

Vermont Country Sampler

- Statewide Calendar of Events, Map
- Inns, B&B's, Dining, Real Estate
- Entertainment, Book Reviews
- Plenty of Good Reading!

February
2019

N. Cassidy

Free

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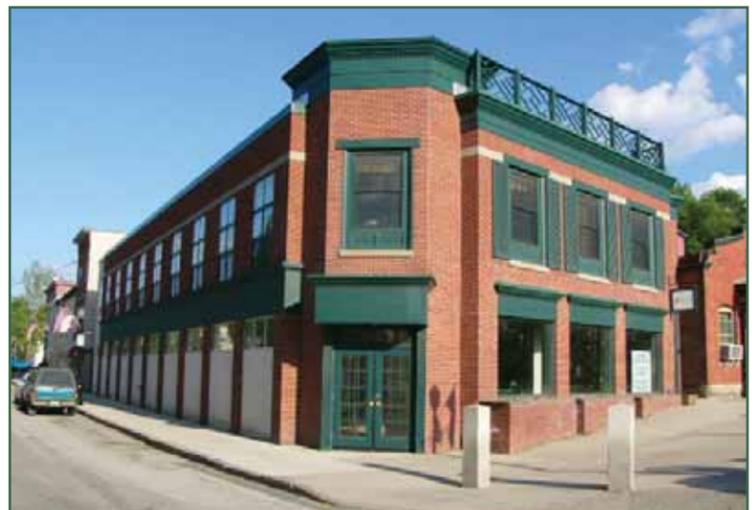
Views over a ten acre field and the Green Mountains

For Further Information and to Arrange a Tour:
Sam Sammis, Owner
2 South Main Street, Randolph, VT
Email: Sammis@NewEnglandLand.com
Mobile: (802) 522-8500
Web: GreenMountainStockFarm.com

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STOCK FARM**
RANDOLPH, VERMONT

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www.RandolphCoWorker.com



February Journal

Zelda and Emmett in Winter

by Bill Felker

Every winter, the two koi in our small pond stop feeding when the water temperature reaches the low 40s. Both fish are about a foot long. Zelda is a golden orange, Emmett is white with black markings. They lie together in the deepest water near the pump, slowly moving their fins but not responding when I walk close to them or when I put a rake near them to remove leaves. They will remain almost motionless until April when the high, warm sun and singing toads arouse them.

Zelda and Emmett seem to have no worries. This is their eighth winter in the pond. They know that there is nothing they can do to change the course of the season. They do not challenge the narrow boundaries of their habitat. There is nothing they can do to alter their future. There is nothing they can do if the pump stops working or if the pond freezes solid in a long cold wave or if I simply forget about them. Day after day, they remain motionless facing south waiting for

spring as though they really do know that April will bring the mild winds that will eventually quicken them.

I often wonder if they have reached enlightenment and if they have transcended passion and desire. Do they instinctively count their breaths or the cold fronts or the sunsets? Do they remember spring and the warmth of the water? Do they have dreams of finding food among the lizard's tail and the water willow and the wild iris?

I find myself jealous of their apparent indifference to danger, of their ability to use the cold to their advantage. I am jealous of their single-mindedness, of their resignation, of their deep patience, endurance and trust. I am jealous of their bodies that simply tell them to look south, to expect without questioning or analysis of precedent. I am jealous of their enduring faith, and often when I wait with them for spring, I pretend that all manner of things really will be well.



A stream winds through the winter woods in Bethel, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Guilford, VT

Midwinter Musicale: "Stolen Jewels"

The Friends of Music at Guilford will be presenting their Midwinter Musicale: "Stolen Jewels" at the Guilford Community Church on Saturday, February 23rd at 3 p.m.

Golden flutist Alison Hale and pianist Christopher Lewis perform romantic favorites originally composed for other instruments and transcribed for flute: the Brahms Sonata in F minor

for clarinet, the Schubert Arpeggione Sonata for Cello, Schumann's three Romances for Oboe, and the Sonata in A Major for violin by Fauré.

A teatime reception of warming soups, sides, salads, and desserts, and lots of good conversation, is popular with performers and attendees. Admission is \$15 per person and includes the soup supper.

Spring Organ Concert and outdoor Holiday Cookout on May 26th at 3 p.m. at The Organ Barn at 158 Kopkind Rd. off Packer Corners Rd. in Guilford, VT. The concert admission is \$15 and the optional cookout is \$10.

Guilford Community Church is located at 38 Church Dr. in Guilford, VT.

For more information email office@fomag.org. Visit www.fomag.org.

Looking ahead to Spring, plan to come to their 11th

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The Community Asylum Seekers Project

The Community Asylum Seekers Project (CASP) supports those fleeing hardship elsewhere and seeking asylum in the United States. We provide basic needs and a supportive community to a growing number of guests.



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Vermonters

These are the people living in this land;
Proud and narrow, with their eyes on the hills.
They ask no favors. Their lips defend
With speech close-rationed their hoarded souls.

You cannot love them or know them at all
Unless you know how a hardwood tree
Can pour blond sugar in a pegged-up pail
In the grudging thaw of a February day.

—DILYS BENNETT LAING
Norwich, Vermont



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Vermont Country Sampler
February 2019, Vol. XXXV

The Vermont Country Sampler is distributed free over-the-counter in and out of Vermont. Advertising rates on request. Deadline 10th of preceding month. Calendar of Events published free of charge.

Vermont Country Sampler
P.O. Box 197, N. Clarendon, VT 05759
(802) 772-7463 • info@vermontcountrysampler.com
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Strolling of the Heifers
Upcoming Events

At the River Garden
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Love Local (2 events)
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Country Wedding & Prom Expo
Sun. February 10

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A competitor flies through the air at the Annual Harris Hill Ski Jump in Brattleboro, VT.

photo courtesy of Harris Hill Ski Jump

Brattleboro, VT

Annual Harris Hill Ski Jump Set for February 16th & 17th

Some of the world's best up-and-coming ski jumpers are set to fly at New England's only Olympic-size venue February 16th and 17th during the Annual Harris Hill tournament in Brattleboro, VT.

The nearly century-old competition will feature athletes from North America and Europe leaping off a 90-meter hill that's one of just six of its size in the country.

Since its start in 1922, the annual event attracts several thousand spectators who watch jumpers shoot at speeds of 60 mph before soaring more than 300 feet.

This year's competition will feature the annual Pepsi Challenge on Saturday and Fred Harris Memorial Tournament on Sunday, and the weekend will also be a stop on the US Cup circuit.

Harris Hill boasts a snowmaking system, so the program will take place regardless of ground cover in surrounding areas.

Gates will open February 16th and 17th at 10 a.m., with trial rounds at 11 a.m., opening ceremonies at noon and competition at 12:45 p.m.

The family event offers food and beverage vendors, a bonfire, music, tailgating and appearances by Jumper the Cow mascot.

Harris Hill Ski Jump is presented by hundreds of com-

munity volunteers and paid for by ticket sales, donations and sponsors including Pepsi, Mount Snow and The Richards Group.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for students ages 6 to 12, and free for children 5 and younger and can be purchased at the gate or online at www.HarrisHillSkiJump.com. Advance discount admission of \$15 for adults and \$12 for students ages 6 to 12 is available starting in February at www.HarrisHillSkiJump.com.

Location

Harris Hill Ski Jump is located on Cedar Street in Brattleboro, VT. Take VT Exit 2 off I-91 and turn left (east) at the end of the ramp. Drive one mile and turn left onto Cedar Street.

If you are coming from the north on Route 30, Cedar Street will be one-way during the event and not accessible for entry off of Route 30. Follow signs into town (Main Street to High Street to Western Ave) to enter from the south.

Parking

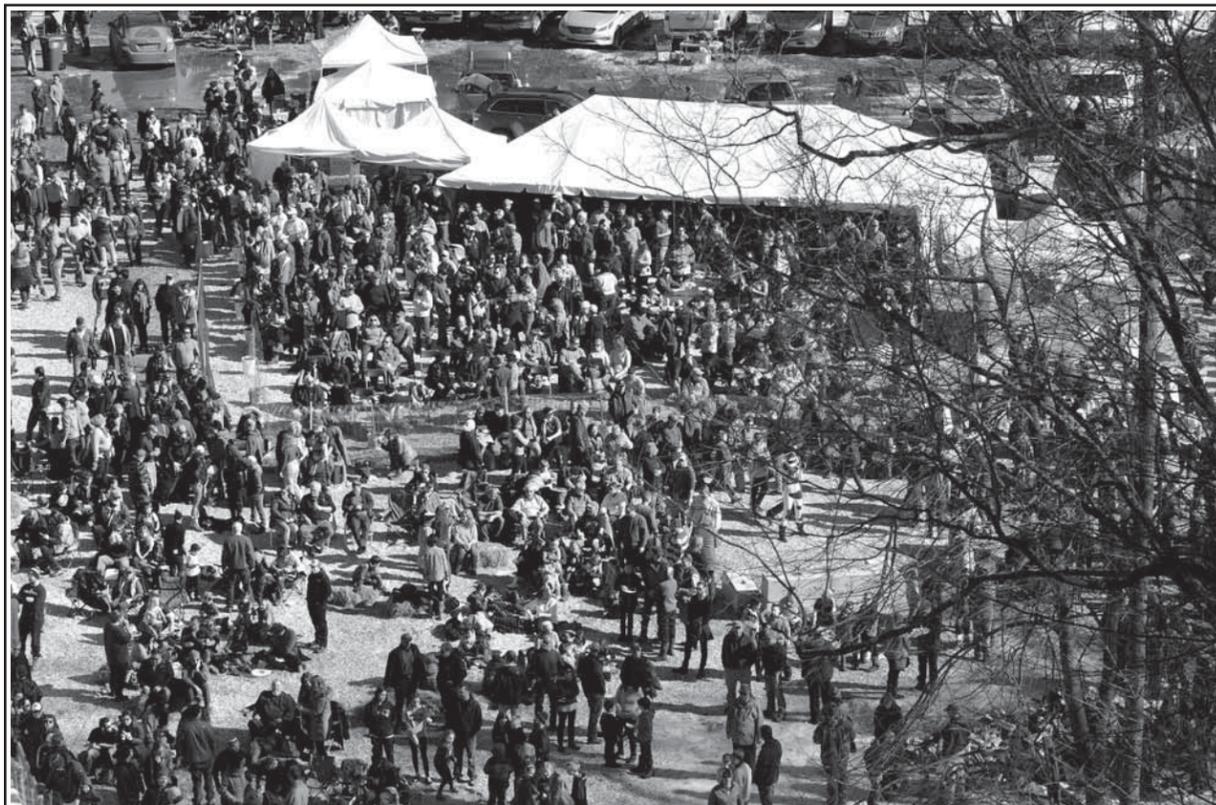
Free parking is on-site at the hill in the field. Note: the field may be muddy and/or very bumpy. If you have a small or a "low to the ground" vehicle, please keep this in mind. There is additional parking at both the Brattleboro Retreat

and The Retreat Farm on Route 30. A free shuttle bus will transport to and from the venue.

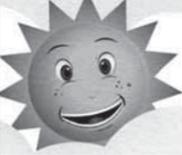
For additional details and ticket sales, visit www.harrishillskijump.com or the event's Facebook and Twitter pages.



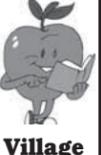
A young fan gets an autograph at Harris Hill Ski Jump. photo by Allan Seymour



Spectators enjoy a sunny winter day at the Annual Harris Hill Ski Jump in Brattleboro, VT. photo courtesy of Harris Hill Ski Jump



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Chester, VT

LEGO Contest March 16, Pre-Register by March 8

Here is some mid-winter fun for kids and their families and interested adults alike.

The 2019 LEGO Contest is taking place on Saturday March 16 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the NewsBank Conference Center, 352 Main St., Chester, VT.

Come and see what creative kids and families in Chester have built with LEGOS, the building block of choice. From tall and wide buildings, fantasy lands, and motorized entries, you will be amazed at what the kids have done.

The contest is open to LEGOmaniacs Pre-K through Grade 8 and their families. The public is invited to come and observe.

Participants should construct their original creations (no kits allowed), with a maximum size of 24" x 36", and bring them on March 16 between 9 & 10 a.m. to the Conference Center, generously donated by NewsBank for the event.

Entries will be judged in different grade categories from 10 a.m. to noon for their originality, imagination, and presentation. If a structure is a team entry, the age of the oldest member will determine the grade category.

There is also a separate family team class for collaborating children and parents. Unique motorized LEGOs will be considered in a separate section.

At 12:30 p.m. LEGO prizes will be awarded to winners and runners-up in the different classes, with special awards for the Judges' choice for Best in Show and Most Vermont creations. The Creators' Choice Award will be given to the entry that the contestants themselves

vote as the most outstanding creation.

Refreshments will be on sale to encourage everyone to stay and view the different entries, as well as to share ideas and techniques during the judging. Again this year young people may create an additional construction at a special LEGO station. They will not be able to remove their creation from the special area and won't be able to enter them in the contest, but this is a good opportunity for students to construct something different, perhaps with a friend, for some additional fun.

The Registration Form may be downloaded from Special Events at www.stlukesepiscopalvt.org, www.ourchester.org, and www.chestertelegraph.org.

Printed forms are available at the Whiting Library on Main Street in Chester, at Chester-Andover Elementary School, and at the Library and the Elementary School in Grafton.

Entries by Friday March 8 are \$15. After that date and on the day of the contest, entries will be \$20. A check for the registration fee should be made out to "St. Luke's Church" and mailed, along with the registration form, to the Registrar, Lillian Willis, PO Box 318, Chester, VT 05143.

Sponsored for the eighth year by St. Luke's Episcopal Church, the event will benefit both the church and the Children's Section of Chester's Whiting Library.

For additional information, please contact Lillian Willis at (802) 875-1340 or lbwillisct@comcast.net. www.stlukesepiscopalvt.org.



Colton Gaudette, age 10, from Springfield stands beside his 6'4" clock Tower that won first prize in the 2018 LEGO Contest for Grade 5 and also first in the Motorized category because of the clock in the building. Colton had been inspired by his trip to New York City and seeing the Empire State Building.

Grafton, VT

Winter Programs at The Nature Museum

The Nature Museum in Grafton, VT is open all year round on Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. From June through September we are open Saturdays as well. Please contact them if you'd like to schedule a time to visit outside of these days or hours. They'd love to have you! Admission to the museum is by donation thanks to our community of supporters.

The Nature Museum creates opportunities for families to discover and appreciate nature together; falling in step with the unhurried pace of the natural world is a simple way to relax and enjoy each other's company.

Kindred Spirits Family Nature Program: Finding Clues of Animals in Winter Through Tracking. At The Whiting Library, 117 Main St., Chester, VT. Saturday, February 2, 10-11:30 a.m. When you look out into the winter landscape in northern New England, it's often hard to believe that there's much of anything happening in the forests and fields. But life continues almost secretly. Together, we'll discover a winter world and the sneaky, smart animals who

thrive during this season. Feel real animals pelts, learn the basics of animal tracking, and then caravan to nearby Chester Pinnacle to head out on snowshoes to test out your winter animal detective skills! All ages welcome- this is a great program for parents and kids to enjoy together. Admission is by donation, RSVP is appreciated, and drop-ins are always welcome. Let us know if you need to borrow snow shoes!

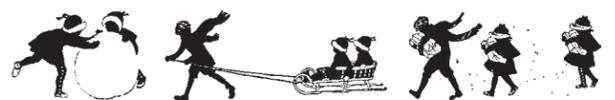
The Nature Museum is located at 186 Townshend Rd. in Grafton, VT. For more information call (802) 843-2111. E-mail info@nature-museum.org. Visit nature-museum.org.

Glare Ice

I have assumed the dignity of years. I wear it well, walking the waxen shine of ice-clad ways with careful steps. No one suspects

the presence of a girl, galoshe buckles jingling as she runs, joyously sliding down the glare ice of remembered winters.

—MARY LOU HEALY



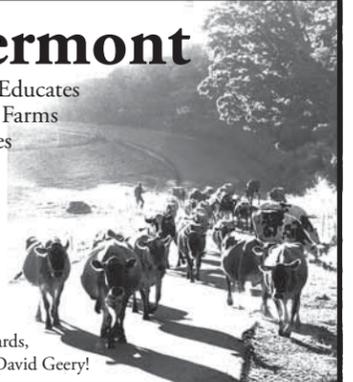
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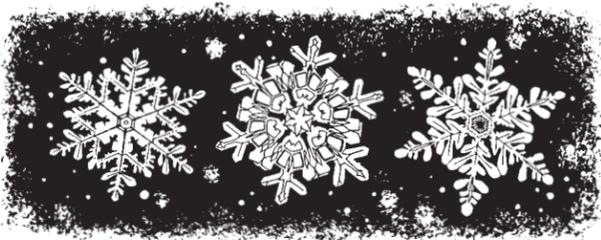
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Winter Festivals In Vermont!

From snow sport competitions to all kinds of festivals here's a sampling of fun things to do in Vermont in February. For more events check out our calendar or visit vermontvacation.com.

5th Annual Winter Carnival Springfield, VT • February 8 & 9

Bonfire, free hot chocolate, skating, sledding, snow volleyball, cardboard sled races, kayak races, snowman competition. Live music. Fireworks. Crown Point Country Club. (802) 885-2727. www.springfieldvtparksandrec.com.

Brrrlington Winter Bash Burlington, VT • February 9

Just for kids. Oodles of indoor and outdoor activities including snow fort building, balloon animals, face painting, kids' yoga, meeting animal and reptile friends, crafts, games with the Big Blue Trunk and yummy food. Free. 12 noon – 3 pm. Miller Recreation Center, 130 Gosse Court. (802) 540-1058. eallen@burlingtonvt.gov. enjoyburlington.com.

Winter Fest

Barre, VT • February 9

Skating & ice games on outdoor rink. Snowshoeing & cross-country skiing, snow carving, snow painting. Bonfire for warming up and making s'mores. BYO skates, skis and snowshoes. Hot cocoa and cider. Free admission. 11 am – 4 pm. Vermont Granite Museum, 7 Jones Brothers Way. (802) 476-4605. vtgranitemuseum.org.

Shelburne Winterfest

Shelburne, VT • February 9

Enjoy indoor and outdoor winter activities during this free, family-fun event! Sledding, crafts, live entertainment, delicious food, 4-H bake sale, ice skating, winter crafting. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides with Thornapple Farm (\$2/person). Live birds. 10 am – 1 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8442. www.shelburnefarms.org.

Southern Vermont Primitive Biathlon

Manchester, VT • February 9 & 10

A fun and challenging wilderness competition of target shooting and snowshoeing. The event is open to all muzzleloading firearm enthusiasts. Spectators welcomed and encouraged to view portions of the course. Food and vendors. 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. Skinner Hollow Farm, Rt. 7A. www.svtpb.org.

Bolton Backcountry Carnival

Bolton, VT • February 9 & 10

America's only 24-hour backcountry splitboard and ski race. Three-hour division on Sunday. Randonnée (alpine touring/skimo racers), tele skiers, and splitboarders welcome to test their endurance on backcountry terrain. Bolton Valley Resort, 4302 Bolton Valley Access Rd. (802) 434-6813. www.boltonvalley.com.

The Vermont Flurry

Snow Sculpture Festival

Woodstock, VT • February 15-17

The Woodstock village green is transformed into a celebration of winter and the visual arts. Professional snow sculpting teams compete. Event is weather-dependent. Free. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Woodstock Village Green. (802) 457-3981. www.pentanglearts.org.

Winter Carnival

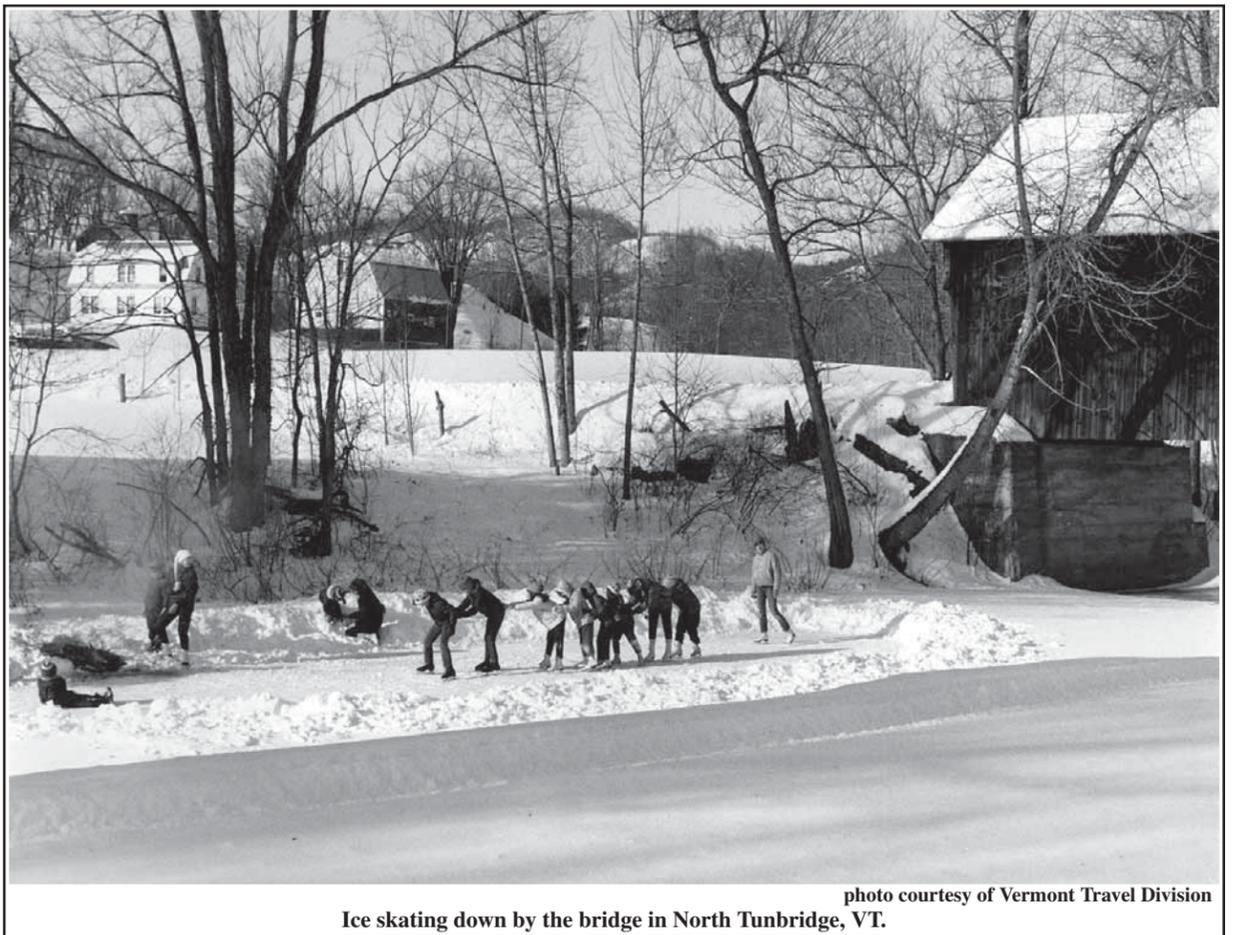
Chester, VT • February 15-17

Wunderle's Big Top Adventures Circus Workshop, sledding, sleigh rides, disc golf at the Pinnacle, free face painting. Food and drinks for sale. Bonfire, music, skating party, and nighttime snowshoe hike at the Pinnacle. Coffee, hot chocolate and pieces of pie for sale. 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. (802) 875-3603. chestervt.gov/recreation.html.

Rutland Winterfest

Rutland, VT • February 15-23

Check out the snow sculpture contest and the chili fest in Main Street Park, give the Frosty Feet 5K a try (or cheer from the sidelines) or snowshoe on the Nature Trail. Enjoy both art and story walks, and even nighttime sledding in downtown Rutland. (802) 773-1822. www.rutlandrec.com/winterfest.



Ice skating down by the bridge in North Tunbridge, VT. photo courtesy of Vermont Travel Division

Igloo Build and The Science of Winter

Norwich, VT • February 16

Enjoy one of the museum's longest-running traditions—the Igloo Build. Admission: \$16 adults, \$13 children 2-17, under 2 free. 10 a.m. Montshire Museum of Science, One Montshire Rd. (802) 649-2200. www.montshire.org.

62nd Annual Brattleboro Winter Carnival

Brattleboro, VT • February 16-24

Snowmobile rides, skating, skiing, sugar-on-snow, sleigh rides, pancake breakfast, ski competitions, live music, movies, chili cook off and more. Living Memorial Park and other venues. See full schedule at www.brattleborowintercarnival.org.

Harris Hill Ski Jump

Brattleboro, VT • February 16 & 17

The nearly century-old competition will feature athletes from North America and Europe leaping off a 90-meter hill that's one of just six of its size in the country, and the only 90-meter Olympic size jump in New England. Come watch world-class athletes fly through the air! Food, music, tailgating, a bonfire, beer tent, souvenirs. Tickets: adults \$20, students 6 to 12 \$15, children under 6 free. Gates open at 10 am, competition begins at noon. Harris Hill Ski Jump, Cedar St. harrishillskijump.com.

11th Annual St. Albans Winter Carnival.

St. Albans, VT • February 16 & 17

Games, contests, races and all kinds of outdoor adventure. Duct Tape Downhill Derby, sliding, skating. Horse-drawn wagon rides. Obstacle course for kids. Fourth annual flag football snow bowl. Starting at 11 am at Hard'ack Recreation Area. (802) 524-1500 ext. 266. a.gratton@stalbanstv.com. stalbanstv.myrec.com.

Winter Renaissance Faire

Essex Junction, VT • February 23 & 24

Merriment, whimsical entertainers, delicious food, and amazing vendors. Performance troupes including singers, musicians, acrobats, and dancers; as well as medieval and Viking demonstrations. Artisans and craft vendors, mead, wine and cider makers. Tickets: \$15, 6-12 \$5, under 6 free. 10 am – 6 pm. Champlain Valley Expo. info@VTgatherings.com. vtgatherings.com.



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Route 103, Chester, VT. 8 miles west of Exit 6, I-91.

Winterville

Burlington, VT • February 24

Ski and snowshoe free rentals, fat bike demos, chili cook-off, kids activities, and more! Food, hot chocolate, and a bonfire! 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Intervale, 180 Intervale Rd. (802) 660-0440. abby@intervale.org. www.intervale.org.

34th Annual Kåre Andersen

Telemark Festival

Peru, VT • February 23 & 24

Clinics in free-heel skiing for all ages and levels, beginner to advanced. USTSA sanctioned race with both citizen and expert categories. Clinics and free-heel camaraderie on Saturday. Annual race on Sunday; additional clinics in the afternoon. Bromley Mountain Resort, 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. info@bromley.com. bromley.com.

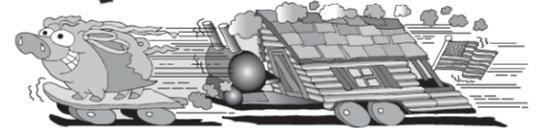
Owl Festival

Quechee, VT • February 23-24

Gather with live owls from all over the world, discover their life stories, create adorable crafts, get your face painted and enjoy delicious food. Adults \$15.50; seniors (62 plus) \$14.50; youth (4-17) \$13.50; children 3 and under free. 9 am – 5 pm. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Rd. (802) 359-5000. www.vinsweb.org.



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Poor Will's Natural Calendar

by Bill Felker

February 1 – The foliage of the oak-leaf hydrangea has fallen in the past weeks. The Osage fruits have turned deep red-brown. The berries of the euonymus are falling from their decaying, once protective sepals. Black walnut hulls are dark and collapsing, fall away at the touch of your heel

February 2 – In northern Mexico, monarch butterflies are moving toward the Texas border. They will reach the Gulf coast in small groups during mid to late March, and their offspring will find the Northeast in early summer.

February 3 – The first major waves of robins and bluebirds now move up the Atlantic coast toward Vermont. Along the back roads, road kills attest to the increasing night-time activities of opossums

February 4 – Almost every year, skunk mating season begins by the end of the Groundhog Day Thaw. Salamander breeding time opens in the first mild rains, and bobbing blue jays announce blue jay courting season.

February 5 – When you hear mourning doves singing before dawn, then organize all your buckets for tapping maple syrup. When you hear red-winged blackbirds in the wetlands, then the maple sap should already be running. When maple sap runs, then prune house plants to encourage spring growth.

February 6 – When you see sparrows courting, then cut branches of forsythia and pussy willows for forcing indoors.

February 7 – When the red tips of peonies push out just a little from the ground, then watch for wild turkeys to be gathering in flocks.

February 8 – Cardinals began their mating calls before dawn in the last week of deep winter. Now they are in full song by eight in the morning, sometimes sing all day.

February 9 – Depending on the year, growth occurs on ragwort, dock, sweet rocket, asters, winter cress, poison hemlock, sedum, mint, celandine, plantain, poppies, pansies, daffodils, tulips, crocus, aconite, hyacinth, strawberries.

February 10 – The pollen season, which ended with early winter, has now begun again across the South with the blooming of mountain cedar, acacia, smooth alder, bald cypress, American elm, red maple, white poplar and black willow. Bluegrass, which stopped flowering in midsummer, revives and starts its seeding cycle. As the February thaws bring moisture and warmth from the Gulf of Mexico, they also bring the pollen from all these flowers to the North.

February 11 – More than half of the pussy willows have opened in the mildest years.

February 12 – The day's length is about an hour longer than it was on December 26. Azaleas bloom in Alabama. In the lowlands of Mississippi, swamp buttercups, violets and black medic are open. Across the deserts of the Southwest, wildflower season begins with the first spring rains. In the Lower Midwest, skunk cabbages are opening. In Vermont, snowdrops struggle to push up through the snow.



photo courtesy Merck Forest & Farmland Center

Visitors enjoy a horse-drawn sleigh ride through the winter woods at Merck Forest & Farmland Center in Rupert, VT.

February 13 – Owlets and young bald eagles grow inside their eggs. Riding the southwest winds, red-winged blackbirds, meadowlarks, starlings, cedar waxwings, snow buntings, eagles, killdeer, and ducks of all kinds migrate, accelerating the appearance of spring.

February 14 – When you see small brown moths on warmer afternoons, then you know that ducks are looking for nesting sites. When you see tulip foliage emerging from the ground, then horned owlets hatch in the woods and sweet corn is coming up along the Gulf coast.

February 15 – Sometimes the weather doesn't change for the better in the middle of the year's second month; sometimes the cold is worse than in the middle of January. But it's the sound that changes and fills the silence of dormancy, songs accumulating like spring leaves.

February 16 – Fields of daffodils open in southern Georgia, and throughout the South, honeybees and carpenter bees collect pollen from yellow dandelions, silver and red maples, blue toadflax, white clover and mouse-eared chickweed.

February 17 – Wildflower season has begun in the Southwest and bald eagles are laying their eggs in Yellowstone.

February 18 – Today is Cross-Quarter Day, the date on which the sun reaches half of the distance to spring equinox, entering the early spring sign of Pisces at the same time. The night has shortened by 90 minutes through the space of the last 60 days, and the speed of the change reaches real spring levels now, the remaining gain of 70 minutes occur-

ring between February 18 and equinox. And the sun, which took 60 days to travel the first half of the way to equinox, suddenly doubles its speed, completing the second half of the journey in only 32 days.

February 19 – This is Supermoon Day: expect cold weather and increases in seasonal affective disorder. But today should be the last of the worst of S.A.D. for most people.

February 20 – The likelihood of seasonal stress begins to fall steadily throughout February. Even though clouds usually continue to deprive the human brain of the benefits of sunlight, the length of the day complements the slowly improving temperatures.

February 21 – The violet and golden flowers of the snow crocus, the white blooms of snowdrops and the bright yellow blossoms of aconites often begin their seasons during the last week of February. Those seasons last through the middle of March, if the weather is not too warm, and they are parallel to the season of red and silver maple bloom.

February 22 – The Delta Leonid meteor shower reaches its peak directly overhead in the early morning hours.

February 23 – Today marks the beginning of the end of winter's gray skies. Although February and March still have plenty of clouds in store, the frequency of brighter days now shows a slow but steady advance.

February 24 – After Snowdrop Winter (between February 23 and 27), geese follow the lead of the blackbirds, marking ownership of the more favorable river and lake sites for nesting. More migrant robins join the sizeable flocks that overwintered in the exurban woodlands.

February 25 – Migrant crows return with their young, sometimes clashing with the crows that have spent the winter here. Sap is running in the maples, a sign that migraine headache season is at its peak throughout the country. And although your asthma may have improved slightly through the winter, the gradual increase in pollen that accompanies the end of February may bring on a new period of congestion.

February 26 – Great flocks of starlings and grackles move across the nation as February comes to an end. And from now on, average temperatures rise at their spring and early summer rate, one degree every three days, until the second week of June.

February 27 – The very earliest bulbs, the snowdrops, the snow crocus and the aconites, have already bloomed in the sunniest microclimates. Now it is time for the larger, brighter standard crocus and the small spring iris, the iris reticulata to flower.

February 28 – The blossoming of the standard crocus bears witness to the blooming of weedy henbit in the garden, the increasing flow of maple sap, the full emergence of pussy willows, the appearance of woolly bear caterpillars, and the full bloom of the snow trillium along the rivers.



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Late Winter and Earliest Spring Vermont Almanack

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 Sun's Progress

Just after the Groundhog Day Thaw is over (typically by February 4), the Sun rushes toward Early Summer, climbs past a declination of 16 degrees, reaches about 40 percent of the way to equinox by February 12, and on the 18th, Cross-Quarter Day, the Sun reaches its halfway point to equinox, entering the Early Spring sign of Pisces at the same time. And on February 24, the Sun reaches a declination of over nine and a half degrees, 60 percent of the way to equinox.

As the Sun moves from the sign of Aquarius (early and middle February) to Pisces (late February), precedents create promise and potential for the fledgling season. Almost every year, skunk mating season begins by the end of the Groundhog Day Thaw. Salamander breeding time opens in the first mild rains, and bobbing blue jays announce blue jay courting season. Doves called occasionally throughout December and January; now their full mating time swells and extends the predawn songs of cardinals and titmice.

Phases of the Squashy Osage Fruit Moon And The Skunk Courting Moon

The ebbing and flowing of the new Skunk Courting Moon helps to create dramatic shifts in weather as well as to stimulate changes in flora and fauna. The volatility of the Skunk Courting Moon accentuates solar influence, and the mix of warming and freezing, Sun and clouds, encourages skunks (and other small mammals) to wander the night in search of mates. Under this Moon, pussy willows emerge, maple sap runs into buckets, and the early bulbs—snowdrops, aconites and snow crocus—send up foliage in northern states and come into full bloom across the South.

February 4: The Skunk Courting Moon is new at 4:04 p.m.

February 5: The Moon reaches apogee (its position farthest from Earth) at 4:26 a.m.

February 12: The Moon enters its second quarter at 5:26 p.m.

February 19: The Moon reaches perigee (its position closest to Earth) at 4:06 a.m., and the Moon is full at 10:54 a.m. Perigee and Full Moon make a Supermoon, the second of 2019.

February 25: The Moon enters its final quarter at 6:28 a.m.

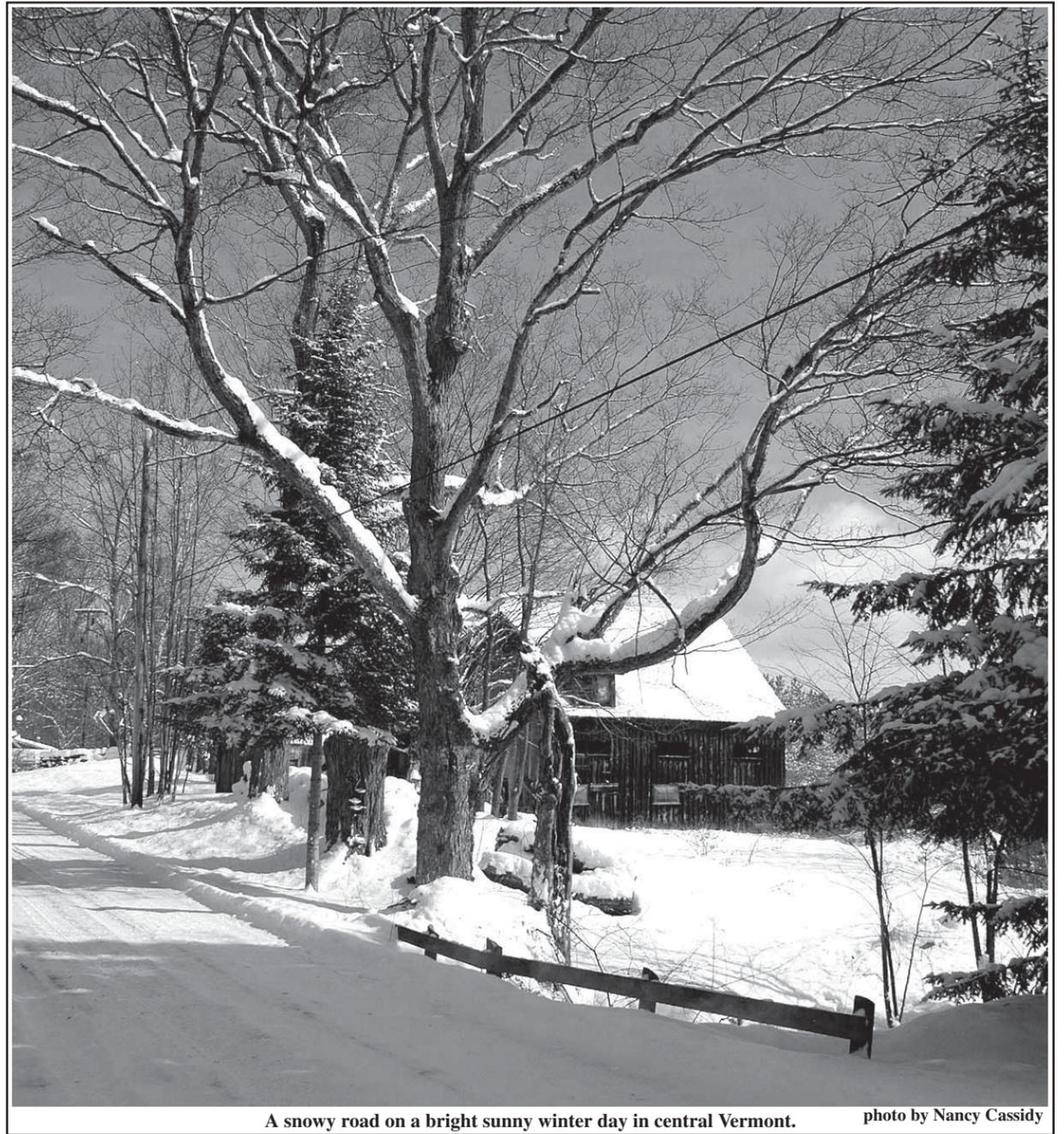
The Stars

By ten o'clock in the evening in the first week in February, giant Orion begins to move west from its dominating January position in the center of the southern sky. The star grouping of Canis Major takes its place along the horizon, with Sirius, the Dog Star, the brightest light in the whole night sky. Sirius, along with Procyon (the large star to the upper left of Sirius) and Betelgeuse (the reddish left shoulder of Orion) form what appears from our position on Earth to be an equilateral triangle.

The Great Square sets in the west before midnight during February's second week. Perseus follows Cassiopeia into the northwest. Spring's Regulus will be well up in the sky on the other side of the horizon in the constellation Leo.

Early Summer's planting guide, Arcturus, is visible just before midnight in the northeast on February 12th.

By the third week in February, Procyon, the largest star of Canis Minor, replaces the Dog Star due south near 10:00



A snowy road on a bright sunny winter day in central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

p.m. Above it, find the twins of Gemini, Castor and Pollux. To the right, Orion and the Milky Way have shifted deep into the west, a simple sign that Early Spring has begun. If you are looking for the North Star, the Big Dipper has moved well into the northeastern sky, up from its low December and January position, and its pointers, the outside stars of the dipper, are easily found. On the 17th, the first stars of Deep Summer's Hercules appear in the northeast after 10:00 p.m.

In the last week of February, the early night sky tells of Early Spring. Looking east, you can almost forget that cold Orion fills the west. Just a little to the right and down from the Big Dipper, May's Regulus is shining in the constellation Leo. The faint stars of lanky Hydra spread along the horizon. Due east, the most prominent star is Arcturus, which will be overhead this time of night when the first fireflies appear.

The Planets

This month, Jupiter remains the earliest Morning Star, rising a few hours past midnight in Ophiuchus. Moving retrograde from Ophiuchus and its tryst with Jupiter into Sagittarius, Venus arrives on the horizon just before dawn, with Saturn, low in the east, following well behind. Red Mars moves retrograde from Pisces to Aries, visible in the west after dark.

Meteorology

Significant cold waves are due to cross the United States around the following dates: February 3, 6, 11, 15, 20, 24 and 27. The first four February weather systems belong to the subseason of Late Winter, the last three to Early Spring. New Moon on February 4 and Full Moon, combined with lunar perigee, on February 19 are likely to increase the intensity of the weather systems that typically arrive near those dates.

Fireside Chant

Apple wood for fragrance,
Ash for violet glow,
Hornbeam, larch and sassafras,
Such lovely words to know.
Sycamore's serenity,
Hickory's embrace,
Oak to scatter golden sparks
Before the watcher's face.

Juniper for incense,
Birch for flame and flare—
Someone to come walking in

With snowflakes in her hair,
Darkness past the windows,
Wind above the eaves,
And friend to friend relating
The thoughts the heart believes.

Hemlock, spruce and poplar.
Say them softly now:
Chestnut, pine and mountain ash,
Beech and cherry bough.

—ESTHER WOOD
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Vermont Flower Show at Champlain Valley Exposition

The 2019 Vermont Flower Show, "Wonder—A Garden Adventure for All Ages" will bring three days of spring to life as our winter draws to a close. The show is being presented at the Champlain Valley Exposition in Essex Junction, VT on March 1-3.

Along with the grand garden landscaped display, the show offers a wide variety of things to choose from – all included in the price of admission. Plan on spending the entire day at the show! The 2019 Vermont Flower Show was chosen by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce as a Top Ten Winter Event to attend!

The show is open to the public on Friday, March 1 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, March 2 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday March 3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

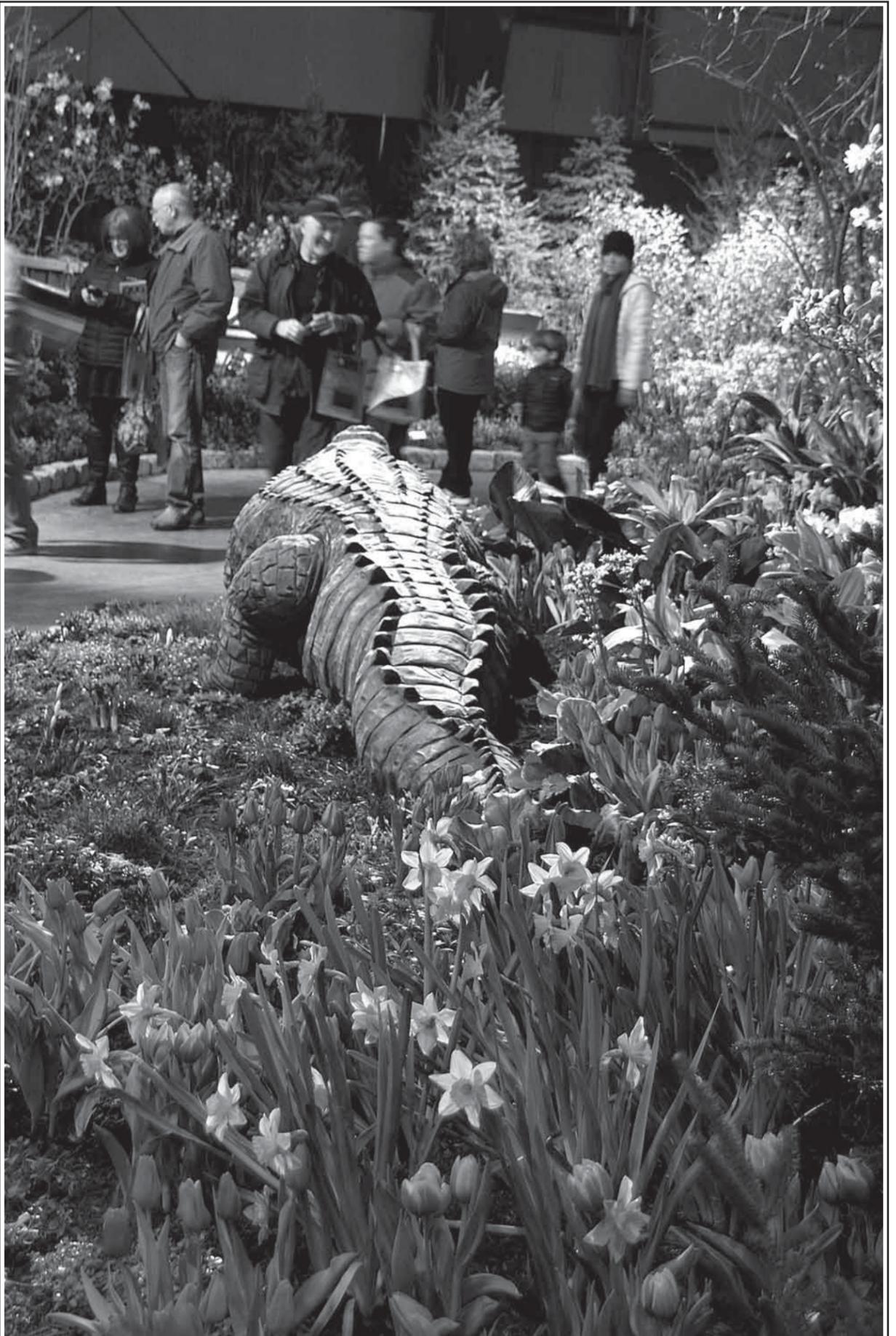
Admission is \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors (60+), \$10 for students (ages 13-17), \$5 for children (ages 5-12), and free for children under the age of 5. Two-day passes are \$28 each and three-day passes are \$40 each. Tickets can be purchased in advance at Gardener's Supply stores and on-line at greenworksvermont.org and beginning February 1 all Price Chopper stores. Parking for this event is free!

Highlights of the Vermont Flower Show

- Grand Garden Display (over 10,000 sq. ft.) filled with flowering bulbs, shrubs trees, and water features!
- Local artists will be painting live in the Grand Garden Display.
- Over 100 horticultural/gardening vendors.
- Over 35 educational seminars and hands-on workshops on a variety of topics.
- Experts on-hand all three days to answer your gardening and landscaping questions.
- Family Room with craft and planting activities all three days as well as scheduled entertainment.
- An art gallery where you can view local artists' work.
- Local bookstore with a great selection of books.
- The Federated Garden Clubs of VT host a "National Garden Club Standard Flower Show Exhibit" which is a judged competition open to both VT garden club members and the general public.
- VT Garden Railway Society—landscaped display with moving trains!
- Plant Sale at the conclusion of the show on Sunday

The Vermont Flower Show is produced by the Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association (VNLA/Green Works), a non-profit statewide organization, dedicated to educating and increasing awareness of the growing industry of horticulture (wholesale and retail nurseries, greenhouses, retail garden centers and florists, designers, landscape and tree services). The VNLA Board and Flower Show Committees work thousands of hours in creating a vibrant and colorful community-wide event that educates, entertains, and inspires.

Champlain Valley Exposition is located at 105 Pearl St. in Essex Junction, VT. For more information about the 2019 Vermont Flower Show, call (888) 518-6484 or visit greenworksvermont.org.



Alligators in Vermont? Springtime flower display at the Vermont Flower Show, this year at the Champlain Valley Exposition March 1-3.



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The flock of sheep in a winter field at Merck Forest and Farmland Center in Rupert, VT.

photo by Merck Forest and Farmland Center

Rupert, VT

Winter Festivities at Merck Forest & Farmland Center

Winter has come to Merck Forest and Farmland Center. There are plenty of family-centered fun activities and events to take part in, or you can just enjoy a stroll around the farm, or an invigorating hike or x-c ski along our 30+ miles of trails.

Winter Event Schedule

To learn more about the details of an event that interests you, please call the Visitor Center at (802) 394-7836. Advance reservations—made on a first-come first-served basis—are necessary for many events due to space limitations or scheduling considerations. For outdoor events, please dress for the weather: sturdy shoes/boots, layered clothing, snow/rain gear, flashlight/headlamp, snacks and water. Outdoor events are held weather-permitting.

Forest Makers Workshop for Children: Treats for Soap Felting Workshop. February 9th, 1-3 p.m. Just in time for Valentine's Day: Merck Forest's Soap Felting Workshop! Attendees will felt three bars of Kirk's 100% Pure Coconut Castile soap, scented or unscented, using natural-colored wool with natural- and brightly-colored wool and silk. One of these handmade scrubbies (or the set of three) would be a luxurious—and personal—gift for a loved one. Pre-registration is suggested: call (802) 394-7836 to reserve your place in the class. *Fee: \$30 per person includes materials.*

Full Snow Moon Guided Hike. February 16th, 4-5:30 p.m. Join Merck Forest staff on a guided hike in the evening landscape to view the Full Snow Moon. This hike will be of moderate difficulty; participants must have appropriate footwear, headlamps, water and snacks. Reservations are requested, please reserve your spot in the group by calling (802) 394-7836. Held weather-permitting. *Fee: \$5 per person.*

Winter in the Woods: Vacation Camp for Children. February 19th, 9 a.m. through February 21, 3 p.m. Winter-Break Camp for second through fifth graders. We'll explore the snowy woods, create wintry crafts and play! Merck Forest is a winter wonderland and you can come to camp for one day or all three. Bring a bag lunch (we'll furnish snacks) and dress for outdoor play. Space is limited, call to register. *Fee: \$50/day or \$125 for three days.*

Owl Presentation and Guided Walk. February 23rd, 4-6 p.m. Whooo's looking for company in our late winter landscape? Well, the Barred owls are, the Great Horned owls, and whooo knows whooo else. If we're lucky we'll be able to listen in on the conversation of one or another feathered couple. We'll start in the Visitor Center with a presentation featuring owls native to the Northeast, then we'll hike out in hopes of finding some courting couples. Participants must have appropriate footwear, headlamps, water and snacks. Reservations are requested. Held weather-permitting. *Fee: \$5 per person.*

Vernal Pool Monitoring Workshop. March 1st, 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Vernal pools are unique, ephemeral wetlands that provide critical habitat for many species, particularly pool-breeding amphibians and invertebrates. Given their small size, landowners and private citizens have the opportunity to make a big difference in vernal pool conservation by protecting a single pool or complex of pools on their property or in their local community. Alex Wells of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) will conduct a workshop to train property owners to monitor these special wetland habitats, using the VCE's monitoring protocols. This workshop will be indoors and will not have "field" component; admission is free to all. For any questions regarding the training component, call the VCE at (802) 649-1431, or check their vernal pool information page at vtecostudies.org.

Maple Madness for Children. March 16, 1-3 p.m. Let's find out what sugaring and maple trees are all about! This is a sap-to-syrup program; youngsters will see a tapping demonstration, tour the sap house to see the evaporator and equipment (if we're very lucky and the weather conditions are just right, we may even get to watch the sugar makers at work!), and then taste the sweet product of our maple trees. Since we'll be outside, children must be dressed for the weather, and must be accompanied by an adult companion; pre-registration is necessary (since enrollment is limited). *Fee: \$10 per child.*

Merck's Annual Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. March 23 at 9 a.m. through March 24 till 2 p.m. Admission: \$5-\$12. Hooray, it's coming! It's all kinds of fun, with sugaring demonstrations, games for the kids, wagon rides, and—of course—breakfast (pancakes laced with the best maple syrup in the universe, eggs, Merck-produced breakfast sausage, coffee and

Merck Forest and Farmland Center is a non-profit educational organization in the Taconic Hills of southwestern Vermont. The Center's mission is the sustainable management of its forest, the promotion of innovative agricultural practices on its upland farm, the education of local students in outdoor exploration and the study of natural sciences, and the creation of recreational opportunities. The property is open free to the public daily, from dawn to dusk, year-round.

Merck Forest and Farmland Center is located between Rupert and Dorset, at the top of the very large hill at 3270 Rt. 315 (Rupert Mountain Rd.) in Rupert, VT, west of Manchester, VT. Once you reach the top of the big hill turn into Merck Forest's driveway. If you start going back down the hill, you've gone too far. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

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Prime Time for Ice Fishing in Vermont

Late February and early March are prime time for ice fishing, according to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

"The warmer days and cold nights we normally have in late February and early March offer some of our best ice fishing of the year," said Vermont Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter. "For safety reasons, you need to watch ice conditions as we get closer to spring, but this is prime time to enjoy the great ice fishing we have on many Vermont lakes."

Lake Champlain offers lots of ice fishing. Ice anglers can find good fishing for a variety of species on this 120-mile long lake, including landlocked salmon, lake trout, northern pike, yellow perch, white perch, walleye, and crappie.

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.

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. Lake trout are found off the west shore of Grand Isle and North Hero, as well as Outer Mallets Bay, Shelburne Bay, and Button Bay south to the Champlain Bridge.

While walleyes can show up anywhere in Lake Champlain, 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 Alburgh.

Yellow perch and other panfish are being caught throughout Lake Champlain in the bays and shallows as well as on many other Vermont waters.

Vermont's ice fishing season for trout, salmon and bass starts January 20th and continues through March 15th on 41 other large Vermont lakes. For a list of those lakes, go to page 36 of the "2018 Vermont Fishing Guide and Regulations" available where licenses are sold and digitally on Fish & Wildlife's website at www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

To locate places to stay and get help on the latest fishing activity, go to the Vermont Outdoor Guides Association website at www.voga.org.

VT Fish & Wildlife provides important safety tips at www.takemefishing.org/ice-fishing/ice-fishing-basics/ice-fishing-safety.



Douglas Scott with a nice Northeast Kingdom rainbow trout. Vermont ice fishing can be excellent during late February and early March. photo by Mark Scott



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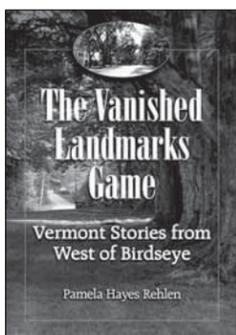
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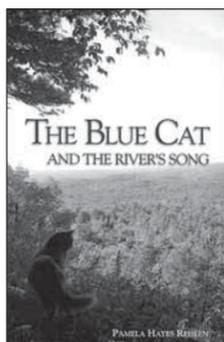
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The Vermont Room

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

The Vermont Room—originally the Edward A. Ellis Room for Vermontiana and Local History—is part of the library at Castleton University. Ed Ellis was an old-time Vermonter, life-long Castleton town patriarch, politically-active, history-minded, and his room is filled with collected information about Vermont, and also a lot of obscure material about Castleton State Normal School, the forerunner to Castleton University, a teachers'-college-world nobody remembers any more.

This is a smallish place with book shelves built by one-time school administrator Jeff Hatch. When I visit in December, it has an uncharacteristically cluttered atmosphere. Furniture has been moved around to accommodate a school finals week 'de-stressor play and drawing table', set up for anxious students in the center of the room, with paper and crayons, a clothes line overhead on which to peg up resulting art work. I think to myself that to anyone attending the long-ago Normal School, this would have been simply incomprehensible.

Just inside the door of the Vermont Room, there used to be a collection of Calvin Coolidge memorabilia, including the pamphlet *Growing Up in Plymouth Notch 1872-1895*, the smaller pamphlet *I Do Not Fit in With These Times* reprinted from the January 6, 1933 edition of *The New York Sun*, old 78 RPM phonograph records of Coolidge's orations, sheet

"Ed Ellis was an old-time Vermonter, life-long Castleton town patriarch, politically active, history-minded..."

music for *Keep Cool and Keep Coolidge*, and, finally, the *Rutland Herald* front page announcing Coolidge's death.

Now there's an assemblage of winter scene sketches, and on the bottom shelf the sword of Captain Abel Edgar Leavenworth of the Civil War 9th Vermont Infantry (later a principal of the Normal School from 1881 to 1897.)

The cabinets on the room's north wall were brought over from the original school library, which was in use from 1926 to 1965, and a place I remember well. Now they're filled with bound magazines and periodicals including *Vermont Life*, the *Vermont*, *CSC's Vermont Literary Review*, *Vermont History*, the *Spartan*, *Vermont Affairs*, and *Vermont Climate*. There's also *The Green Mountaineer* for junior historians—

Books

Busy that man must be indeed,
Who thinks he has no time to read,
No time to sit him down and look
Upon the pages of a book.
So busy with his tasks of day,
So eager, with the night to play,
That Tennyson is thrust away!

Near him are richer friends than those
His daily wandering ever knows
Friends who would share his every mood
And fill his heart with gratitude,
But he's so busy that he must
Know Shakespeare merely as a bust,
A bit of marble gathering dust.

Busy that man must be, who finds
No time for all God's noble minds,
Who sees them waiting all about,
Takes tradesmen in and shuts them out.
He lives his life on crowded streets,
Listens to every man he meets,
But has no time for Lamb or Keats.

Fancy a garden wondrous fair
With every lovely blossom there
And at its farthest end a shop
Where one to eat a bite could stop,
Not to know books would be I think
Like racing there to eat and drink,
Blind to the roses, white and pink.

—EDGAR A. GUEST
Detroit, MI 1881-1959



Pamela Hayes Rehlen looking at Marcella Jackson's *Beaconaire* in the Vermont Room at Castleton University. photo by John Rehlen

last published in 1990, a loss, I think, because the magazines were filled with stuff like: *Was Your Town a Mill Town?* (Dorset, surprisingly enough, was), *How They Put the Wedding Bells in Bellows Falls* (once a wedding capitol), and *The Disappearing Balloonist of Hyde Park*.

An original James Hope lithograph of Woodruff Hall once hung in this room, and below it a primitive pencil sketch of a Leavenworth Hall dormitory room that could have been mine in the 1960s except this 19th century-era accommodation was heated by a tiny Langdon stove.

The Vermont Room houses only a few artifacts, but Marcella Jackson, born in 1898, a wispy, maiden-lady, art, speech, and dramatics instructor, who taught at the school from 1928 to 1964, has left behind her speckled granite bird sculpture *Beaconaire*.

I knew Marcella Jackson. My closest school friend revered her. My parents, aunts, and uncles were less reverential, but she exemplified how sincerely high-minded the Normal School once was, and how its mission was seen as that of lifting up, and polishing up its many just-off-the-farm students and future teachers

The Vermont Room stacks have everything, including *Vermont Reports*, *Vermont Statutes*, *Laws of Vermont*, *Reports of the Vermont Labor Relations Board*, *School Reports*, *State of Vermont Vital Statistics*, and *Annals of the Vermont Asylum for the Insane* (shown to be a lively place with cheerful employee-inmate social interaction.)

There's also *Rutland County Cemetery Inscriptions*, *The Collected Poetry of William Mundell*, (poet laureate of the Poetry Society of Vermont,) genealogical registers for early families, the novels of Chris Bohjalian, and *Mrs. Apple yard's Family Kitchen* cookbooks. I think that *The Blue Cat of Castleton* must be in here somewhere, and I hope my own books: *The Blue Cat and the River's Song*, and *Vanished Landscapes - Vermont Stories from West of Birdseye*.

I also like visiting the hall outside the Vermont Room to look at old school photographs, my favorite being of the graduating class of 1933. I find my father here, standing on the steps of Woodruff Hall next to my Uncle Nelson Lyons, two Fair Haven boys, my father looking uncharacteristically louche, but Uncle Nelson in a well-cut dark suit. They both

always told me that there were no men graduating from the Normal during their years, but I count sixteen in this photo.

Even a near-by picture of the class of 1909 shows three men among the women graduates—and, even more unexpected, sprawled at the feet of the ladies in the front row, an evil-looking, piebald pit bull.

On my last visit—the door kept open wide as mandated—I hear the steady buzz of a lot of students preparing for their end-of-semester finals.

I wish I could convey to them out there some sense of what this school once was, but I can't. They wouldn't believe it. I hardly believe it myself anymore.

That's why, every once in a while, I come back to The Vermont Room for a visit.

Pamela Hayes Rehlen has written and lived most of her life in Castleton, Vermont. She is the author of stories, article, essays, magazine features and of two books: The Blue Cat and the River's Song (\$17 plus shipping and handling) and The Vanished Landmarks Game—Vermont Stories from West of Birdseye (\$20 plus shipping and handling) available at the Castleton Village Store P. O. Box 275, Castleton, Vermont 05735, and at a number of Vermont booksellers. To reach the store, call (802) 468-2213. All back issues of these columns are available to read under the archives at www.vermontcountrysampler.com.



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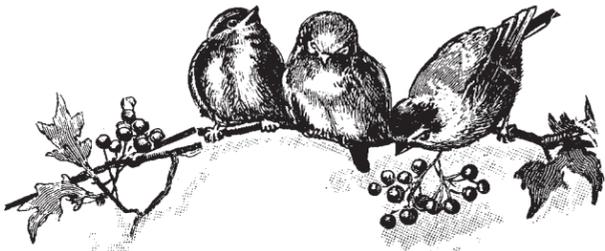
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The Great Backyard Bird Count on February 16-19

The 21st Annual Great Backyard Bird Count will be held Friday, February 16, through Monday, February 19, 2018. Please visit the official website at birdcount.org for more information and be sure to check out the latest educational and promotional resources.

Join birders across the world to count birds in backyards, parks and favorite birding spots. A great free family project!

The Great Backyard Bird Count is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations.

Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at birdcount.org. Anyone can take

part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world.

Each checklist submitted during the Great Backyard Bird Count helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. Last year, more than 160,000 participants created the largest instantaneous snapshot of global bird populations ever recorded.

For more information contact birdcount.org, the National Audubon Society at audubon.org, or Rutland County Audubon Society at birding@rutlandcounty.audubon.org.



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Vermont Country Calendar

See the end of the daily event calendar for ongoing activities; and museums, exhibits, and galleries.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30

ESSEX JUNCTION. Vermont Farm Show. Vendors, awards, workshops. Wednesday 8:30 am – 7:30 pm, Thursday 9 am – 4 pm. Free admission, free parking. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. www.vtfarmshow.com. Through January 31.

HANOVER, NH. Performance: “Indigenous Rising”. Spoken word, incisive theater and “Alter-Native” rock by a rising generation of indigenous artists. Tickets: \$14–\$25. 7 pm and 8:30 pm. Warner Bentley Theater, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

WATERBURY. Waterbury Winterfest. Various locations. (802) 233-0576. waterburywinterfest.com. Through February 3.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Play: *Venus Rising*. When Julie, married mother of three, unexpectedly leaves her husband and moves in with her mother Cora, she’s shocked at what she finds in her childhood home. 7:30 pm. Northern Stage, Barrette Center for the Arts, 74 Gates St. (802) 296-7000. Through February 17.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31

ESSEX JUNCTION. Vermont Farm Show. Vendors, awards, workshops. Thursday 9 am – 4 pm. Free admission, free parking. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. www.vtfarmshow.com.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1

BURLINGTON. Lane Series Concert: Yumi Kurosawa, koto, and Anubrata Chatterjee, tabla, will take us on an unforgettable journey of melody and rhythm. Tickets: adults \$30, students \$5. 7:30 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 392 South Prospect St. (802) 656-3131. uvm.edu/laneseries.

GRAFTON. Preschool Nature Program. Wonderful Winter: The Hows and Whys of the Season. Make a snowflake craft, try out a pair of snowshoes, bring your own sled to slide down our hill, make a snowman. Ages 3-6. Cost: \$5 per child if registered in advance, drop-in cost \$8. 10–11:30 am. The Nature Museum, 186 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2111. daron@nature-museum.org. nature-museum.org.

RANDOLPH. Concert: The Campbell Brothers. Gospel as you’ve never heard it before, backed by pedal and lap steel guitars. Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25. 7:30 pm. Main Hall, Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

RUTLAND. Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sale. Thousands of organized, gently-used books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles for all ages. Rare and antique books at discounted prices. Most items \$.25 – \$3. 10 am – 4 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org. Also February 2.

SPRINGFIELD. Exhibit: Student Art Show, in the Open Wall. Open Mondays 11:30 am – 2:30 pm and Wednesday through Saturday 11 am – 5 pm. Gallery at the Vault, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault@vermontel.net. galleryvault.org. Through February 27.

WATERBURY. Waterbury Winterfest. Various locations. (802) 233-0576. waterburywinterfest.com. Through February 3.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2

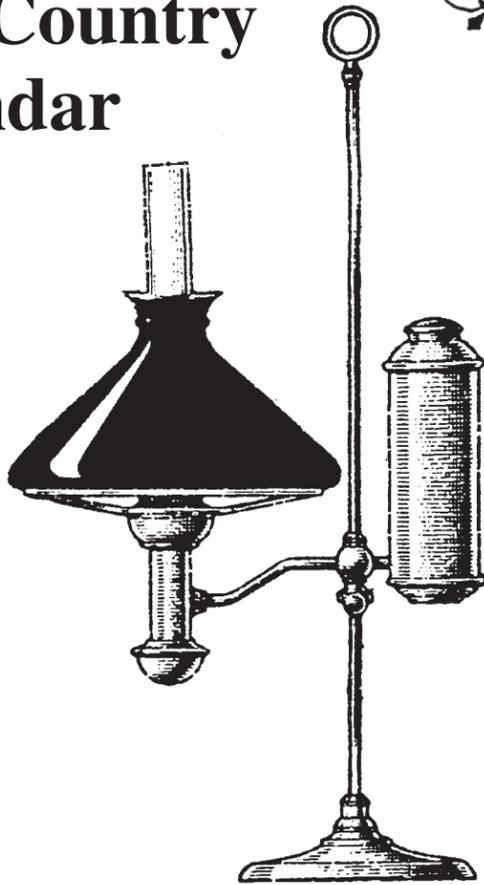
BARRE. Concert: Arrival From Sweden. Abba tribute show. 7:30 pm. Barre Opera House. City Hall, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. barreoperahouse.org.

BENSON. Down Home Derby. Sponsored by Benson Fish & Game Club. Waterbody: all legal Vermont waterbodies and Lake Champlain. Fish: All legal species. 12 am Saturday – 2 pm Sunday. Check-in Location: Headquarters at Benson Town Office, 2760 Stage Rd. (802) 537-2468 (day), (802) 537-2468 (evening). tbarthol@shoreham.net. tbarthol@shoreham.net. Also February 3.

BRATTLEBORO. 16th Annual Collegiate A Cappella Concert. Benefit concert with a lineup that includes the CharlieChords of Berklee College of Music, Dartmouth Decibelles, Tufts Beelzebubs, UMaine Renaissance, UVM Top Cats, and UVM Zest. Tickets: \$15–\$50. Doors open at 7 pm for 7:30 pm show. Latchis Theater, 50 Main St. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Winter Farmers’ Market 13th season. Fresh produce, syrup, local meats, eggs cheese and other farm products. Yummy treats, delicious pies, pickles and preserves, and beautiful handmade gifts. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm. Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. Saturdays through March 10.

CHESTER. Family Nature Program: Finding Clues of Animals in Winter Through Tracking. Feel real animals pelts, learn the basics of animal tracking. Caravan to Chester Pinnacle to head out on snowshoes. All ages welcome. Admission by donation, RSVP appreciated. Let us know if you need to borrow snow shoes. 10–11:30 am. The Whiting Library, 117 Main St. (802) 843-2111. nature-museum.org.



COLCHESTER. 36th Annual Colchester Winter Carnival. Activities, food concessions, arts & crafts, family fun, inside and outside. Colchester High School, 131 Laker Lane. (802) 264-5500. colchestervt.gov. Also February 3.

QUECHEE. Introduction to Ice Fishing. Free clinic. Learn the basics, from checking the ice for safety to selecting sites and drilling holes to setting tip-ups and jigging. Open to all ages and levels of experience. Dress for the weather and bring your own snacks or meal. Free; registration required. 8:30–11:30 am. Dewey’s Pond. (802) 265-2279. letsgofishing@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

RIPTON. Concert and Open Mic: Greg Klyma. General admission \$10, generous admission \$15, under 12 \$3. 7:30 pm open mic followed by featured performers, doors open at 7 pm. This concert will be held at the Ripton Elementary School, 753 Lincoln Rd. (802) 388-9782. rcchfolks@gmail.com. rcch.org.

RUTLAND. Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sale. Thousands of organized, gently-used books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles for all ages. Rare and antique books at discounted prices. Most items \$.25 – \$3. 10 am – 2 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers’ Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through April.

WATERBURY. Waterbury Winterfest. Various locations. (802) 233-0576. waterburywinterfest.com. Also Feb. 3.

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekends at Billings Farm. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, chickens, pigs, and sheep – inside for the winter – and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House and farm life exhibits. *A Place in the Land*, Academy Award nominee film shown in the theater. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. February weekends and February 16 through March 2.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3

BENSON. Down Home Derby. Sponsored by Benson Fish & Game Club. Waterbody: all legal Vermont waterbodies and Lake Champlain. Fish: All legal species. 12 am Saturday – 2 pm Sunday. Check-in Location: Headquarters at Benson Town Office, 2760 Stage Rd. (802) 537-2468 (day), (802) 537-2468 (evening). tbarthol@shoreham.net. tbarthol@shoreham.net.

BURLINGTON. 36th Annual Colchester Winter Carnival. Open skate. Skate rentals for \$3/pair. 11:20 am – 12:40 pm. At Studio Ice at Leddy Park, 216 Leddy Park Rd. (802) 264-5500. colchestervt.gov/663/Winter-Carnival.

EAST CHARLESTON. Tour de Hor. A new backcountry ski destination on Mount Hor, above magnificent Willoughby Lake. Bring a bag lunch, hot thermos, and plenty of warm layers, as well as alpine touring gear. \$15 suggested donation. 9 am – 1 pm. NorthWoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551.

MONTPELIER. Ice on Fire. Huge winter festival in the open fields. Food, storytellers, performers, winter games and song. Dress warmly and bring shakers, rattles, and drums, sleds, cross-country skis, and snowshoes. Also family-friendly activities inside. Suggested donation: adult \$3, child \$1, family \$5. 2–5 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 223-1242. KidsFestVT@gmail.com. northbranchnaturecenter.org.

WATERBURY. Waterbury Winterfest. Many activities. Various locations. (802) 233-0576. waterburywinterfest.com.



Vermont Winter Farmers Markets

Start your grocery shopping with a trip to a winter Farmer’s Market and you’ll be pleased at how much of your table can be from Vermont, locally-grown and better tasting.

Bennington – Bennington Winter Farmers Market. At the Baptist Church, 601 East Main St. 1st and 3rd Saturdays through 4/20. 10 am – 1 pm. benningtonfarmersmarket@gmail.com. www.benningtonfarmersmarket.org.

Brattleboro Winter Farmers Market at the C.F. Church Building, 80 Flat St., Brattleboro, VT. Saturdays through 3/31. 10 am – 2 pm. Sherry Maher. samaher@vermontel.net. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. www.brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org.

Burlington – UVM Medical Center Farmers Market at the Davis Concourse, UVM Medical Center, 111 Colchester Ave., Burlington, VT. Thursdays through 4/25. 2:30-5 pm. Tanya McDonald, tanya.mcdonald@uvmhealth.org. (802) 847-5823.

Burlington Farmers Market at the Dudley Davis Center (UVM), 590 Main St. Burlington, VT. Saturdays, 1/12, 1/26, 2/9, 2/23, 3/9, 3/23, 4/6, 4/20. 10 am – 2 pm. www.burlingtonfarmersmarket.org.

Dorset Farmers Market at the J.K. Adams Kitchen Store, 1430 VT Rt. 30, Dorset, VT. Sundays through 5/5. 10 am – 2 pm. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com. (802) 353-9656. www.dorsetfarmersmarket.com.

Montpelier – Capital City Farmers Market at the City Center Building (1st floor), 89 Main St., Montpelier, VT. Saturdays 1/5, 1/19, 2/2, 2/16, 3/2, 3/16, 3/30, 4/13, 4/27. 10 am – 2 pm. manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. (802) 793-8347. www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com.

Middlebury Farmers Market at the VFW Building, 530 Exchange St., Middlebury, VT. Saturdays through 4/27 9 am – 12 pm. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. (802) 462-3486. www.middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

Northfield Farmers Market at Plumley Armory, Norwich University, 158 Harmon Dr., Northfield, VT. Select Sundays 1/6, 2/3, 3/3, 4/7. 11 am – 2 pm. northfieldfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com. (802) 485-8586. northfieldfarmersmarketvt.org/index.html.

Norwich Farmers Market at Tracy Hall, 300 Main St., Norwich, VT. Saturdays 1/12, 1/26, 2/9, 2/23, 3/9, 3/23, 4/13, 4/27. 9 am – 1 pm. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. (802) 384-7447. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org.

St. Johnsbury – Caledonia Farmers Market Association at the St. Johnsbury Welcome Center, 50 Depot Square, St. Johnsbury, VT. 1st and 3rd Saturdays through April 20. 10 am – 1 pm. cfmamanager@gmail.com. (802) 592-3088. sites.google.com/site/caledoniafarmersmarket.

Vermont Farmers Market at the Rutland Farm and Food Center, 251 West St., Rutland, VT. Saturdays through 5/4. 10 am – 2 pm. wintermarketmanager@vtfarmersmarket.org. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Sunday, February 3, continued)

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekends at Billings Farm. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, chickens, pigs, and sheep – inside for the winter – and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House and farm life exhibits. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *February weekends and February 16 thru March 2.*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4

BURLINGTON. Concert: Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Led by Joseph Shabalala's sons, Ladysmith sustains their original message of peace, love, and soul-soaring harmony well into their seventh decade. Tickets: \$15-\$52. 7 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

CASTLETON. Introduction to Ice Fishing. Free clinic. Learn the basics, from checking the ice for safety to selecting sites and drilling holes to setting tip-ups and jigging. Open to all ages and levels of experience. Dress for the weather and bring your own snacks or meal. Free; registration required. 2-5 pm. Lake Bomoseen. (802) 265-2279. letsfish@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: The Shanghai Quartet, known for sensitively melding Eastern and Western music, plays diverse program including new work by famed Chinese composer Tan Dun. Tickets: \$17-\$30. 7 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

MANCHESTER. Talk. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*: Still Coming to Life 200 Years Later. By Cates Baldrige, Professor of English and American Literature at Middlebury College. \$20 at the door. 5:30 pm. Burr and Burton Academy, 57 Seminary Ave. (802) 867-0111. greenmtacademy.org.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

BURLINGTON. Concert: Herbie Hancock, legendary pianist and composer. Tickets: \$25-\$90. 7:30 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org.

MONTPELIER. An Evening with Langston Hughes. Dramatic rendition of Langston Hughes's poems and short stories, with actor and writer David Mills. Free. 7:30-9 pm. Vermont State House, State St. (802) 223-3338.

RUTLAND. Talk: The Invention of History. By Middlebury professor Jane Chaplin. Free. 7-8:30 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7

ST. ALBANS. Third Annual Evening of Bird Tales. Indoor birding event, featuring storytelling from the field and forest. Demonstration of large live birds from the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum. Avian entertainment, knowledge, vendors, and refreshments. Free. 6:30-8:30 pm. Bliss Room, Saint Albans Museum, 9 Church St. RSVPs appreciated at: birdtales@friendsofmissisquoi.org.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8

BURLINGTON. Lane Series Concert: California Guitar Trio and Montreal Guitar Trio. Tickets: adults \$40, students \$10. 7:30 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 392 South Prospect St. (802) 656-3131. uvm.edu/laneseries.

BURLINGTON. 2019 Industrial Hemp Conference. 9 am – 6 pm. Hilton Burlington Lake Champlain. regonline.com/2019industrialhempconference.

BURLINGTON. Best of Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Screenings. 5 pm *All the Wild Horses*. 7:30 pm *Dateline-Saigon*. Q&A follows. Tickets: \$10/\$8/\$5 \$8. Main Street Landing Film House, 60 Lake St. (802) 260-2600.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble. Dartmouth's student creative music ensemble teams up with the extraordinary trio Thumbscrew. Tickets: \$9-\$12. 8 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

ISLAND POND. Island Pond's Winter Carnival. Chili cook off, snowmobile parade of lights, and cardboard sled race. 5-10 pm. 11 Birch St. (802) 723-0470. *Through February 10.*

WILLISTON. Brick Church Music Series Concert: Paul Asbell Quartet. A true "musician's musician." Tickets: advance \$13, children/seniors \$11; at the door \$15, children/seniors \$13. Doors open at 6:30 pm, concert at 7 pm. Old Brick Church, 100 Library Ln. (802) 764-1141. rmeguire@willistonvt.org. willistonvt.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Third Annual JAGfest. Staged readings of new works in African-American theatre. The Last Day of Black History Month: A Conversation with a Naked Black Southern Lesbian. Multimedia show featuring dance, comedy, music, and poetry. Post-show conversation with the artists. Tickets: \$20, weekend pass \$50. 7:30 pm at Briggs Opera House. 10 pm JAGfest Dance Party at Piecemeal Pies. (603) 276-9338. jagproductionsvt.com/jagfest2019.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9

BARRE. Winter Fest. Free. Skating & ice games on outdoor rink. Snowshoeing & cross-country skiing. Snow carving. Snow painting. Bonfire for warming up and making s'mores. BYO skates, skis and snowshoes. Stone Arts School stations for making Valentines. Hot cocoa or cider. 11 am – 4 pm. Vermont Granite Museum, 7 Jones Brothers Way. (802) 476-4605. info@vtgranitemuseum.org. vtgranitemuseum.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Jazz Concert: Sullivan Fortner Trio. Tickets: \$20-\$40, students \$15. 8-11 pm. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill #222. (802) 254-9088. gingervjc@gmail.com. vtjazz.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market 13th season. Fresh produce, syrup, local meats, eggs cheese and other farm products. Yummy treats, delicious pies, pickles and preserves, and beautiful handmade gifts. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm. Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. *Saturdays through March 10.*

BURLINGTON. Brattleboro Winter Bash. Indoor and outdoor fun activities. Dog sled rides, balloons, face painting, kids' yoga, crafts, music and dancing with Star 92.9, games with the Big Blue Trunk and yummy food. Free. 130 Gosse Court. (801) 881-7767. eallen@burlingtonvt.gov. enjoyburlington.com.

EAST CHARLESTON. Wild and Woolly Snowshoe Races. Competitive and fun snowshoe races for the whole family. 9:30 am – 2 pm. North Woods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551.

GREENSBORO. Best of Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Screenings. 4 pm *Dateline-Saigon*; Q&A with director Tom Herman follows. 6:30 pm *All the Wild Horses*. Tickets \$10, students and seniors \$8. Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St. (802) 533-2000. boxoffice@highlandartsvt.org. highlandartsvt.org.

ISLAND POND. Island Pond's Winter Carnival. Snowmobile parade of lights, chili cook off, and cardboard sled race. Friday 5-10 pm, Saturday 8 am – 10 pm, Sunday 7 am – 2 pm. 11 Birch St. (802) 723-0470. *Also Feb. 10.*

MANCHESTER CENTER. Program: Vermont's Original Rail to Trail—The Long Trail and Logging Railroad. Part of the 27th Annual James P. Taylor Outdoor Adventure Series. Hosted by the Manchester Section of the Green Mountain Club. Admission: \$8, under 12 are free. 7 pm. Manchester Community Library, 138 Cemetery Ave. greenmountainclub.org.

Green Mountain Gardener

Greens in the Dead of Winter

by Gordon Clark

Extension Master Gardener, University of Vermont

If you're a food gardener, you're probably counting the weeks until you can start your seeds and are already dreaming of your first fresh garden salad of the season. But what if you could easily produce salad greens right now?

You can, and the miracle green is pea shoots. You don't need low tunnels, cold frames or even artificial lights to grow these delightfully delicious and nutritious shoots in your home. It's also very cost effective as a few dollars of materials will produce \$20 or more of product at retail prices. Shoots are sometimes mentioned interchangeably with

sprouts. Both are highly nutritious and easy to grow but are distinct and grown differently. Sprouts are essentially the initial developing root system of the plant, are grown in jars or special containers and can be harvested in days.

Shoots are grown in a growing medium, have developed roots and are growing stems and initial leaves (and in the case of peas, tendrils) and typically take two to three weeks from planting to harvest. Think of them as teenage plants vs. baby plants.

Pea seeds for shoot production are available at most garden stores or seed companies. My favorite is the Dwarf Grey Pea, but other varieties will work. Here's how to do it.

Use a standard 10-20-inch growing flat, and fill it with potting soil. Don't worry about holes in the flat as you really don't need drainage for this.

Spread up to a cup (8 oz.) of pea seeds as evenly as possible over the surface of the flat. The flat should be fairly full. Just don't have seeds piled on top of each other.

Water and cover with a shallow growing flat placed right side up as if you were stacking the two flats. To create this shallow flat, simply cut the top off a standard flat so it is no more than one-inch deep.

Place in a cool spot. As the seeds germinate and start to grow (3-5 days), they will push up the shallow flat cover. Once they do that, give them another watering if needed. Keep moist but not wet.

Then turn the top flat over so it's upside down. Let the shoots continue to grow until they start to push up that top flat (another 2-4 days), then replace that with a standard 2 1/2-inch deep flat, also upside down, again watering if needed.

Don't skip this step as the two flats are a simple but effective means to "cap" the shoots and keep them growing at a uniform rate to produce a lush, even, easily harvested crop. Without them you may have a scraggly mess with shoots of all different heights.

Once the shoots start to push up the top flat (another 2-4 days) remove it, and put the shoots next to a window. Keep them moist and watch them grow for a few more days, turning the flat daily to keep them growing straight.

In as little as 10-14 days total you will have a flat full of sweet, highly nutritious 6-8-inch shoots. It's that simple. Harvest with scissors, leaving the bottom 2-3 inches so you will get a second "come again" crop.

Mix the shoots with winter veggies such as beets and carrots, apple or pear slices and nuts for a fresh salad to get you through the winter. They're also great on sandwiches, as garnishes and even stand up to a quick stir-fry. Enjoy!

Gordon Clark is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from Burlington, VT.

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Vermont Country Calendar

NORWICH. Contra Dance. Featuring music by Blind Squirrel, David Millstone calling. Beginners welcome, no partner needed. Admission: \$12, students \$8, under 16 free. Dance starts at 8 pm, 7:45 pm for walk-through. Bring clean, soft-soled shoes. Potluck snacks at the break. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. 8-11 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. uvm.org. Also *February 23*.

RANDOLPH. Concert: Ronnie Earl. Veteran New England bluesman and his ace band, The Broadcasters, present a fiery evening of electric blues. Tickets: \$42, \$37, \$32. 7:30 pm. Main Hall, Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

RUPERT. Soap Felting Workshop. Felt three bars of Kirk's 100% Pure Coconut Castile soap, scented or unscented, using natural-colored wool with natural and brightly-colored wool and silk. Fee: \$30, includes materials. Pre-registration suggested. 1-3 pm. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 VT Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. 10 am - 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through April*.

SHELburne. Shelburne Winterfest. Come enjoy indoor and outdoor winter activities during this annual free, family-fun event! Sledding, crafts, live entertainment, delicious food, 4-H bake sale, ice skating, winter crafting. T-Bone, "America's Musical Pied Piper" performs at 10:30 am and 12 pm. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides with Thornapple Farm (\$2/person). Live birds with Outreach for Earth. 10 am - 1 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8442. www.shelburnefarms.org.

SPRINGFIELD. Art Class: Impressionist Winter Landscapes in Pastel, with Robert Carsten. Materials list provided at registration. Fee: \$90; registration and payment required one week prior. 9:30 am - 4 pm. Gallery at the Vault, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleriesvault@vermontel.net. galleriesvault.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Fifth Annual Valentine Poetry Reading. Northeast Storytellers and guests share their love-themed readings. Award for the best love poem reading, determined by audience appreciation. Refreshments served. Free. 1-2:15 pm. Art Gallery, St. Johnsbury Athenæum, 1171 Main St. (802) 751-5432. brookequillen@yahoo.com. stjathenaeum.org.

TUNBRIDGE. "Just Desserts" Fundraiser. Desserts, live music, silent auction and a door prize. Proceeds benefit the Tunbridge Church parish house restoration fund. Admission \$5; each dessert plate is \$5. 7-9 pm. Tunbridge Central School, 523 Route 110. (802) 889-5528. kjayvt@gmail.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Valentine's Day Chicken Cordon Bleu Dinner. Menu: chicken cordon bleu, sherry cream sauce, au gratin potatoes, mashed potato casserole, broccoli Normandy with garlic butter sauce, ambrosia salad, relish tray, rolls and butter, homemade pies and desserts, coffee, tea, milk and Valentine's punch. Admission: adults \$12, children under 12 \$6. 5-6 pm. St. Anthony's Church, 15 Church St. (802) 356-3527. dominickmontuori@comcast.net.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Third Annual JAGfest. Staged readings of new works in African-American theatre. *Rabbit Summer* by Tracey Conyer Lee. Post-show conversation with the artists, 4 pm. *If This Be Sin*, a new musical based on the life of the queer Harlem Renaissance entertainer, Gladys Bentley, 7:30 pm. Post-show conversation with the artists. Tickets: \$20, weekend pass \$50. 4 pm. Briggs Opera House. (603) 276-9338. jagproductionsvt.com/jagfest2019.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Takeout Turkey Dinner. Includes homemade pie. Takeout only. Call after 1 pm to place an order; pick up between 4 and 5 pm. Tickets: \$10. United Methodist Church, 106 Gates St. (802) 295-7091.

WOODSTOCK. Best of Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Screening: *All the Wild Horses*; Q&A with director Ivo Marloh follows. Tickets: adults \$11, children \$6. 3 pm & 5:30 pm. Billings Farm and Museum, 69 Old River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekends at Billings Farm. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, chickens, pigs, and sheep - inside for the winter - and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House and farm life exhibits. *A Place in the Land*, Academy Award nominee film shown in the theater. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *February weekends and February 16 through March 2*.

WOODSTOCK. Working Woodlands Workshop: Animal Tracking. Learn the tracks and signs of many common Vermont mammals, including fisher, red fox, bobcat. Dress for outdoor activity, and bring a water bottle, snack, and snowshoes if possible. Free, please pre-register. 9 am - 1 pm. Forest Center, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368 x 226. ana_mejia@partner.nps.gov. nps.gov/mabi/learn/nature/working-woodlands. Also *February 16*.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10

BARRE. Barre Antiques Market. Vendors offering antique and vintage furniture, jewelry, paintings, tools, glassware, primitives, advertising, books and much more. Early buyers \$5 (8 am), general \$2 (9 am). 8 am - 1 pm. The Canadian Club, 414 East Montpelier Rd. (Rte 14). (802) 751-6138. montpelierantiquesmarket.com. *2nd & 4th Sundays through April*.

BURLINGTON. A Single Pebble Chinese New Year Celebration. Fundraising dinner. Traditional thirteen-course Chinese New Year feast and traditions associated with the Year of the Pig. Tickets: \$125, includes wine, tax and gratuity. 6 pm. 133 Bank St. (888) 974-3698. flynncenter.org.

HARTLAND FOUR CORNERS. Chocolate Auction. Homemade items, desserts by area restaurants, all containing chocolate. Chances to win a \$100 gift certificate to Skunk Hollow Tavern. Dark chocolate fondue served during the viewing period. 11 am - 12:30 pm. First Universalist Society, 8 Brownsville Rd. (603) 863-0066. nancy.mr.walker@gmail.com.

ISLAND POND. Island Pond's Winter Carnival. Snowmobile parade of lights, chili cook off, and cardboard sled race. Friday 5-10 pm, Saturday 8 am - 10 pm, Sunday 7 am - 2 pm. 11 Birch St. (802) 723-0470.

MONTPELIER. Best of Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Screening: *Dateline-Saigon*. The story of five journalists' courageous reporting during the early years of the Vietnam War. Q&A with Director Tom Herman follows. Tickets: \$12, seniors \$10. 6:30 pm. Savoy Theater, 26 Main St. (802) 229-0598. savoytheater.com.

RUTLAND. Best of Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Screenings. 1 pm All the Wild Horses; Q&A with director Ivo Marloh follows. 4 pm *Dateline-Saigon*, the story of five journalists' courageous reporting during the early years of the Vietnam War. Tickets: \$10, double feature \$16. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0570. paramountvt.org.

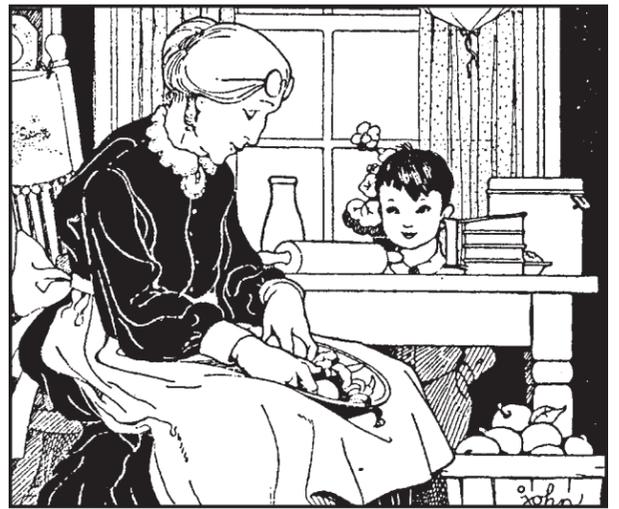
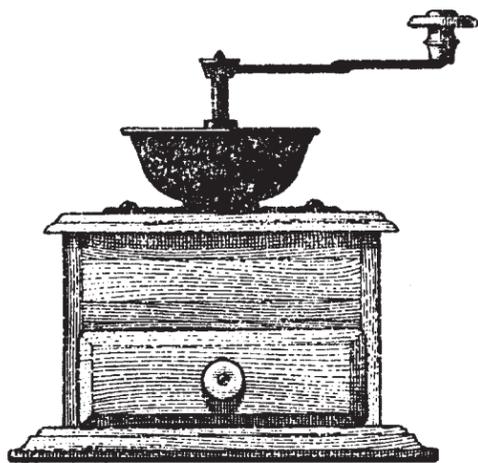
VERGENNES. Best of Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Screenings. 2 pm All the Wild Horses. Riders from around the world compete in the Mongol Derby. 4:30 pm *Dateline-Saigon*, the story of five journalists' courageous reporting during the early years of the Vietnam War. Tickets: \$14.36. Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. (802) 877-6737. vergennessoperahouse.org.

WAITSFIELD. Winter Outing to Burnt Rock. Head up Hedgehog Brook Trail to the Long Trail, and continue up the steep final stretch to the summit of Burnt Rock Mtn. Snowshoes and spikes required. Difficult snowshoe. Moderate pace. 5.2 miles. 2500' elevation gain. Newcomers and non-members welcome. Free. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Contact leader for meeting location and details: Jill George, jillghiker@gmail.com. greenmountainclub.org.

WEST FAIRLEE. 36th Annual Ice Fishing Derby. Sponsored by Upper Valley Fish and Game Club. Waterbody: Lake Fairlee. Fish: Brown Trout, Chain Pickerel, Largemouth Bass, Rainbow Trout, Smallmouth Bass. Midnight - 3 pm. Check-in Location: Horizons Day Camp Beach area (adjacent to fishing access). (802) 281-9814 (day), (802) 281-9814 (evening). rhettscruggs@gmail.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Third Annual JAGfest. Staged readings of new works in African-American theatre. *Blanks or Sunday Afternoon, After Church* by Gethsemane Herron-Coward. Post-show conversation with the artists. Tickets: \$20, weekend pass \$50. 4 pm. Briggs Opera House. (603) 276-9338. jagproductionsvt.com/jagfest2019.

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekends at Billings Farm. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, chickens, pigs, and sheep - inside for the winter - and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House and farm life exhibits. *A Place in the Land*, Academy Award nominee film shown in the theater. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *February weekends and February 16 through March 2*.



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Cold Hollow Cider Mill. 3600 Waterbury-Stowe Rd., Waterbury Center, VT. (800) 327-7537. www.coldhollow.com. Apples, cider, hard cider, baked goods, cider jelly, applesauces, apple butters, Vermont foods, crafts, and other products. Apple Core Luncheonette and Brew. Open daily 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Dutton's Farm Stand, Rt. 11/30, 2083 Depot St., Manchester, VT, (802) 362-3083. *2nd location at 407 Rt. 30 in Newfane, VT, (802) 365-4168. And third location at 308 Marlboro Rd., West Brattleboro, VT, (802) 254-0254.* Over 30 varieties of apples! Fresh-pressed cider, fall produce, jams, cheeses. Pies, cookies and baked goods. Our own maple syrup, fudge, and creemees. Holiday decor, Christmas wreaths and trees. Open year round, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Green Mountain Orchards. 130 West Hill Rd., Putney, VT. (802) 387-5851. www.greenmountainorchards.com. Apples year round, our own cider, baked goods from our own bakery including apple and blueberry pies, jams and butters, and Vermont products. Pick-your-own apples, blueberries and more in season. Open seven days a week, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Mendon Mountain Orchard. 1894 US Rt. 4, Mendon, VT. (802) 775-5477. www.mendonorchards.com. Apples and cider. Our own baked goods including many varieties of pies, turnovers, and cheesecake and carrot cake. Pick-your-own apples in season. Pasture-raised meats. Open daily 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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Vermont Country Calendar

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

BRATTLEBORO. Food As Medicine: Anti-inflammatory Cooking Series with Amy Comerchero. Explore "food as medicine" and how to feast/eat with enjoyment while respecting your body. Hands-on cooking and sampling the dishes. Fee: \$35 per class, \$65 for 2. The River Garden, 157 Main St. strollingoftheheifers.com.

CRAFTSBURY. Cross-Country Ski. Various distances. All abilities. Craftsbury Touring Center. Trail fee or pass required. Bring lunch and water or buy at the center. Difficulty: moderate. Newcomers and non-members welcome. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Contact leaders for meeting location and details: Mary Smith, (802) 505-0603, or Mary Garcia, (802) 622-0585. greenmountainclub.org.

PUTNEY. Fables Storytelling: things we do for love, featuring four storytellers. Hosted by Peter "Fish" Case. Beer and wine cash bar, pizza, popcorn and snacks. 7 pm. Next Stage Café, Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill. (802) 380-1077. peter@fishhookvt.com. nextstagearts.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Documentary Film Screening: *Young Picasso*. An in-depth look at the journey of Picasso's life and his path to genius. Tickets: \$13, students \$8. 11 am and 7 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. townhalltheater.org.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15

BURLINGTON. Lane Series Concert: The Doric String Quartet (Alex Redington, violin; Jonathan Stone, violin; Hélène Clément, viola; John Myerscough, cello), performing works by Haydn, Benjamin Britten, and Mendelssohn. Tickets: adults \$35, students \$5. 7:30 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 392 South Prospect St. (802) 656-3131. uvm.edu/laneseries.

CHESTER. Winter Carnival. 8 pm GM Boosters Comedy Night, tickets \$20. 5-7 pm Dinner, \$13 per adult. American Legion. (802) 875-3603. chestervt.gov/recreation.html. *Through February 17.*

HANOVER, NH. Winter Public Astronomical Observing. The Department of Physics and Astronomy at Dartmouth College offers free viewing through its astronomical telescopes. Observing is only possible under good weather conditions; if weather is questionable, call to confirm the status of a session. Free. 8-10 pm. Dartmouth College Shattuck Observatory, Observatory Rd. (603) 646-9100. Tressena.A.Manning@dartmouth.edu. *Also February 22, March 1.*

NORTH HERO. Great Ice Event. Ice labyrinth & lighted ice rink, 5 pm. Christmas tree bonfire, 5:30 pm. Fireworks, 6 pm. Italian family dinner at The North Hero House, 6:30 pm, call (802) 272-4732 for reservations. (802) 378-5115. info@greaticevt.org. *Through February 17.*

RANDOLPH. Concert: Maple Jam. A cappella jazz for lovers and Valentine's Day. Tickets: \$24. 7:30 pm. Live & Upstairs, Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

WEST RUTLAND. The Great Backyard Bird Count. Join birders across the world to count birds in backyards, parks and favorite birding spots. birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org. *Through February 18.*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: Alexey Alexandrov, domra, and Ekaterina Skliar, mandolin. From Bach duets to Russian folk songs, and from Alexey's own compositions to neo-folklore and jazz. Tickets: \$20, seniors \$15. 7:30 pm. The Chapel, Stone Church Center, 12 Church St. (802) 460-0110. stonechurcharts.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Harris Hill Ski Jump. The only 90-meter, Olympic-sized ski jump in New England. Pepsi Challenge and US Cup Nordic Combined. Food, music, tailgating, a bonfire, beer tent, souvenirs. Tickets: adults \$20, students 6 to 12 \$15, children under 6 free. Gates open at 10 am, competition begins at noon. Harris Hill Ski Jump, Cedar St. HarrisHillSkiJump.com. *Also February 17.*

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market 13th season. 10 am – 2 pm. Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. *Saturdays through March 10.*

BURLINGTON. 37th Annual Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Winter Conference. Three days of learning, inspiration, good food, great conversation, and community building. Workshops. Keynote speakers. Book signings. Exhibitors' fair. Organic seed swap. Film: Modified—A Food Lover's Journey Into GMOs. Music by Ryegrass, 5-piece bluegrass band. Saturday Social. Children's Conference. The Davis Center at UVM Campus. (802) 434-4122. winterconference@nofavt.org. *Through February 18.*

CASTLETON. Lake Bomoseen Ice Fishing Derby. Sponsored by Castleton Lions Club. Waterbody: Lake Bomoseen. Fish: Brown Trout, Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Perch. 5 am Saturday – 3 pm Sunday. Check-in Location: Crystal Beach, Route 30. (802) 468-5454 (day), (802) 236-3715 (evening). *Also February 17.*

CHESTER. Winter Carnival: 10 am Wunderle's Big Top Adventures Circus Workshop. 12 noon Sledding, sleigh rides, disc golf at the Pinnacle; pie tasting at Southern Pie Company, 287 Main St., \$5 per plate. Free face painting. Food and drinks for sale. 6-8 pm Bonfire, music, skating party, and nighttime snowshoe hike at the Pinnacle. Coffee, hot chocolate and pieces of pie for sale. (802) 875-3603. chestervt.gov/recreation.html. *Also February 17.*

COLCHESTER. Vermont Philharmonic Winter Concert. Erik Nielsen's Fanfare in B-flat for Orchestra, Rufus Reid's Lake Tyrrell in Innisfree, Mozart's Allegro from Piano Concerto No. 23, and Dvorak's Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra. Tickets \$20, seniors \$15, students \$5. 7:30 pm. Elley-Long Music Center. vermontphilharmonic.com.

LUDLOW. Torchlight Parade and Fireworks Display. Torchlight parade of skiers and riders precedes the fireworks show. Naturalist Joe Karl leads a snowshoe hike. Meet inside the Okemo Rental Shop (Clock Tower base area) at 6 pm to be fitted for snowshoes. Tour departs from beside South Ridge Quad A at 6:30 pm and heads up Bull Run to watch the fireworks. Show starts at 7:30 pm in the Okemo Clock Tower base area. Okemo Mountain Resort, 77 Okemo Ridge Rd. (800) 786-5366.

NORTH HERO. Great Ice Event. Free public skating 9 am. Snow building competition 10 am. Business expo 10:30 am. Chili cookoff 12:30 pm. Ice rescue demonstration 1:30 pm. Pickup hockey 2 pm. Ice labyrinth 5 pm. Lighted rink 5 pm. (802) 378-5115. greaticevt.org. *Also February 17.*

PERU. February Festival & Fireworks. Yearly celebration, with torchlight parade and fireworks around 7 pm. Live music and dancing at the base lodge. Good eats and a live auction. Proceeds benefit the Bromley Outing Club. 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. info@bromley.com. www.bromley.com.

RUPERT. Guided Full Snow Moon Hike. Guided hike in the evening landscape, moderate difficulty. Participants must have appropriate footwear, headlamps, water and snacks. Held weather-permitting. Reservations requested. Fee: \$5. 4-5:30 pm. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 VT Route 315. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. Center Street Story Walk, 10 am. Family ice skating night, 5-8 pm at Giorgetti. (802) 773-1822. info@rutlandrec.com. rutlandrec.com/winterfest. *Through February 24.*

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through April.*

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Vermont Country Calendar



SHELBURNE. Build a Nest Box. Come build a nest box for American Kestrels and Eastern Screech Owls and learn when and where to place your box for nesting success. You will also meet American Kestrel and Eastern Screech Owl ambassadors from Outreach For Earth Stewardship. Materials are provided but bring a cordless drill if you have one. Fee: \$10 per nest box. 10 am – 1 pm. McClure Education Center at the Farm Barn, Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8442. www.shelburnefarms.org.

SHELBURNE. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 20-minute horse-drawn wagon ride from the Welcome Center (weather permitting). Rides on the half hour from 11am to 2 pm. No reservations; tickets sold on a first come, first served basis beginning at 10 am when the Welcome Center opens. Cost: adult \$10, child \$8, under 2 free. 11 am – 2 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8442. www.shelburnefarms.org. Saturdays and Sundays through February 24.

SPRINGFIELD. Workshop: Felting Mushrooms Out of Wool, with Sue Carey. Use felting needles and wool to craft your own colorful toadstools. Suitable for beginning and intermediate students, older youth and adults. Materials provided. Fee: \$38 + \$10 materials fee. 1–4 pm. Gallery at the Vault, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault@vermontel.net.

ST. ALBANS. 11th Annual St. Albans Winter Carnival. Beautiful winter display of fireworks in downtown St. Albans. (802) 524-1500 x 266. a.gratton@stalbanst.com. stalbanst.vtmyrec.com. Also February 17.

STOWE. Stowe Land Trust Snowshoe Hike at the Mill Trail. Investigate the clues left behind by past occupants of the property, and explore the beautiful forest we have there today. Wrap up back at the cabin with a warm drink by the fire. Bring your own snowshoes or micro-spikes. Free. 1–3 pm. Mill Trail, Notchbrook Rd. stowelandtrust.org.

STRATTON. “Old School” Stratton Pond Ski Tour. Head in from North Brookwood and make our way along the Catamount Trail to the pond and the shelter. Skis or snowshoes, condition dependent. Free. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Contact leader for meeting location and details: Richard Windish, (802) 484-9118 or rwindish@woodstockvtlaw.com. greenmountainclub.org.

WEST RUTLAND. The Great Backyard Bird Count. Join birders across the world to count birds in backyards, parks and favorite birding spots. birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org. rutlandcountyaudubon.org. Through February 18.

WEST RUTLAND. Monthly Bird Monitoring Walk. 3.7 mile loop around the marsh (dirt and paved roads) or go halfway. Meet at the marsh boardwalk on Marble Street at 8 am. birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org. rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekends at Billings Farm. Visit the barns, farmhouse, and farm life exhibits. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. Through March 2.

WOODSTOCK. Working Woodlands Workshop: Animal Tracking. Learn the tracks and signs of many common Vermont mammals, including fisher, red fox, bobcat. Dress for outdoor activity, and bring a water bottle, snack, and snowshoes if possible. Free, please pre-register. 10 am – 12 noon. Forest Center, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368 x 226. nps.gov/mabi/learn/nature/working-woodlands.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17

BARRE. Vermont Philharmonic Winter Concert. Erik Nielsen’s Fanfare in B-flat for Orchestra, Rufus Reid’s Lake Tyrrell in Innisfree, Mozart’s Allegro from Piano Concerto No. 23, and Dvorak’s Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra. Tickets \$20, seniors \$15, students \$5. 2 pm. Barre Opera House. vermontphilharmonic.com.

BRATTLEBORO. Harris Hill Ski Jump. The only 90-meter, Olympic-sized ski jump in New England. Pepsi Challenge and US Cup Nordic Combined. Food, music, tailgating, a bonfire, beer tent, souvenirs. Tickets: adults \$20, students 6 to 12 \$15, children under 6 free. Gates open at 10 am, competition begins at noon. Harris Hill Ski Jump, Cedar St. HarrisHillSkiJump.com.

BURLINGTON. 37th Annual Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Winter Conference. Learning, good food, conversation, and community building. Workshops. Keynote Speaker. Book signings. Exhibitors’ fair. Ice cream social. Wellness fair. Music by Ryegrass. Children’s Conference. UVM Campus. (802) 434-4122. winterconference@nofavt.org. nofavt.org. Also February 18.

CASTLETON. Lake Bomoseen Ice Fishing Derby. Sponsored by Castleton Lions Club. On Lake Bomoseen. Brown Trout, Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Perch. Through 3 pm Sunday. Check-in at Crystal Beach, Route 30. (802) 468-5454, (802) 236-3715.

CHESTER. Winter Carnival: Broom Hockey. 10 am at the Pinnacle Rink. (802) 875-3603. chestervt.gov/recreation.html.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Screening: *What They Had*, directed by Elizabeth Chomko. Tickets: \$13. 2 pm. Town Hall Theater. (802) 382-9222. townhalltheater.org. middlefilmfest.org.

NORTH HERO. Great Ice Event. Flapjack breakfast 8-10 am at The North Hero House. Free public skating 9 am. Over n’ back trek 9 am; hike, skate, or ski to Knight Island State Park, warming cabin with hot chocolate. Sled dog rides, 12 pm, \$8 child, \$12 adult. Ice labyrinth 5 pm. Lighted rink 5 pm. (802) 378-5115. greaticevt.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. Go Play Day –Teddy Bear Carry. 10 am – 2 pm at Giorgetti. (802) 773-1822. info@rutlandrec.com. rutlandrec.com/winterfest. Through February 24.

ST. ALBANS. 11th Annual St. Albans Winter Carnival. Games, contests, races and all kinds of outdoor adventure. Duct Tape Downhill Derby, sliding, skating. Horse-drawn wagon rides. Obstacle course for kids. Flag football snow bowl. Starting at 11 am at Hard’ack Recreation Area. (802) 524-1500 x 266. stalbanst.vtmyrec.com.

WEST RUTLAND. The Great Backyard Bird Count. Join birders across the world to count birds in backyards, parks and favorite birding spots. birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org. rutlandcountyaudubon.org. Also Feb 18.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Sunday, February 17, continued)

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekends at Billings Farm. Visit the barns, farmhouse, and farmlife exhibits. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18

BURLINGTON. 37th Annual Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Winter Conference. Monday intensives. UVM Campus. (802) 434-4122. nofavt.org.

LUDLOW. Two-hour Curling Clinic. Twenty minutes of off-ice instruction, followed by on-ice instruction and game play. \$40 includes equipment. 6-8 pm. Okemo's Ice House, Jackson Gore Inn at Okemo, 111 Jackson Gore Rd. (802) 228-1600.

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. Frosty Feet 5K, 11 am, Rutland Country Club. Movie at the Paramount at 2 pm. (802) 773-1822. rutlandrec.com/winterfest. *Through February 24.*

WEST RUTLAND. The Great Backyard Bird Count. Join birders across the world to count birds in backyards, parks and favorite birding spots. birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org. rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19

BRATTLEBORO. Full Moon Cross Country Ski. Skiing under the full moon at the Brattleboro Outing Club at 7:30 pm. Newcomers and non-members welcome. Free. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Contact leader for meeting location and details: Chris.Chapman@greenmountainclub.org. (802) 231-2766. greenmountainclub.org.

QUECHEE. Learn to Ice Fish Clinic. Learn the basic skills of ice fishing, basic ice safety and how to determine adequate ice thickness for fishing. Experience ice fishing first hand; equipment provided. Adults must bring a child and children must bring an adult, to learn fishing together. Free; pre-registration encouraged. 9 am. Dewey's Pond, Quechee Main St. off Rt. 4, then left into Dewey's Mill Pond Parking Lot. (802) 295-5036. hartfordrec.com.

RUPERT. Winter in the Woods: Vacation Camp for second through fifth graders. Explore the snowy woods, create wintry crafts and play play play. Bring a bag lunch (we'll furnish snacks) and dress for outdoor play. Space limited; call to register. Fee: \$50/day, \$125 for three days. Tuesday through Thursday, 9 am – 3 pm. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 VT Route 315. (802) 394-7836. christine@merckforest.org. merckforest.org. *Through February 21.*

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. See you on the court at Vermont Sport & Fitness, 1-3 pm. Center Street Sledding, 7-9 pm. (802) 773-1822. info@rutlandrec.com. rutlandrec.com/winterfest. *Through February 24.*

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

WATERBURY CENTER. Full Moon Snowshoe Walk. Evening walk with GMC Education Staff. Afterwards, enjoy hot chocolate in the warmth of our Visitor Center. All ages. Bring your own snowshoes or rent a pair. Fee: \$25 (\$45 with snowshoe rental). Snow or shine. Pre-register. 6:30-8 pm. Visitor Center, Green Mountain Club, 4711 Waterbury Stowe Rd. (802) 244-7037. greenmountainclub.org.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21

BURLINGTON. Contemporary Dance Performance. Candoco: Let's Talk About Dis, Face In. An intimate piece that explores the disabled and non-disabled dancers' distinctive physicalities. Tickets: \$15-\$40. 8 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. Curling for Kids, 11 am – 2 pm, at Giorgetti. (802) 773-1822. rutlandrec.com/winterfest. *Through February 24.*

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. Winter Carnival. Music, face painting, games, a bonfire, and a barbecue. 2:30-4:30 pm on the Village Green, Smugglers' Notch Resort, 4323 VT Route 108 South. (888) 328-0892.

SO. BURLINGTON. Tenth Annual Hop Conference. Virtual training tool demo for hop scouting and sensory analysis. Registration fee: \$75; \$35 for live broadcast. 9 am – 5 pm. DoubleTree by Hilton (formerly known as the Sheraton Hotel), 870 Williston Rd. (802) 524-6501.

WATERBURY. Free Clinic: Introduction to Smelting. Learn about fishing regulations and techniques, fish identification, ice safety and more. Open to all ages and levels of experience. Dress for the weather and bring your own snacks or meal. Free; registration required. 5-8 pm. Waterbury Reservoir. (802) 265-2279. letsgefishing@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22

BURLINGTON. Lane Series Concert: The Queen's Six, male vocal ensemble. Austere early chant, florid Renaissance polyphony, lewd madrigals and haunting folk songs, and upbeat jazz and pop arrangements. Tickets: adults \$40, students \$10. 7:30 pm; pre-show talk with artists at 6:30 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 392 South Prospect St. (802) 656-3131. uvm.edu/laneseries.

HANOVER, NH. Winter Public Astronomical Observing. The Department of Physics and Astronomy at Dartmouth College offers free viewing through its astronomical telescopes. Observing is only possible under good weather conditions; if weather is questionable, call to confirm the status of a session. Free. 8-10 pm. Dartmouth College Shattuck Observatory, Observatory Rd. (603) 646-9100. Tressena.A.Manning@dartmouth.edu. physics.dartmouth.edu. *Also March 1.*

MIDDLEBURY. Concert: Christian Sands Trio. His abundant piano technique perfectly matches his conception, accomplishing a much deeper musical goal: a fresh look at the entire language of jazz. Tickets: \$28, youth \$10. 7:30-9:30 pm. Mahaney Center for the Arts, Robison Hall, 72 Porter Field Rd. (802) 443-3168.

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. Professional snow sculpture carving, 9 am – 9 pm at Main Street Park. Winter fun at Rutland Regional Medical Center, 4:30-7 pm. Moonlit snowshoe trek and wine tasting, 5:30-7:30 pm at Rutland Country Club. (802) 773-1822. info@rutlandrec.com. rutlandrec.com/winterfest. *Through February 24.*

Rutland WINTER FEST

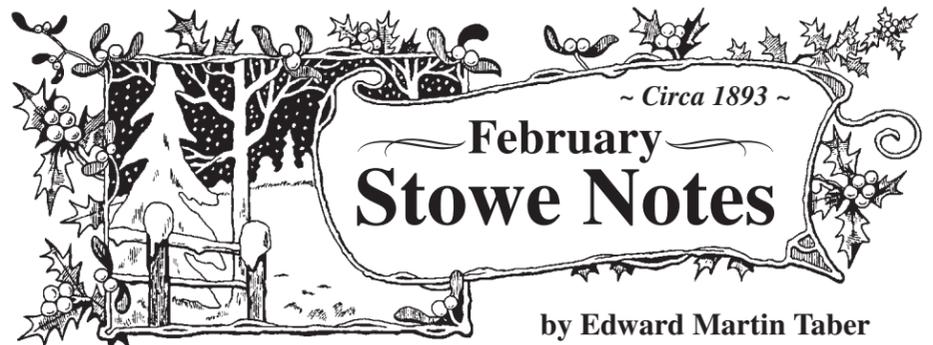
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- FAMILY ICE SKATING NIGHT
- GO PLAY DAY
- TEDDY BEAR CARRY
- PJs AT THE PARAMOUNT
- SEE YOU ON THE COURT!
- CENTER ST. SLEDDING
- CORN HOLE PLAY
- CURLING FOR KIDS
- SNOW SCULPTURE CARVING
- WINTER FUN AT RRM
- MOONLIT SNOWSHOE AND WINE TASTING (21+)
- WINTER FAT BIKES
- CHILI COOKOFF
- WONDERFEET WINTER DANCE
- REAL RUTLAND FEUD



RUTLANDREC.COM/WINTERFEST



by Edward Martin Taber

This morning about ten o'clock the thermometer stood at four degrees, and I think it did not go much higher in the course of the day, which was overcast, snowing, and with a steady north wind. I noticed it again at five, and it had gone down a degree.

From about three to four o'clock I walked in the west pasture. I went for the purpose of collecting some balsam boughs, which, being laid on the top of the stove, exhaled a pleasant odor.

The walking was very difficult, owing to the loose snow drifted in between the hummocks and hiding the underlying ice.

The brook could be heard but faintly, muttering under a double covering of ice and snow.

The spruces and balsams were heavily weighted; a touch would send the feathery mass scattered like powder from the ends of the branches.

I passed up on the edge of the old road through a small group of balsams, and on to the ridge among the branching sumacs. The position of the sun might be occasionally detected by an obscure gleam in the gray expanse of the sky. The fine snow sped almost horizontally on the steady wind.

Coming home by the pines, I was stopped by a faint note. I saw a bird that I took at first for a blue jay rise from the ground and slip behind an evergreen. Almost at the same moment, with a soft and broken cry, a vermilion-hued bird flew close above my head, swerved suddenly to one side, and disappeared in the boughs of a spruce close by. In the swift glance upward I saw distinctly the reddish chest, pale belly, and ashy under tail-coverts of the pine grosbeak.

This disappearance was immediately fol-

lowed by the passage of one darker tinted, that with a powerful and easy flight swept across the pasture and settled in the top branches of a sumac. I waited patiently for the reappearance of the first, for although I knew they were the male and female pine grosbeak, I wanted another glimpse of the vermilion plumage. Had I not seen them, I think I should have recognized the note, so strange, so plaintive.

Casting a glance after the one departed (the female), I was startled to see a flock rise suddenly above the thicket of sumac where she had settled. They rose high into the air, and descended fluttering among the evergreens on the crest of the hill.

I immediately set out in pursuit, but before I had retraced my steps to the pine, they were up again, this time sweeping down toward me, over the snowy undulations. They passed within a rod of me, a considerable flock flying rather low. The males were brilliantly tinted—a deep red, almost crimson, on the crown; the females, flying, showed an orange spot on the rump.

Sometimes a thin lisp intermingled with their twitter, which latter sound reminded me somewhat of the distant chant of frogs, sometimes a cry, like the jay's, but fainter and softened, more like a sea bird's but not so plaintive. They appeared to me to be as large as robins.

They seemed mightily at home. It was a beautiful spectacle. They lit in the pine's swaying boughs, scattering the snow, the bright males contrasting finely with the dark green foliage.

My last sight of them was in the air, making a descent a little farther along the slope, fluttering, falling and changing place.

Vermont Country Calendar

SHELBURNE. Forester for a Day. Put on a hard hat, watch a forester fell a tree, and learn the importance of trees in our lives. Then, work in the woodshop to make a wood product for your home. For ages five and up with accompanying adult. Fee: \$7 adult, \$4 child. 10 am – 12 pm. McClure Education Center at the Farm Barn, Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8442. www.shelburnefarms.org.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Carnival Ice Fishing Derby. Sponsored by Retreat Farm. Waterbody: Retreat Meadows. Fish: Chain Pickerel, Crappie, Northern Pike, Pumpkinseed, Yellow Perch. 6 am – 3 pm. Check-in Location: Retreat Farm Shanty on the Meadows. (802) 490-2270. cfloyd@retreatfarm.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market 13th season. Fresh produce, syrup, local meats, eggs, cheese and other farm products. Yummy treats, delicious pies, pickles and preserves, and beautiful handmade gifts. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm. Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. *Saturdays through March 10.*

BURLINGTON. Concert' New Voices: From Burma to the Balafon. Showcase of world musical traditions nestled in and around the Queen City. Tickets: \$15. 8 pm. FlynnSpace, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org.

BURLINGTON. Winter Bird Monitoring Outing. Binoculars, field guides, and snow shoes for people to borrow. Depending on who shows up we can do up to a two-mile hike. The homestead offers different length loops. Newcomers and non-members welcome. Free. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Meet at 8:30 am in the parking lot up by the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum, 1 Ethan Allen Homestead. Leader: Juli Tyson, (978) 994-0482 or americorps@wvpd.org. greenmountainclub.org.

CASTLETON. Great Benson Fishing Derby. Sponsored by Fair Haven Rotary. Waterbody: all legal Vermont waterbodies and Lake Champlain. Fish: all legal species. Dawn Saturday – 3 pm Sunday. Check-in location: Headquarters at Crystal Beach on Lake Bomoseen. (802) 558-8831 (day), (802) 558-8831 (evening). jennifer.larson41@gmail.com. *Through February 24.*

COLCHESTER. Evening Owl Hoot Hike. Naturalist-led, evening hike in the deep forest. Learn about owls and explore Niquette Bay State Park. Unplug and enjoy a quiet walk in the woods—we may even hear an owl. Traction devices for boots or snowshoes are a must. Bring a headlamp or flashlight and weather appropriate clothing. Free; registration required. 6-7:30 pm. Niquette Bay State Park. (802) 862-4150 x 3. events@lclt.org. lclt.org.

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Renaissance Faire. Merriment, entertainers, food, and vendors. Performance troupes including singers, musicians, acrobats, and dancers; as well as medieval and Viking demonstrations. Artisans and craft vendors, mead, wine and, cider makers. Kids under 6 get in free. 10 am – 6 pm. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. (802) 778-9178. *Also Feb. 24.*

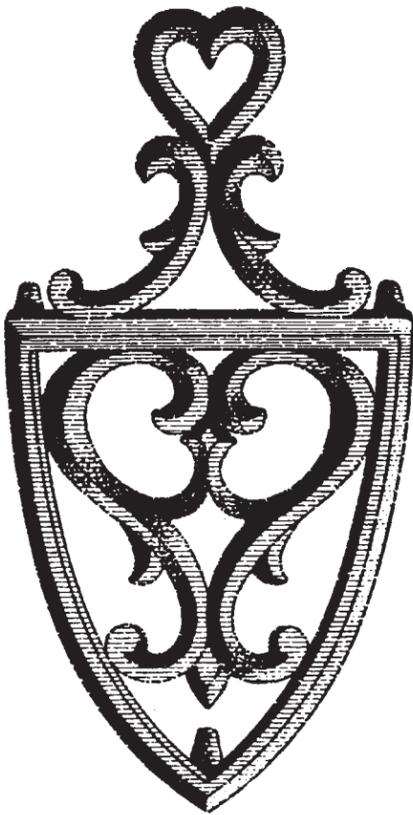
GREENSBORO. Concert: Craftsbury Chamber Players, featuring Marcantonio Barone on piano and Fran Rowell on cello. Dessert reception follows the concert in The Gallery. Tickets: \$15, students \$10, seniors 20% off. 3-5 pm. Main Stage, Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St. (802) 533-2000.

GUILFORD. Midwinter Musicales: "Stolen Jewels." Golden flutist Alison Hale and pianist Christopher Lewis perform music by Brahms, Schubert, Schumann, and Fauré. Teatime reception of warming soups, sides, salads, and desserts. Admission: \$15, includes soup supper. 3 pm. Guilford Community Church, 38 Church Dr. (802) 257-2616. www.gallerywalk.org.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra with Sally Pinkas, piano. All-Beethoven program: Coriolanus Overture, Piano Concerto No. 5 "Emperor", and Symphony No. 5. Tickets: \$10-\$25. 8 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

NORWICH. Contra Dance. Featuring music by Jeremiah McLane, David Langford, and Colin McCaffrey. Nils Fredland calling. Beginners welcome, no partner needed. Admission: \$12, students \$8, under 16 free. Dance starts at 8 pm, 7:45 pm for walk-through. Bring clean, soft-soled shoes. Potluck snacks at the break. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. 8-11 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. www.uvdm.org. *Also March 9.*

PERU. 34th Annual Kåre Andersen Telemark Festival. Clinics in free-heel skiing for all ages and levels, beginner to advanced. USTSA sanctioned race with both citizen and expert categories. Clinics and free-heel camaraderie on Saturday. Annual race on Sunday; additional clinics in the afternoon. Bromley Mountain Resort, 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. info@bromley.com. bromley.com. *Also February 24.*



QUECHEE. Owl Festival. Gather with live owls from all over the world, discover their life stories, create adorable crafts, get your face painted and enjoy delicious food. Learn about current owl research and about owl rehabilitation. Admission: adults \$15.50; seniors (62 plus) \$14.50; youth (4-17) \$13.50; children 3 and under free. 9 am – 5 pm. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Rd. (802) 359-5000. info@vinsweb.org. www.vinsweb.org. *Also February 24.*

RUPERT. Owl Presentation and Guided Walk. See a presentation featuring owls native to the Northeast, then hike out in hopes of finding some courting couples. Participants must have appropriate footwear, headlamps, water and snacks. Held weather-permitting. Reservations requested. Fee: \$5. 4-6 pm. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 VT Route 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. Winter Fat Bikes, 9 am – 1 pm, Pine Hill Park, fee: \$30. Amateur snow sculpture carving, 10 am – 2 pm, Main Street Park. Chili cookoff, 12-2 pm, Main Street Park. Wonderfeet Winter Dance 4-6 pm, The Palms, fee: \$15 per couple. Real Rutland Feud, 7 pm, The Paramount Theater, tickets \$25/\$30. (802) 773-1822. info@rutlandrec.com. rutlandrec.com/winterfest. *Also February 24.*

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through April.*

SHELBURNE. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 20-minute horse-drawn wagon ride from the Welcome Center (weather permitting). Rides on the half hour from 11 am to 2 pm. No reservations; tickets sold on a first come, first served basis beginning at 10 am when the Welcome Center opens. Cost: adult \$10, child \$8, under 2 free. 11 am – 2 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8442. shelburnefarms.org. *Also February 24.*

ST. JOHNSBURY. 2019 Wabanaki Run. 18th Annual Primitive Biathlon with wood snowshoes and muzzle loaders. 9 am – 3 pm. Caledonia Forest and Stream Club, Inc., 10 Field and Stream Rd. caledoniabiathlon@gmail.com. caledoniaforestandstream.com.

WEYBRIDGE. Hike/Snowshoe Trek to Bittersweet Falls. Walk or snowshoe the TAM Blue Trail from the parking lot on Hamilton Road. 5.2 miles out and back, 2.5 hours. Mostly gentle slopes, good views of Snake Mountain. Bring a snack or lunch, water, and dress to the weather in thermal layers (avoid cotton). Ankle gaiters & hiking poles recommended. Be prepared for ice & snow. Newcomers and non-members welcome. Free. Sponsored by the Bread Loaf Section of the Green Mountain Club. Contact leader for meeting location and details: David Andrews, (802) 388-4894 or vtrevda@yahoo.com. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

WOODSTOCK. Working Woodlands Workshop: Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Monitoring. Dress for outdoor activity, and bring a water bottle, snack, and snowshoes if possible. Free, please pre-register. 9 am – 12 noon. Forest Center, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368 x 226. nps.gov/mabi/learn/nature/working-woodlands. ana_mejia@partner.nps.gov.



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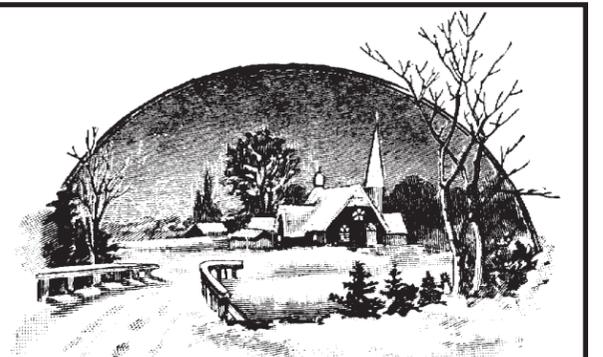
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Vermont Country Calendar

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24

BARRE. Barre Antiques Market. Antique and vintage furniture, jewelry, paintings, tools, glassware, primitives, advertising, books. Early buyers \$5 (8 am), general \$2 (9 am). 8 am – 1 pm. The Canadian Club, 414 East Montpelier Rd. (802) 751-6138. montpelierantiquesmarket.com. *2nd & 4th Sundays thru April.*

CASTLETON. Great Benson Fishing Derby. Sponsored by Fair Haven Rotary. All legal Vermont waterbodies and Lake Champlain. All legal species. Dawn Saturday – 3 pm Sunday. Headquarters at Crystal Beach on Lake Bomoseen. (802) 558-8831. jennifer.larson41@gmail.com.

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Renaissance Faire. Merriment, entertainers, food, and vendors. Performance troupes including singers, musicians, acrobats, and dancers; as well as medieval and Viking demonstrations. Artisans and craft vendors, mead, wine and, cider makers. Kids under 6 get in free. 10 am – 6 pm. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. (802) 778-9178.

NORWICH. English Country Dance. Music by Trip to Norwich—Carol Compton and Thal Aylward with Chris Levey calling. Wear clean soft-soled shoes. Dances taught, no partner needed, newcomers welcome. Admission: \$10 adults, \$4 age 25 and under. Refreshments provided. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. 3-6 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4121. Tinyurl.com/LeveyECD. *Also March 24, April 28.*

PERU. 34th Annual Kåre Andersen Telemark Festival. Clinics in free-heel skiing for all ages and levels, beginner to advanced. USTSA sanctioned race with both citizen and expert categories. Annual race on Sunday; additional clinics in the afternoon. Bromley Mountain Resort, 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. info@bromley.com. bromley.com.

PUTNEY. Concert: The Sweet Remains, folk/rock quartet featuring singer/songwriters Rich Price, Greg Naughton and Brian Chartrand. Tickets: \$25. 7:30 pm. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill. (802) 387-0102. twilightmusic.org. nextstagearts.org.

QUECHEE. Annual Owl Festival. Gather with live owls from all over the world, discover their life stories, create adorable crafts, get your face painted and enjoy delicious food. Learn about current owl research and about owl rehabilitation. Admission: adults \$15.50; seniors (62 plus) \$14.50; youth (4-17) \$13.50; children 3 and under free. 10 am – 4 pm. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Rd. (Rt. 4). (802) 359-5000. info@vinsweb.org. www.vinsweb.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Fest. Professional snow sculpture unveiling and awards, 9 am – 12 pm. Main Street Park. (802) 773-1822. info@rutlandrec.com. rutlandrec.com/winterfest.

SHELBURNE. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 20-minute horse-drawn wagon ride from the Welcome Center (weather permitting). Rides on the half hour 11 am to 2 pm. No reservations; tickets sold first come, first served beginning at 10 am. Cost: adult \$10, child \$8, under 2 free. 11 am – 2 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8442. www.shelburnefarms.org.

STOWE. Concert: Gaelic Storm. Multi-national, Celtic juggernaut. Storytelling, instrumentals. Tickets: \$25-\$35. 7 pm. Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, 122 Hourglass Dr. (802) 760-4634. sprucepeakarts.org.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

BURLINGTON. Performance: *The Sound of Music.* The classic story of Maria and the von Trapp family is alive with the magic that made Rodgers and Hammerstein's original a timeless sensation. Tickets: \$25-\$80. 7 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org. *Also February 27.*

RUTLAND. Audubon Winter Program Series: Two Audubon Birders to Texas. Marv Elliott and his wife have visited many of the Texas State Parks. Join RCAS for a presentation on the variety of habitats and species that can be found in this vast and varied state. 7 pm. Grace Congregational Church. www.rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*

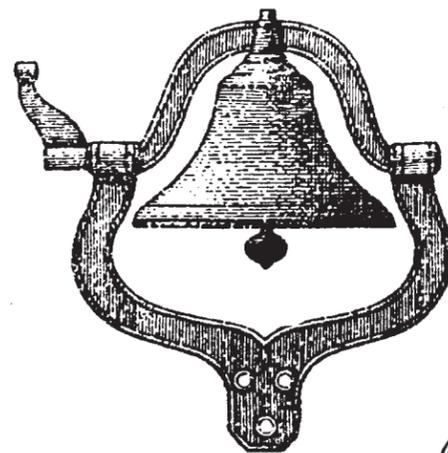
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28

DORSET. Winter Community Supper. Free. 5:30-7 pm. United Church of Dorset & East Rupert, 143 Church St. (802) 867-2260. dorsetchurch@gmail.com. *Also March 28.*

MIDDLEBURY. Performance. Ragmala Dance Company: Sacred Earth. Dancers perform with live music to create a sacred space honoring Raneer and Aparna Ramaswamy's singular vision of the divinity in the natural world and the sustenance we derive from it. Tickets: \$22, youth \$10. 7:30 pm. Mahaney Center for the Arts, Robison Hall, 72 Porter Field Rd. (802) 443-3168. *Also March 1.*

SO. BURLINGTON. No-Till & Cover Crop Symposium. 9 am – 5 pm. DoubleTree by Hilton (formerly known as the Sheraton Hotel), 870 Williston Rd. uvm.edu/extension/agriculture.

WOODSTOCK. February Vacation Weeks at Billings Farm. Tour the dairy farm, farm life exhibits, and farmhouse. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Through March 2.*



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Way Back Then

Crossing the Atlantic by Steamer

by Charles Sutton

When one goes to Europe today the main consideration is the best ticket price on an intercontinental airline. But 60 years ago following a three-plus year stint in the U.S. Navy I gladly looked forward to and took passage on ocean liners.

My most memorable and longest trip—nine days from Naples, Italy, to New York City was on the 700-foot Italian (29,191 gross tons) SS Cristoforo Colombo built in 1954 and then the largest merchant ship in Italian service.

Old-timers living in New England may well remember when her sister ship the SS Andrea Doria sank July 26, 1956 off Nantucket after colliding with a Swedish merchant ship. Some 46 lives were lost, but an unbelievable 1,660 were saved. A college friend of mine's father was one of those life-jacketed passengers rescued after floating around for hours in the sea. He said it was a horrifying experience. Rescue efforts were difficult because the sinking ship listed so badly to starboard that its lifeboats were unreachable.

Any thoughts of such a disaster were far from my mind on my Italian liner. Maybe it helped that we were in the mid-Atlantic (albeit winter) but far from floating icebergs that sent the RSM Titanic to the ocean bottom on April 15, 1912. Also we never saw other ships during the journey so there was little chance of a collision on the high seas. The Atlantic Ocean was choppy and turbulent with gray, overcast skies for most days of the trip. But well worth staring at with one's inner thoughts.

My meal companions included two nurses from New Jersey returning from a vacation, an Italian-American from Brooklyn, NY, who had visited relatives in Italy, and a Russian 'princess'—so she claimed. She did have a cold, aristocratic manner and seemed annoyed to be stuck with us 'serfs' one deck level from steerage class. She could remain

unfriendly because she said she spoke little English, but when I tried conversing with her in Russian, she was taken aback and not pleased. I said “please pass me some butter” (pozhaluysta propustite menya nemnogo masla). I received a “here” (vot) from her and that was it. We rarely saw her the rest of the trip—she took meals in her cabin. She probably had a fascinating and sad story to tell about fleeing the then Soviet Union with none of her wealth. We'll never know.

The man from Brooklyn was fun to be with, but one day he was depressed having attended the Mass that was conducted daily. He didn't like how the priest scared those who were immigrants, frightened enough to leave their country for a foreign land where they spoke no English. The priest told them their sins were like the angry seas surrounding them.

“The Atlantic Ocean was choppy and turbulent with gray, overcast skies for most of the trip.”

In addition to restaurant-quality Italian food, there was plenty of Italian wine and other beverages. Except for movies, passengers had to occupy time on their own as there was no entertainment,

musical groups, dancing, swimming pools, and sauna baths as are required on cruise ships today.

That was fine by me as I needed rest after my ski adventure and I was recovering from a serious ear infection—I was at the age and stage in life when going to a doctor was the last thing to do. I didn't go but should have. Some time was spent pondering the future. I had no prospects for a future job on the magazines and newspapers I applied at before I left. My credentials, I thought, were spotty: summer jobs on a farm, a BA in Russian studies, and three years as a crypto-linguist in the Navy. It would be back to live with my aging parents in Connecticut until I found a job.

Not many years after my ocean liner trip, daily jet flights to Europe by PanAm, TWA, BOA and other carriers got most of the business and forced the shipping companies to get their business from cruises and cargo-carrying services. The Cristoforo Colombo gave up New York service in 1973 and after a few years servicing South America as a cruise ship (but with maintenance and cockroaches problems) she was finally scrapped in Taiwan in 1982.

Today there is limited inter-continent passenger service on a few remaining ocean liners. If time is of no concern, limited bookings on cargo ships are also available. But who today has the luxury of ignoring the passage of time...

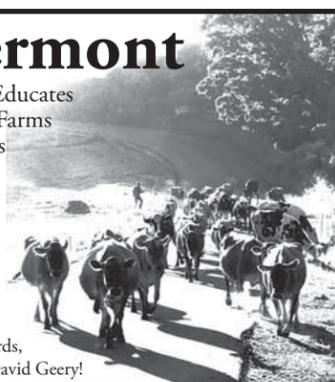
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Vermont Country Calendar

ONGOING ACTIVITIES 2019

BARRE. Barre Antiques Market. Vendors offering antique and vintage furniture, jewelry, paintings, tools, glassware, primitives, advertising, books and much more. Early buyers \$5 (8 am), general \$2 (9 am). 8 am – 1 pm. The Canadian Club, 414 East Montpelier Rd. (Rte 14). (802) 751-6138. montpelierantiquesmarket.com. *2nd & 4th Sundays through April.*

BRATTLEBORO. The Cotton Mill. Housed in a three-story, 145,000 square foot renovated mill building dating back to 1910, The Cotton Mill is home to over 60 small businesses and artists' studios. Painters, dancers, jewelry makers, circus performers, jam and granola makers, filmmakers, bodyworkers, woodworkers, jazz musicians, toymakers and many others form a vibrant & bustling community just minutes from downtown. 74 Cotton Mill Hill. info@thecottonmill.org. www.thecottonmill.org.

BURLINGTON. Poetry Experience. Rajnii Eddins facilitates a poetry and spoken-word workshop aimed at building confidence and developing a love of writing. Free. 1–3 pm. Fletcher Free Library, 235 College St. (802) 865-7211. www.fletcherfree.org. *First and Third Saturday of every month.*

CASTLETON. Coffee Hour. Enjoy homemade goodies, hot brew and good company. Free. 9-11 am. Castleton Community Center, 2108 Main St. (802) 468-3093. *Continues on Fridays.*

CHITTENDEN. Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides. 30-minute tours on resort grounds. Maximum 9 adults & children per ride. Sleigh ride & dinner package, includes sleigh ride, 3-course dinner for two & taxes for \$150 (gratuity & alcohol not included). Reservations required; call ahead for current schedule. Mountain Top Inn & Resort, 195 Mountain Top Rd. (802) 483-6089. www.mountaintoppinn.com. *Open daily through March (weather permitting).*

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, Monday-Friday. Free. (802) 649-2126.

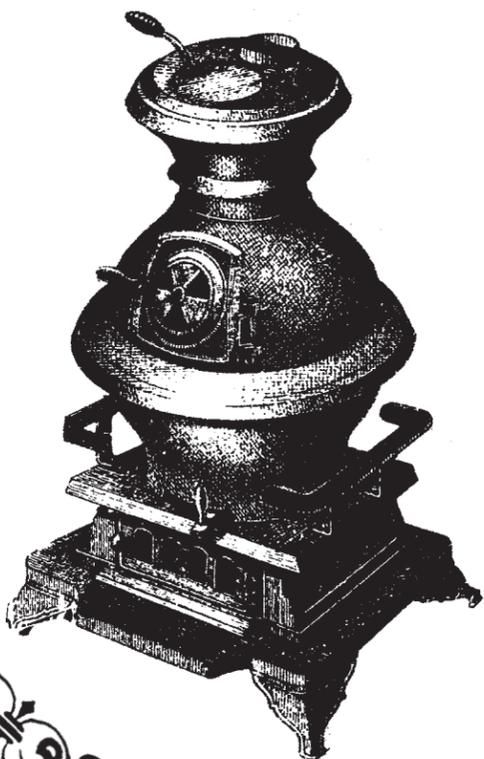
MANCHESTER CENTER. Winter Merriment Sampler Tour. Backroad Discovery offers guided tours in a comfortable 10-passenger vehicle or SUV. Discover a mountain/valley overlook, a woodworking facility/kitchen store, an abandoned marble quarry, a covered bridge, and a country shop. Hear intriguing facts and stories. 1-3:15 pm. Tours meet in front of Spiral Scoops Ice Cream Shop, 21 Bonnet St. Advance reservations necessary. (802) 362-4997. *Through February 27.*

MILTON. Children Read to Cleo the Therapy Dog. 10-11 am. Milton Public Library, 39 Bombardier Rd. (802) 893-4644. library@town.milton.vt.us. miltonlibraryvt.org. *First and third Saturdays.*

NORTHFIELD. Winter Farmers' Market. 11 am – 2 pm. Plumley Armory, Norwich University. (802) 485-8586. northfieldfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com. northfieldfarmersmarketvt.org. *Sundays February 3, March 3 & April 7.*

NORWICH. Suds & Science. Each month join Vermont Center for Ecostudies scientists and colleagues at the Norwich Inn for a cold brew and interesting conversation on a selected natural history topic. 7-8 pm at the Norwich Inn. (802) 649-1431. www.vtecostudies.org. *First Tuesday of every month.*

ORLEANS. Vermont Reindeer Farm. Come see the only live reindeer in the whole state of Vermont! Many other farm animals to pet & feed. Nature trail, Reindeer games & gift shop. Vermont Reindeer Farm, 3108 Chilafoux Rd (in West Charleston). (802) 754-9583. On Facebook.



PERU. Winter Yoga class. All abilities, all bodies, and all personalities are welcome to join in on any Yoga practice, anytime. Fee: \$15/regular class drop in & \$20/CBD class. \$60 for five classes purchased in advance. Tuesday 9:30-10:30 am; Wednesday 5:30-6:30 pm; Thursday 1:30-2:30 pm. CBD (Hemp Extract) Yoga Class every third Wednesday evening class of each month. Barn Sanctuary at New Spring Farm, 135 Batchelder Barn Rd. (802) 356-0191. peaceofparadisising@gmail.com.

POULTNEY. Weekly Game Night. Games for young children as well as adults. Bring your own or play ours. Experienced game players help new players get started. 7-10 pm. Poultney Public Library, 205 Main St. (518) 282-9089 or (802) 287-5556. poultneypubliclibrary.com. *Ongoing every Thursday.*

POULTNEY. Check Out a Bike at the Poultney Public Library. Five bicycles available to be checked out for two days, with a helmet and a lock. A current Poultney Public Library patron over the age of 18 will need to sign a borrower agreement form. Poultney Public Library, 205 Main St. (802) 287-5556. poultneypubliclibrary.com.

POULTNEY. Free Historical Audio Walking & Driving Tours. View and learn about Main Street Poultney, East Poultney Village, and the Quarries, Farms & Forests. (802) 287-5252, (802) 287-2010. www.poultneyhistoricalsociety.org. www.poultneyvt.com.

POULTNEY. Stone Valley Arts. A non-profit community arts center. visual art shows, literary events, music concerts, dance performances, guest speakers, and classes in dance, drawing, music, scriptwriting, yoga and meditation. Stone Valley Arts, 145 E. Main St. (802) 884-8052. stonevalleyartscenter@gmail.com. www.stonevalleyarts.org.

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.*

PUTNEY. Green Mountain Orchards Farm Store. Apples and cider year round. Pick-your-own in season. 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.

PUTNEY. Hidden Springs Maple. Family maple farm where they started making maple syrup over 50 years ago. Our sugar bush spans over 1,000 acres. Maple Syrup Tasting Table, samples, hand-dipped ice cream, sales table, gifts. Hidden Springs Maple, 162 Westminster Rd. (802) 387-5200. info@hiddenspringsmaple.com. www.hiddenspringsmaple.com.

QUECHEE. Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Wildlife exhibits, workshops, and special events. Wildlife rehabilitation. Admission: adults: \$15.50, seniors (62 plus) \$14.50, youth (4-17): \$13.50, children 3 and under free. Open 7 days a week 10 am – 5 pm. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Rd. (802) 359-5000. info@vinsweb.org. www.vinsweb.org.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Silloway Maple Sugarhouse Tour. Open year 'round. Tour our solar powered, wood-fired maple sugarhouse. Hear how syrup used to be made, compared with today's modern ways. See the reverse osmosis machine, where part of the water is removed before boiling. Sample maple candy, shop for syrup, cream, and sugar – ship or bring home. Take your children and dogs on a self-guided hike to see the tubing system in the woods. 7 am – 8 pm. Silloway Maple, 1303 Boudro Rd. Call ahead and we'll meet you at the sugarhouse! (802) 272-6249 or (802) 249-0504.

RUPERT. Merck Forest and Farmland. Pick-your-own blueberries and raspberries through August as supply permits. Camping, cabins, 30 miles of trails, farm, workshops and seasonal events. Visitor's Center and store with certified organic maple syrup, our own 100% wool blankets, and more. Free. Open year round, dawn to dusk. 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. The Mint, Rutland's Makerspace. A collaborative community workshop and business incubator, born out of the Rutland Mini Maker Faire, led by a team of dedicated volunteers. Full wood shop and metal shop, plus 3D printing. Classes in woodworking, metal work, vinyl cutting, welding, 3D printing and design, CNC and more. The Mint, 112 Quality Lane. (802) 779-4242. kmccalla@millriverschools.org. rutlandmint.org.

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.

RUTLAND. Rutland Area Flea Market. Indoors, year-round, clean & friendly! Cozy cafe offers refreshments and light lunch. 10 am – 4 pm. 200 West St. corner of Forest St. (802) 770-9104. On Facebook. *Every Saturday and Sunday.*

RUTLAND. Vermont Backroad Tours. Daily tours any day of the years. Fee. Book in advance. (802) 446-3131. kelly@vtbackroadtours.com. www.vtbackroadtours.com.



The Gettysburg Address by Abraham Lincoln

November 19, 1863

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us



the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Nancy Hanks

If Nancy Hanks
Came back as a ghost,
Seeking news
Of what she loved most,
She'd ask first
"Where's my son?
What's happened to Abe?
What's he done?"

"Poor little Abe,
Left all alone
Except for Tom,
Who's a rolling stone;
He was only nine
The year I died.
I remember still
How hard he cried."

"Scraping along
In a little shack,
With hardly a shirt
To cover his back,
And a prairie wind
To blow him down,
Or pinching times
If he went to town."

"You wouldn't know
About my son?
Did he grow tall?
Did he have fun?
Did he learn to read?
Did he get to town?
Do you know his name?
Did he get on?"

—ROSEMARY BENET
New York, NY 1898-1962

Poulin Grain Dealer



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CONTRADANCE

Saturday, February 23rd

Instruction 7:45 pm
Dance at 8 pm

Music by Jeremiah McLane
David Langford, Colin McCaffrey
Nils Fredland calling

Admission \$12, students \$8,
under 16 free.

Everyone is welcome. No Partner or experience necessary. All dances taught. Beginners & singles welcome. All dances taught.

Please bring soft-soled shoes.

Yummy potluck snacks at the break.

Tracey Hall, 300 Main St., Norwich, VT
uppervalleydm@gmail.com • www.uvdm.org

Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing activities 2019, continued)

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.

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. stalbansfreelibrary.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Northern Vermont Songwriters. Songwriters may bring a song to share, performed live for the group, or a recording. Bring 6 copies of lyrics. Or bring lyrics only, or simply listen and comment. Free. 6:45-8:30 pm. Catamount Outback Artspace, the wooden octagonal building behind Catamount Arts, 115 Eastern Ave. (802) 467-9859. jakarns33@gmail.com. *Third Thursday of every month.*

ST. JOHNSBURY. Storytime in the Children's Library. These events are part of the Athenaeum's Acorn Club. 10:30 am. St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, 1171 Main St. (802) 748-8291. www.stjohnsnaeum.org. *Every Friday and every 1st and 3rd Saturday.*

WAITSFIELD. Head Lamp Snowshoe Dinner Tours. Snowshoeing under the starry sky followed by a delicious dinner. Meet your guide, get your gear and then explore the woods behind the inn for about an hour and a half. All equipment provided. Advanced reservations required. Cost \$79 + tax/gratuity. 5-9:45 pm. Clearwater Sports/American Flatbread, 4147 Main St. (802) 496-2708. clearwatersports.com. *Through April 18.*

WEST RUTLAND. Vermont Herbal General Store. Owned and operated by a registered pharmacist. Tai' Chi Gung classes, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5 pm at the store. Free intro classes. Meditations at the store Wednesdays at 5 pm. Usul & Karuna Reiki Healings & Classes. Handmade Herbal Medicines, Oils, Essences, Crystals, Gemstones & Books. Teas, Lotions, and Capsules. All are welcome. Open Tuesday & Wednesday 1-6, Thursday 11 am - 4:30 pm, Saturday 1-6 pm, Sunday 1-4 pm, closed Friday and Monday. Vermont Herbal General Store, 578 Main St. (802) 438-2766. info@vermonthherbal.com. On Facebook and Twitter. www.vermonthherbal.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Newberry Market. A year-round, public indoor market with vendors offering local products, cheeses, clothing, gifts, pottery, and specialty foods. Free admission. Open every Thursday year round 11 am - 6 pm. Newberry Market, 19 South Main St. For information contact: Betsy Briggs Wheeler at (802) 299-0212. newberrymarketwrj.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Play: *Venus Rising*. When Julie, married mother of three, unexpectedly leaves her husband and moves in with her mother Cora, she's shocked at what she finds in her childhood home. 7:30 pm. Northern Stage, Barrette Center for the Arts, 74 Gates St. (802) 296-7000. *January 31 through February 17.*

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. The Center for Cartoon Studies. Exhibitions, and classes. Two-year course of studies, Master of Fine Arts degrees, summer workshops. Public gallery hours are Monday-Friday from 12-4 pm through June 9. 46 South Main St. (802) 295-3319. cartoonstudies.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. *Every Wednesday.*

WOODSTOCK. Tech Tuesdays: Free one-one help with technology. Computer basics: how to use an e-reader, get a free email address, download e-books and audiobooks, start a blog, learn HTML, FTP, CGI or JavaScript, Word or Excel. 4-6 pm. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green. To set up an appointment, please contact the library at (802) 457-2295. www.normanwilliams.org.

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekends at Billings Farm. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, chickens, pigs, and sheep - inside for the winter - and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House and farm life exhibits. *A Place in the Land*, Academy Award nominee film shown every hour in the theater. Adults 16-61 \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, student 16 and up \$9, children 5-15 \$8, children 3-4 \$4. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *February weekends and February 16 through March 2.*

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. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park, 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368 x 22. nps.gov/mabi.

MUSEUMS, EXHIBITS & GALLERIES

ARLINGTON. Canfield Gallery and the Russell Collection. Library hours: Tues & Thurs 9 am - 8 pm, Wed 9 am - 5 pm, Fri 2-6 pm, Sat 10 am - 3 pm. The Russell Collection, Tues 9 am - 5 pm. Martha Canfield Memorial Library, 528 E. Arlington Rd. (802) 375-6153. marthacanfieldlibrary.org.

BARRE. Studio Place Arts. Exhibits, classes, workshops, artists' studios. Free. Tues thru Fri 11 am - 5 pm, Sat 12-4 pm. 201 N. Main St. (802) 479-7069. studioplacarts.com.

BARRE. Vermont History Center and Leahy Library. Admission: Adult \$7, seniors \$5, students free, families \$20. Admission includes both the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier and the Vermont History Center in Barre. Open Monday-Friday, 9 am - 4 pm. Vermont History Center, 60 Washington St. (802) 479-8500. info@vermonthhistory.org. vermonthhistory.org. *Through March 30, 2019.*

BELLOWS FALLS. River Artisans Cooperative. Really Handmade... Really Vermont. River Artisans is the longest continually operating craft cooperative in the state of Vermont. Works of 30+ of New England's finest craftspeople await you in our shop. Open year round Wednesday through Monday 10 am - 4 pm. River Artisans Cooperative, 28 the Square. (802) 460-0059.

BENNINGTON. The Dollhouse and Toy Museum of Vermont. Dolls and dollhouses, puppets, trucks and trains, toys, and educational displays. 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. 212 Union St. at the corner of Valentine St. (802) 681-3767. www.dollhouseandtoymuseumofvermont.com.

BENNINGTON. Laumeister Art Center. Permanent collections, theater productions, workshops. Open Wed-Mon, 10 am - 5 pm. Laumeister Art Center, 44 Gypsy Lane. (802) 442-7158. artcenter@svc.edu. www.artcenter.svc.edu.

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum. Founding documents, fine art, Bennington Pottery, the 1924 Wasp Touring Car, Vermont furniture, and the Bennington Flag - one of America's oldest flags. Lectures, workshops, concerts, films. Admission: adults \$10, seniors and students over 18 \$9. Admission is never charged for younger students, museum members, or to visit the museum shop. Open 10 am - 5 pm daily except Wednesdays. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

Useful Vermont Websites

Vermont Tourism Site: vermontvacation.com
 Vermont Chamber of Commerce: visitvt.com
 Green Mountain National Forest: fs.fed.us/r9/gmfl
 Vermont Outdoor Guide Association: voga.org
 Hunting & Fishing: vtfishandwildlife.com
 Vermont State Parks: vtstateparks.com
 Things to Do: findandgoseek.net

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Randolph, VT

Maple Jam—Sweet A Cappella Jazz at Chandler Music Hall

Vermont's own a cappella jazz septet, Maple Jam, is returning to Chandler Music Hall on February 15 at 7:30 p.m. The snazzy vocal masters return to warm up a winter's eve with jazzy vocal sounds, spotlighting classic love songs in honor of Valentine's Day. Tickets are \$21.

Maple Jam is a Vermont-based jazz a cappella band. These seven talented singers reinterpret favorite jazz and big band melodies with lush close-harmonies, cool percussion grooves, and soulful trumpet solos using only their voices. From the music of Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Neal Hefti and Miles Davis to Bill Evans, Chick Corea, Antônio Carlos Jobim and more—Maple Jam's got it covered!

Long ago, on a cold March day in 2004 several members of the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Chorus got together after rehearsal to sing some Gene Puerling arrangements of jazz and popular tunes. They were hooked! With almost 100 gigs under their collective belts, over the years they've delighted audiences at Burlington's Discover Jazz Festival, Sing for Peace Concerts, Burlington's First Night, Bristol's Best Night and scores of other events in Vermont, New Hampshire and Canada. In 2012 they completed their first CD Grade "A" Fancy. In 2017, after their tenor moved on, they regrouped to their present seven-singer ensemble.



Maple Jam.

Maple Jam performs a wide variety of music, mostly from the jazz world including classics from the Great American Songbook, Big Band hits from the 30s to the 60s, and Be-bop. They have also been known to sneak in a couple popular and novelty tunes here and there. Their repertoire includes their own arrangements and those made famous by such groups as The Swingle Singers, The Singers Unlimited, The Real Group, Manhattan Transfer and more.

Chandler Center for the Arts is located at 71-73 Main St. in Randolph, VT. (802) 728-9878. www.chandler-arts.org. info@maplejam.com. www.maplejam.com.

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Vermont Country Calendar



BRANDON. Compass Music and Arts Center. Arts businesses and studios, workshops & classes, 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. Treasure Chest, and more. Open Monday-Saturday 10 am – 5 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Drive, Park Village. (802) 247-4295. www.cmacvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Five New Exhibits. Open every day except Tuesday, 11 am – 5 pm. Admission: adults \$8, seniors \$6, students \$4, 18 and under free. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org.

BURLINGTON. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center. Exhibits, workshops, programs, café, gift shop, story hour. Admission: \$9.50 adults, \$7 ages 3-17, \$8 seniors and students, under 3 free. Monday-Sunday, 10 am – 5 pm. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center at Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, One College St. (877) 324-6385. echovermont.org.

BURLINGTON. Fleming Museum of Art. More than 20,000 objects that span the history of civilization. Admission: adults \$5, family \$10, students and seniors \$3, children 6 and under free. Tue, Thu, Fri 10 am – 4 pm, Wed 10 am – 7 pm, Sat-Sun noon – 4 pm. Fleming Museum of Art, 61 Colchester Ave. (802) 656-0750. www.flemingmuseum.org.

CENTER RUTLAND. The Rutland Railroad Museum. Housed in the Rutland Depot, built in 1917. See railroad artifacts and historical exhibits including HO & N scale model railroad layouts and a children's layout. The museum is also available to educational groups and schools for tours by appointment. Open Saturdays from 11 am – 1 pm. Rutland Railway Association, 79 Depot Lane. For information call John Schaub at (802) 768-8427. info@rutlandrailroadmuseum.org.

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.

HARTFORD. Hartford Historical Society Museum. Tours and exhibits cover the history of Hartford, including the Abenaki tribes. Free. Monday-Friday 9 am – 1 pm. Garipay House, 1461 Maple St. (802) 296-3132.

LEBANON, NH. AVA Gallery and Art Center. 11 am – 5 pm. 11 Bank St. (603) 448-3117. avagallery.org.

MANCHESTER. Southern Vermont Art Center. Galleries, exhibits, classes, performances, gift shop, café, botany trail. Free admission to some exhibits. Open Tues-Sat 10 am – 5 pm. Yester House Galleries, Southern Vermont Arts Center, West Rd. (802) 362-1405. svac.org.

MANCHESTER. Hildene House Tours of Robert and Mary Lincoln's home. The museum store in our 100-year-old carriage barn welcomes visitors for distinctive gifts. Tours daily at 2 pm with a prior reservation, not recommended for children under 10. Admission \$20 adults; children 6 to 14, \$5; under 6, free. A fee of \$7.50 for the tour is added to the general admission. No admission charged for Welcome Center and Museum Store. Open daily year round 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home, Rt. 7A, south of the village. (802) 362-1788. info@hildene.org. 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, kids 4 and under are free. Open 10 am – 4 pm weekdays, 10 am – 5 pm weekends. Rt. 9, Hogback Mountain. (802) 464-0048. museum@sover.net. www.vermontmuseum.org.

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, seniors \$4.50, family \$12. Open Tues-Sat 10 am – 5 pm and select Sundays in December 1-4 pm. The Henry Sheldon Museum, One Park St., across from the Ilsley Library. (802) 388-2117. henrysheldonmuseum.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. 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. www.vermontfolklifecenter.org.

MONTGOMERY CENTER. Montgomery Center for the Arts. Exhibits, classes, special events for all ages. 2 Mountain Rd. montgomerycenterforthearts.com.

MONTPELIER. Exhibit: Seeds of Renewal. Abenaki agricultural history, cuisine, and ceremony. Admission: adults \$7, families \$20, seniors, students, children \$5, under 6 free. 10 am – 4 pm, Tuesday-Saturday. Calder Gallery at the Vermont History Museum, 109 State St. (802) 479-8500. vermonthistory.org. *Through April.*

MONTPELIER. Vermont History Museum & Bookstore. Admission: adults: \$7; families: \$20; students, children, seniors: \$5; members and children under 6: free. Open 9 am – 4 pm, Tuesday through Saturday. Pavilion Building, 109 State St. (802) 828-2291. www.vermonthistory.org.

MONTPELIER. Exhibit: "Artists to Watch." 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday. Spotlight Gallery at the Vermont Arts Council, 136 State St. (802) 828-3291.

NORWICH. Montshire Museum of Science. 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.

RUTLAND. Chaffee Art Center. Exhibits, workshops, classes. Open Mon-Fri 10 am – 5 pm, Sat 9 am – 3 pm. Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St. (802) 775-0356. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

SAXTONS RIVER. Main Street Arts. Exhibits, concerts, lectures, workshops, and classes for adults, teens and children. Main Street Arts, 35 Main St. (802) 869-2960. www.mainstreetarts.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. POMFRET. Exhibits, workshops, classes, events. Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Rd. (802) 457-3500. artistreevt.org.

SPRINGFIELD. The Great Hall Presents "Healing: The Transformative Imagery of Art." Great Hall, One Hundred River St. (802) 885 3061, ninajamison150@gmail.com. *Through March 30.*

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. Classes, workshops. Tuesday – Saturday 11 am – 5 pm. Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault.org.

STOWE. Vermont Ski and Snowboard Museum. Exhibits, events, and gift store. Suggested admission donation: \$5 per person. Open Wednesdays-Sundays, 12 noon – 5 pm. The Perkins Building, One South Main St. (802) 253-9911. vtssm.com.

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. Open every day 9 am – 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. Gallery open 7 days a week in the summer. Dog Chapel open seven days a week from dawn to dusk. Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. off Spaulding Rd. (800) 449-2580. contact@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com.

WEST RUTLAND. Carving Studio and Sculpture Center Gallery. Hours are Monday-Friday, 10 am-1 pm, or by appointment. 636 Marble St. (802) 438-2097. info@carvingstudio.org. carvingstudio.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Visit the Barans, farmhouse, farmlife exhibits. Admission: adults \$16, 62 & up \$14, 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. *Through March 2 then reopening for the season April 2.*

Snowstorm

Frost crystals obscure half my window pane,
But through the unobstructed glass I see
The blizzard swirling across field and road,
Covering lawn and car and neighbor's roof.
Flat light and snow blur the fine distinctions
Of sculpted shrubs, the inessential curves
Of garden walks, the subtle modeling
Of every shape that man and nature make.
What stands out now is the elemental
Structure of things, the trunks of my maples,
The angles of the heavy limbs from which,
In peril, hang snow-wrapped twigs and branches,
Sacrificed if need be without regret.
And the posts supporting my neighbor's porch,
The horizontals of the ridge and eaves,
The A of his pitched roof, his brick chimney,
Dark red against the white, no shingles seen—
All abstracted from the embroidery of things
Like muscle and bones beneath the skin,
Like the arc of hills seen from afar,
Like sea-swept cliff stripped of grass and bush,
Like the bedrock of things.

—CHARLES FISH
Dummerston, VT 2018

Randolph Center, VT

Off to the Sugarwoods by Bette Lambert

And the snow conditions are...variable! Recently we worked in the woods, in a steady rain. Each branch, each twig was frosted in ice. I floundered a bit in the mushy snow, well, alright, I actually went down face first twice.

The next day was different, as the crust was hard and beautifully shiny. The boys dove headfirst, sliding down hummocks on their stomachs, looking like young otters. I stayed on top for the most part, occasionally dropping through, with a loud "Humph!"

Walking out of the woods on the logging trail, conditions changed, and there was the odd, widespread sinking of the crust all around me, with each step.

At the top of the pasture, home in sight, I could not walk, the crust was so hard and slippery. I sat down and slid home, no sled needed.

Bette Lambert helps run the family sugaring business at Silloway Maple, 1303 Boudro Rd., Randolph Center, VT. (802) 272-6249. www.sillowaymaple.com.

Free Calendar Listings

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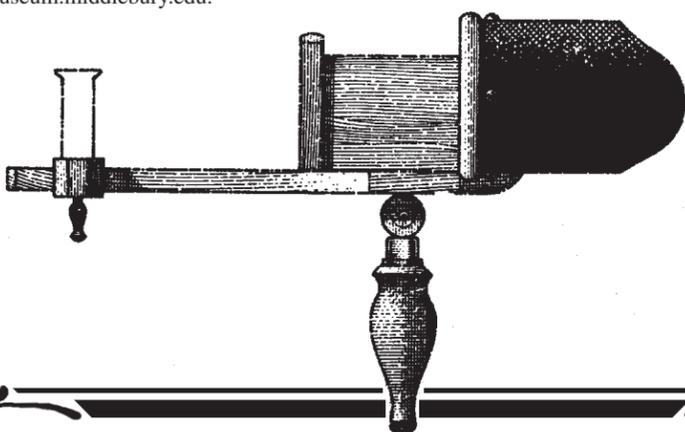
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37th Annual NOFA-Vermont's Winter Conference Celebrates Our Food Traditions & Agricultural Roots

by Megan Browning

This year's Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. of Vermont winter conference celebrates those who came before us by honoring the history of land-use in Vermont. The event takes place February 16-18th, 2019 at The Davis Center at the University of Vermont in Burlington. The conference highlights the role of all people working the land past and present, as well as the whole community currently committed to food production in Vermont.

Keynote speakers

Two keynote speakers will speak to this theme: Leah Penniman, a Black Kreyol educator, farmer/peyzan, author, and food justice activist from Soul Fire Farm in Grafton, NY, and Melody Walker Brook, Abenaki educator, activist, artist, and UVM alumni from Highgate, VT.

Drawing on twenty years of tending the soil, Leah will share both her farming wisdom as well as experience from her work at Soul Fire Farm, working to end racism and injustice in the food system. She will invite you to join in this work by learning how you too can be part of the movement for food sovereignty and help build a food system based on justice, dignity, and abundance for all members of our community. She is the author of *Farming While Black—Soul Fire Farm's Practical Guide to Liberation on the Land* published by Chelsea Green.

Melody Walker Brook will invite us to honor those who came before us, reminding us that the past is an integral part of our future. She will be joined by the Alnôbaiwi Dance Group, who will perform sacred dances from the Abenaki calendar. Together they will highlight the important role of the Abenaki community as the beginning of Vermont's rich agricultural history.

Over 80 workshops

With over 80 workshops, there is something for everyone. Learn how to graft your own tomato plants or how to grow hemp, or maximize the benefits of cover crops on your farm. Find out about techniques for seed saving, or learn to make bone broth or kimchi? Explore the precolonial history of the land you tend. Build an action plan to work toward uprooting racism in the food system.



Leah Penniman from Soul Fire Farm in Grafton, NY will be a keynote speaker at the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Annual Winter Conference in Burlington, VT Saturday, February 16th.

Four full-day intensives are presented on Monday, February 18 if you want to take a deeper dive: Sourdough Bread Baking, No-Till Vegetables, Business Branding and Marketing, and Finding Your Inner Activist.

cost of registration. Children are welcome to join their adult guardians for lunch at the children's price of \$12. Of course, they're also welcome to pack a bag lunch for their kids.

Food, friends, and socializing

During a time when the future of food and organic farming is uncertain, we invite you to come together around hope and momentum toward building the food system that you want to be a part of. This conference will inspire us to think and talk together about the key role food and agriculture plays as a tool for social change and spend time honoring all of our agricultural roots as a critical piece of working together toward a just food system.

The NOFA-VT Winter Conference, is a highlight of the winter for Vermont's local food producers and consumers alike. We look forward to this annual opportunity to bring together farmers, gardeners, homesteaders and organic food enthusiasts for three days of shared learning, inspiration, good food, and great conversation. We hope to see you there!

About Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont: NOFA Vermont is member-based organization working to grow local farms, healthy food, and strong communities in Vermont. Our members are farmers, gardeners, educators and food lovers of all sorts—anyone who wants to help us create a future full of local food and local farms.

Our programs include farmer and gardener technical assistance, farm to school support, organic certification, advocacy, an online apprentice and farm worker directory, an annual Winter Conference, and programs that work to ensure access to fresh, local food to all Vermonter, regardless of income.

The Davis Center at the University of Vermont is located at 590 Main St., in Burlington, VT. Visit nofavt.org/conference to explore the full conference details. Register by February 11th to receive early pricing. Call (802) 434-4122 or email winterconference@nofavt.org if you have any questions.

Activities for everyone

This year's conference includes exciting new offerings, as well as many of our favorite conference traditions. Visit the Sunday morning Wellness Fair with reiki, yoga, massage, and herbal consultations. Join the Saturday Night Meet-Up at Hotel Vermont with Slow Food Vermont and the Vermont Young Farmers Coalition.

Enjoy live music throughout the weekend with local musicians and featuring Ryegrass, a five-piece bluegrass band. Snacks and refreshments are free throughout the weekend including oven roasted roots cooked on NOFA-VT's wood-fired mobile oven! Stop by for Sunday breakfast treats on your way to a workshop.

An ice cream social on Sunday at 5:30 p.m. rounds out the weekend thanks to the generosity of Strafford Organic Creamery. There will be a raffle drawing for beautiful oil paintings donated by Community Artist Bonnie Acker. Make sure to buy some raffle tickets when you register. Join us for dessert, community, and time to unwind after the conference!

Children's Conference

The next generation of farmers, gardeners, and food lovers are welcome to the Children's Conference! Participants will hand-crank their own ice cream, craft nature journals, learn to mimic calls of Vermont birds, work with local artist, Bonnie Acker, on cardmaking and the Community Art Project, and more!

Register your children ages 5-12 for the Children's Conference taking place the same time as the adult conference on Saturday and Sunday, February 16 & 17. The cost of registration is on a sliding scale (\$0-\$30) and space is limited, so please register early. Lunch is not included in the



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Cherries Sweet and Tart

by Marie W. Lawrence

Although I suppose the legend of George Washington cutting down the cherry tree with his little hatchet has been thoroughly debunked by now, I still think of February as the month to enjoy cherries. Perhaps Valentine's Day, with its perpetual red theme, has something to do with this. Perhaps it's also because these highly perishable little fruits are frequently easier to find canned or frozen than fresh. One of my goals is to have producing cherry trees on our property. Finally varieties are being developed that tolerate the cold of a Vermont winter, which is exciting news indeed for a person whose favorite fruit in the whole world is a sweet golden cherry, with that gorgeous blush of red on its little cheek. Such delicacies notwithstanding, here are some recipes using their red (sometimes even artificially red) cousins.

SWEETHEART COOKIES

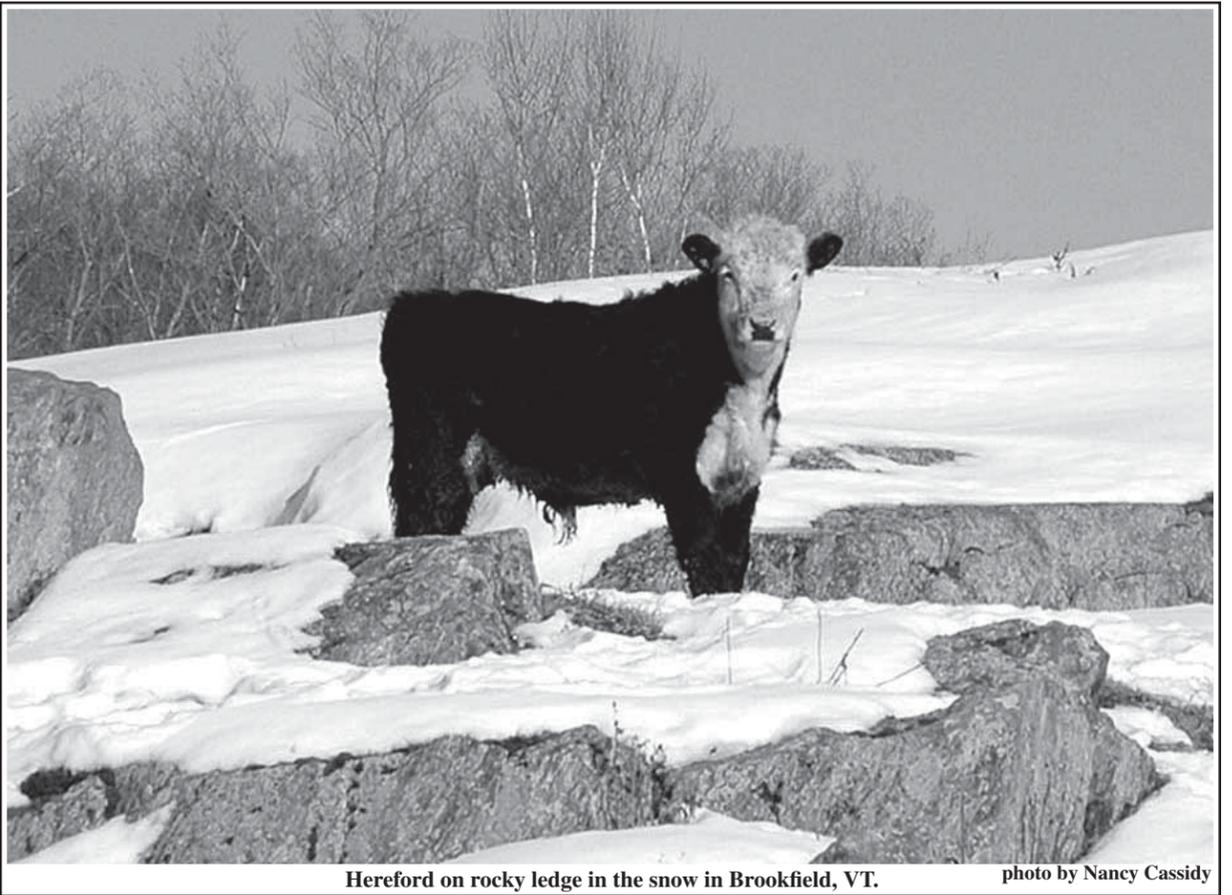
We couldn't let February slip away without including at least one Valentine recipe, could we? When our now-adult children first headed off to college, I wanted to still be able to share a little taste of home baking with them. I devised my recipe for sweetheart cookies about the time our older son Greg departed for the halls of higher academia. The nice thing about these crispy little sugar cookies is that the frosting is sandwiched inside, making them easy for transporting and even for mailing to someone special who's far away.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 c. unsalted butter | 1 t. vanilla |
| ½ t. almond extract | 1 c. granulated sugar |
| ½ t. salt | 1 egg |
| 1 t. baking powder | 2 c. flour |
| Colored sugar and/or sprinkles | Milk for brushing tops |

Pink Buttercream Filling/Frosting

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| ½ c. butter | 3 c. confectioner's sugar |
| 1 T. water | 1 t. flavoring of choice |
| 2-3 drops of red food coloring (optional) | (vanilla, cherry, raspberry) |

Beat the butter and sugar together until smooth and creamy. Add the egg and extracts, beating again until light and fluffy. On low speed with a heavy mixer blade or by hand with a wooden spoon, stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt until thoroughly combined. Cover the dough or place in a plastic bag and refrigerate for about one hour (or more) before rolling and baking. The chilling time is important for a couple of reasons; it makes the fragile dough more manageable, and it decreases the amount of flour necessary for rolling and therefore the amount absorbed when rerolling scraps. When you're ready to bake your cookies, roll portions of the dough at a time, thin (¼"). Cut out with heart-shaped cookie cutters. Lightly brush the tops with milk and sprinkle generously with colored sugar. Bake on ungreased cookie sheets on upper shelf of a 350°F for about 10-12 minutes, until light golden brown around the edges. Cool for a minute or two on the sheets before carefully removing to cooling racks. For the filling, beat the softened butter with the extract of choice at medium speed until it's nice and fluffy. Gradually add the confectioner's sugar, beating well. Mix in the water and a few drops of red coloring, if you wish. The frosting will be creamy, yet stiff enough to sandwich between cookies without running out or turning the cookies soggy. If you prefer to ice your cookies, you may wish to beat in another tablespoon or so of water. Use 1-2 teaspoons of filling per cookie; this batch should yield enough for approximately 2½-3 dozen heart sandwich cookies, depending on the size of the cookie.



Hereford on rocky ledge in the snow in Brookfield, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

CHERRY BERRY PIE

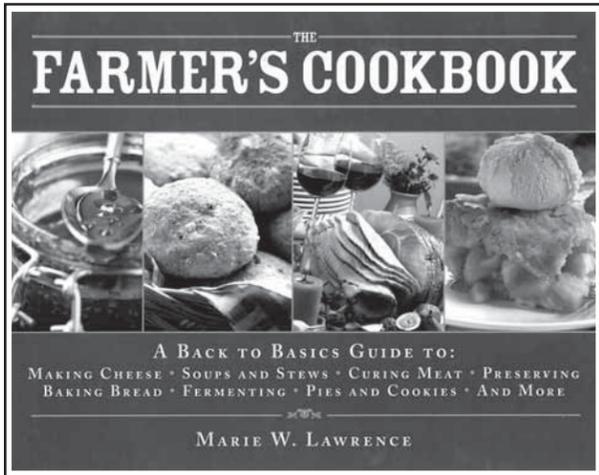
When I was a vendor at the Brattleboro Farmers' Market, one of my specialties was little triangles of homemade puff pastry filled with either savory veggie or sweet fruit fillings. The cherry-berry combination was one of my favorites, here revised to make a standard pie.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 c. tart cherries (frozen are fine) or 1 can of tart cherries, not drained | 2 c. fresh or unsweetened frozen red raspberries |
| 3 T. cornstarch | 1¼ c. water (measure the canned cherry juice first, adding extra water to equal this amount) |
| 1 t. grated lemon rind or ¼ t. pure lemon extract | ½ t. pure lemon extract |
| ½ t. almond extract | 1 T. kirsch or other cherry liquor |
| Unbaked 2 crust pie pastry | |

Combine everything except the extracts, liquor, and crust in a heavy saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring gently, until thickened and bubbly. Remove from heat and add the flavorings. Allow the filling to cool for about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, roll out half the chilled piecrust and fit into a

9" pie plate. Add the filling and moisten the out rim of the bottom piecrust with water or milk. Roll out and fit the top crust, fit it over the pie, and trim excess overhang from both crusts, leaving about an inch extra. Fold the top crust down over and under the bottom crust to seal. Press the edges and flute decoratively. Cut slits in the top crust or prick with a fork to allow steam to escape during baking. Brush the top crust with milk or cream and sprinkle lightly with sugar. Bake at 425°F for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°F and continue baking until the crust is nicely browned and the filling is bubbly, about 30 minutes longer. Cool before cutting.

Author Marie W. Lawrence is a third generation Vermonter. An elementary school para education, mother of three, and grandmother of two, she lives with her husband in Brattleboro, VT. *The Farmer's Cookbook—A Back to Basics Guide to Making Cheese, Curing Meat, Preserving Produce, Baking Bread, Fermenting, and More* by Marie W. Lawrence (\$24.95. Skyhorse Publishing. www.skyhorsepublishing.com).



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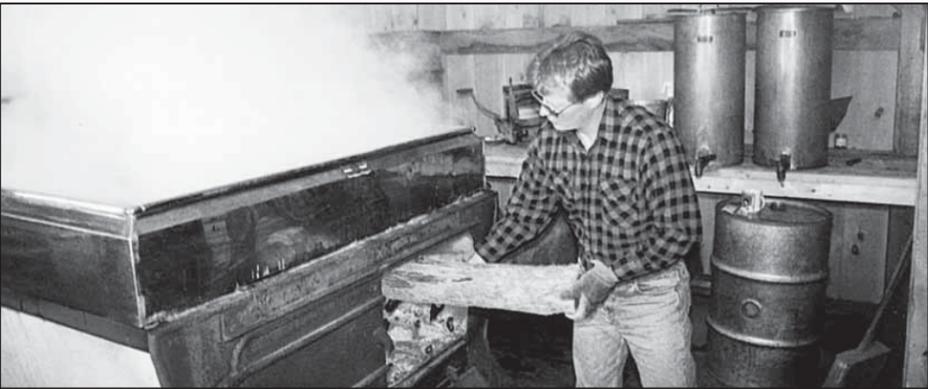


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Guided Wildlife Management Area Walks

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department will be hosting a series of free guided walks to look for winter wildlife and their tracks on select state wildlife management areas this year in northern, central, and southern Vermont beginning this winter.

The walks are led by wildlife biologists and naturalists with decades of experience conserving Vermont's wildlife and their habitats. The walks will focus on bird watching as well as observing the sign or presence of other wildlife.

"These wildlife walks are a chance for Vermonters to get to know the state's 98 wildlife management areas either in their own backyard, in a unique area such as along the Connecticut River Valley, the Lake Champlain Valley, or in a wild remote corner of the state," said John Austin, lands and habitat program manager for the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. "We'll have offerings throughout the year, from winter tracking walks to summer birding paddles. Whether you're watching trout jump up Willoughby Falls in the spring, looking to observe unique birds, or looking for moose among the colorful fall foliage, there are always great opportunities to view wildlife on Vermont's wildlife management areas."

All seminars are free and participants are encouraged to bring snacks and water and to dress in footwear and clothing appropriate for walking slowly in the woods in winter. Space is limited to the first 30 signups and these events fill up quickly, so signup as early as possible. Go to vtfishandwildlife.com for more information and to sign up for the walks.

Wildlife Viewing Tour. Saturday, February 2, 2019, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Victory Basin Wildlife Management Area, Victory, VT. Join St. Johnsbury biologists Doug Morin and Paul Hamelin for a wildlife-based exploration of a unique part of Vermont. Victory Basin is a vast lowland boreal forest, an environment common to northern Canada but rare here in Vermont, and this walk allows visitors to feel like they've stepped into another world. There is a possibility of spotting boreal wildlife such as snowshoe hare, gray jays, and possibly



photo by Tom Rogers, VT Fish & Wildlife
Doug Morin co-leads a wildlife walk at Victory Basin Wildlife Management Area.

even tracks of an American marten. Doug Morin is a highly trained naturalist who manages Victory Basin WMA and Paul Hamelin is a veteran wildlife biologist who manages wildlife habitat on WMAs throughout the state. Backup date: Saturday, February 9.

Winter Wildlife of Vermont. Saturday, February 16, 2019, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Middlesex Notch Wildlife Management Area, Middlesex, VT. John Austin, lands and habitat program manager, will lead this tour of this unique area of mature forest at the base of central Vermont's Worcester Range. Winter is a quiet time for wildlife on the landscape, but many species are still out and about and are easily located due to their tracks in the snow. This large forested property contains many important food sources for wildlife, meaning the group may see birds or mammals and their tracks as they forage for a winter meal. Backup date: Sunday, February 17.

Tracking Wildlife in Winter. Saturday, March 2, 2019, 9 a.m. – 12 noon. Turner Hill Wildlife Management Area, Grafton, VT. Wildlife biologist Chris Bernier has spent his career working with mid-size mammals such as fisher, fox and the elusive lynx and pine marten. Much of his field work with these species has involved tracking them in the snow. Come learn Bernier's tricks for tracking these and other wild mammals and birds. This tour is sponsored by The Nature Museum in Grafton, VT. Backup date: Saturday, March 9.

Vermont's wildlife management areas are owned and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department for wildlife-based recreation such as hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching. These lands are purchased and managed in part using funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Restoration Program using excise taxes on hunting and shooting equipment, as well as through hunting and trapping licenses and donations to the Vermont Habitat Stamp program.

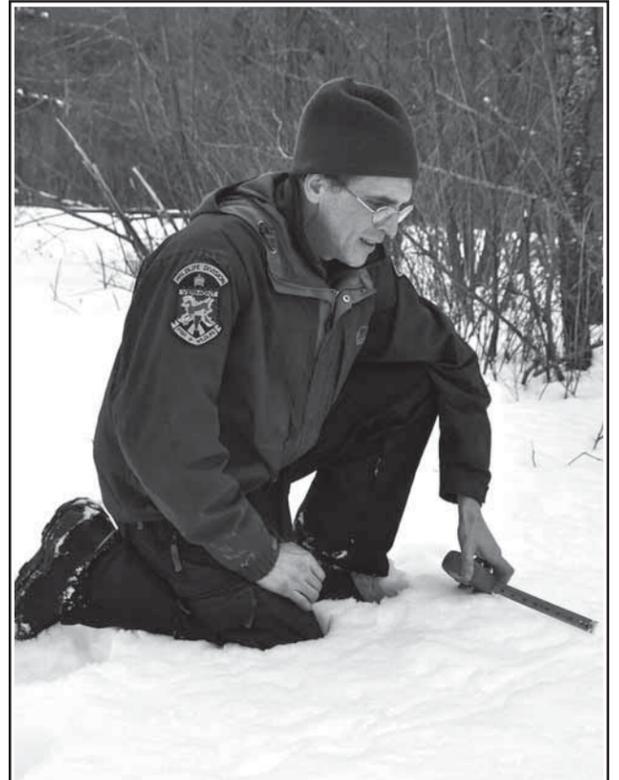


photo by Tom Rogers, VT Fish & Wildlife
Chris Bernier measures a track in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom as part of a lynx tracking survey. Bernier will be leading a tracking workshop in Grafton, VT on March 2.

Useful Vermont Websites

- Vermont Tourism Site: vermontvacation.com
- Events for All Ages: www.findandgoose.net
- Vermont Chamber of Commerce: visitvt.com
- Vermont State Parks: vtstateparks.com
- Green Mountain National Forest: fs.fed.us/r9/gmfl
- Vermont Outdoor Guide Association: voga.org
- Hunting & Fishing: vtfishandwildlife.com
- Mountain Biking: vmba.org
- Four Wheeling: vtvasa.org • Snowmobiling: vtvast.org
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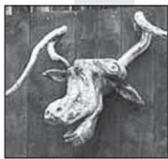
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For more information and to sign up for the walks go to vtfishandwildlife.com.

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There are Vermonters, Then There is Vera Ruth

by Burr Morse

I can just hear my wife Betsy now talking on the phone with her cousin Pennie. One of them would say “and what would Vera Ruth say about that?” And then, through gales of laughter, they’re off and running with a long phone conversation. You see “Vera Ruth” was their grandmother, stalwart Vermonter, character...perfect common denominator for the those gales of laughter.

Vera Ruth Cole was born in 1892 before Vermont living got “soft”, our winters were still winters, and folks grubbed out a living one grueling step at a time. She started her life performing the never-ending “girl” chores of cooking,

“Intrepid and straight-laced, she had no room for smiling. This quality remained for her whole life.”

housecleaning, and washing clothes but, due to the particular poverty around her hometown of Mount Holly, Vermont, she also inherited “boy” chores: milking cows, cutting wood, driving horses. In fact through her experience with these chores, she once reached down a cow’s throat to extract a choke-causing apple. Another time, she was dragged through the dirt by a team of runaway horses! This early period in her life

gave her both Yankee fortitude and Vermont wisdom.

Intrepid and straight-laced, she had no room for smiling. This quality remained through her whole life. Back in her early years, smiling was passé, especially for photographs or in public. One theory was that smiling portrayed a person as “lower class, foolish, dumb” and Vera Ruth was certainly none of the above. In her case, this writer’s theory is that life was so hard in her community that there was rarely anything to smile about! In spite of her hard life, life did go on...even though she was once heard to say “Harold

never saw me naked”, she and her husband Harold Parker somehow had four kids. Not surprisingly, most things were done in the dark!

Even with her stoic persona, there was at least one of life’s little pleasures she partook of. She often departed behind her bedroom’s closed door to, in her words, “take a trifle of a nap”. It was smoke from an unfiltered Chesterfield, however, wafting through the



loose-fitting farmhouse door that told the true story...a nap was not what she was about! Although she never admitted to having the habit (ladies did not smoke!), telltale signs went as far as once putting out a couch fire with the crook of her cane (we have the cane which is still very charred).

The earlier description of Vera Ruth Parker points heavily to her being prickly but that was not necessarily the case. To her children and grandchildren, her door was always open. Her idiosyncrasies included love, reverence and guidance. She had a gossipy interest in what was going on around town but also a genuine concern for the lives of each and every family member. After all, her granddaughters say the harshest swear word she ever uttered was “bubbles”...and in light of words we hear today, who could not love a person like that!

Vera Ruth Parker finally passed away

at age 99 in spite of the Chesterfields. If she could assess the quality of her life, she would probably say something like “hard work never killed anyone” and would cast an unsmiling eye toward some things that go on these days. I, for one, pine for the Vermont of yesteryear when hard work brought character instead of complaints, more folks farmed the land, and the worst swear word we heard was “bubbles”.

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Building the Kitchen Fire In Vermont Winter

To turn out with a frozen yawn
And in the blue-black dark,
And haul your socks and brogans on
Without no mean remark,
And poke through both the entry doors
And grope to left and right,
And find the matchbox, strike a match
And light a lantern light;

And set the lantern on a chair,
And then look down to see
If there is any kindling there
Jest where it oughter be;
Then lift the lid and take both hands
To feed the fire-food in,
And touch it off and curl all up
To feel the heat begin;

And stand there till your legs get weak
As No. thirteen wire,
And then decide you’ll take a peek
To see what ails your fire,
And lift the old cracked lid again
From off its iron seat,
But not a vittermine of fire
Or callory of heat—

It’s quite a thing, it’s quite a chore
To make two cold sticks spark,
Without, as I have said before,
No malapert remark;
The fire collapsed, but ‘twan’t your fault
No more than urn, a bit,
When Europe scrapped and called on us
To make the Hell-Bosch quit.

It didn’t ketch, that’s all; you know
It means a woodshed trip,
Which means that you must sweep some snow
Unless you want to slip;
You grab the broom, unlock the door,
But such a blast of air!
It blows the cat inside the house,
The lantern off the chair.

A batch of woodshed kindling sends
Your hopes of heat-waves higher,
And when your new endeavor ends
You’ve got a Christian fire;
You sling the milkpails on your arm
And start out through the dark—
“Come cold, wail wind, I’ve beat you both
Without no mean remark!”



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North Country Book News

Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

Stories About Friendships to Warm the Heart

In times when people are estranged and friendships elusive it is reassuring to read that friendships still can happen in unique ways among unlikely persons...and even animals.

Consider the young mouse Pete's friendship with an aging, pipe-smoking professor mouse, a former astronaut who was the first mouse to land on the moon.

The twosome strike up a friendship in *Edison—The Mystery of the Missing Mouse Treasure* by Torben Kuhlmann (\$19.95. *NorthSouth Books, Inc. www.northsouth.com*), and dream up and build a vessel capable of taking them to the bottom of the ocean to find missing treasure more precious than gold.

The author, born in Germany in 1982, was already a gifted draftsman as a child, captivated by small airplanes, strange machines and steaming trains.

So be amazed at his mouse-made submarine and underwater diving suits carefully manufactured undercover by the two mice at Reynolds & Sons car repair shop. They sneak their sub aboard an ocean-going liner that will take them to the site of a ship wreck and its hidden treasure. Stunning, full-page illustrations show their trials and errors including an underwater glass dome and wooden spice container before developing the metal submarine. The drama includes crabs eating the diving bell's lifelines and a giant whale song making the sub's metal 'creak and groan.' As the title of the book suggests, the mice's treasure has something to do with another inventor, Thomas Edison, and what he created with the help of mice. We won't reveal their treasure, but you will be pleasantly surprised.

Kuhlmann, who studied illustration and design at the University for Applied Sciences in Hamburg, works in pen and watercolor, and also with acrylics, oil paints and digital programs. Marvel at the book's many full-page color depictions of young mouse Pete and the older Professor as they build their vessel and find the treasure. This latest book was translated from the German by David Henry Wilson.

The author's other books are *Lindbergh—The Tale of a Flying Mouse*, *Armstrong—The Adventurous Journey of a Mouse to the Moon*, and *Moletown*.

When one is especially old and loses a spouse, a world with any sort of joy also comes to an end. That is unless some small event like a new and unexpected friendship can rekindle and start life again. Such is the story of *The House of Lost and Found* by Martin Widmark & Emilia Dziubak (\$17.95. *Floris Books. www.florisbooks.co.uk*) where the grief-stricken Niles gets one of life's reprieves when an unknown stranger—a neighbor boy, makes him take a potted plant to look after while he and his family go on vacation. At first the elderly man sulks at such an imposition, but then when the plant starts growing a flower the old man is inspired to clean up his house, open the windows for some fresh air, his runaway cat returns, and he no longer mopes about day and night reliving sad memories.

By some miracle the potted plant produces a poppy flower

just like the ones in the field his late wife Sara had painted, and where the couple had first fallen in love. After a few days the boy returns to rescue his plant and invites the once-grumpy old man to visit his family, and he happily accepts.

Polish artist Emilia Dziubak's illustrations contrast the gloom and doom of the old man's sorrowful and lacking life in his rundown house with the life and comfort that just one flower and one little boy can bring. The old man's despair is common in life and the story of his renewal is told and illustrated with compassion and hope.

Most self-exiled shut-ins are left alone, ignored or invisible to the outside world for many reasons. But sometimes by some strange chance they can come out of their shell and enjoy a few moments of happiness. Meet live-alone Elise in *The Visitor* by Antje Damm, translated from German by Sally-Ann Spencer (\$17.99. *Gecko Press. geckopress.com*).

Elise is scared of spiders, scared of people, even scared of trees, and never goes outside. One day a strange object, a blue paper airplane comes sailing through her window. She quickly burns it up. The next day, after a fitful night's sleep, she has a visitor. A knock on the door produces a little boy, Emil, wanting his plane back...but first can he use the bathroom? His matter-of-fact friendship encourages Elise to show him around. She gives him something to eat, reads him a storybook, and they play games. "It's fun at your house," he says, waving goodbye. "Bye for now, Emil," she replies. Later we see her working hard at making a paper airplane for the for-sure return visit.

You will marvel at German artist and architect Damm's eye-catching illustrations made of cut-outs, and her use of the colors yellow, fuchsia, red, and light blue to warm the atmosphere room to room. This is a delightful book.

For a dramatic yet whimsical story of a short-lived but all-encompassing and tender relationship between two unlikely entities reflect on and give thought to an unhappy cave-dwelling gray Creature and friend, an all-seeing, talkative tiny sun spark...yes spark...in *My Little Small* by Ulf Stark and illustrated by Linda Bondestam (\$15.95. *Enchanted Lion Books. www.enchantedlion.com*).

Narrated in blank verse by Sweden's beloved poet Ulf Stark, accompanied with extraordinary visionary drawings by Finnish illustrator Linda Bondestam, we meet the Creature who because she would become ill and die if exposed to light, goes out only at night, trying to reach the moon for something to care for. Then one day a tiny sun spark enters the Creature's cave and a sweet, brief friendship begins. The Spark, whom Creature calls Little Small, tells of sunset colors, and the life it supports with its rays: the "vast, blue ocean with its wonderful waves, fish and boats" and a "hot, empty yellow dessert" where some still live. Little Small thrills the Creature with descriptions of animals of the green forest: tree swinger, gaudy ground-pecker, gangle-leg (a spider), spotty runner, sock creep (a snake), little hopper and more. The Creature feels happy and tells stories, too, of how she built and climbed up boulders to get closer to the moon.

But all too soon Little Small must return to the sun before dark and the Creature carries her to the far side of a mountain to say their good-byes. Even though the twosome have had only one day together their friendship has changed the Creature's life. As she waves goodbye to Little Small, "The Creature covers her eyes, to better see all the colors the Spark lit up inside her." And isn't this the mark of a true friend?

Swedish poet Ulf Stark, who died in 2017, authored more than 100 books for children. Those printed in English include *Can You Whistle*, *Johanna*, *FruitTop and Dip Sticks*, *When Dad Showed Me the Universe*, and three *My Friend Percy* books. Linda Bondestam, who lives in Helsinki, has illustrated more than 25 books, 10 printed in English.



Book News

Archer Mayor Releases His 29th Joe Gunther Mystery!

Archer Mayor, author of The New York Times bestselling Vermont-based mystery series featuring detective Joe Gunther, recently released his 29th novel, *Bury the Lead* (St. Martin's/Minotaur Press).

In this intriguing mystery, a woman is found dead at the top of a Vermont ski area in the summer. The investigation leads to Mick Durocher, who, when confronted, confesses to the killing. Case closed? Hardly. The confession is riddled with holes, the evidence doesn't back it up, and Joe Gunther and his crew are left to wonder why their initially hot lead is dead and the murder now clearly the work of some unseen master manipulator.

Archer Mayor, a 35-year Vermont resident, has written 29 highly-acclaimed Joe Gunther novels loosely based on his actual experience in the field.

Over the past 30 years, he has worked (and continues to work) as a firefighter/EMT, a police officer, and a death investigator for Vermont's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Mayor's diverse careers in other fields also inform his books. He has been a scholar, editor, researcher, and photographer, as well as a political advance man and

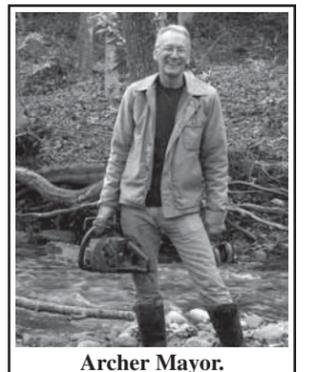
a medical illustrator. He is a graduate of Yale.

According to Mayor, who releases one novel each year, "I am continuously driven by two things: ignorance and curiosity." His research is always in depth, whether it be into horses, reservoirs, how disease is spread, or even ginkgo trees.

In 2016, the author received the Robert B. Parker Award, named for "the dean of mystery writers." He also received the Vermont Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. The New York Times calls Archer Mayor "The boss man on procedures."

Bury the Lead is available at independent bookstores and online.

Find more information at archermayor.com.



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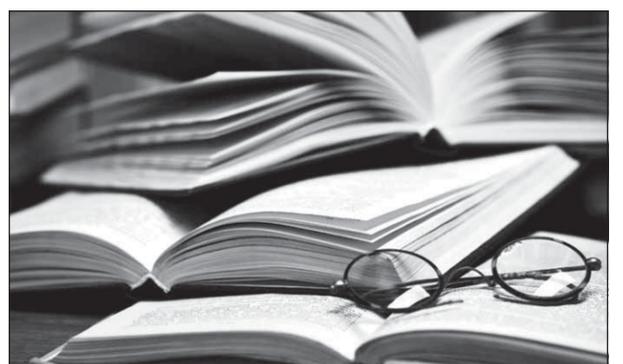
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George Washington's Secret Six

The Spy Ring That Saved the American Revolution

by Brian Kilmeade and Don Yaeger

(\$17.99, Viking, www.penguin.com/youngreaders)

When we remember and honor George Washington on his birthday (February 22, 1732) how many of us know anything about him operating a top-secret spy ring in the New York, Long Island and surrounding areas that helped defeat the British and win the War of Independence.

Thanks to this timely book, written for middle readers but a fascinating read for all ages, we learn that a group of unlikely spies, average patriotic citizens, risked the lives collecting and gaining intelligence on the British which was sneaked by couriers on horseback directly to their Commander-in-Chief, George Washington.

Only one of them—a woman, Agent 355, was captured and presumably perished aboard a British prison ship, the HMS Jersey. The other spies had numerous and scary close calls, but made it safely through five years of war. Afterwards they had to remain anonymous for fear from being found out and harmed by Loyalists still living in America.

A forerunner to the six spies was a 21-year-old Connecticut schoolteacher Nathan Hale who early on was betrayed by Loyalist cousins, captured by the British and executed. The famous saying 'I only regret I have but one life to lose for my country,' has been attributed to him.

The stories and doings of each spy are interwoven into the timeline of Washington's movements and battles, successes and failures, throughout the long war. Washington early on knew that his ragtag force of volunteer civilian patriots were no match for the well-trained, heavily-armed and well-equipped British forces. But he knew that a chance of victory would also be through the help of a sophisticated intelligence service. He had earlier served as a major in the Militia of the British Province of Virginia during the French and Indian War. There he gained tactical and strategic military skills, even including some spying. Fortunately for us he was unable to get a commission in the British Army!

In a mission statement dated April, 1781, Washington writes to his chief spy Benjamin Tallmadge: "the great objects of information include arrivals, embarkation, preparations for movement, alterations of positions, situations of post, fortifications, garrisons, strengths or weaknesses of each, distribution and strength of corps."

He also writes that whatever intelligence is communicated should be not in general terms, but in detail with the greatest precision. Getting that intelligence data to Washington usually took about two weeks. It was to be written in invisible ink and disguised among regular papers like invoices, ship-

ping forms, family letters, even in packages of blank paper. The use of invisible inks was well known, and there were easy ways to make it reappear. For that reason Washington had his spies use a unique ink that could only be seen again if treated by a special stain. (This book includes a how-to on making invisible ink and an alphabet code). Now let's meet our spies.

Benjamin Tallmadge (undercover name John Bolton), the young army captain who was close to Washington at Valley Forge, became his spymaster on Long Island, recruited other spies, planned routes and was instrumental in exposing a British scheme to harm the economy with counterfeit money.

He developed a code and name for each spy to use. He also was instrumental in exposing to Washington the traitorous plot by officers Major John Andre and General Benedict Arnold to give fortification data about West Point to the British. (An ancestor of this book reviewer was one of the three Patriot militiamen who apprehended Major Andre and found plans for the fort in his boots).

Caleb Brewster, a brash young longshoreman, ferried messages in a whaleboat across the Long Island Sound to Connecticut. He had a key role in tricking the British into thinking Washington was to attack New York City. This allowed ships loaded with French troops sent to aid Washington to safely disembark and avoid an attack by British naval vessels.

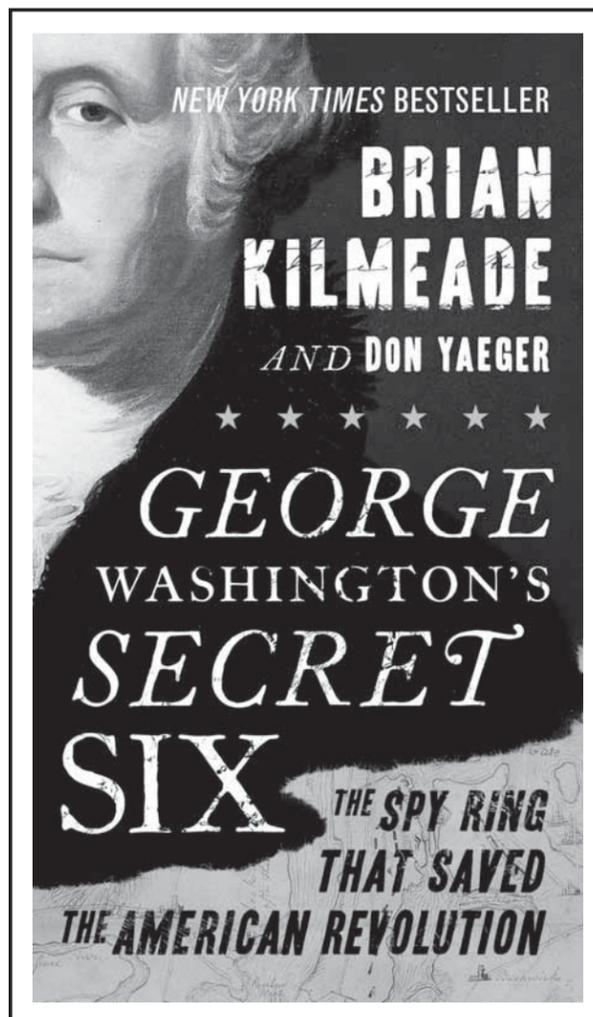
Abraham Woodhull, described as a 'black sheep in a strait-laced family' with the code name Samuel Culper, reported on the state of British warships in New York Harbor as well as troop movement and naval preparations on Long Island Sound. The group of spies was named after his undercover name: The Culper Spy Ring.

Austin Roe, the owner of a tavern in East Setauket, Long Island, frequented by British soldiers and others loyal to the King, overheard enemy conversations which he reported.

James Rivington, a newspaper publisher and former Loyalist, used book bindings to hide slips of paper holding intelligence he had gleaned from Loyalist friends and guests who patronized his coffeehouse.

Robert Townsend, a quiet shopkeeper, developed the perfect cover as a writer for Rivington's Long Island newspaper the Royal Gazette. The spy-to-be could ask questions about 'things' without raising suspicions.

Agent 355 remains a mystery to this day with only Woodhull, who recruited her, ever knowing her name and telling no one. She worked in Manhattan, he wrote in a letter to



Tallmadge, where she was uniquely positioned to collect important secrets. Her disappearance and apparent death was very upsetting to the other spies. In a letter he wrote that she was situated to "outwit them all."

The book concludes with a timeline from when the Stamp Act by England (March 22, 1765) levied a tax on every piece of paper the colonists used to November 25, 1783 when Washington rides into Manhattan as the victor and the last British ships leave the harbor. Our narrative ends with this scene:

"But now the citizens of New York, no longer subject to British law or British soldiers, waved flags freely as Washington rode forward. Church bells tolled. Not in warning but in celebration, and the shouts after each firing of the cannons were triumphant rather than terrified. Some people even crowded theater's edge, waving at the ships for departure and laughingly bidding the defeated soldiers on board a lovely trip home."

Fantastical Cakes

Incredible Creations for the Baker in Anyone

by Gesine Bullock-Prado

(\$30, Running Press, www.runningpress.com)

Many of us would never think of baking a cake from scratch—just too risky, but we might be willing to put together one of those cake box mixes. They look easy, and one doesn't have to worry about not getting measurements and ingredients just right.

But to veteran cake-baker and food author Gesine Bullock-Prado anyone can easily make beautiful, imaginative and tasty cakes from scratch by following her easy step-by-step instructions for baking and decorating.

Gesine's cake-making techniques always use ingredients from scratch in this order: Bake Ahead, Dam and Assemble, Smooth Coat and Spruce Up. She highly recommends baking and freezing several cake layers at once so one always has several rounds stored away for your final touch as needed.

The author entices us with a lengthy choice of cakes just waiting to be assembled and baked. Ones that particularly tempted us because of their 'fantastical' looks were a Giant Pumpkin Cake, Sticky Bun Layer Cake, Carrot Cake (decorated with a marzipan rabbit and orange carrots), Gingerbread Cake (made of gingerbread cookies and spice cake), and Fraisier Sponge Cake (strawberries in and around a mousse).

For those of you who may want to start baking a more familiar cake she has recipes for Coconut Cake, Tiramisu Cake, Devil's Food Cake, Yellow and Chocolate Cakes, and Banana Cake (like banana bread but less heavy).

Although Gesine grew up in Virginia, as a child she made trips to visit her grandmother Omi and aunt Tante Christel in Germany. So some of her recipes have a distinctive German touch. As a child she used to sneak into a candy store and load up on Schoko Crossies made from cornflakes, sliced almonds and bittersweet chocolate. The recipe is here and she also uses them to decorate birthday cakes.

You may also want to try her Black Forest Cake which

features "chocolates, cherries, whipped cream, and a bit of booze" topped off with "marzipan toadstools and bit of cake moss."

With a home now in Vermont, Gesine has recipes for Maple Cake, Maple Sticky Bun Cake, Maple Bark and Maple Leaves Cake, and a Maple Espresso Cream Cheese Frosting.

In addition to mouth-watering full-page color photographs of her cakes, the 325-page book is attractively laid out and interspersed with dozens of special one-page "Messages from The Cake Lady" covering such topics as Wet and Dry Caramel, Creme de la Creme, Torting and Freezing Layers, Egg Whites Europe, Foamy is My Middle Name, and Making Simple Edible Paper Flowers.

Gesine teaches classes on how to bake cakes, pastries, and other goodies at her Sugar Glider Kitchen school at her home in Hartford, Vermont. Most classes run for three hours (\$95 fee) and offerings include Eclairs, Puff Pastry, Perfect Pie, Macaron, Confetti Cake, Strudel, Patterned Swiss Roll, Baking 101 (Muffin, Biscuit, Paste & Cream), French Pork Pies, and a two-day French Pastry & Croissant Class.

She hosts Food Networks' 'Baked in Vermont' and teaches classes at King Arthur Flour in Norwich, Vermont, and at Stonewall Kitchen in York, Maine.

And she is the author of *Bake It Like You Mean It, Let Them Eat Cake, Sugar Baby*, and *Pie It Forward*. Her book *My Life From Scratch* covers her baking adventures from Hollywood to Vermont, from pastry shop owner to teacher and writer.

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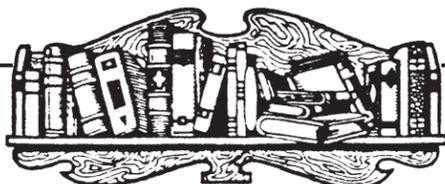
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North Country Reflections

From Classic to Whimsey
The art of decorating our outdoor spaces

by Judith Irven

Even though we—and our gardens—are still in the midst of winter hibernation, many of us are planning outdoor changes, both large and small, we will be making this coming season—perhaps making a new flower bed or maybe trying some gorgeous but unfamiliar plants.

Beyond Plants

But, in addition to plants, what about enhancing your garden with some special highlights—a new bench, a decorative planter, or perhaps a compelling sculpture? It is like choosing a beautiful necklace to compliment your new outfit, or hanging some evocative pictures on your walls.

The possibilities for decorating our gardens are both endless and also extremely personal. Perhaps your imagination is triggered by a beautiful classic hand-crafted ceramic pot you saw at the local show or a stunning arbor at the public garden last summer. Or maybe the sweep of a flower bed motivates you to go in search of an elegant sculpture.

In addition to choosing that special decorative item, it is helpful to consider the impact you want to make in the garden—for instance to create a dramatic focal point, an imposing entrance, a beckoning destination or welcoming outdoor room.

Here are four ways I have used non-living things to create special highlights around my own garden, and indeed they run the gamut—from classic to whimsy. I hope they will inspire you to find new ways of enhancing your own garden.

And to learn more—I will be presenting a seminar on this whole topic, including over a hundred beautiful photographs, at the Vermont Flower Show on March 1, 2019 at noon. I hope you can join me.

A Dramatic Focal Point

While the shady corners in our gardens may be soothing and relaxing, sometimes they can also feel featureless and uninteresting. But just the simple trick of setting a classic ceramic pot among all those green leaves will create a focal point that draws our attention and brings that shady space to life.

I am the proud owner of three beautiful colorful pots that I bought many years ago from Robert Compton, a skilled potter who lives in Bristol, VT. And, at around 20" high, they make perfect containers for shade-loving flowers.

Every spring I put out these special pots in different parts of my garden. I set each one up on a couple of pavers, both to create a firm base and also to elevate the pot slightly above all the surrounding ferns and hostas. Finally adding a few tuberous begonias with brightly colored flowers creates the perfect foil for all the surrounding greenery.

Beckoning Destinations

Like many people, Dick and I love to spend time outdoors chatting over a nice cup of tea or a glass of wine.

Thus not only did we build a screened gazebo for those times when the bugs may be biting, but I have also carefully positioned several benches around the garden in both sunny and shady areas.

And while our preferences have evolved over time, at this point our favorite bench for day-time forays sits on a specially created 'mini-patio' under a huge maple. From this shady vantage point we can look across the sunny garden beds, and watch the butterflies and bees as they flit from flower to flower in search of nectar.

If your garden seems to be missing that special 'something' I suggest you add a garden bench where it is visible from your favorite indoor room. Garden benches seem to magically conjure up evocative feelings about the specialness of our outdoor world. From spring until fall it will beckon you 'come on out and enjoy the garden', while even in the depth of winter it will be like 'a ghost of summer' reminding you that spring will soon be here.

An Enticing Entrance

The space around our back door is strictly functional; there is a small raised bed where I grow herbs and salad greens,



photo by Dick Conrad
The entrance to Judith's back garden in Goshen, VT is flanked by serviceberry trees and wrought-iron trellises. Across the lawn the gazebo is a popular family gathering spot while the bench offers a quiet place to enjoy the distant mountains.

plus the wash line and the woodshed. Thus my mood there is decidedly busy and focused.

But a few steps away I walk out along a short path and quickly my mood changes to serene and tranquil. This is the entranceway to our back garden with its colorful flowing flowerbeds and, off in the distance, a view of Mount Moosalamoo.

The entrance path is made of flat irregularly shaped blue-stone pavers, and it is flanked on either side by deep flower beds. Here I planted a pair of serviceberries and in their dappled shade, I grow many favorite woodland plants. Finally, to finish the picture and further emphasize this special entrance, on either side of the path I placed the free-standing wrought-iron trellises you can see in the photograph.

Furthermore this arrangement is lovely in every season. The flowers on the serviceberries are a springtime delight, the trellises support a pair of flowering clematis for summertime color, the leaves on the serviceberries turn a beautiful orange each fall, while in wintertime the snow on the ironwork is nothing short of magical.

A Welcoming Front Doorway

The south-facing space around our front door, enclosed on three sides by house walls, is a quintessential 'outdoor room'. Narrow flower beds run along each wall, while the central stone patio (just 18' x 14') easily provides room for the front walkway and, to one side, a charming metal bench.

Our front door is a busy place. In addition to our guests, Dick and I also use it for all our own comings and goings. So I really want this small space emanate a huge 'WELCOME'.

Not only does the bench create the perfect sunny spot for enjoying a cup of tea, it also sets an easy relaxed mood as we come home.

And, although most of the vertical wall space is claimed by windows, in each of the remaining areas I have hung carefully selected objects. On the east wall a burnished metal 'sun' with radiating flames shines down, while between the windows on the north wall a charming metal trellis provides support for a climbing honeysuckle, which has the added benefit of enticing the hummingbirds.

Finally, about five years ago, to add a delightful touch of whimsy to the scene, I hung the smiling face you see in this picture to watch over our arrivals and departures. And, since she has a small planting pocket concealed in her hair, each year I can give her a new hair style.

Our lovely 'face' is work of talented Vermont ceramicist, Susan Smith-Hunter, and, if you are interested, she currently has a few for sale in the Brandon Artist's Guild—each a unique individual!

Judith Irven and her husband Dick Conrad live in Goshen, VT where together they nurture a large garden. You can subscribe to Judith's blog about her Vermont gardening life at www.northcountryreflections.com.

Dick Conrad is a landscape and garden photographer; to see his photographs go to www.northcountryimpressions.com.



photo by Dick Conrad
A beautiful whimsical face that hangs near Judith and Dick's front door to greet them every time they come home. It was made by Susan Smith Hunter of Brandon.

Old Homes

Old homes among the hills! I love their gardens;
 Their old rock fences, that our day inherits;
 Their doors, round which trees stand like wardens;
 Their paths, down which the shadows march like spirits;
 Broad doors and paths that reach bird-haunted gardens.

I see them gray among their ancient acres,
 Severe of front, their gables lichen-sprinkled—
 Like gentle-hearted, solitary Quakers,
 Grave and religious, with kind faces wrinkled—
 Serene among their memory-hallowed acres.

Their gardens, banked with roses and with lilies—
 Those sweet aristocrats of all the flowers—
 Where Springtime mints her gold in daffodillies,
 And Autumn coins her marigolds in showers,
 And all the hours are toilless as the lilies.

I love their orchards where the gay woodpecker
 Flits, flashing o'er you, like a winged jewel;
 Their woods, whose floors of moss the squirrels checker
 With half-hulled nuts; and where, in cool renewal,
 The wild brooks laugh, and raps the red woodpecker.

Old homes! Old hearts! Upon my soul forever
 Their peace and gladness lie like tears and laughter;
 Like love they touch me, through the years that sever,
 With simple faith; like friendship, draw me after
 The dreamy patience that is theirs forever.

—MADISON CAWEIN
 Louisville, KY 1865-1914

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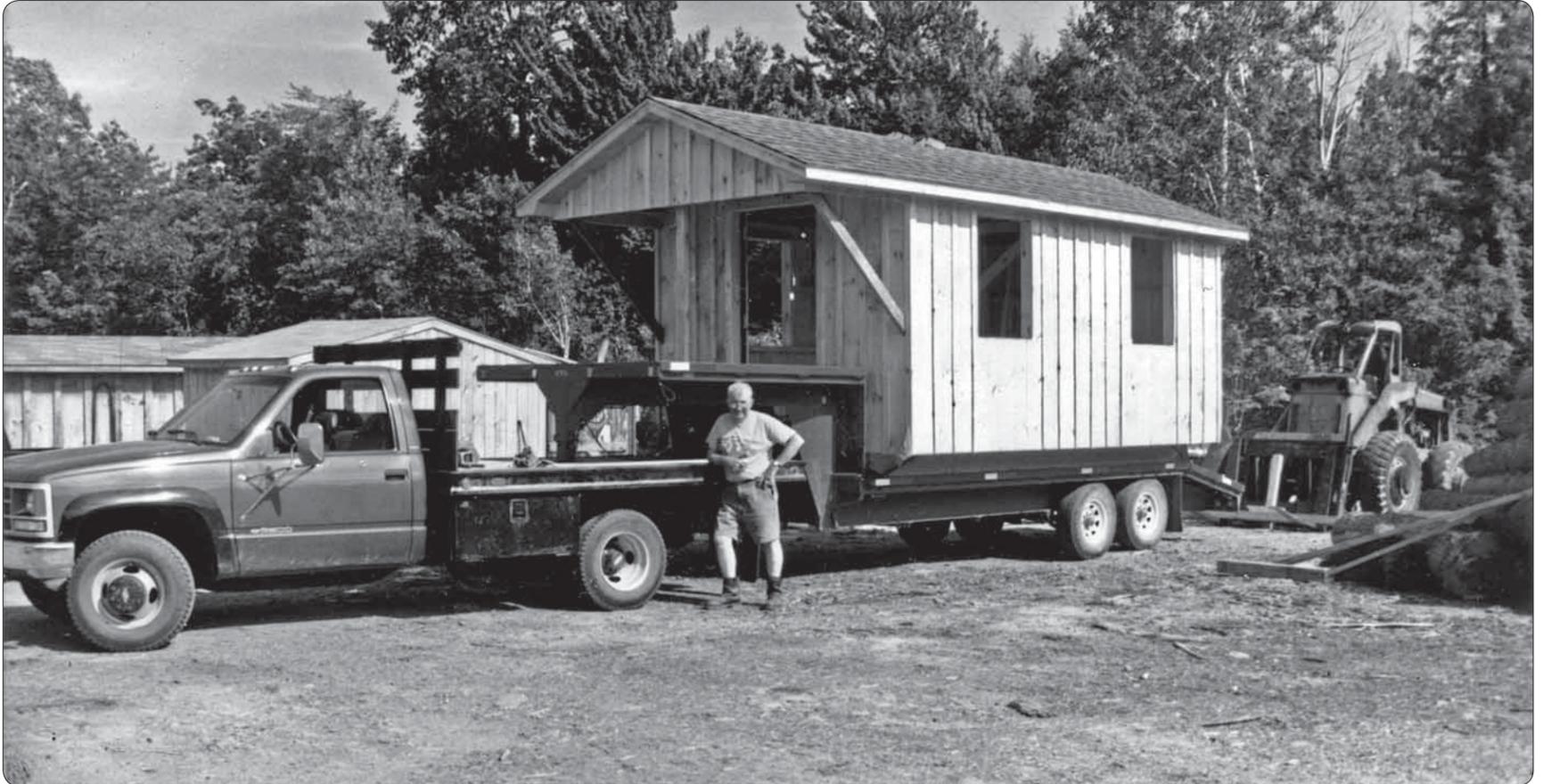
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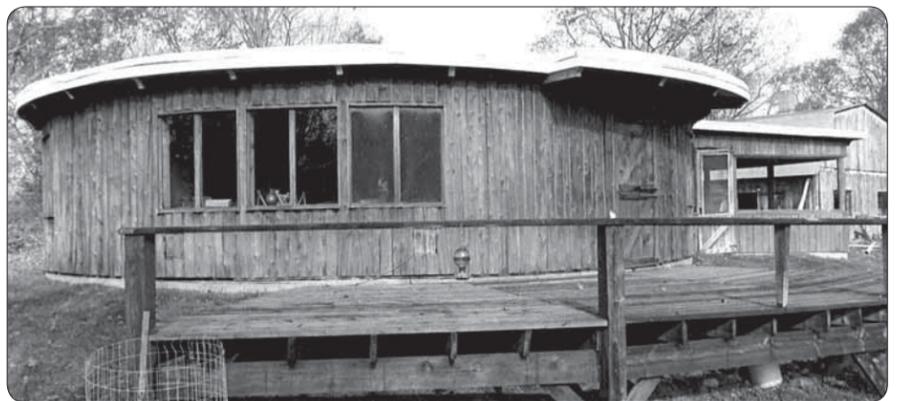
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