Seating

Light meals and desserts served.

Purchase tickets at the door or in advance at Middlebury Inn & Main St. Stationery. By mail: 2 weeks in advance send self-addressed stamped envelope with checks only, made out to:

After Dark Music Series,
PO Box 684, Middlebury, VT 05753.

For more information call (802) 388-0216
afterdarkmusicseries.com

Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing Activities, continued)

LEBANON, NH. ValleyNet Community Technology Center. 10-seat computer lab in the new Grafton County Senior Citizens Council building, Campbell St., downtown. Center is open for walk-ins 9 am - 4:30 pm, Mon-Fri. Free. (802) 649-2126.

LEICESTER. Addison County Farm Animal Homeopathy Study Group. Learn how other farmers are applying homeopathy to their herds or flocks. Meets the first Monday of each month and is open to all levels. 11:30 am - 1:30 pm at Taconic End Farm. For more info call Annie Claghorn, (802) 247-3979. foxclag@gmavt.net.

MIDDLEBURY. Winter Farmer's Market. 9:30 am - 1 pm at Mary Hogan Elementary School, 201 Mary Hogan Dr. (802) 989-7223. middleburyfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays March 7 through April 25.*

MONTPELIER. Bethany Bowl. A community meal that is free to all. 11:30 am - 1 pm. At the Fellowship Hall, Bethany Church, 115 Main St. (802) 223-2424. www.bethanychurchvt.org. *Every Tuesday.*

MONTPELIER. Kellogg-Hubbard Book Sale. Hardcover \$2 each, softcovers \$1 each. Hours: Mon-Thurs 10 am - 8 pm, Fri 10 am - 5:30 pm, Sat 10 am - 5:30 pm. Kellogg-Hubbard Library, 135 Main St. (802) 223-3338. www.kellogghubbard.org. *Through January 17.*

MONTPELIER. Montpelier Capital City Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am - 2 pm. January 3 & 17 at Montpelier City Hall; February 7 & 21 and March 21 at Montpelier H.S.; March 7 at Montpelier City Hall; March 21 and April 11 & 25 at Montpelier H.S. Carolyn Grodinsky, (802) 223-2958. manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com.

NEWPORT. Souper Lunch. Free. All are welcome. Noon at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 44 2nd St. (802) 334-7365. www.stmarksnewport.org. *Last Tuesday of each month.*

NORTHFIELD. Winter Farmers' Market. 11 am - 2 pm. Norwich University's Plumley Armory. Crystal Peterson. (802) 485-5563. northfieldfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com. northfieldfarmersmarketvt.com. *January 4, February 1, March 1, and April 4.*

NORWICH. Norwich Farmers' Winter Market. Holiday Market Winter markets 10 am - 1 pm, January 10 & 24; February 14 & 28; March 14 & 28; April 11 & 25. At Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. Steve Hoffman, (802) 384-7447. norwichfarmersmarket.org.

POULTNEY. The Slate Valley Community Monthly Breakfast. 8-10 am at the Poultney United Methodist Church on Main St. Scrambled eggs, sausage, homemade biscuits, jams, juice, tea and hot chocolate. Adults \$1 and children under 14 free. Handicapped accessible. (802) 287-9087. *Last Saturdays of the month.*

POULTNEY. The Horace Greeley Writer's Guild. No charge to join or participate and always looking for new writers to join them! Please come and bring your latest writing, and bring a friend too. As always, writers in all genres, regardless of age or experience, are welcome. Happy writing! Poultney Public Library, 205 Main St. (802)287-5556. poultneypubliclibrary.com. *Second Tuesdays.*

PROCTOR. Marble Cafe and Gift Shop. Enjoy pastries, soups and sandwiches. Free wifi. Open Tuesday thru Saturday year round from 9 am - 3 pm. At the Marble Museum, 52 Main St. (The museum itself will reopen in the Spring). (802) 459-2750. www.vermontmarblegifts.com.

PUTNEY. Green Mountain Orchards Farm Store. Apples and cider year round. Horse-drawn wagon rides by reservation. Farm store with our own bakery. 130 West Hill Rd. (exit 4, I-91), look for signs in Putney Village. (802) 387-5851. www.greenmtorchards.com.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Through May 2.*

RUTLAND. Himalayan Salt Cave. Come relax in the only public Himalayan Salt Cave in North America. Mon-Fri 10 am - 7 pm, Sat & Sun 10 am - 6 pm. \$12. Pyramid Holistic Wellness Center, 120 Merchants Row. For reservations call (802) 775-8080. www.pyramidvt.com.

SHELburne. Saturday Mornings on the Farm. For ages 5-12. Farm chores and fun, plus bagels and hot chocolate. Grooming and walking donkeys, checking coop for chicken eggs, feeding and caring for barn cats. Parents welcome to stay or drop off. Fee: \$25. Please pre-register. 9 am - 12 pm. One Mitten Farm, 1631 Bay Rd., near the entrance to Shelburne Farms. (802) 825-1182. onemittenfarm.com. *Every Saturday.*

SO. HERO. Free Community Supper. The food is delicious and prepared by wonderful volunteer cooks. 5:30-7 pm. Congregational Church of South Hero, UCC, 24 South St. (802) 372-4962. *Second Fridays.*

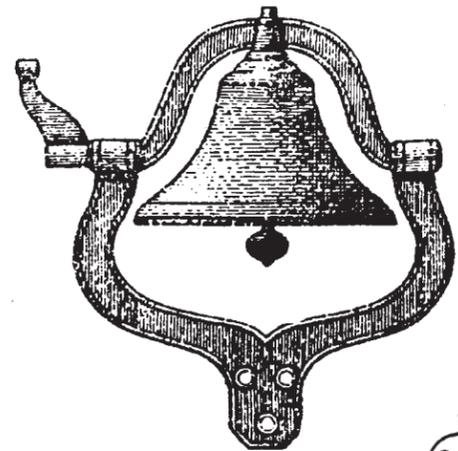
SO. HERO. Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am - 2 pm. At South Hero Congregational Church on South St. Denise Boutin, (802) 372-3291. deniseboutin@gmail.com. champlainislandsfarmersmarket.com. *December 6 & 20.*

SO. ROYALTON. Community Supper. Free and open to all. Handicap accessible. 6 pm. United Church of South Royalton (church w/red doors adjacent to the green), 67 S. Windsor St. (802) 763-7690. *Continues every Friday.*

SO. WOODSTOCK. Winter Warriors. Great horse-related activities on winter evenings! We offer a free and fun gathering where we can learn from experts and each other. Hot and cold drinks provided; please bring a snack to share. 6-7 pm in the Members' Room, Green Mountain Horse Association, 5491 South Rd. (802) 457-1509. www.gmhainc.org. *Also January 8, February 12, and March 12.*

SPRINGFIELD. Stellafane. A place and an organization devoted to amateur astronomy, founded by Russell W. Porter in 1923, and considered by many to be the "Birthplace of Amateur Telescope Making." Home to The Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc., an active amateur astronomy and telescope-making club that sponsors many events, classes, and a convention late summer. Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc., PO Box 601, Springfield, VT 05156. webmaster@stellafane.com. www.stellafane.com.

STATEWIDE. January is Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month in Vermont. Beginners can get a full beginner's package with lift access, instruction and equipment for just \$29, non-holiday in January. Must purchase in advance. Go to skivermont.com/learn. *January 1-31.*



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Way Back Then

Sand Flies and Snowbirds

by Charles Sutton

By now Vermonters who go south for the winter (known as Snow Birds) have migrated to Florida or other warmer havens. My visits to the Sunshine State were years ago, almost by chance, and fell short of the expected 'fun and sun.'

My first visit to Florida was during the annual, week-long party that thousands of college students do every spring, mostly going to Fort Lauderdale, known for its sunny beaches, swimmable waters, and on-going party atmosphere.

Six of us—three male students and three co-eds—left Ithaca, New York, and drove non-stop, taking turns at the wheel in 3-4 hour rotations. The trip down was uneventful except for hogs crossing the highway in Georgia. They were wild and definitely 'free range.'

Once there we didn't see the girls again until the trip home. Our trio of college guys shared an inexpensive motel room near the beach. The first one up in the morning went

across the street to an orange juice stand and brought back a large pitcher of delicious, freshly squeezed juice.

It was then to the beach for a day of hanging out,

swimming, and beer. It's amazing that time can pass so fast when one is doing just about nothing. We'd eat at a different restaurant for dinner and then to bed early. We tried the dog races one night, but didn't enjoy it knowing how the dogs would end up.

Scenes of the college student invasion of Florida on the evening news now look like one big, wild frat party. When we were there it was a lot more subdued, maybe because, as college seniors, we would be going on active duty to the Korean War. The draft awaited any of us without a military commitment through the ROTC or the reserves.

We were hoping to meet co-eds from other colleges. My two companions tried, but came up empty-handed. I was lucky to meet a co-ed from Ohio and we spent an evening on the beach. Have you ever sat next to a stranger on a plane, and immediately developed a rapport? When you said your goodbyes you knew you would never see each other again. Such was my meeting with the co-ed whose name I have long forgotten.

My second trip to Florida came many years later when I took a year off from newspapering, traveling across the county in a VW camper, and stopping occasionally to write travel stories.

Unfortunately, by the time I reached California I was quite ill. One morning while at a campground near Hollywood I peered out the camper window and saw four foreboding ravens sitting on a power line feasting their eyes on me. Not a good omen. It was time to head home.

A doctor in Arizona was kind enough to give up watching a Cowboys football game to check me out. The verdict wasn't good: bronchitis in full bloom in a run-down traveller.

My mother who was visiting her sister in Tampa Bay, Florida, urged me to come there for R & R. So that was my next destination.

I took my meds, crossed the southern tier of states, and arrived in Florida none the worse from my ordeal. I rested, and picked and enjoyed oranges and grapefruit from a small orchard in my aunt's backyard.

After a couple of days the sisters wondered if I would be willing to drive them in the camper to visit friends on

Sanibel Island. So off I went with the two aging widows, who were very much enjoying adventuring in the VW camper. On the way there we crossed a long, high bridge.

"I saw four foreboding ravens on a power line feasting their eyes on me. Not a good omen. It was time to go home."

The VW started buffeting in the strong winds and I had to fight the wheel. They asked me if anything was wrong. "No problem," I said.

At Sanibel Island my aunt's friends had bedrooms for the two of them, and I was to sleep in the camper. That would have been just fine except around 1:00 in the morning, I was suddenly awakened by a massive infestation of insects coming through even the screened windows. Their bites were much worse than the mosquitos and black flies of the north country.

I flipped on the lights. There was nothing to see at first, but looking closer I saw hundreds of specs like ground-up pepper on the inside roof of the camper. They were no-see-ums (also aptly named sand flies, midges and punches) feeding freely on my face! I retreated to the house. Mother was shocked seeing my face so red and swollen.

Our hosts were embarrassed over my experience (and the look of me), but I made light of it, noting the trip was really worthwhile exploring the beautiful island and its shores laden with world-famous shells.

That was likely my last trip to Florida, as time moves on and I have grown accustomed to our beautiful, snowy, frigid winters. I wish the Snowbirds well but I'm happy where I am, right here in Vermont.

Vermont Country Calendar

STATEWIDE. Free Ice Fishing Day on January 31. A day when anyone, resident or nonresident, may go fishing without a fishing license. Vermont's ice fishing season for trout, salmon and bass runs from January 17 through March 14 on 40 large Vermont lakes. For a list of those lakes, go to the 2015 Vermont Guide to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping, available where licenses are sold and at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. For more information, contact Nicole Corrao, (802) 318-1347. Nicole.Corrao@state.vt.us www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

STATEWIDE. Salvation Farms. Volunteer opportunities to glean and process Vermont raised, surplus fruits and vegetables for use by vulnerable populations. For more information contact (802) 522-3148. info@ourfarmsourfood.org. salvationfarms.wordpress.com.

STATEWIDE. Extension Master Gardener Course. Non-credit course covers the basics of home horticulture and what it means to be an Extension Master Gardener. Fee: \$395 (includes online manual and course materials. Printed copies of the manual are \$55). Tuesday evenings, 6:15-9 pm. Via Vermont Interactive Technology studios in Bennington, Brattleboro, Johnson, Lyndon, Middlebury, Montpelier, Newport, Randolph Ctr., Rutland, Springfield, St. Albans, White River Jct., and Williston. (802) 656-9562. www.uvm.edu/mastergardener. February 3 through April 28.

ST. ALBANS. Book Cellar—Library Used Book Sale. \$3 per bag of books! Sponsored by Friends of the St. Albans Free Library. Tuesdays from 10 am - 8 pm. Held in the library basement. St. Albans Free Library, 11 Maiden Lane. (802) 524-1507. www.stalbansfreelibrary.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Caledonia Winter Farmers Market. First and third Saturdays, November 1 through April 18, 10 am - 1 pm. At St. Johnsbury Welcome Center, Railroad St. Elizabeth Everts, (802) 592-3088. sites.google.com/site/caledoniafarmersmarket.

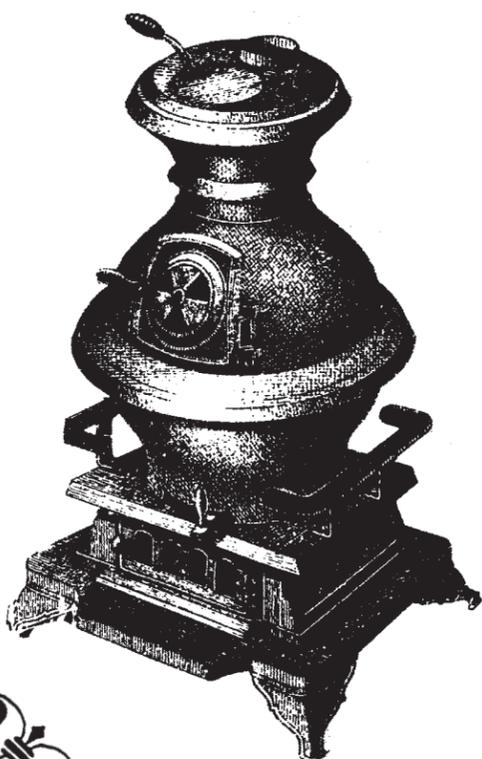
TUNBRIDGE. Monthly Breakfast & Bake Sale. Hosted by the Tunbridge Recreation Committee and the Tunbridge Central School 8th Grade Class. 8 am - 12 noon. Tunbridge Town Hall, Rt. 110. www.tunbridgevt.com. Second Sundays of each month.

WEST RUTLAND. Vermont Herbal General Store. Tai Chi Gung intro classes, Wed at 6 pm. Free intro classes. Reiki healings, Chinese ear coning, handmade herbal remedies, teas, and lotions. Crystals, stones, and books. All are welcome. Open Tues & Wed 1-6, Thurs-Sat 12-6, Sun 1-4, closed Fri. Vermont Herbal General Store, 518 Main St. (802) 438-2766. info@vermontherbal.com. www.vermontherbal.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Listen Community Dinner. Doors open at 3 pm. Nutritious free meals served from 5-5:30 pm every Monday through Friday. Take-home available. At Listen Community Dinner Hall, River Point Plaza, 44 Maple Ave. (603) 448-4553. www.listencs.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Thrift Shop. Discount summer clothing. Saturdays 10 am - 1 pm, Wednesdays 1-4 pm. Second Hand Rose, United Methodist Church, 106 Gates St. (802) 295-2502. unitedmethodistchurchwrj.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Upper Valley Seed Savers meet on the second Thursday of the month at 5 pm at Upper Valley Food Coop, through the winter. Our mission is to further knowledge about seed saving and to work on projects that will help develop a body of locally-adapted open-pollinated vegetable seeds. For information, or if you can't come to meetings but would like to receive a monthly email with our minutes which contain information on our projects, please contact Sylvia Davatz at sdav@valley.net or call (802) 436-3262.



WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Public Sitting Meditation. Free meditation instruction is available at most of these times: Tues 5:30-6:30 pm, Thurs 12-1 pm, Sun 9 am - 12 pm. Shambhala Meditation Center of White River, 158 S. Main St. (802) 785-4304. whiteriver.shambhala.org.

WINDSOR. Stuffed Animal Repair. Sue Spear, stuffed animal repair specialist, will fix up stuffed friends. Free. 6-8 pm. Windsor Public Library, 43 State St. (802) 674-2556. Each Wednesday.

WINDSOR. All-You-Can-Eat Brunch Buffet. Menu includes pancakes and eggs, sausage, fruit salad, homemade bread, desserts and more. Adults \$7.50, 8 and under \$3. 11 am to 1 pm. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 27 State St. (802) 674-6461. First Sundays.

WOODSTOCK. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park. 20 miles of trails and carriage roads are open year-round. Gardens and mansion. Vermont's only national park. Guided tours \$4/\$8, under 15 free. Walk the grounds free. Visit the Carriage Barn Visitor Center open daily 10 am - 5 pm through October 31. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park, 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368 x 22. nps.gov/mabi.

WOODSTOCK. 5th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. Fifteen films and documentaries from around the world. All films are open to the public and accessible to people with disabilities. Tickets \$11 for ages 16 and up, \$6 for ages 3-15. Saturdays at 3 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. To purchase tickets in advance call (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. On Selected Saturdays through April 4.

WOODSTOCK. Hand-in-Hand Community Meal. All are welcome. Free, donations accepted. Every Thursday, 5-7 pm in the Social Hall of the North Universalist Chapel Society, 7 Church St. (802) 457-2557.

WOODSTOCK. First Run Movies at the Woodstock Town Hall Theatre. Old-fashioned big-screen movie-going experience. Adults \$8, seniors \$7, students \$6. Famous maple popcorn! (802) 457-3981. www.pentanglearts.org.

MUSEUMS, EXHIBITS & GALLERIES

BARRE. Studio Place Arts. Exhibits, classes, workshops, and artists' studios. Free. Tues, Wed & Fri 10 am - 5 pm, Thurs 11 am - 7 pm, Sat 9 am - 5 pm. 201 N. Main St. (802) 479-7069. info@studioplacearts.com. www.studioplacearts.com.

BARRE. Vermont History Center and Leahy Library. Thousands of books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, audio, video and film recordings, and many other items which shed light on the lives and times of past Vermonters. One admission fee for both the Vermont Heritage Galleries in Barre and the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier. Adults: \$5; families: \$12; students, children, seniors: \$3; members and children under 6: free. Monday through Friday, 9 am - 4 pm. Vermont Historical Society, 60 Washington St. (802) 479-8500. vermonthistory.org.

BELMONT. Stephanie Stouffer Studio and Gallery Gift Shop. Hooked pillows and rugs, tapestries, holiday cards, and stoneware. Free admission. Call for appointment. Stephanie Stouffer Studio and Gallery Gift Shop, 250 Maple Hill Rd. (802) 259-2686. stouffer@vermontel.net. www.stephaniestouffer.com.

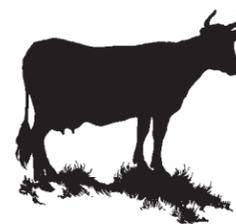
BENNINGTON. The Dollhouse and Toy Museum of Vermont. 2nd Annual Festival of Tiny Trees and exhibit of vintage tree topper angels. Museum shop. Admission is \$2 for children three and older, \$4 for adults and \$10 for families. Open Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 pm and every afternoon between Christmas and New Year's Day. 212 Union St. at the corner of Valentine St. (802) 681-3767. www.dollhouseandtoymuseumofvermont.com.

BENNINGTON. Bennington Center for the Arts. Permanent collections, theater productions, workshops. Admission: adults \$9, seniors & students \$8, families \$20, under 12 are free. Open Wed-Mon, 10 am - 5 pm. Bennington Center for the Arts, 44 Gypsy Lane. (802) 442-7158. jana@thebennington.org. thebennington.org.

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum. Exhibits and programs, founding documents, fine art, and more. See Bennington Pottery, the 1924 Wasp Touring Car, Vermont furniture, and the Bennington Flag—one of America's oldest flags. Lectures, workshops, concerts, films, and the George Aiken Wildflower Trail. Admission \$10, children under 18 free. Free admission to the Gift Shop. Open 10 am - 5 pm every day except Wednesdays. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BRANDON. Compass Music and Arts Center. Second Annual Winter Art Mart, January 16 through March 29. Arts businesses and studios, classes & workshops, exhibits, concerts, and community events. A gift shop features art and music related books, collectibles, and the music of the classical recording company, Divine Art Records. Onsite café. 10 am - 5 pm daily. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Drive, Park Village, 1.5 miles north of downtown. (802) 247-4295. www.cmacvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Exhibit: World Leaders & Global Citizens—Photographs by Patrick Leahy. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of his service as a U.S. senator. Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, 10 Vernon St. www.brattleboromuseum.org. Through March 7.



Watering the Cow

I led the red Guernsey from her stable out into glistening daylight. She stood at the trough gulping pailfuls of ice cold water. Her broad back caught and held perfect snowflakes on the ends of her long, winter hair. They formed a gallery of crystal shapes. She was silver laden. We walked back carefully with our exquisite burden. We entered the dark, warm barn. Our treasure vanished. She shook, tumbling the stars.

—WILLIAM MUNDELL

Winter Wildlife Celebration In Quechee, VT on January 17

Celebrate the wildlife of winter at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science Nature Center on Saturday, January 17, 2015, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a fun-filled day of family activities!

In the morning, join our knowledgeable educators to explore our exhibits and trails with interactive guided tours and talks.

The celebration continues in the afternoon with outdoor and indoor games, crafts, and activities that challenge visitors of all ages in their winter adaptation skills. Finish the day by a warm campfire and

enjoy some yummy refreshments.

Snow or no, it's sure to be a great way to discover the wonders of wildlife in winter! All activities are included with admission to VINS Nature Center: adults \$13, seniors (65 plus) \$12, youth (4-17) \$11, children 3 and under free.

Vermont Institute of Natural Science Nature Center is located at 6565 Woodstock Rd., Rt. 4, Quechee, VT. For more information call (802) 359-5000 x 223. Visit vinsweb.org.



"Reflections Of the Season"

Mixed media works by
late artist Harlow Lent

On exhibit at Café 232 through the winter
232 Main Street, South Strafford, VT
802-765-9232 • www.cafe232.com
Wed thru Fri 6-2, Sat 7-2, Sun 8-1, closed Mon

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Sleigh Ride Weekend

January 17, 18, & 19, 2015
10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.



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Sledding with Jack Jumper Sleds

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Museums, Exhibits and Galleries, continued)

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. Exhibits and programs. Open 11-5. Closed Tues & Wed. Admission \$6/\$4/\$3. 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

BURLINGTON. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center. Admission: \$9.50 adults, \$7 ages 3-17, \$8 seniors and students, under 3 free. Monday-Sunday, 10 am - 5 pm. At Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, One College St. (877) 324-6385. info@echovermont.org. www.echovermont.org.

CHESTER. 103 Artisans Marketplace. Hand crafted gifts, decorative accessories, small batch Chocolates and Vermont Maple products. Owned by artists Elise & Payne Junker, exclusive showroom of Junker Studio metalwork. Open every day 10 am - 5 pm, closed Tuesday. Located on Rt. 103, south of town—look for the life-size moose! (802) 875-7400. Gallery103.com.

ENOSBURG FALLS. Art Exhibit. Featured artist reception first Sunday of every month, 1-3 pm. Open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm, Sunday 10-2 pm. Artist In Residence—a Cooperative Gallery, 321 Main St. (802) 933-6403. www.artistinresidencecoop.com.

GLOVER. Bread & Puppet Museum, One of the largest collections of some of the biggest puppets in the world housed in a 100-foot-long converted dairy barn built in 1863. By appointment November through May. Bread and Puppet Farm, Rt. 122. (802) 525-3031. breadandpuppet.org.

GRAFTON. The Nature Museum at Grafton. Programs for all ages. Hands-on exhibits, dioramas, mounted specimen, wildlife garden. Admission \$5 adults, \$4 seniors and students, \$3 children ages 3 to 12, 2 and under free, \$15 for families. Open Thurs & Sat, 10 am - 4 pm, and by appointment. 186 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2111. info@nature-museum.org. www.nature-museum.org.

GRAFTON. Art Exhibits. Open daily 10 am - 5 pm. Gallery North Star, 151 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2465. gallery@gnsgraffton.com. www.gnsgraffton.com.

GRANVILLE, NY. The Slate Valley Museum. Exhibits, events, demonstrations, programs, First Fridays, and gift shop. Tues-Fri 1-5 pm, Sat 10 am - 4 pm. Admission \$5, under 12 free. Downtown at 17 Water St. (518) 642-1417. www.slatevalleymuseum.org.

HUNTINGTON. Birds of Vermont Museum. Features over 500 carved wooden birds, representing 259 species. Admission: adult \$6, senior \$5, child 3-17 \$3. 10 am - 4 pm. The Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. www.birdsofvermont.org. Open by appointment November 1 through April 30.

MANCHESTER. Southern Vermont Art Center. Winter Members' Exhibition December 6 through January 11. Free admission to some exhibits. Open Tues-Sat 10 am - 5 pm. Yester House Galleries, Southern Vermont Arts Center, West Rd. (802) 362-1405. www.svac.org.

MANCHESTER. Visit Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home. Summer home of presidential son, Robert Lincoln. House, gardens, Pullman car, working farm and cheese-making facility, floating boardwalk, walking/cross country ski trails, museum store and welcome center. Admission: \$18 adults, \$5 children 6-14, under 6 free. Open daily 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Hildene, off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. www.hildene.org.

MARLBORO. Southern Vermont Natural History Museum. Perched on an overlook—on a clear day the horizon is 100 miles away! See mounted specimens of over 600 native New England birds and mammals, a Raptor Center with live hawks and owls, amphibian and reptile exhibit and fall wildflower exhibit. Hogback Mountain Gift Shop next door. Admission: adults \$5, seniors \$3, children 5-12 \$2, under 5 free. Open 10 am - 5 pm on weekends in the winter. Rt. 9, Hogback Mountain. (802) 464-0048. museum@sover.net. www.vermontmuseum.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury College Museum of Art. Free. Tuesday through Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 12-5 pm, closed Mondays. 72 Porter Field Rd. (802) 443-3168. museum.middlebury.edu.

MIDDLEBURY. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont. The oldest chartered community history museum in the United States, welcoming visitors since 1882. Exhibits, research center, and museum shop. Admission: adults \$5, youth 6-18 \$3, senior \$4.50, family \$ 12, under 6 free. Open Tues-Sat 10 am - 5 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, One Park St. (803) 388-2117. www.henrysheldonmuseum.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Vermont Folklife Center. Gallery, archives & research center, programs, and Heritage Shop. Free admission. Open Tues-Sat 10 am - 5 pm. Vermont Folklife Center, 88 Main St., (802) 388-4964. info@vermontfolklifecenter.org. www.vermontfolklifecenter.org.

MONTPELIER. Vermont History Museum & Bookstore. One admission fee gives access to both the Vermont History Museum and the Vermont Heritage Galleries. Adults: \$5; families: \$12; students, children, seniors: \$3; members and children under 6: free. Open 9 am - 4 pm, Tuesday through Saturday. Pavilion Building, 109 State St. (802) 828-2291. vhs-info@state.vt.us. www.vermonthhistory.org.

NORWICH. Cycles of Change: Farming in Norwich. An exhibit documenting agricultural heritage through the stories of eight working farms. Hosted by the Norwich Historical Society. Free. Wednesday and Thursday, 10 am - 3 pm. Norwich Historical Society, 277 Main St. (802) 649-0124. info@norwichhistory.org. norwichhistory.org. Through Spring 2015.

NORWICH. Montshire Museum of Science. Exhibits, trails, programs, and museum store. Open 10 am - 5 pm daily. Admission \$14 adults, \$11 children 2-17, under 2 free. Open daily 10 am - 5 pm. One Montshire Rd. (802) 649-2200. www.montshire.org.

QUECHEE. Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Trails, exhibits, live bird programs and animal feeding times. \$11-\$13, under 3 free. 10 am - 5 pm daily. 6565 Woodstock Rd. (802) 359-5000.

ROCHESTER. Art Exhibit: "Duet." VarujanBoghosian and Ben Frank Moss, on exhibit through February 14. Wed-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-5, Sun-Tues by appointment. BigTown Gallery, 99 North Main St. (802) 767-9670. bigtowngallery.com.

RUTLAND. Exhibits, classes, workshops, open studio evenings, gift shop. Gallery open Thursday and Friday 12-6 pm and Saturdays 12-5 pm. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. info@chaffeeartcenter.org. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

RUTLAND. Chaffee Downtown Art Center. Exhibits, workshops, classes. Open Tuesday-Friday 12-6 pm, and Saturday 10 am - 5 pm. Chaffee Downtown Gallery, 75 Merchants Row. (802) 775-0062. info@chaffeeartcenter.org. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

SAXTONS RIVER. River Artisans Cooperative. 40 craftspeople keep the shelves stocked with a wide variety of handcrafted items. Open to new members. Year round, weekdays from 12-5 pm and weekends from 10 am - 3 pm. 26B Main St. (802) 869-2099. www.riverartisans.com.

Winter Morning

It comes thundering out of the night.
The eastern sky is barely light.
With a tearing, a grating, a deep rasping growl,
The snow plow.

There's no use trying to go back to sleep.
That sweet dream, starting, will have to keep.
The dogs are hungry and want out. Now.
And the kittens yowl.

The snow and wind have worked all night
And created a frigid icing delight.
Such beautiful stuff.

I go out and shovel and dig and sweat.
My feet are cold, my hands are wet.
Enough is enough.

The birds are a-twitter, they want their grub.
It must be cold 'neath their snow-draped shrub,
But they survive.

My stoves are hungry and so are the dogs.
I dish out some Kibble and shove in some logs
To keep us alive.

Now there's a dog beside me in my easy chair,
And a cat on my lap and she doesn't care,
She doesn't have to go out.

My coffee is hot and the muffin is sweet.
There's sheepskin slippers on my feet
And nothing to worry about.

—KIT HEWES



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English Country Dance

Music by *Trip to Norwich*
Carol Compton and Thal Aylward
Chris Levey, caller

All dances taught, no partner necessary, all are welcome!
Bring a separate pair of clean, non-marking, soft-soled shoes or socks. Bring refreshments to share at the break.

Sunday, January 25 from 1-4 p.m.

Tracy Hall, Norwich, VT

Admission \$8, under 25 \$4

Info: (802) 785-4121 (Chris)

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Vermont Country Calendar

SAXTONS RIVER. Main Street Arts. Concerts, workshops, lectures, and classes for adults, teens, and children. Something for every interest. 35 Main St. (802) 869-2960. www.mainstreetarts.org.

SHELBURNE. Shelburne Museum. Home to the finest museum collections of 19th-century American folk art, quilts, 19th- and 20th-century decoys, and carriages. Between November 1 and April 30, open buildings include the Pizzagalli Center for Arts and Education, the Round Barn and the Webb Gallery. Admission: adults \$8, children \$5 (5-12), under 5 free. Open daily 10 am – 5 pm. Shelburne Museum, 6000 Shelburne Rd. (802) 985-3346. shelburnemuseum.org.

SHOREHAM. Shoreham Bell Museum. See 5-6,000 bells collected from all over the world. Open most afternoons by appointment or chance year round. Free admission, donations accepted. Shoreham Bell Museum, 127 Smith St. off Rt. 74 west. For information call Judy Blake at (802) 897-2780. vtcat@shorehambellmuseum.com. www.shorehambellmuseum.com.

SO. STRAFFORD. Mixed Media Works by Late Artist Harlow Lent. On exhibit in Cafe 232 through the winter. The paintings, completed from 1990-1992 incorporate oil and acrylic on foil and can be viewed during café winter hours: Wednesday through Friday 6 am – 2 pm; Saturday 7 am – 2 pm; and Sunday 8 am – 1 pm. 8-1. Free wifi. Cafe 232, 232 Rt. 132, (802) 765-9232. (802) 885-6156. www.nlwatercolor.com. cafe232.com.

SPRINGFIELD. Gallery at the VAULT. A Vermont State Craft Center featuring fine art and hand-crafted gifts from over 125 local and regional artists and craftsmen. Exhibits, classes, workshops. Tuesday - Saturday 11 am – 5 pm. 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium. Exhibits, programs, special events, wildflower table, collections. Admission: adults \$8, seniors and children under 17 \$6, under 5 free. Winter hours: Tues-Sat 9 am – 5 pm, Sun 1-5 pm. Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium, 1302 Main St. (802) 748-2372. www.fairbanksmuseum.org

ST. JOHNSBURY. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain and Dog Chapel. Free. Winter hours through April 30: Thursday through Monday 11 am – 4 pm. Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. off Spaulding Rd. (800) 449-2580. contact@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com.

WINDSOR. Cider Hill Gardens & Art Gallery. Gallery open December through April by appointment. At 1747 Hunt Rd., off State St. (800) 232-4337. flowers@ciderhillgardens.com. ciderhillgardens.com. garymilek.com.

WOODSTOCK. ArtisTree Community Art Center. Exhibits, classes, music, special events. Tues 11 am – 8 pm, Wed-Sat 11 am – 4 pm. Mount Tom Building, 1206 Rt. 12. (802) 457-3500. www.artistreevt.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum Hosts the Frederick Douglass Exhibit during January weekends and Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday weekend. Admission: adults \$14, age 62 & up \$13, children ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am to 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House. Admission: adults \$14, age 62 & up \$13, children ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. Open November-February Weekends, 10 am to 4 pm; Christmas and February Vacation Weeks, 10 am to 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

HORSEBACK RIDING, SLEIGH & WAGON RIDES

BRATTLEBORO. Fair Winds Farm Wagon Rides. Half-hour reserved horse-drawn rides through fields and woods, and along a babbling brook. Adults \$10, kids 3-12 \$6, minimum \$50, after 5 pm \$80. Visit our farm store. Fair Winds Farm is a "Diversified, Horse Powered, Vermont Family Farm" at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd., off Rt. 30. (802) 254-9067. fairwinds@fairwindsfarm.org. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

CHITTENDEN. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 30-minute rides Wednesday through Sunday. \$30 for 15 years and older, \$20 for 4 - 14 years, 3 and under free. Private rides available. To reserve, call the Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Center at (802) 483-6089 from 9 am – 5 pm or after hours call the front desk at (802) 483-2311. Mountain Top Inn & Resort, 195 Mountain Top Rd. www.mountaintoppinn.com. *December through March.*

LANDGROVE. Karl Pfister Horse-Drawn Sleigh, Wagon and Carriage Rides. Prices: \$20 adult, \$10 children under 12, under 2 free. Private rides are \$120 for 1-4 people, \$180 for 5-12 people. Rides leave on the hour from Landgrove Inn, Landgrove Rd. off Rt. 11. Call for reservations. (802) 824-4663. www.karlpfistersleigh.com.

LONDONDERRY. Sleigh and Wagon Rides at Taylor Farm. Sleighs run 11 am – 6 pm every hour on the hour Friday, Saturday and Sunday (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day). Rides last 45 minutes and include a fireside stop to toast marshmallows and enjoy hot cider. Wool blankets provided. Come early and pack up a picnic basket of goodies from our farm store. We will host sleigh rides well into the Spring if we have enough snow! Our sleighs each hold up to 10 adults. Prices: \$20 for everyone over age 7, \$10 for ages 7-2, under 2 free; private rides \$150 for 1-5 people, \$200 for 6-10 people. Mid-week private rides available on request with advance notice. Taylor Farm, 825 Rt. 11. By reservation only, call (802) 824-5690. www.taylorfarmvermont.com.

PUTNEY. Green Mountain Orchards. Horse-drawn wagon rides year-round by reservation. 130 West Hill Rd. (exit 4, I-91). (802) 387-5851. www.greenmtorchards.com.

RUPERT. Winter Sleigh Rides. In a Sweetheart Sleigh built for two. Over the course of an hour, you will tour around the wintry landscape of the farm and forest. Fee \$150/hour. Saturdays and Sunday, reservation required. Group sleigh rides in a 12-person sleigh for \$185/45 minutes. Call to reserve. Merck Forest and Farmland, 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org. *December 20 through March.*

SHELBURNE. Sleigh Rides. Enjoy a 20-minute horse-drawn sleigh ride from the Welcome Center (weather permitting). If there's not enough snow, we'll have wagon rides instead. Fee: \$10 adult, \$8 children, 2 and under free. 11 am – 2 pm, first come, first served. Reservations for private 20-minute sleigh rides at 2:30 and 3 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-8686. registration@shelburnefarms.org. www.shelburnefarms.org. *Every day through January 1st except Christmas Day.*

WILMINGTON. Scenic Horseback Trail Rides. \$25/40 minutes. Children over 6 can ride alone. Year round seven days a week by reservation. Flames Stables, Rt. 100 south. (802) 464-8329.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Sleigh Ride Weekends. Horse-drawn sleigh rides, jack jumper sledding. Visit the operating dairy farm featuring the Jersey herd, calf nursery, draft horse teams, sheep, and oxen, and restored farmhouse. Admission: \$14 adults, \$13 seniors, \$8 children 5-15, \$4 children 3 & 4. Open 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *January 17, 18 & 19; February 14 through 22.*

RECREATION & NATURE CENTERS

EAST CHARLESTON. Northwoods Stewardship Center. Outdoor programs, outings, workshops, classes, and more. 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551 x 115. www.northwoodscenter.org.

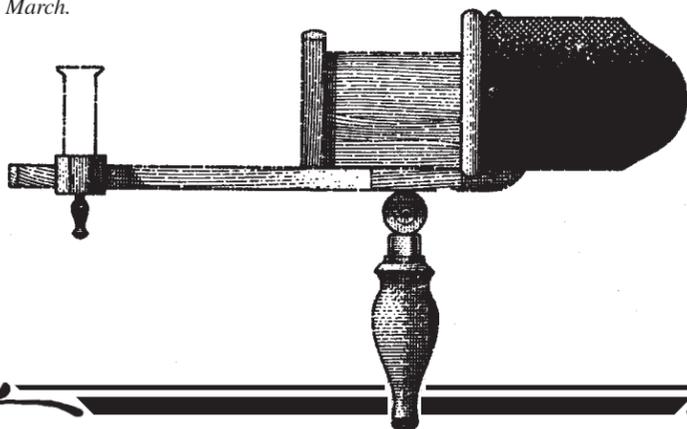
GRAFTON. Grafton Ponds Outdoor Center. A year-round recreation center. In the winter enjoy cross country skiing with snowmaking, snowshoeing, and snowtubing. Mountain biking, bike terrain park, hiking, canoeing. 783 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2400. grafftonponds.com.

MONTPELIER. North Branch Nature Center. Programs and workshops, hikes, bird counts. 713 Elm Street. (802) 229-6206. chip@northbranchnaturecenter.org. northbranchnaturecenter.org.

QUECHEE. Vermont Institute of Natural Science Nature Center. Exhibits, programs, nature trail, live bird programs and animal feeding time, nature store. Admission: adults \$13, seniors \$12, youth (4-17) \$11. 10 am – 5 pm. VINS Nature Center, 6565 Woodstock Rd., Rt. 4, 1/4 mile west of Quechee Gorge. (802) 359-5000. www.vinsweb.org.

RUPERT. Merck Forest and Farmland. Camping, cabins, trails, farm, workshops and seasonal events. Visitor's Center and store with certified organic maple syrup, our own 100% wool blankets, and more. Help with animal chores Saturdays 2-4 pm. Open year round, dawn to dusk. 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

SHELBURNE. Shelburne Farms. Welcome Center, Farm and Farm Store. Family programs, workshops, events. Open year round 10 am – 5 pm. Admission. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.



The New England Cook Book circa 1836

My mother always told me to feed our horse dried corn in the winter to help keep her warm. One time I fed her corn in the summer and she got a bad case of eczema on her tummy. "See that," my mother said? "Too much heat."

Our ancestors knew about eating more corn in cold weather and saved dried stores of it to see them through the winter. They made corn bread to go with their stews and chowders, hoe cakes, and hasty pudding—corn meal mush or fried mush, which was a family favorite for Saturday night supper. Here are some of their recipes, from 178 years ago. We've included a few non-corn treats for your winter dessert pleasure. —Editor

Indian Slap Jacks

Mix a quart of milk with a pint of Indian meal, four table-spoonsful of flour, three beaten eggs, a teaspoonful of salt. A tablespoonful of molasses or a little stewed pumpkin is thought by many people to improve them. Fry them in lard.

Baked Indian Pudding

Boil three pints of milk, and turn it on to a pint of Indian meal, and five table-spoonsful of wheat flour. When cool beat three eggs with the same quantity of sugar, and stir it into the pudding, together with a teaspoonful of salt and a piece of butter of the size of an egg. A teaspoonful or two of cinnamon can be added to taste. If raisins are put in the pudding, a teacup more of milk will be required, as they absorb the milk. This pudding is good if the eggs are omitted. It takes two and a half hours to bake it.

Hasty Pudding

Wet Indian meal with cold water sufficient to make a thin batter, turn part of it into a pot of boiling water. When it has boiled fifteen or twenty minutes stir in the remainder, salt it to taste, and stir in Indian meal by the handful as long as you can stir the pudding stick round in it easily. When the stick can be made to stand upright for a minute, it is thick enough. It should boil slowly, and be stirred often. If you wish to fry it later, it will be necessary to boil it from two to three hours. If not, it will boil sufficiently in an hour. Turn it into a deep dish, and if it is to be fried, let it stand till cold, then cut it into thin slices, flour and fry them in lard, till very brown.

Marlborough Pie

Pare tart mellow apples, quarter them, take out the seeds, and stew them in a little water till soft enough to rub through a sieve. To twelve table-spoonsful of it when strained, put twelve table-spoonsful of sugar, the same quantity of wine, five eggs, six table-spoonsful of melted butter, half a pint of milk, the juice and grated peel of half a lemon, and half a nutmeg. Bake it in deep pie plates, without an upper crust.

Shrewsbury Cake

Mix a pound of butter, with twelve ounces of sugar, add five eggs beaten to a froth, a little rosewater, or essence of lemon, and a pound of flour, roll out thin, and stamp and cut it into cakes, and bake them in a quick oven.

Tunbridge Cake

Stir six ounces of butter with the same quantity of sugar, beat a couple of eggs and put in, together with a table-spoonful of cream, and a little orange flower water, or essence of lemon. Add three-quarters of a pound of flour, roll it out thin and cut it into cakes.

A Rich Bread Pudding

Cut a loaf of baker's bread into thin slices, spread butter on both sides. Lay them in a buttered pudding dish, and on each layer strew currants, or raisins, and citron cut into small pieces. Beat eight eggs with six table-spoonsful of sugar rolled free from lumps; mix them with three pints of milk, and a grated nutmeg. Turn the whole over the bread and let it stand until the bread has absorbed most of the milk, then bake it for about three-quarters of an hour.

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7th Annual Ladies Nordic Ski Expo at Trapp Family Lodge

The Catamount Trail Association invites you to join us at the 7th Annual Ladies Nordic Ski Expo: Taught by Women, Just for Women, on Saturday, January 10, 2015 at Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, VT.

For the last six years in January, over 100 women have gathered to ski and celebrate at the historic lodge.

The Catamount Trail Association is pleased to continue this great tradition that brings together some of the region's best instructors with a fantastic group of women looking to learn and practice new ski skills.

While Vermont offers a host of ski opportunities and events, the Ladies Nordic Ski Expo is unique in that it offers women instructional opportunities in the traditional skinny-ski track of classic and skate skiing, as well as backcountry and telemark techniques.

Participants choose the technique they would most like to learn, and are grouped with an experienced instructor. Instructor-to-participant ratios are kept low during the morning and afternoon instruction sessions.

All of this happens with

the spectacular backdrop of Trapp Family Lodge, which offers European-style hospitality and an extensive network of cross-country ski trails nestled in the Green Mountains. Special rates for accommodations are available at Trapp Family Lodge for participants, as are equipment rentals.

The 2015 lineup includes guest speakers Louise and Regina Limoge of Vermont Climbing and Adventure School, a guiding business offering rock climbing, hiking, canoeing, and yoga adventures. A delicious lunch and the après-ski wine, cheese, and chocolate tasting are sure to be a hit for skiers coming in from the cold.

Don't miss out on the 7th Annual Ladies Nordic Ski Expo! Registration fee is \$90, late registration after January 2 is \$105. To register go to www.skireg.com/ladies-nordic-ski-expo.

For more information about the Catamount Trail Association visit www.catamounttrail.org.

For questions about the Ladies Nordic Ski Expo go to catamounttrail.org/events/ladies-nordic-ski-expo.

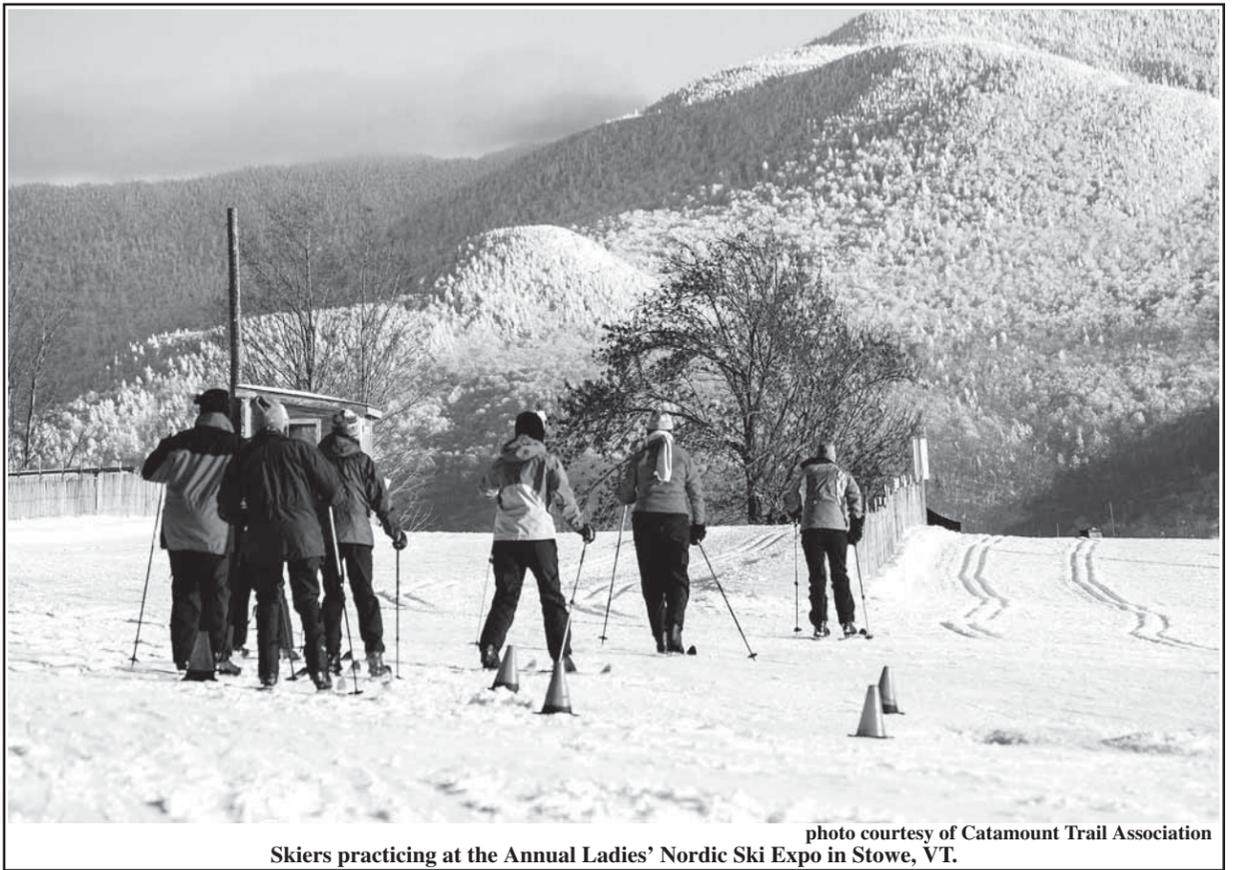


photo courtesy of Catamount Trail Association
Skiers practicing at the Annual Ladies' Nordic Ski Expo in Stowe, VT.

Winter Trails Day

Cross country skiing is a terrific way to enjoy the great outdoors in winter. The pleasures of cross country skiing can take your mind off the stresses of the daily grind, whether you seek the solitude of solo skiing or are spending some quality time with family and friends. Cross country skiing can seem daunting to newcomers.

Fans of snowshoeing often say that "if you can walk, you can snowshoe," illustrating how easy the sport is, and people of all ages can be found snowshoeing in winter recreation areas all over the world.

Join us January 10 for a free day of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing including instruction, for beginners to the experience. Vermont's Nordic Ski Centers are offering various programs for Winter Trail Day. Check them out try out the sport.

Bolton Valley Nordic Center, 4302 Bolton Access Rd., Bolton Valley, VT 05477. (802) 434-6871. nordiccenter@boltonvalley.com. www.boltonvalley.com. Offering an introductory lesson at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. which will include a two-hour rental of ski package or snowshoes, 30-minute first time ski or snowshoe lesson and trail passes for the day. We will accept 10 individuals per time slot for Nordic skiing and five individuals for snowshoeing.

Blueberry Lake, 424 Robinson St., Warren, VT. (802) 496-6687. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Try cross country skiing and snowshoeing for free. Open to those new to the sports.

Craftsbury Outdoor Center, 535 Lost Nation Rd., Craftsbury Common, VT 05827. (800) 729-7751. stay@craftsbury.com. www.craftsbury.com. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For those 'new to the sport', complimentary trail use and rental equipment for snowshoeing and cross country skiing. Also an introductory x-c group lesson at 1:30 p.m.

Ole's Cross Country Ski Center, Airport Rd., Waitsfield, VT 05673. (802) 496-3430. ski@olesxc.com. www.olesxc.com. We offer first timers and "not skied xc in years" folks free trail passes and rentals from 1 p.m. to closing. There will be a free mini-lesson at 1p.m.

Mountain Top Inn & Resort Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Center, 195 Mountain Top Rd., Chittenden, VT 05737. (802) 483-6089. rogerhill@mountaintopinn.com. www.mountaintopinn.com. We look forward to introducing adults and children to the sports of Nordic skiing and snowshoeing from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is exclusively for beginners. Our program includes a free trail pass for adults and children

to explore winter on xc skis or snowshoes throughout our resort's 60 km of trails; a free group Nordic skiing lesson at 10 a.m., and a discount on rental equipment. Note that the group lesson is based upon availability and must be booked in advance.

Woodstock Nordic Center, Rt. 106 S., at the Fitness Center, Woodstock, VT 05091. (802) 457-6674. xcski@woodstockinn.com. www.woodstockinn.com. First-time skiers and snowshoers receive complimentary trail passes and rental equipment. Short introductory lessons also available free of charge, 1-4 p.m.

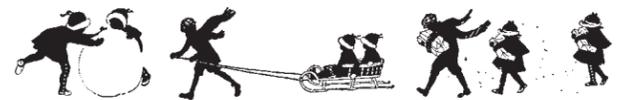
Smugglers' Notch Resort Nordic Ski and Snowboard Center, 4323 Rt. 108 South, Smuggler's Notch, VT 05464. (802) 644-8544. scmishock@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com/events. Smugglers' Notch Resort's Nordic Ski and Snowshoe Adventure Center will provide free rentals of snowshoes and cross country skiing equipment and offer short instructional sessions from 12 noon until 4 p.m. for first time snowshoers and cross country skiers. The Resort has 30 km of cross-country ski trails and 24 km of dedicated snowshoe trails that wander through meadows and woods with breathtaking mountain views. Please pre-register; limited to 65 participants.

Rikert Nordic Center, Rt. 125, Ripton, VT. (802) 443-2744. mhussey@middlebury.edu. www.rikertnordic.com. Clinics available free of charge for those 'new to the sport'. Please register in the Touring Center, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Hot food, snacks, and beverages available in the center. Call ahead to check availability.

Strafford Nordic Center, 55 Rockbottom Rd., Strafford, VT 05072. (802) 765-4309. info@straffordnordicskiing.com. www.straffordnordicskiing.com. We invite 'new to the sport' skiers of all ages to take advantage of our specials—free group beginner lessons at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Participants must pre-register at www.snowlink.com/wtregisternow.aspx. Free youth or adult rental package, \$5 youth/\$10 adult trail passes. Families welcome! Discounts available for participants on season passes during the event.

Jay Peak Nordic and Snowshoe Center, 830 Jay Peak Rd., Jay, VT 05859. (802) 988-2611. mrobidou@jaypeakresort.com. www.jaypeakresort.com. A day of skiing and snowshoeing for beginners of all ages, from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. This is a free event for those who have never tried either sport. Lessons and activities ongoing throughout the day. Discounts available on seasons passes, future lesson and retail. Pre-registration suggested. Event subject to cancellation due to weather.

For more information go to www.wintertrails.org/wintertrails/snowshoe/gettingstarted.aspx.



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North Country Reflections

This Gardening Life

by Judith Irven

It is 20 years since I started creating my expansive 'garden of a lifetime' on the western slopes of Vermont's beautiful Green Mountains. Of course it is by no means finished—and it probably never will be. That is the nature of gardens: always changing and always evolving.

I began my gardening endeavors on a very small scale back in my graduate school days, gradually increasing their scope to match my life at the time. Along the way I made my share of mistakes and learned many valuable lessons, with some of the more notable ones highlighted here.

For me, gardens are magical places where nature and culture combine to create beauty and serenity. As a child I adored the classic novel 'A Secret Garden' by Frances Hodgson Burnett, about two young cousins, Mary and Colin, who meet under bizarre circumstances and then discover a hidden derelict garden. Together they work to bring it back to life, while the garden itself restores their health and happiness.

Passive admirer

I have always loved beautiful gardens, but unlike Mary and Colin, in my youth I was strictly a passive admirer.

Being English, my parents had a good sized garden, where they grew plenty of vegetables as well as lovely roses and other flowers. A special memory of my teenage years is spending time with my mother visiting beautiful public gardens like Sissinghurst, where we would stroll together through the spectacular 'garden rooms' that make up this celebrated place.

Soon I headed off to London University. As luck would have it, my college was situated right next to Kensington Gardens and just down the road from the more intimate Holland Park. More opportunity to absorb great gardens!

In London I was also close enough to my parents' house to make occasional weekend visits, returning to London with some my father's prize flowers to adorn my small rented room. I still remember him muttering "Judith loves to pick the flowers but she hates to dig the weeds".

Beginning active gardening

A couple of years later in London, and now in graduate school, I created my first 'real' garden. By now I was married with a young son, and we lived in a large house that had been converted to small apartments. The old garden area had been divided into long strips of earth, one per apartment and each sized to take a wash line, plus in my case a long row of lettuces! Of course while hanging out the laundry we sometimes accidentally walked on the lettuces; but one has to make do with the space available.

Then twins arrived on the scene and almost immediately we moved to suburban New Jersey. After a hiatus of a few years I restarted my gardening efforts. I dug up a small piece of our back lawn to make a single garden bed which I mentally divided into thirds, one for each child. Then I took the kids to the local garden center to choose their plants. My elder son and daughter each selected a six-pack of stocky seedlings—petunias and lettuces.

But my younger son coveted a single puny pumpkin seedling that cost all of a dime. Once home he planted it with care and watered it diligently. In a few months he was rewarded with an immense plant that completely submerged the petunias and lettuces, and bearing three enormous pumpkins. Luckily he was generous enough to give his siblings a pumpkin apiece. All three kids took their pumpkins to school for Halloween and the local newspaper even published the entire story!

Thus my first lesson in active gardening was to always estimate the eventual size of any young plant, and choose a spot so that, even when fully grown, the plant will not engulf its neighbors.

Vegetables for the entire family

The next big leap into gardening came when I set myself the goal of growing all the vegetables for the whole family for a full year—in addition to my full time technical career. With the invincibility of youth, clearly my eyes were bigger than my stomach!

We now had a house with a half-acre backyard. So my first husband, the scientist, joined forces with two friends to buy a small rototiller. He then tilled up the entire space, and as a family we planted salad greens, strawberries, tomatoes, beans and corn.

I quickly discovered that, while a rototiller does a great job of churning up the soil, most of the grass is still close to the surface where it quickly re-grows. So, faced with a



photo by Dick Conrad

The centerpiece of Judith Irven and Dick Conrad's garden is this square gazebo, built for them by a friend almost 15 years ago. Judith was able to relocate a number of perennials, including these Shasta Daisies, from her previous garden.

monumental weeding task, I co-opted the kids to help and, to their credit, they did an admirable job.

Considering my lack of knowledge, the harvest was actually quite gratifying. However we had an abundance of produce, especially strawberries and tomatoes, and I had yet to embrace canning.

So the kids joined forces to operate a small 'farm stand' at the side of the main thoroughfare in town, their first entrepreneurial endeavor. It was only later that I discovered they labelled their produce the 'COL brand', which they cheerily explained stood for 'Crazy Old Lady'!

Looking back I am actually surprised they took my gardening excesses with such good humor.

Perennial obsessions

Fast forward a few years and the family has changed. The kids are in college and Dick and I are starting our new life together in a suburban house with a large flat lot, perfect for growing perennials. This time I actually made a garden plan showing the shapes of the beds and the numbers of plants I needed. I particularly admired the informative full-color catalog produced by White Flower Farms, a large mail-order nursery in Connecticut, where I studied the details of each variety before ordering. The garden was surprisingly successful and several neighbors told me they even planned their dog-walking route to pass by each day.

Expanding horizons

When we moved to Vermont in 1994 I decided to relocate a considerable number of garden plants, transporting them in a small trailer behind my Volkswagen.

Given my sweeping ambitions for our new Vermont garden, I decided it was time to acquire a more in-depth knowledge of gardening. So I enrolled in the UVM Extension Master Gardener Course, which turned out to be a wonderful experience for me and something that I would highly recommend for all serious gardeners.

If you are interested in expanding your own gardening horizons, the 2015 Master Gardener course can be taken

at Vermont Interactive Television sites around the state on Tuesday evenings from February 3 – April 28. Topics include botany basics, soil fertility, fruit and vegetable production, woody plants and flower gardening, healthy lawns, invasive plant control, plant pests and disease management and sustainable home landscaping. You can enroll on the UVM Master Gardener website during January.

Now twenty years later, our garden has evolved to be an endless source of pleasure for both of us. Many of the perennials, including the Shasta Daisies in this picture, are descended from the ones I purchased from White Flower Farm so many years ago. I have also incorporated plenty of shrubs and small trees, which require less maintenance and add a nice sense of structure to the whole.

And finally, the gazebo, where Dick and I spend precious time together, was built for us by a special friend in 2000, and is now the centerpiece of the entire garden. Here we watch the birds and savor our connection with the natural world; our garden has indeed become a fusion of nature and culture, and a place of beauty and serenity.

Judith Irven and Dick Conrad live in Goshen where together they nurture a large garden. Judith is a landscape designer and Vermont Certified Horticulturist who also teaches Sustainable Home Landscaping for the Vermont Master Gardener program. You can subscribe to her blog about her Vermont gardening life at www.northcountryreflections.com. Dick is a landscape and garden photographer; you can see more of his photographs at northcountryimpressions.com.

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Winter Fun

by Burr Morse

In these almost sixty-five years, my winter pastimes have sure taken me on a “wild ride”. Yup, give a farm kid a steep hill, lots of snow and a good toboggan or Flexible Flyer, and there’s a world of fun out there. Here in Vermont, there was never a shortage of any of the above. In fact, we judged our buddies back then more for the size of their hill than anything else. My sledding friends Dougie Schaefer and Jeff Bean both had good hills but Jeff’s, the infamous “Bean’s Hill”, was long, ledgey, steep, and scary. It was the veritable Denali of East Montpelier! Oh, and one more thing—back then we had more snow.

Yup, back then it was nothing to get huge dumpings, three, four foot at a time b’God! The Saturday after a storm, Bean’s Hill begged for our arsenal of shovels, scoops, snowshoes, skis—anything to pack it down and move it around. We’d end up with huge jumps, slopes full of “double-dawg-dares” and best of all, we were boys being boys.

Dougie’s toboggan would fit all of us. I’ll never forget being locked somewhere in the middle of a gang of five facing the hill’s steepest offering, an ice-packed trail with a jump, way down toward the bottom. Like astronauts, we’d done the training and engineering, but the other part, the unknown, loomed even bigger than the hill—and then there was the push off and a mixture of adrenaline, speed, and fear clear to the bone. The jump was straight ahead and unavoidable, no way to “bail out”. We hit it and were airborne for a long time until violently reclaimed by terra firma, boys flying in every direction. I laid where I crashed with my breath knocked out, thinking I was going to die while my buddies shook the snow off and laughed like hyenas.

Any talk of toboggans and Flexible Flyers would be as empty as a snowless January without mentioning jack jumpers. Jack jumpers were the king of winter “go fast, show off, get crazy” toys and contrary to these modern times of buying them made of plastic from Walmart, we made our own jack jumpers from barrel staves and scraps of lumber. Speaking of modern times, skis these days are wickedly expensive and billed as “fully rockered and reverse camber”. Hell, we had that feature over fifty years ago with our barrel staves! Jack jumpers were a real hoot, very hard to master, but something to be proud of because instead of bearing foreign names like “Kneissel” or “Rossignol”, we had our own names on them.

My winter sports evolved during my teenage years to another slope here at Morse Farm which had its own rope



Skiers lined up for the rope tow at Morse Farm in Montpelier, VT, years ago.

photo courtesy of Morse Farm

tow. It was there that my buddies and I transformed from the “primitive” to parallel skiing and suave winter clothing—anything that would impress the girls. Heck, we even got to big ski places like Stowe or Sugarbush once in a while after we’d scrimped and saved enough. It was at Sugarbush, in fact, where some twenty years ago, I left the trail and smacked into an unyielding white birch tree. I spent 10 days at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and several months in a body cast while my broken back healed. My body did heal (heck, a farmer can’t be held up with a bad back) but my days of downhill skiing were suddenly over.

These days my world of winter sports is tiny—no jumps, no spills, nothing steep—a few times a winter I’ll click into my cross-country skis and head out on the Morse Farm Ski Touring trails. That’s it. A few years back, I met up with a young friend whose wife had convinced him to try cross-country skiing instead of his usual snowboarding. I’ll always

remember his reply when I asked him about it. With a perfect “Rodney Dangerfield” frown he said: “most fun I’ve ever had at three miles an hour!” Well folks, this Vermonter has been full circle with his “wintah” sports and from now on “three miles an hour” works just fine for me. In fact, if I’m lucky I’ll never quit but just apply my version of the adage: “old Vermonters never die. They just slowly ski away.”

Happy sledding!

Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks is located at 1168 County Rd., Montpelier, VT and is open year-round. Visitors welcome! Come see their Country Store with Vermont products and gifts, maple, and pasture-raised local beef and bacon. Tour the Sugarhouse, Woodshed Theater, Outdoor Farmhouse Museum, Cross-Country Ski Center and more.

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‘Spice on Snow’—Fifth Annual Winter Folk Music Festival Hosted by Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture

Winter is cold in Vermont! The Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture will heat things up by hosting ‘Spice on Snow’ Winter Music, Food and Dance Festival January 15th–18th, 2015 in Montpelier, VT.

The festival will take place in various locations in downtown Montpelier including: Bethany Church, Skinny Pancake, City Hall, Charlio’s World Famous, Sweet Melissa’s, Capitol Grounds, Bagitos, North Branch Cafe, and the Summit School.

We are excited to celebrate the winter with dances, cooking classes, music workshops, and concerts.

Summit School is bringing nationally known performers to our small capitol

city to teach workshops and play concerts throughout the weekend. Featured artists include: Jay Ungar and Molly Mason (whose fiddle tune ‘Ashokan Farewell’ was made famous by Ken Burn’s Civil War documentary, and who are the founders of Ashokan Fiddle and Dance Camps), The Revelers from Louisiana (featured on the TV series ‘Treme’, and Anthony Bourdain’s ‘No Reservations’), Corey Porche (Cajun/Zydeco dance and accordion), Jeremiah McLane and Ariel Friedman (Quebecois and original music), Jon Gailmor (kids songwriting workshops and performances) and the Green Mountain Playboys (Montpelier’s own Cajun band).

Other performances include: The Starline Rhythm Boys (honky-tonk/rockabilly), The Rear Defrosters (rockabilly/honky-tonk), Two Cents in the Till (bluegrass), the Zeichner Family Band (Celtic/Appalachian), the O-labelles (a capella harmony singing), Brett Hughes and Kati Wright and more.

Ticket prices: pay by the event or buy a festival pass. An all-weekend pass costs: \$175 and includes Friday and Saturday evening meals; excludes Thursday Concert and late night venue events. Saturday-only pass costs \$100 and includes all Saturday workshops, the Saturday evening meal, and Saturday featured event with Jay Ungar and Molly Mason.

Visit website at www.summit-school.org

mit-school.org to buy tickets and view full schedule. This festival is supported in part by the Montpelier Alive, Skinny Pancake, Vermont Violins, Vermont Public Radio, Young Tradition Vermont, WGDR Goddard Radio Station, and many others.

The Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture is a non-profit folk music school located in Montpelier, VT, with ongoing classes, workshops, and concerts for adults, children and families.

For more information contact Katie Trautz, Director, Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture, 46 Barre St., Montpelier, VT. (802) 917-1186. director@summit-school.org. www.summit-school.org.

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20th Annual Smugglers' Notch Primitive Biathlon

The Twentieth Annual Smugglers' Notch Primitive Biathlon, presented by the Smugglers' Notch Area Chamber of Commerce, and sponsored by the Green Mountain Rifle Barrel Company of Conway, NH and The Ancient Ones of Maine, will be held Saturday and Sunday, January 24th and 25th, 2015 on the grounds of the Sterling Ridge Resort and Log Cabins in Jeffersonville, VT.

This is the original Primitive Biathlon, first held 20 years ago, and, with more than 200 entrants annually, the largest such event held. Rather than Olympic-style target rifles and cross-country skis, this rather unusual event involves the use of muzzleloading rifles and snowshoes. Eligibility for overall prizes is limited to single-barrel traditional style muzzleloaders—no in-lines or optical sights—and traditional wood-framed snowshoes, although modern equipment users are welcome to participate. In the primitive spirit of the event, and in the interest of fairness, the use of round-ball ammunition is requested.

Period dress is definitely encouraged, though not required. While this is a competitive event, it's also about getting out in the fresh air and greeting old friends or making new ones. Spectators are welcome.

The beautiful, mostly wooded course is approximately two miles long and can be enjoyed by the average sportsman—you needn't be an Olympic athlete! The route will be well marked and will include four target stages with a total of nine shots. A mis-fire is a miss (keep your powder dry!), times will be adjusted based on shooting scores, putting an emphasis on accuracy, and the final target stage will be in an open, spectator area where families of the entrants and anyone interested can watch.

This event will be held regardless of the weather—remember the concept of 'Primitive.' In the event of insufficient snow for snowshoes, bring a good pair of woods boots.

The overall winner will be awarded the Marilyn Grice Memorial Trophy, to be held for the year. Event trophies will be awarded for First, Second and Third Overall, First Smoothbore, First Woman (Any Age), First 'Elder' (60 and Over), First Junior (Under Sixteen) and First Pistol. We will also continue a class for those over age 70 scoring shooting only. A variety of merchandise prizes will be awarded by blind draw of all participants. The first 200 entrants will receive a 20-year commemorative pin.

Traders of appropriate goods are welcome with the approval of the organizers. Fee is a merchandise prize for the blanket.

Sterling Ridge Resort and Log Cabins is located at 155 Sterling Ridge Dr. in Jeffersonville, VT. The resort has 26 log cabins on 360 acres on the quiet side of Mount Mansfield and Smugglers' Notch in Northern Vermont. To inquire call (800) 347-8266, e-mail info@sterlingridgeresort.com or go to sterlingridgeresort.com.

For more information about the Primitive Biathlon call weekdays: (802) 644-8232; evenings and weekends: (802) 933-4880; e-mail info@primitivebiathlon.com; or visit us at www.primitivebiathlon.com. To register, go to the website.



A contestant heads out on her snowshoes to compete at the Primitive Biathlon in Jeffersonville, VT.

photo courtesy of Primitive Biathlon

Firs in Snow

These woodland chieftains hear and know
The slow, majestic speech of snow.

The white wind-cloud fleet, cruising by,
Dips them *salute* from seas of sky.

Star-clocks have ticked for their keen ears
Earth's moments thundering into years.

The lynx and wolf and shrewd fox pause
For housing here till hunger gnaws.

What outpost stands with surer tread,
Armored in hush, from foot to head?

Tonight the moon has garbed these firs
Like Gothic kings and emperors.



—J. CORSON MILLER
Driftwind, 1932

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North Country Book News

Children's Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

A Winter Snow Day for Kids and Animals!

Snowflakes may be small and beautiful, but once they pile up they soon create their own special adventure land. Children are invited to go out and play or there's plenty of books about snow for entertainment, too.

If the snow's just right, eye-catching snowman will start appearing across the landscape and some may last the whole winter. But suppose you don't want the snowman (who can look so human) to ever melt down and disappear.

In *The Snow Girl* retold by Robert Giraud and illustrated by Helene Muller (Floris Books, \$17.95 www.florisbooks.co.uk), an aging childless couple creates the daughter they never had out of snow and dress her up for real. We're all surprised, too, when behold...she comes to life!

She's a lovely, happy girl, pitching in with the household and farm chores. But the spring and summer seasons only make her sad. Finally one summer day while playing with other girls around a camp fire in the forest, she gets too close to the fire—they all jump over the burning twigs for fun—but our snow girl disappears in the air, leaving behind only a faint mist. The mist travels over the home of the couple who created her. They look up and catch a voice in the breeze: "Winter will bring back what summer drives away." The sad couple will wait, full of hope, for the snows to return. Gentle watercolor illustrations give the story a dream-like quality.

Rarely a winter passes without children losing mittens in the snow. They'll love this classic story, now published in the large size board book, *The Mitten* by Jan Brett (G.P. Putnam's Sons, \$14.99 www.penguin.com), based on a Ukrainian folktale. Grandma Baba knits a pair of white mittens for her grandson Niki, and she warns, "If you drop a white mitten in the snow, it will be hard to find."

Of course, Niki immediately loses a mitten, but it becomes a warm and safe home for a variety of animals, each squeezing their way in. You will be amused at beautiful two-page spreads of a mitten-seeking mole, rabbit, owl, badger, fox, big bear, and finally a tiny mouse. In a dramatic scene the bear makes a loud sneeze that sends all the animals flying

from their mitten nest. The lost mitten goes skyward and is retrieved by a grateful Niki. But you'll see the mitten is now stretched out a bit too big! Brett delights us again with illustrations that capture the essence of a foreign land.

Vermonters who experienced unending snow days just this past mid-December will agree "I've been there, too" when they follow the rescue missions made by a lone bulldozer turned snow plow in the large size board book edition of the classic, *Katy and The Big Snow* by Virginia Lee Burton, (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$11.99, www.hmhc.com).

Katy, a big, beautiful, and strong red crawler tractor belonging to the Highway Department, saves the day when a massive winter storm buries the City of Geopolis with snow up to the second-story windows. Regular snow plows are helpless in such deep snow, but Katy answers one call after another for help from the chief of police, postmaster, railroad station, telephone and electric companies, water department, hospital, fire department and airport. Wonderful, two-page drawings show Katy chug, chug, chugging as she clears away the endless snow so rescue and other vehicles can get through. This is an unusually enjoyable board book.

There may be lessons to be learned even when everyone is having fun out playing in the snow. In *Snow Joke* by Bruce Degen (Holiday House, \$14.95, www.holidayhouse.com), a group of rabbit children build snowmen, sled, go skating, and make snow angels but Red rabbit, a bully, plays mean tricks on all the others. "It's just a joke," says Red. But the others retort: "That's not funny!" Red finally falls down on the ice and goes off with a hurt butt—that's no joke and not funny either. The story ends on a happier note with the forgiving rabbits sharing cocoa with the poor jokester.

Really young children experiencing the first snow and ice of winter will relate to the Ready-to-Read story *Anne and Snowball and the Wintry Freeze* by Cynthia Ryland and illustrated by Sucie Stevenson (Simon Spotlight, \$16.99, www.simonandschuster.com), which colorfully shows a young girl Anne, her cousin Henry, and his big dog Mudge sliding and trampling around in a wintry freeze. Their pet rabbit Snowball prefers staying inside where Henry's dad has prepared hot cider and cinnamon buns for the frosty troop.



Book News

Salman Rushdie Novel Selected For Vermont Reads 2015

The Vermont Humanities Council has selected internationally renowned author Salman Rushdie's novel *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* as its 2015 pick for its Vermont Reads program. Vermont Reads is VHC's statewide one-book community reading program that began in 2003.

On January 14 at 5 p.m., Rushdie will make a special appearance at UVM's Ira Allen Chapel to kick off Vermont Reads 2015 speaking on the subject of, "What's the Use of Stories That Aren't Even True?"

Set in a make-believe world loosely based on Kashmir and Mumbai, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* follows the trials of father Rashid Khalifa and his son Haroun, who must find a way to unclog the Sea of Stories and restore his father's storytelling abilities.

Written during a tumultuous period in Rushdie's life when he was forced into hiding, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is a funny and touching modern folktale, full of whimsical language and wordplay, that reflects on the importance of stories, imagination, and creativity.

Rushdie reflected after publishing the book, "It's

ironic that the book written at the most miserable moment of my life is probably the happiest book that I ever wrote."

Born in Bombay (now Mumbai), India, Rushdie is the author of eleven novels, one book of stories, and four works of nonfiction. His stage adaptation of *Midnight's Children* was performed in London and New York by the Royal Shakespeare Company. A Fellow of the British Royal Society of Literature and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Rushdie has received, among other awards, the Whitbread Prize for Best Novel (twice), the European Union's Aristeion Prize for Literature and Author of the Year prizes in both Britain and Germany. He holds the rank of Commandeur in the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, France's highest artistic honor. In June 2007, he was knighted for services to literature. His books have been translated into more than 40 languages.

To learn more about the Vermont Humanities Council, visit www.vermonthumanities.org or call (802) 262-2626.

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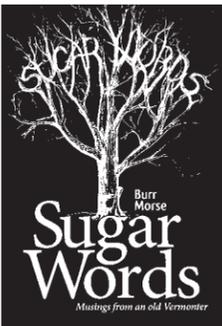
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Saving Simon

How a Rescue Donkey Taught Me the Meaning of Compassion

by Jon Katz
(Ballantine Books)

The vet said it was the worst he has ever seen in twenty years of practice. Tears ran down his cheek as he frantically administered first aid to the dying donkey mired in mud and its own manure. After much miraculous doing the half-dead donkey was able to stand, was led and helped into a trailer, and then taken to the author's barn.

Working through the night to save him, the vet and helpers finished sawing the wings off his feet. They pulled out half his teeth. He was bathed in medics to heal the sores. Powders were applied to kill the lice and fleas. Braces were put on his legs to hold him up. Drops went in his eyes to clear them and gauze poultices for the swelling in his mouth. Wounds were wrapped and medicines administered to rat bites. But rain rot and his blackened skin would take months to heal.

The author was singled out to take Simon home, because as the animal control officer on the scene said: "We knew you had some donkeys and loved them." And, "I read your books."

And so the story begins on how the saving of Simon gave the author a lesson in compassion, with enlightenment coming not from humans who often sorely lack it, but from diverse animals and how they relate to us humans.

Equally troubling as the sight of the abused and

dying donkey was the thought of who and how could anyone do such a terrible thing.

The 10-year old boy who reported the incident to police was living there and had vainly tried to feed hay to the dying donkey with whom he had bonded. He told authorities: "My dad is a good man. It's just hard now."

We can have compassion for the boy for trying to help and having the courage to report his own father. What about the father?

Author Katz, the former newspaper man, now turned book writer and farmer, remembers the Who? What? Where? When? and Why? that journalists ask. He needed to know who could put and leave Simon unattended in a pig pen to die a slow and painful death?

The author returns to where Simon was found and meets the farmer. He recalls, "I didn't get what I was looking for that morning. There were no sobs, no declarations of guilt, no pleas for mercy or understanding."

And he adds:

"My ideas about compassion were changing, perhaps even crumbling, by the minute. Compassion was not one thing but many, and it moved around, one second hovering over the farmer, then his son, then Simon.

"The farmer was defeated, worn down, humiliated and, now trapped. He couldn't take care of his family. He couldn't keep his farm. He was beyond caring about a hungry donkey. He couldn't feed another animal he didn't want and couldn't sell. He was past caring what people thought, or what I thought.

"I remember his dead eyes. He was beyond reach.

"And then I thought about the farmer's wife and son. All this commotion, all this work to save a donkey and bring him back to life.

"What about those two. Who was going to worry about them?"

Simon's recovery continues thanks to the loving care from the author and his wife Maria, a fiber artist.

We soon see that the remarkable chain of

events leads the author from one animal to another.

As a journalist Katz carries a camera because one never knows when that unusual picture is right before you. Katz looks for scenics, especially old barns—the ones they just don't build anymore. Many are in disrepair or are falling down.

One day he comes upon an unusual barn that also has a horse looking like Simon standing outside. The animal turns out to be a very old Appaloosa pony, covered with burrs and with matted fur. He goes to the house to ask permission to take a photo. The door finally opens and an older woman steps out:

"She was quite beautiful—erect, tall, with white hair. She looked at me curiously, but her eyes were blue and piercing. She was 102...her name was Florence Walrath." She said she is deaf and her 33-year old pony named Rocky is blind, but he knows his way was around the pasture. "Me and Rocky," she says, "we're just riding it out together."

Katz and Maria began visiting Rocky regularly, bringing him apples and carrots. Just as Simon brays, Rocky neighs when they pull into the driveway. "He knew the sound of our cars and the sound of our voices. He loved

Maria, and would almost sigh in contentment when she brushed him, sang to him, and talked to him."

Little did they know then that within a year Florence would be dead; they would give up their existing 90-acre Bedlam Farm; and purchase this 17-acre farm along with its aging, blind pony!

Katz writes: "Standing by the side of the house in that moment, I understand why I had stopped to photograph Rocky so long ago. He had called me to the farm, drawn me there. A magical helper, doing his work."

Through Simon's story we also meet Red, a border collie and rescue dog from Ireland in search of the right home. With Simon and Rocky, Red completes an animal triad. And Katz writes: "Red is the dog I have been waiting for my whole life and I have had wonderful dogs."

"He had entered my life through the powerful portal of the human-animal bond. A dozen times a day, I look at him and smile, in the way people who love their dogs and who are lifted up by them."

Red is introduced gently to the other animals on the farm, especially to the donkeys because donkeys are herd animals, and they see dogs as no different than coyotes. Once again another surprise for the reader—Red becomes a seeing eye dog for Rocky!

Katz writes, "With each visit, this very touching relationship deepened. Red would take up a position leading to wherever Rocky wanted to go—the barn, the steam, the outer pasture. Red would sit and wait for Rocky to come up and locate him. Once Rocky was on his way and no longer needed his assistance, Red would turn and come back to me, like a bus driver who has made his final stop."

Simon's recovery continues thanks to the loving care from the author and Maria. He is brought to the new farm along with the other animals which include sheep, chickens and two other girl donkeys, Lulu and Fanny. Soon it is time for the now-healthy Simon join these donkeys.

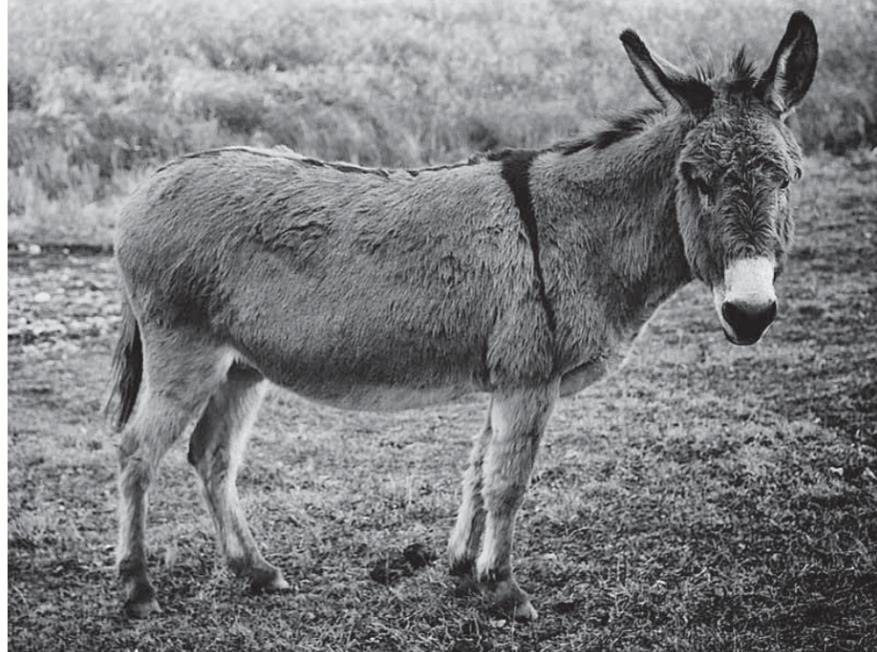
Katz tell us donkeys have two tools when they challenge, attack, discipline or fight—

Saving Simon

How a Rescue Donkey Taught Me the Meaning of Compassion

JON KATZ

New York Times bestselling author



their teeth and their hind legs. Now imagine having administered to Simon's needs for months and watched him struggle so to get up, how shocked they were when Lulu and Fanny take turns kicking Simon in the head as a way of saying, "Hello, welcome to the farm," and their way of behaving like the herd animals they were supposed to be.

But there was one even more scary, devastating moment for the author when Simon, yes, our Simon, his male competitiveness showing, started beating up on the blind Rocky.

"I was furious. I felt nothing but outrage for Simon, and I rushed out into the pasture and saw him charging Rocky again. I ran as quickly as I could and intercepted him, swinging my hand out and slapping him hard on the side of his face. "I'm not sure who was a more astonished at this. Simon or me."

The two thankfully were able to have a reconciliation—with Simon being forgiving and the author realizing Simon was only 'protecting' his two ladies from the other guy, blind or not.

The author hopes readers will gain the same insight into the human condition with lessons to learn from the animals around us. Here's what the author says Simon taught him:

"I see more clearly now that Simon is a magical helper, a spirit guide sent to guide me on my hero journey, to help me on my way. He is a teacher who appears in the form of a donkey. Many animals teach us important lessons if we let them. To open up, not just to him, not

just to animals, but to the human experience. To love, to risk, to friendships. He helped me come so much closer to an understanding of mercy and compassion, something I have been pursuing my whole life."

Jon Katz has written 26 books including works of fiction and nonfiction, many about dogs. Previous to the book-writing career he was a journalist and has written for the New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Rolling Stone and other publications. You can visit his farm and see Simon and other animals at bedlamfarm.com or on Facebook.

Saving Simon—How a Rescue Donkey Taught Me the Meaning of Compassion is available at your bookseller for \$25 or can be ordered from www.ballantinebooks.com.

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Bennington-Walloomsac Holiday and Winter Farmers Markets at First Baptist Church, 601 Main St. January through April, first and third Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. info@walloomsac.org. On Facebook.

Bradford Farmers Market, Grace United Methodist Church. Second and fourth Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., through April. Iris Johnson, (802) 222-4495. hello@bradfordfarmersmarket.com. facebook.com/bradfordfarmersmarket.

Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market at River Garden, 153 Main St. Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., through March 2015. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Sherry Maher, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postsoilsolutions.org. www.postsoilsolutions.org.

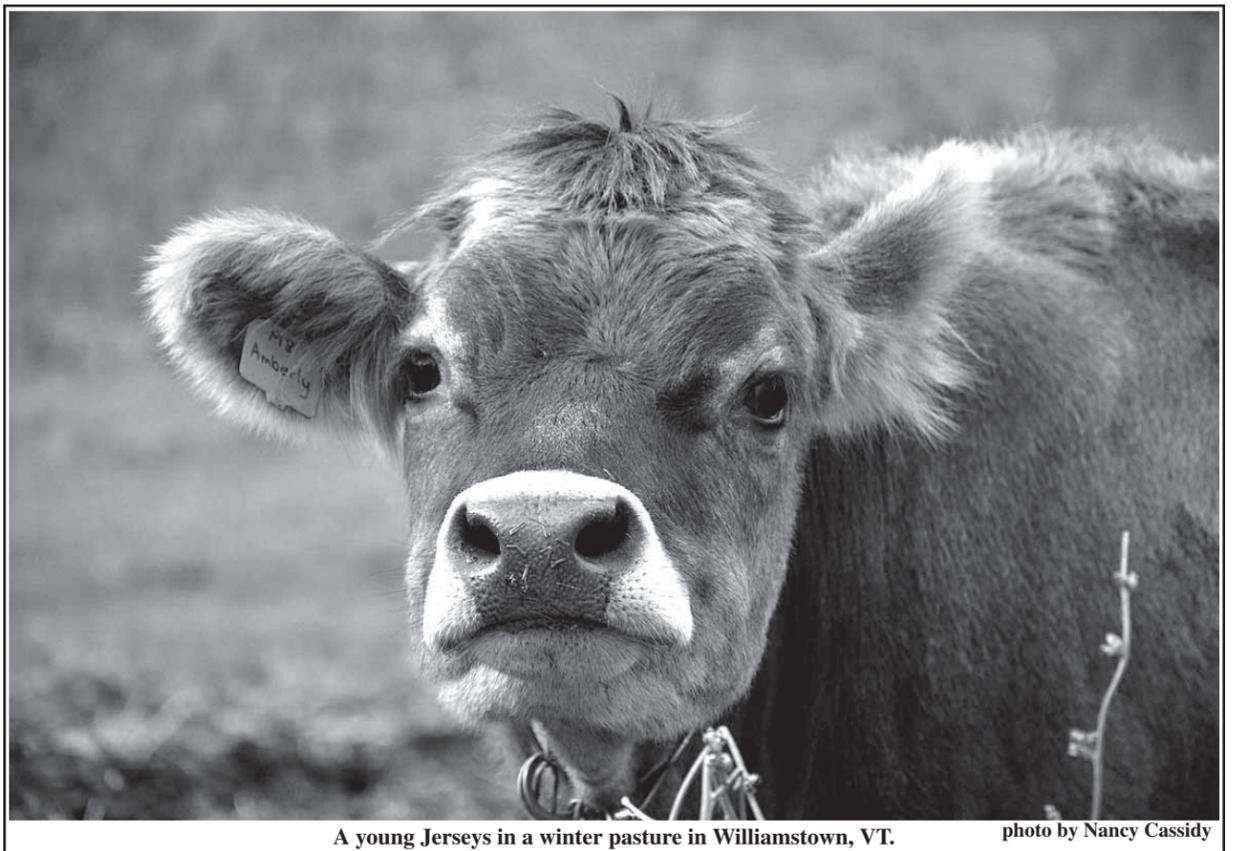
Burlington Winter Farmers' Market at Memorial Auditorium, corner of Main St. and S. Union. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. every other Saturday, January 3 through April 11. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Chris Wagner, (802) 310-5172. info@burlingtonfarmersmarket.org. burlingtonfarmersmarket.org.

Dorset Winter Farmers' Market at J.K. Adams Kitchen Store and Factory on Rt. 30. Sundays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., through May 5. Carol Adinolfi. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com. www.dorsetfarmersmarket.com.

Groton Growers' Winter Farmers Market at Groton Community Building Gym. Every third Saturday, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., through May. Mary Berlejung and Sandi Adams. (802) 584-3595 or (802) 633-3031. grotongrowers@gmail.com. www.grotongrowers.org.

Londonderry—West River Winter Farmers' Market. Floodbrook Union School. Saturdays 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. January 3. Jenny Strecker. (802) 875-5004. westriverfarmersmarket@gmail.com. www.westriverfarmersmarket.com.

Middlebury Winter Farmer's Market at Mary Hogan Elementary School, 201 Mary Hogan Dr. Closed January & February; then open March 7 through April 25, 9:30 a.m. –



A young Jerseys in a winter pasture in Williamstown, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

1 p.m. Jeremy Gildrien & Sharon Kerwin, (802) 989-7223. middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

Montpelier—Capital City Winter Farmers' Market. All markets run from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. January 3 & 17 at Montpelier City Hall; February 7 & 21 and March 21 at Montpelier High School on Bailey Ave.; March 7 at Montpelier City Hall; March 21 and April 11 & 25 at Montpelier High School. Carolyn Grodinsky, (802) 223-2958. manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com.

Northfield Winter Farmers' Market. Norwich University's Plumley Armory. 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. January 4, February 1, March 1, and April 4. Crystal Peterson. (802) 485-5563. northfieldfarmersmarketvt.com.

Norwich Farmers' Winter Market at Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., January 10 & 24; February 14 & 28; March 14 & 28; April 11 & 25. Steve Hoffman, (802) 384-7447. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. norwichfarmersmarket.org.

Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. Food Center Building at 251 West St. Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Wednesdays 4-7 p.m. through May 2. Doug Patac, (802) 753-7269. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org

Sharon Sprouts Farmers' Markets at Sharon Elementary School. February 14, March 14, 10 am – 1 pm, local lunch 11:30 am – 1 pm. Donna Foster, (802) 763-8280. vtfoster@myfairpoint.net.

St. Johnsbury—Caledonia Winter Farmers Market at St. Johnsbury Welcome Center, Railroad St. First and third Saturdays through April 18, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Elizabeth Everts, (802) 592-3088.

2015 Vermont Grazing and Livestock Conference

Join us for the 19th Annual Vermont Grazing and Livestock Conference from 8 a.m. Friday, January 16, 2015 until 5 p.m. Saturday, January 17, 2015 at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT.

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The event takes place at the family-friendly Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT just off I-91. Friday will feature a day-long intensive workshop on swine production and an afternoon working session on silvopasture. Saturday will include a kids' conference for ages 6-12. The weekend

highlights local and organic foods, great company from over six states, and plenty of new ideas to take home.

Conference hosted by the Vermont Grass Farmers Association (VGFA) and the Vermont Beef Producers' Associations (VBPA), and coordinated by the UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

Registration discounts are available for VGFA and VBPA members. More details about the conference as well as registration are available at www.uvm.edu/pasture.

Contact conference coordinator Jenn Colby at jcolby@uvm.edu, (802) 656-5459 with any questions.

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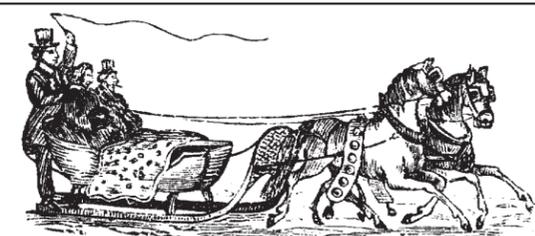
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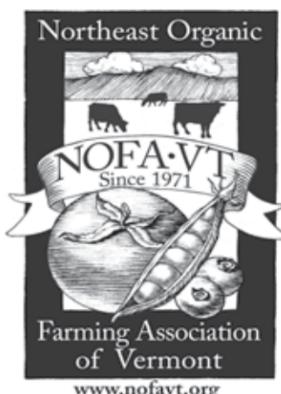
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The Farmer

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Outside the winds of winter
Drift high the frozen snow.

Content is he, this farmer,
For done is the work today,
His family at his fireside,
His children at their play.



His cattle snugly sheltered,
The season's work is done,
His toil throughout the summer
A competence has won.

Heaped high the lean-to shed
With knot, with stick and splinter,
Whose captive heat and ruddy glow
Defy the blasts of winter.

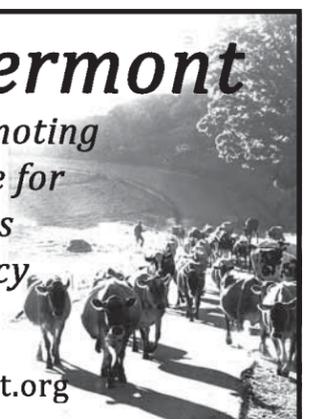
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For his family and his farm
Make up his heart's content.

—FRANK H. CRAIG
Waits River, VT, 1928

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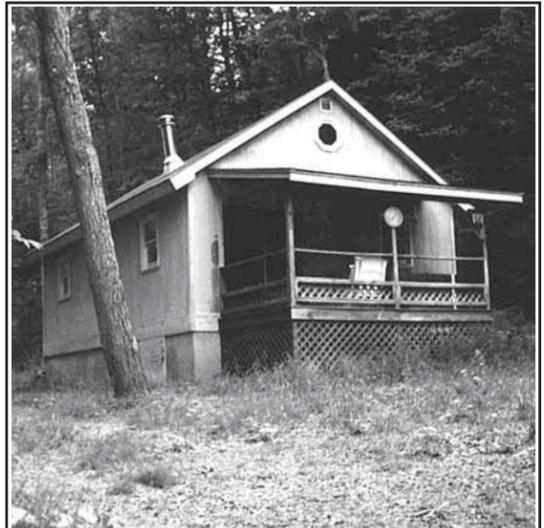
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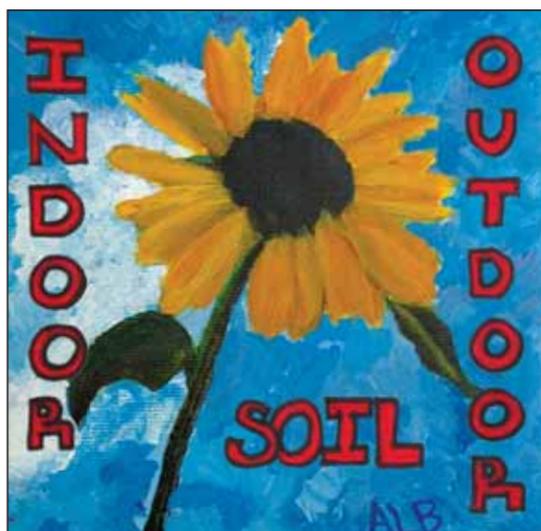
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