

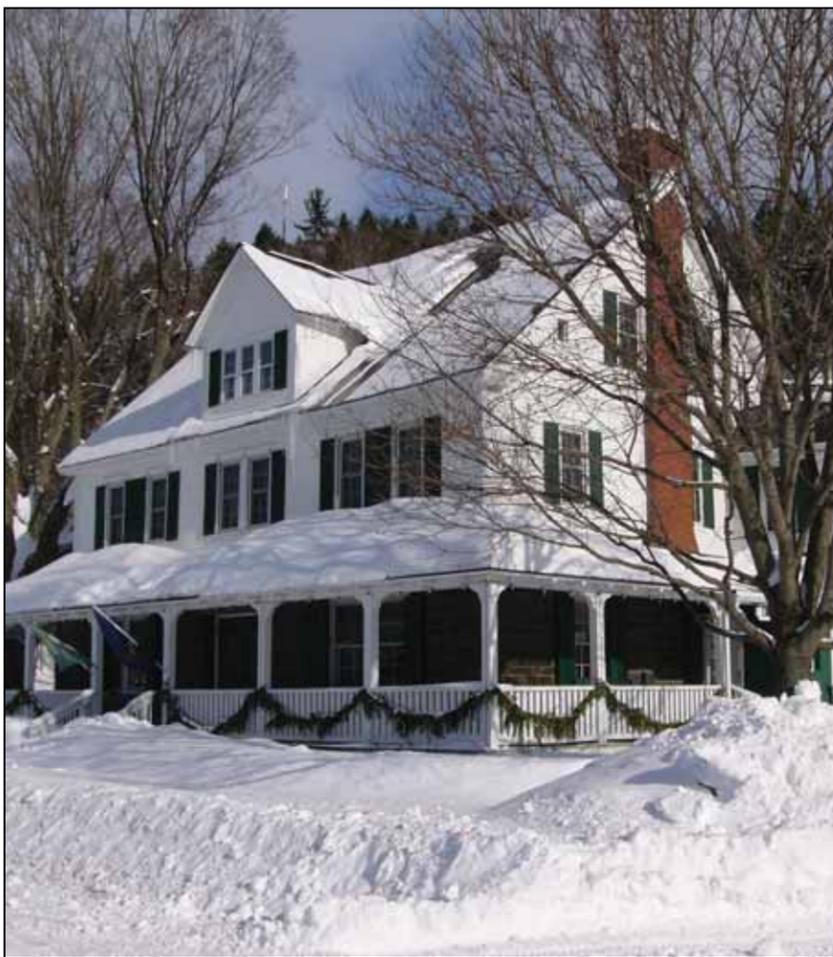
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March 2015

N. Cassidy



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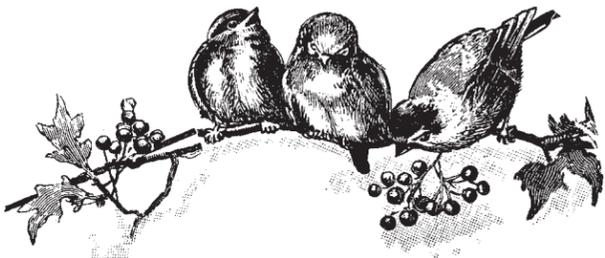
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March Journal

The Visitor

by Bill Felker

From time to time, I am visited by depressions, sometimes light, sometimes deep. One morning not long ago, I woke up to one of those darker moods in which nothing seemed right or meaningful. Not only was I useless to myself, I thought, but there was nothing positive I could do for anyone else.

Staring out the window and nursing my emotions, I heard the knocking of a yellow-bellied sapsucker on the siding of the house. She had been there before; a yellow-bellied sapsucker had appeared in the middle of spring to tap at my siding nearly every year for more than a decade.

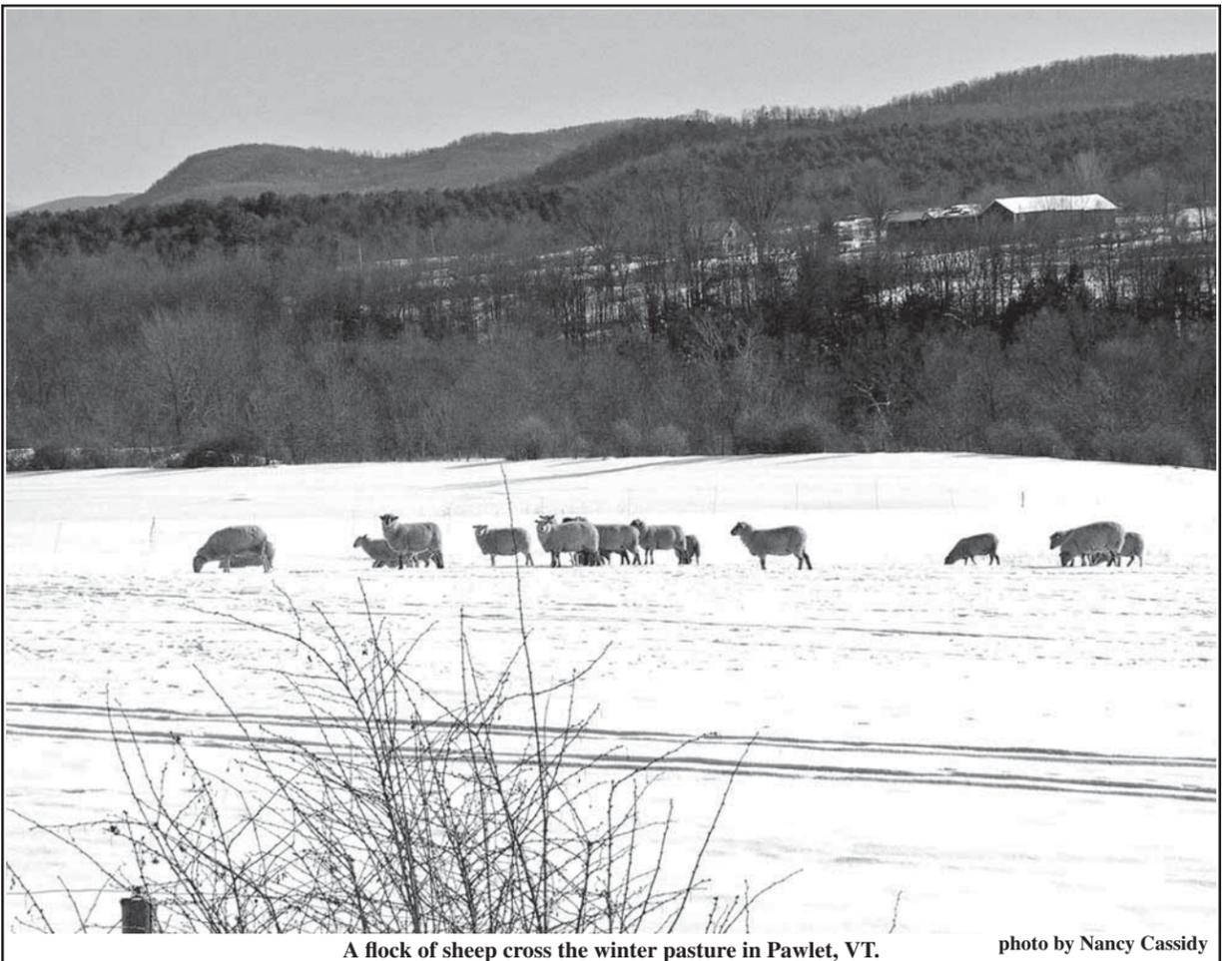
She comes just once a spring on her way to somewhere. If she is not the same bird each year, then maybe a daughter or grand-daughter following a family tradition, taught by her parents that for good luck, or maybe for the taste of a certain kind of beetle emerging from the cedar just before equinox,

she should stop and check the wood.

And that simple knock, which I would have missed had I been busy at more practical things, brought flooding in the whole optimism of spring. The isolation I'd been feeling dissipated immediately. The bird's presence and her history were all I needed to come back from what seemed to be a hopeless funk.

In my joy, I blew the whole incident out of proportion. I allowed the arbitrary act of a sapsucker to reassure me about the good order of the entire world. Things were not, as my mood had told me, out of sync and empty, but rich and all in place if only I would listen.

Perhaps, I thought, fortune was no more or less than this. Maybe sense and virtue, immediate pleasure and lasting meaning, were as free and as accessible. And if the transient yellow-bellied sapsucker could wield the power of happiness, I might wield it, too.



A flock of sheep cross the winter pasture in Pawlet, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

March in Vermont

Curmudgeon March is here again
With all his old pretense;
He blows the ear-muffs off your ears,
The pickets off your fence;
He wants it known that he's a man
And month of consequence.

He claims descent from General Mars,
And says he led the year,
Till Julius Caesar happened 'round
And took him by the ear,
And said, "Step down, old Janus-face
Has your position here."

For bitter looks and biting breath
He has no likes nor kind;
The children born when he's around
Will neither grow nor mind;
He drives the well towards Jacksonville
And leaves the sick behind.

He hates to see the bare-back ground
Stick up above the snow;
He hates to see the onions sprout
And autos start to go;

He likes a coalpile best that's gone,
And next best when it's low.

He has no mercy in his heart,
No warmth within his soul;
He'd let a poor "uplifter" trudge
Before he'd fill her bowl;
He'd turn the pasture brook to ice
And spoil the swimming hole.

But he gets paid for his misdeeds,
The cowslips in the dell
Run out their yellow tongues at him,
The crows, they sass him well,
And pretty April comes and tells
The anxious buds to swell.

—DANIEL L. CADY



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Guilford Church Sugar-on-Snow Supper Set for March 21

The Annual Sugar-on-Snow Supper at Guilford Community Church, Guilford, VT will be held on Saturday evening, March 21.

The menu features baked ham, baked beans, deviled eggs, potato salad, coleslaw, freshly baked rolls, sugar-on-snow with homemade donuts & pickles, and your choice of coffee, tea or milk.

A half gallon of maple syrup will be raffled off during each seating.

There are three seatings to choose from, at 4:30, 5:45, and 7 p.m. Prices are \$11 adults, \$5 children age 11 and under, and \$3 for preschoolers.

Directions: take 1-91 to Vermont Exit 1 (Brattleboro), go south on US Rt. 5 just past Guilford Country Store, left on Bee Barn Rd., then left again to 38 Church Dr.

For reservations, please call (802) 254-9562 or email guilfordchurchsupper@gmail.com. For more information visit www.guilfordchurch.org.



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Vermont Country Sampler
March 2015, Vol. XXX

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Keith Bronson (on left) gathers sap with the help of a team of Percheron draft horses at Maple Hill Farm in Whitingham, VT. Farm owner Steve Morse carries a bucket on the far right.

17th Annual Whitingham Maple Festival

For the 17th year in a row, the town of Whitingham will host its annual spring celebration of Vermont's most famous export—maple sugar and maple syrup. This year, the festival will be held Saturday, March 28 and Sunday, March 29, 2015. There are a number of Bed & Breakfasts and small inns in and around town, making this a pleasant weekend get-away.

Whitingham, VT, a town of 1,500 residents nestled in the southern Green Mountains, takes its maple seriously. It is in the blood; the first 14 settlers arrived in 1770, and by the early years of the next century, there were 45 sugar makers working nearly 40,000 taps. Today, there are still around 18 sugarhouses in town, turning out some 8,000 gallons of syrup in a good season. Many of the town's families have lived and sugared here for generations.

Plans for this year's festival include self-guided tours of seven local sugar houses (with plenty of opportunities for sampling), pancake breakfasts, luncheons, horse-drawn sleigh rides, a craft fair, maple recipe contest, sugar-on-snow baked ham dinner and more. There will be activities for children at the Whitingham School. And shops and galleries around Jacksonville and Whitingham will be open.

Visitors with a penchant for history might be interested to know that Whitingham is the birthplace of Brigham Young, the Mormon leader. Two monuments (one rather infamous locally) note Young's roots in the town, and are worth a side trip.

You can pick up a map and check the latest schedules at the Information Booth at the Whitingham Municipal Center on Rt. 100 in Whitingham. The town is located on Route 100 in southern Vermont—between Bennington and Brattleboro, and about 25 miles north of Greenfield, MA.

Whitingham Festival Schedule

Saturday, March 28th

7:00–10:00—Pancake Breakfast by the Lions Club at the Jacksonville Municipal Center. Adults \$8, 65+ years and children 5-12 \$6, children under five free.

8:00–4:00—Information Booth is open at the Twin Valley High School on Rt. 100 in Whitingham.

8:00–5:00—Sugar House Tours at seven local sugarhouses, hours vary. Self-guided auto tour maps available at the Information Booth.

9:00–4:00—Craft Fair. Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100, Whitingham. Food at the Craft Fair is priced by item since various organizations offer a variety of delicious lunch items.

All Day—Self-guided Tours of Whitingham artisans, hours vary. Participants will open their studios and workspaces to share their ideas, process and products.

10:00–2:00—Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides, snow or no snow (donations appreciated). Across from Twin Valley Middle School, Rt. 100, Whitingham.

11:30–1:30—Lunch is served by the Whitingham Ladies Benevolent Society at the Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100, Whitingham..

5:00–7:00—Sugar-on-Snow Ham Dinner by Unity Lodge #89 A&FM at the Jacksonville Municipal Center. Adults \$12, children 5-12 \$6, children under five free.

Sunday, March 29th

7:00–10:00—Pancake Breakfast by American Legion and Legion Auxiliary at the Municipal Center in Jacksonville. Adults \$8, 65+ years \$6, children under five free.

10:00–2:00—Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides, snow or no snow (donations appreciated). Across from Twin Valley Middle School, Rt. 100, Whitingham.

10:00–3:00—Information Booth is open at Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100, Whitingham.

8:00–5:00—Sugar House Tours at seven local sugarhouses, hours vary. Self-guided auto tour maps are available at the Information Booth at Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100, Whitingham.

10:00–2:30—Craft Fair at Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100, Whitingham. Food at the Craft Fair is priced by item since various organizations offer a variety of delicious lunch items.

All Day—Self-guided Tours of Whitingham artisans, hours vary. Participants will open their studios and workspaces to share their ideas, process and products.

11:30–1:30—Lunch is served by the eighth grade class at Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100, Whitingham.

Please check the latest schedule at the Information Booth at Twin Valley High School. For further festival information call Carol Mandracchia at (802) 368-2658. info@whitinghammaplefest.com. www.whitingham-maplefest.us.



Jason Morse filters maple syrup at Maple Hill Farm in Whitingham, VT.



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Local Students to Compete in Annual LEGO Contest

Saturday, March 21

When winter weather lures people indoors and school vacations and national holidays present extra time for creative projects, students are encouraged to work on their entries for the 2015 LEGO Contest. The annual contest will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday March 21 at the NewsBank Conference Center in Chester, VT. Last year over 175 adults and children attended, and entries came from 15 towns in Vermont and three in New Hampshire. Children and adults viewed fabulously different creations in the comfortable space generously donated by NewsBank, Inc. The event is open to the public and is sponsored by St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

LEGOmaniacs Pre-K through Grade 8 and families are invited to enter and display their original creations (no kits are allowed) for others to admire. Entries should be constructed at home, brought to the NewsBank Conference Center, and set up in a space approximately 18" x 30" from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the day of the contest. 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 adults and children who have collaborated. The judges will speak with every entrant to make sure they understand each entry's theme and details before they write comments on an entry card.

Around 12:30 p.m. LEGO prizes will be awarded to the winners and runners-up in the grade and family team divisions, with special awards for the Judges' Choice for Best in Show and Most Vermont creations. A new award, entitled Creators' Choice, will recognize the construction the entrants themselves vote as their most favorite.

While the judging is going on, participants will have a chance to check out the other entries and to share techniques and ideas with the other exhibitors. Stay and enjoy the displays—refreshments will be for sale making for a relaxed,



A crowd of kids examining the Drive Through entry of the girl in the striped shirt on the far side of the table. This gives an idea of the sharing that goes on at the annual LEGO Contest in Chester, VT.

fun family event. This year, after entrants have spoken with the judges about their exhibits, they may go to a LEGO station and build an additional creation either alone or with a friend. The building activity will be another opportunity to learn from others and have fun while the judges are conferring and making their decisions.

Participants should pre-register by March 16 to be assured of a space. Entry forms may be downloaded from www.chester.telegraph.org, www.ourchester.org, and Special Events at www.stlukesepiscopalvt.org. Printed forms are available at the Whiting Library and Chester-Andover Elementary School on Main Street in Chester.

A check for the pre-registration fee of \$10 per entry 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. Both the entry form and fee must be received by March 16 in order to reserve a space. Entries after March 16 and on the day of the contest will be \$15, if there is space; but to avoid disappointment, pre-registration is strongly encouraged. A portion of the proceeds from the program will go to the Children's Library at the Whiting Library in Chester, VT.

The NewsBank Conference Center is located at 352 Main St., in Chester, VT.

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

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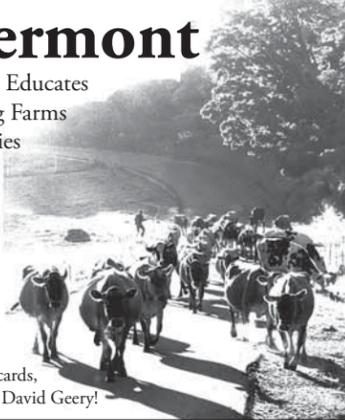
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including this photo from John David Geery!

St. Patrick's Fiddle Frenzy In Bellows Falls on March 14

Stone Church Arts is hosting the St. Patrick's Fiddle Frenzy on Saturday, March 14, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Immanuel Episcopal Church in Bellows Falls, VT.

The traditional music of New England and the Celtic countries can be as warm and comforting as a winter fire or as potent and exhilarating as a summer thunderstorm.

Fiddler and singer Lissa Schneckenburger is a master of both moods, a singer who brings new life to old ballads and a skillful fiddler of dance tunes old and new. Lissa will perform with fiddler and singer Laura Cortese and Boston based guitarist Bethany Waickman and perhaps ten of her fiddle students. Together, they make a sparkling acoustic music creation!

Tickets are \$20, students and seniors \$15.

There will also be a Fiddle and Song Retreat from March 13-15 held at the Immanuel Retreat Center in Bellows Falls. Take workshops on fiddling, singing, and song writing, participate in community outreach, perform in the annual St. Patrick's "Fiddle Frenzy" concert, and more! Tuition is \$90, with room and tuition \$125-\$225.

Immanuel Episcopal Church is located at 20 Church St, Bellows Falls, VT. For information call (802) 460-0110. Visit www.stonechurcharts.org.



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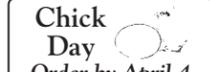
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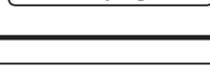


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Beautiful Jewelry From Vintage Buttons

by Nina Jamison

Martha L. Welch of Chittenden, Vermont, designs one-of-a-kind jewelry using antique buttons. She started her button jewelry business, Vintage Button Jewelry, in the fall of 2007, a year after she retired as an elementary school teacher. Martha's passion is fueled by her love of the search, the designing, and the history of the buttons she uncovers.

Traversing the snowy back roads of Mendon and Chittenden we recently visited Martha at her antique filled, early 1800s home. It is here that her inspiration and love of history was born, in the home she grew up in. Martha says, "My inspiration came from my childhood. I was raised with antiques and, from an early age. I grew to appreciate the history that went with them. My mother's button box was one of my favorite toys. I loved playing with buttons, and I guess that was one thing I never outgrew."

The vintage buttons are from the late-19th century through mid-20th century. They all have value as collectables and were therefore not damaged in the making of the jewelry. China buttons, Victorian metal buttons and glass buttons are a few of the handcrafted pieces, each reflecting the era in which it was made.

The vegetable ivory buttons are of particular interest since there was a vegetable ivory button factory in Gaysville, Vermont in the late 1800s.

Along the path from an "out-of-the-box" idea to a successful business, Martha has learned several important lessons. "If you can make your passion into your business, you've got it made. Keep your inventory up and your prices down."

Her philosophy is indeed carried over in her pricing; the unique, one-of-a-kind necklaces and earrings are \$24 to \$32.

Each antique button jewelry piece has a fascinating past and comes with a card describing its history. What's not to love?!

A new collection of Vintage Button Jewelry by Martha L. Welch is now at VAULT, an official Vermont State Craft Center in Springfield, VT.

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

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



Martha L. Welch will be showing her Vintage Button Jewelry at The VAULT in Springfield, VT.

Stargazing with Bob Dudley & SoVerA at Grafton Ponds

Join The Nature Museum at Grafton, the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group, and Grafton Ponds on the evening of Friday March 20, 2015 for a stargazing experience for adults and families!

Bob Dudley of the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group will lead an astronomy program at Grafton Ponds in Grafton, VT. In case of cloudy weather, a rain date

will be on March 21st. The crescent moon will be setting in the western sky with the planet Venus nearby, and Jupiter will be positioned for us to observe through a telescope. Fee: \$5, family \$20.

Grafton Ponds is located at 783 Townshend Rd. in Grafton, VT. For more details call (802) 843-2111 or go to www.nature-museum.org.

Organic Beekeeping Workshop With Ross Conrad in Chester, VT

Join The Nature Museum for a beekeeping workshop with expert Ross Conrad. On Saturday, March 14th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the News Bank Conference Center in Chester, VT, Conrad will lead a workshop on "Overwintering Bees and Spring Management" and "Beeswax: Production, Collection, Processing, and Uses".

Light morning refreshments will be served, featuring special treats from

Grafton Village Cheese! Participants are encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch. This will be an interactive workshop with plenty of time to discuss beekeeping and answer questions with Ross. Fee is \$35.

The News Bank Conference Center is located at 352 Main St., Chester, VT. For more info call (802) 843-2111. Visit www.nature-museum.org.

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Martha L. Welch's Vintage Button Jewelry.

March

March is the time for many things;
For blustering winds and bluebirds' wings,
For thawing snow and muddy boots,
For cleaning house and crocus shoots.
March spells beginning to all springs.

March is the time for sugar-on-snow,
When pussywillows start to grow,
For hot town meetings, alleys, too,
And—you will always find this true—
Spring fever comes when March winds blow!

—MIM HERWIG
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Snowshoeing in the mountains of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom.

photo by Jeff Gold

The Weeks of March

by Bill Felker

The Week of the Lanky Wild Onions

The advance of spring is neither logical nor linear. Spring does not always obey the measurements of the sun, sometimes arrives all at once, sometimes hardly comes at all. Sometimes it crosses boundaries into autumn, winter or summer. And, like all seasons, its nature in any one year is evocative of different years, blending and separating, transporting the observer back a decade or a half century, teaching that nothing belongs where it seems to belong but that everything is welded together in the spin of the planet.

—Bill Felker

I walked southwest into the ice that was shining in the sun. The woods were bright, steaming from the melting water. When I returned northeast with the sun at my back, the wet osage branches were golden and spring like. As I moved, the ice fell around me, pieces like cocoons or cicada ectoskeletons, fossils of the branches, the winter's hulls shattered in the March sun. It was like walking in rain and hail, the sky pure blue. At one point, I turned around and saw the biggest red fox I've ever seen jogging after me. He stopped when I stopped, put his ears back, sniffed my tracks, then turned and climbed up into the woods. At home in the greenhouse, the

first leaf of a violet, the plant brought in last fall, had grown out. In one corner of the yard, one snowdrop and two aconites were blooming, and a few wild onions were getting lanky.

The Week of Buzzards and Mosquitoes

A few days ago, not a bird, not a sound; everything rigid and severe; then in a day the barriers of winter give way, and spring comes like an inundation. In a twinkling all is changed.

—John Burroughs

So much happened before the cold weather moved back in this week.

On the 9th, Mike reported: "The redwings finally showed up a week ago on Tuesday (February 28th). I heard a killdeer for the first time Sunday (March 6th), and I believe the mockingbirds might be back. Bluebirds were singing today."

Casey also called on the 9th. He'd seen one buzzard, but he admitted that "one buzzard doesn't count" as the official return of buzzards for spring. The next day, the problem was solved. Casey phoned again to tell me that eight buzzards were circling above.

"Old friends," he called them, and he described the birds to me as they rode the hard wind up and up. So I went out into the back yard of my house, and there they were, so high that both Casey and I could see them even though we stood a mile apart.

Mosquitoes appear with the buzzards. Sure enough, on the 11th, Jean and I found a mosquito flying around in our car. Blackbirds arrived the week that robins began their chorus at 6 a.m. Cardinals and doves were calling around 6:30 a.m.

The Week of the First Cabbage White

He is bewitched forever who has seen,
Not with his eyes but with his vision, Spring
Flow down the woods and stipple leaves with sun...

—Vita Sackville-West

Along the river this afternoon, I found the first purple cress and the very first hepatica. Maples were blooming everywhere, and there were hulls on the ground from the bloom of the high trees overhead, chinquapin oaks. A cabbage butterfly flew past me, announcing the Cabbage White Butterfly Moon.

Tonight as I came home from church, I heard the first toad calling from the pond. I went out into the back yard and stood listening to him. In the west, the new moon was setting, most of its globe veiled in the earth's shadow. Above it, bright Jupiter, above and to the south of Jupiter, Saturn, and then the stars arched west into the red eye of Taurus, to Orion, then down to Sirius and then to rising Leo. About 9:00 p.m., Casey called with another buzzard update; he'd counted almost 50 vultures, a record number for this date, sailing above his farm, playing in the wind: "It was a sight to see," he said.

The Week of the First Groundhog

It is the first mild day of March:
each minute sweeter than before,
the redbreast sings from the tall larch
that stands beside our door.

—William Wordsworth

The woods floor is covered with three inches of snow, but the air is gentle, the wind still. A few flies are out; one tried to bite my wrist. Crows restless. Past the mill, I found new sprouts on the southern side of a log. A small tan moth fluttered across the path. On the way home, the first groundhog of the year ran across the road. Starlings are migrating north along the highway.

In the alley, I discovered a great new patch of snowdrops, full bloom, hundreds of square feet, hidden in a backyard bordering the alley. In my east garden, the crocus stand tight, waiting for full sun and a little warmth to blossom.

This afternoon when the temperature rose a little above 60, they finally trusted enough to open. When I was looking for henbit budding, I found that the first stonecrop had emerged. Tulip foliage was three to four inches, daylily foliage two to three inches. A few of the aconites I planted last fall have yellow buds, but they lie limp like naked fledglings just emerged from their eggs.



Now is Sign-up Time for our Summer Season Farm Share (CSA)

Share members can choose from all the plants and produce we offer. Details at clearbrookfarm.com

Our Greenhouses are filling up. Bedding plants will be available for our late April opening.

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A Vermont Almanack for Early Spring

by Bill Felker

And so we celebrate
renewal of the world:
happy are they who find their love therein,
their heart's desire.

—Manuscript of Benediktbeuern

The Phases of the Flowering Moss Moon And the Cabbage White Butterfly Moon

March 5: The Flowering Moss is full at 1:06 p.m. Also today, the moon reaches apogee, its position farthest from Earth. **March 13:** The moon enters its final quarter at 12:48 p.m. **March 19:** Lunar perigee: The moon is closest to Earth. **March 20:** Cabbage White Butterfly Moon is new at 4:36 a.m. **March 27:** The moon enters its second quarter at 2:43 a.m.

The Sun's Progress

Equinox occurs at 12:14 a.m. The sun also enters Aries.

Daylight Savings Time

Set clocks ahead one hour at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 8.

The Planets of March

Venus and Mars share Pisces in the west during March evenings. Then Venus moves to Taurus, and Mars travels to Aries, disappearing into the sunset on April 18. Jupiter continues his residence in Cancer, riding across the western sky from dusk until the middle of the night. Saturn remains in Scorpio as a morning star, very low in the southeast.

The Stars

Jupiter in Cancer follows Gemini across the middle of the heavens this month, and Venus leads on Orion, who has now shifted into the high west. Sirius, the Dog Star, stays a little behind its master, low along the southern horizon. April and May rise in the east, attached to Regulus, to Arcturus and to the Corona Borealis.

Meteorology

Major weather systems are due to reach the Northeast on March 3, 6 (usually the most severe front of the month), 10 (ordinarily followed by quite mild temperatures), 15, 20 (frequently the second-coldest front of March), 25 (often followed by the best weather so far in the year), and 30.

New Moon on March 20, and full moon on March 5 are likely to increase chances for frost and for storms as the weather systems due near those dates reach Vermont. Perigee on March 19 is likely to make the March 20 front stronger than usual.

Sugaring-Time

The crows above the woodlot
Are out on flapping wings,
And in the dooryard maple
An early robin sings;
Beside the barn the cattle
Stand warming in the sun,
And it is clear that spring is here
And sugaring has begun.

Go yoke the brindle oxen,
And get the draw-tubs out,
The maple grove shall echo
The teamster's hearty shout;
Old Jack, the dog, is waiting
To help the work along;
At every tree a bucket,
In every heart a song.

Is there a season dearer
Than this to country folk,
When every old brown sugarhouse
Is sending up its smoke?
We've weathered the long winter
That sealed our northern clime,
And thank the Lord, we've lived to see
Another sugaring-time.

—FLORENCE BOYCE DAVIS
1913, Waitsfield, VT



An icy brook runs through the snowy woods in Bethel, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, March 8th, a Pancake Breakfast, a charity fund-raiser event, will be held at the West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department. Sponsored by the department's firemen, breakfast is open from 7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. All are welcome.

The menu includes pancakes of several varieties including regular, chocolate chip, blueberry and cranberry; as well as waffles, West Pawlet's world-famous home fries, scrambled eggs, sausage and bacon. The menu's beverages include: coffee, tea, milk and orange juice.

Breakfast prices are \$8 for

12 years and up, \$5 for 5-12 years and free to children under the age of 5 years.

Breakfast profits are dedicated for the department's equipment and training needs. The department is a non-profit. Donations are appreciated and are gratefully received. New members are welcome.

The West Pawlet Fire House, located at 2806 Vermont Route 153 (Main Street) in West Pawlet, is a handicap accessible site.

For info contact: Antonio Landon at (802) 345-4312 or email wp5801@yahoo.com.



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Springtime Maple

Circa 1946

by Ella Shannon Bowles
and Dorothy S. Towle

It is always a miracle when spring comes back to New England. Long before the first bluebird saucily skims by the kitchen window there are faint hints of the return of spring. You feel it in your bones even when the stone walls are hidden under deep drifts of snow. If you live in the sugar country—in Vermont, in New Hampshire, in Maine—early in February before the freezing nights and thawing days of sugar weather set in, you begin to think of sap dripping in the buckets hung on the maples, of sweet steam rising from the sugarhouse evaporator, of new maple molasses on breakfast pancakes.

New Englanders have used maple sugar since pioneer days. They learned the secrets of making it from the Indians. In fact, methods of making maple honey and sugar have not changed in their essentials since the Indian women hung elm bark buckets on the trees to receive, the “sweet water,” and threw hot stones into the sap to make it boil.

Everyday maple

A century ago, maple, as most people called it, was commonly used on the table to sweeten the breakfast porridge and the evening cup of tea. The treasured cone of white sugar in its blue or brown paper wrapping was scraped only to make the finest cake or to serve guests at special teas.

Later when big barrels of granulated sugar were on sale in all grocery stores, maple still remained a staple pantry item. Children were given pails of maple sugar for their own use, and their mothers were lavish with it in their cooking. A few pennies bought delicious heart-shaped sugar cakes and crinkly edged patties, and cans of maple syrup and pails of sugar were on sale at farmhouse and store.

A great addition to your kitchen

There are many New England cooks who will not get along without maple products. In a way, both syrup and sugar are luxury items, but still they are in great demand.

We have told you here how to prepare Sugar-on-Snow, or leather aprons or frogs, if you prefer the country names. This is always served at the sugaring-off parties held in the sugarhouses. But you can have sugar-on-snow if you are miles from a maple orchard. All you need are a can of maple syrup and a pan full of clean snow.

Maple syrup and maple sugar give a delicious flavor to both boiled and baked ham. Use them as you would use molasses or brown sugar. We have given a special rule for cooking a slice of ham with maple syrup and sweet potatoes, a dish that was famous in a well-known mountain resort hotel.

If you have not tried maple sugar or maple syrup in muffins and rolls, you have a real treat in store, particularly if butternuts are added. Butternuts are a natural combination with anything maple.

Cooking with maple a New England tradition

A White Mountain tearoom popular in the 1920s was noted for its delicious cinnamon toast. The secret was the use of maple sugar in place of the white sugar usually mixed with cinnamon. French toast also is, improved if the toast is buttered while hot and sprinkled with shaved maple sugar.

One of our most prized recipes was given us by a lineal descendant of Governor Bradford of old Plymouth. Five generations of women have made these delicious thin cakes for the family's Easter dinner dessert. They are called, for a reason nobody can no explain, Hammond's ears. We have included here the recipe for them.

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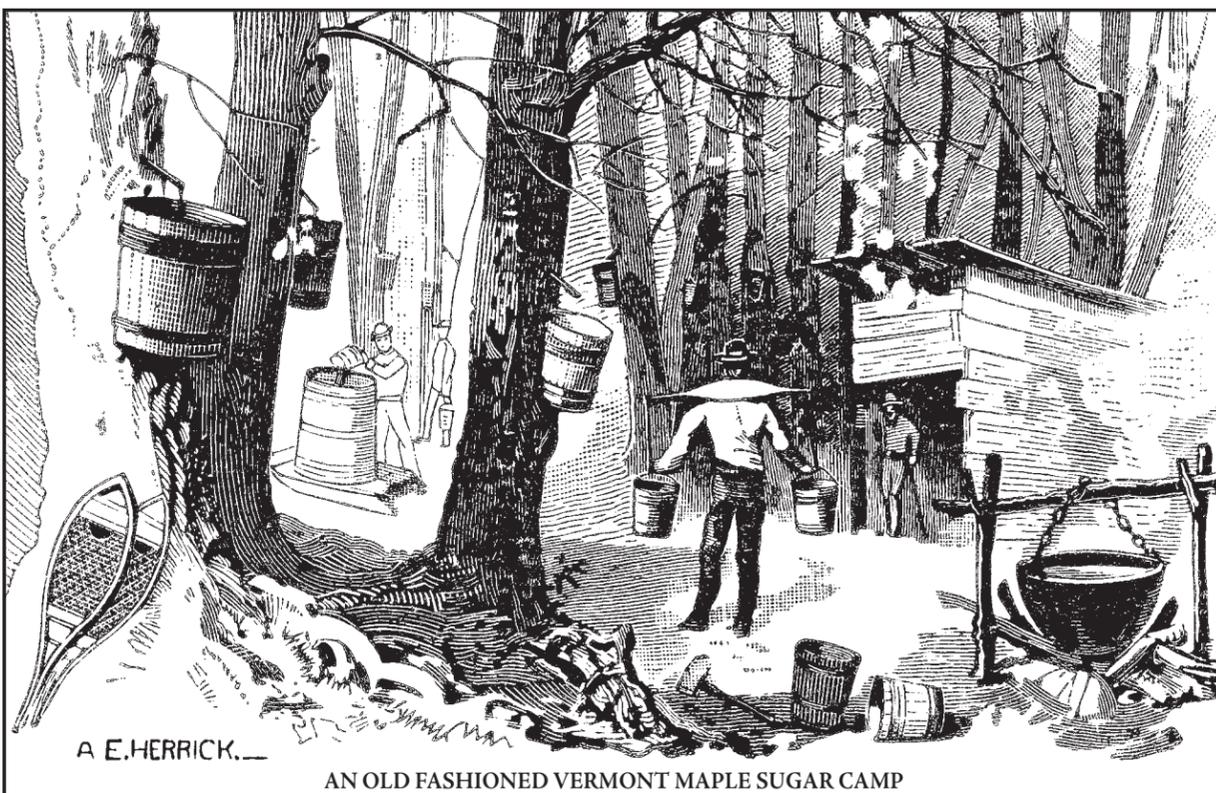


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Recipes for Maple Sweets and Treats

Sugar-on-Snow

Fill large pans with closely packed snow. If you cannot get snow, use a flat cake of ice. Boil the maple syrup until it will wax, that is form a “soft” hard ball when dropped in cold water. Drop the syrup by large spoonfuls on the snow. It will form into shapes that may be twisted on forks or wooden skewers and lifted from the pan. Serve with plain doughnuts, pickles, and coffee.

Waumbek Ham Steak

1 slice ham
1 cup maple syrup
4 sweet potatoes, boiled and peeled

Fry the slice of ham until browned. Slice the sweet potatoes and put in the frying pan with the ham. Add the maple syrup and cook until the potatoes are browned and the syrup is almost absorbed. Serves six.

Maple Butternut Muffins

2 cups flour
2½ tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
2 tbsp. maple spread
3 tbsp. melted shortening
1 egg
1 cup milk
½ cup butternuts

Sift the dry ingredients. Mix the maple spread with the melted shortening and add the egg. Stir together until smooth. Mix in the milk gradually, and add to the dry ingredients. Remove the black skins from the butternuts. Chop the nuts and add them to the muffin mixture, and stir in quickly. Turn the batter into well-greased muffin tins and bake twenty minutes in a hot oven, 425°F. Makes one dozen muffins.

Maple Pinwheel Rolls

Use your favorite recipe for yeast rolls or for baking powder biscuits. Turn the dough on the molding board and roll out to about half an inch thick. Brush with melted butter and cover with on-half cup of shaved maple sugar. Sprinkle with chopped butternuts or walnuts. Roll up like jelly roll and slice. Set the slices and end in a well-greased baking pan and spread the tops with butter. Bake in a hot oven, 475°F, for about twenty minutes.

Old-Fashioned Maple Sugar Cream Cake

1 cup maple sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon soda
1 cup sour cream
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch of salt
2 cups flour
Granulated maple sugar

Mix the maple sugar with the egg and beat thoroughly. Dissolve the soda in a little cold water and stir into the sour cream. Combine the mixtures. Sift the cinnamon and salt with the flour and fold in. Sprinkle the top with granulated maple sugar. Bake in a seven-by-ten-inch pan for half an hour in a moderate oven, 350°F. Serve hot or cold, plain or with whipped cream.

Maple Whipped Cream

1 cup cream
⅓ cup maple spread

Whip the cream until stiff. Add the maple spread and beat slowly until well mixed. Then beat rapidly until firm.

Flo's Maple Custard Pie

3 eggs
1 teaspoon flour
2 teaspoons white sugar
½ cup soft maple sugar
Pinch of salt
3 cups milk
Uncooked pie shell

Beat the eggs slightly. Mix the flour with the white sugar and combine with the maple sugar. Stir into the eggs and add the salt. Heat the milk and pour slowly over the mixture. Arrange the pie shell in a deep nine-inch crockery pie plate. Build up the edges and flute them with the thumb and forefinger. Prick the bottom and sides of the pie shell with a fork. Turn in the egg mixture and bake in a hot oven, 400°F, for ten minutes, then reduce to 325°, and bake until the custard is set. The secret of this pie is not to beat the eggs too much, to heat the milk, and to get the pie shell baked during the first ten minutes of baking. If you prefer, prick the pie shell with a fork and bake for a few minutes in a hot oven. Then remove and turn in the filling and continue baking like custard.

Easter Hammond's Ears

2 cups bread flour
4 eggs
1 teaspoon salt

Sift the flour and salt into a mixing bowl. Make a hole in the center of the mound of flour and break in one unbeaten egg. Mix well. Then make another hole, break in another unbeaten egg, and mix thoroughly. Continue until the four eggs are combined with the flour. When the eggs are mixed in, the flour should be of the consistency of pie crust. Add more flour, if necessary. Turn the dough on a molding board and divide into twelve equal parts. Roll each section as thin as paper and to the size of a dinner plate. Pile one “ear” on top of the other with a little flour between them. Fry in deep hot fat, one at a time. As you fry them, put each one in a pan and pour maple syrup over it. Fry another ear, place on top, and cover with maple syrup. Do this until all the ears are fried. Serve hot, with more maple syrup if necessary. Serves six.

Baked Pears in Maple Syrup

6 large cooking pears
1 tablespoon lemon juice
¾ cup maple syrup

Peel the pears and cut in halves. Put in a baking dish and turn the lemon juice and maple syrup over them. Cover the dish and bake in a very slow oven, not over 275 degrees F., for four hours. Serves six.

New England Maple Salad Dressing

¼ cup lemon juice
1 tablespoon flour
½ cup maple syrup
½ teaspoon salt
Speck of pepper
1 cup cream

Mix the flour with the lemon juice until there are no lumps. Stir in the maple syrup. Cook until it thickens, stirring constantly. Add the seasonings. When the mixture is cool, whip the cream and fold in. Serve on any fruit salad.



Merck Forest & Farmland Center

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photo by Dan Sullivan

Phil Warren and his team of Belgian draft horses take visitors on a ride during the sugaring celebration at Merck Forest and Farmland Center in Rupert, VT.

Rupert, VT

Come to the Annual Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast at Merck Forest & Farmland Center

Sweet! It's time again for Merck Forest and Farmland Center's Annual Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. The breakfast is part of the Vermont Maple Sugar Maker's Open House weekend, and it will be on March 28 and 29, 2015 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Merck Forest and Farmland Center invites visitors and members to join us for the celebration. A community event, the breakfast honors

the hard work that went into the year's sugaring operation, and it celebrates the outcome of sugaring: delicious maple syrup! Come on out for great food and family fun.

On either Saturday or Sunday, take a horse-drawn wagon or sleigh ride up to the Frank Hatch Sap House where our staff will serve MFFC-raised pork breakfast sausages, locally-grown eggs, pancakes drizzled with Merck's Vermont-certified

organic syrup, and coffee and juice.

Everyone is encouraged to explore the workings of the sugaring operation (we will be boiling!), step over to the sugar maple tapping demonstrations, discover the farm, participate in the children's activities, and check the barn for newborn lambs.

As always, feel free to explore our 30 miles of trails during your visit-and the sugarbush!

The cost for the maple celebration and pancake breakfast is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 4-12, and under age 4 free! We are also looking for volunteers to help out at the breakfast. If you are interested in volunteering,

please give the Visitor Center a call at (802) 394-7836.

Merck Forest and Farmland Center's mission is to teach, demonstrate and sustain a working landscape. MFFC's 3,100-acre property, in the Taconic Mountains of southwestern Vermont, is open to the public daily.

With no admission fee, the public is invited to spend time on the farm and enjoy 30 miles of trails for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and horseback riding. Cabin rentals area also available year-round.

Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315, Rupert, VT. www.merckforest.org. (802) 394-7836.



A family enjoys the pancake breakfast at Merck Forest & Farmland Center in Rupert, VT



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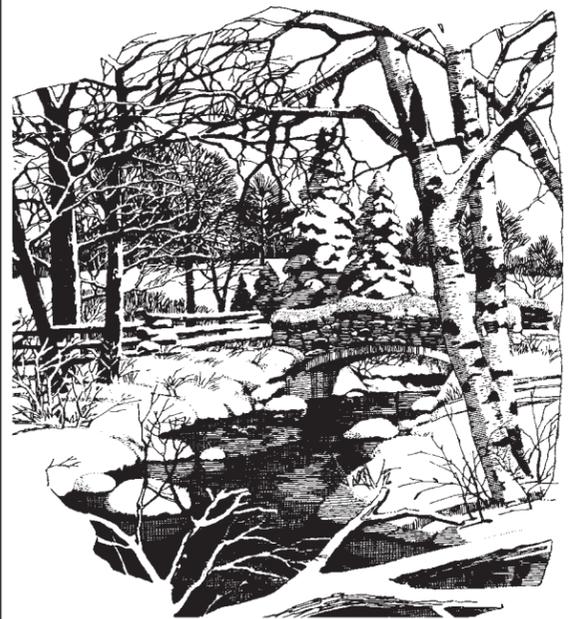


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In Sugarin' Time

It's sugarin' time up country, and settin' here in town
I seem to hear the "drip, drip, drip" of sap a tricklin' down,
Into them wooden buckets in our old sugar place;
Afore Josiah died, and our only daughter Grace,
Insisted 'twasn't no ways safe for me to live alone
Up in that old brown farm-house that long's I live I own.

And naught would do but I must come and stay along o' her
Where sugarin' might be hayin' time, and all this bustlin' stir;
Where smells o' spring, and tricklin' sap, and wild flowers never come.
There ain't no chance for such things around Grace's city home;
And sugarin' time no different ain't from summer or from fall.
I wisht Josiah 'n me was back—a-workin' hard and all.

The children on these brick-paved walks they make me think o' Jim,
What we had hoped would stay by us—the farm was meant for him.
He died when he was twenty. Yes, there was young Josiah,
Professor in a college now, with hope of something higher.
And Grace, our girl, she married what they called a railroad king,
And lives on Beacon Street, in all the styles that she can swing.

But all the same when April comes, I see 'em all agin,
Jest runnin' wild around that farm, them three, and in
All sorts of mischief daily, from early spring to fall.
I wisht that we was back there now—a-workin' hard and all.

I seem to see the tossels shakin' out upon the trees,
I seem to smell the perfume of the May-flowers in the breeze.
I seem to feel the summer a-comin' 'crost the hills.
I seem, up in the pastur', to hear the sharpen' of the blades.
I hear the cattle lowin', I go berryin' in the glades;
I smell the harvest ripenin' over in the corner lot.
I see Josiah bringin' home that last new pair he bought.

I remember how together, when the children went away—
Grown big and married—by the fire we sat at close of day.
And how together we had lived there fifty year—come fall.
I wisht Josiah 'n me was back—a-workin' hard and all.

It's sugarin' time up country, but never once agin
Shall I, now goin' on eighty, see the spring a-comin' in
The old way, thru' the maple trees, 'crost the pasture's brown;
For I must stay—in sugarin' time—on Beacon Street in town.

The children never, as of old, shall I tuck in at night,
Their little feet so tired, but their happy hearts so light.
They wouldn't go back if they could, and I'm too old they say,
And since Josiah isn't there, I let them have their way.

It's sugarin' time up country, though, and memories, like the sap,
Start up and set me longin' for Mother Nature's lap—
And him, and Jim—the farm, the hens, the horses in the stall,
It's sugarin' time up country, I'm homesick—that is all.

—HELEN M. WINSLOW
1890, ROXBURY, MA



A young guest enjoys her sugar-on-snow at the annual Guilford Community Church Sugar-on-Snow Supper in Guilford, VT. This year the supper is on March 21. You can find sugar-on-snow all over Vermont especially during March at church suppers and festivals.

The Old Farmer's Almanack

For the Year of Our Lord 1854

March—Temperance is My Physic

Pure cold-water bathing is good. Some, however, prefer rum; but this is too apt, by mistake, or some other cause, to get into the throat, and so go down the wrong way, thus causing everything else to go wrong.

The love of ease and the love of grog, combined together, form a most dangerous disease.

Farmers and mechanics, who, generally, are engaged in minding their own business, mostly steer clear of diseases brought on by a love of lounging.

But hold—how the wind whistles! The forest cracks! Down tumble the fences, and over goes the old sheep shed. No fear of dyspepsy in the elements. I like the winds. Let them blow "till they crack their cheeks!"

I like the Ides of March. Here is an example for us all to be *stirring*—yes, to some honest and useful purpose. Go to, now, and let your practice show that you are resolved to abide by the good rule of "love thy neighbor as thyself."

April—Sow Well, Reap Well

No stopping now to see the pigeons fly. Our Yankee soil has grown old, and needs working and enriching.

Plough well, if you would sow well and reap well. See all nature in motion! No, not all—there is a knot of fellows that form an exception. They belong to the *Standabout* family, and are of the tribe of the *Gossips*. Not very profitable associates.

Spring time—now is the time to spring, especially if you are looking ahead to reaping time. Let him step out of the way, he who is unwilling in this matter to put his shoulders to the wheels.

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Icicles and Late Snow

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

After a late winter snowfall, I look out the upstairs window of our house and see a new row of icicles. Icicles are one of wintertime's romantic accessories. Like glittering necklaces, they hang down the front of all the big, old, south-facing houses along Castleton's Main Street. They are, however, potential-disasters for the owners of these houses.

Icicles are usually found in combination with ice dams, and ice dams always do serious damage to a building. Snow falls onto a roof and eventually melts. As this melt water runs down, it gets to the colder eaves at the roof edge, and there the water refreezes.

More melt water comes down and rolls over this frozen barrier and drips down forming icicles. But some water backs up behind the ice dam. Because it has no where else to go, eventually, this water will seep down into the building.

That's when upstairs bedroom wallpaper grows damp, peels away, and long brown stains appear. The water often travels horizontally along ceilings, away from the spot where it entered the house. Sometimes, there's enough of it to cause flooding. A highly-insulated attic stops the heat loss that melts ice and brings water inside, but most of Castleton's old houses don't have highly-insulated attics.

The only way to combat the formation of ice barriers is at the first big snowfall to get up there with a specialty rake and clean off the roof. Immediately is the time to do it because going up later and having to chop the barrier away once ice has formed is risky for the chopper and will probably lead to broken roof slates.

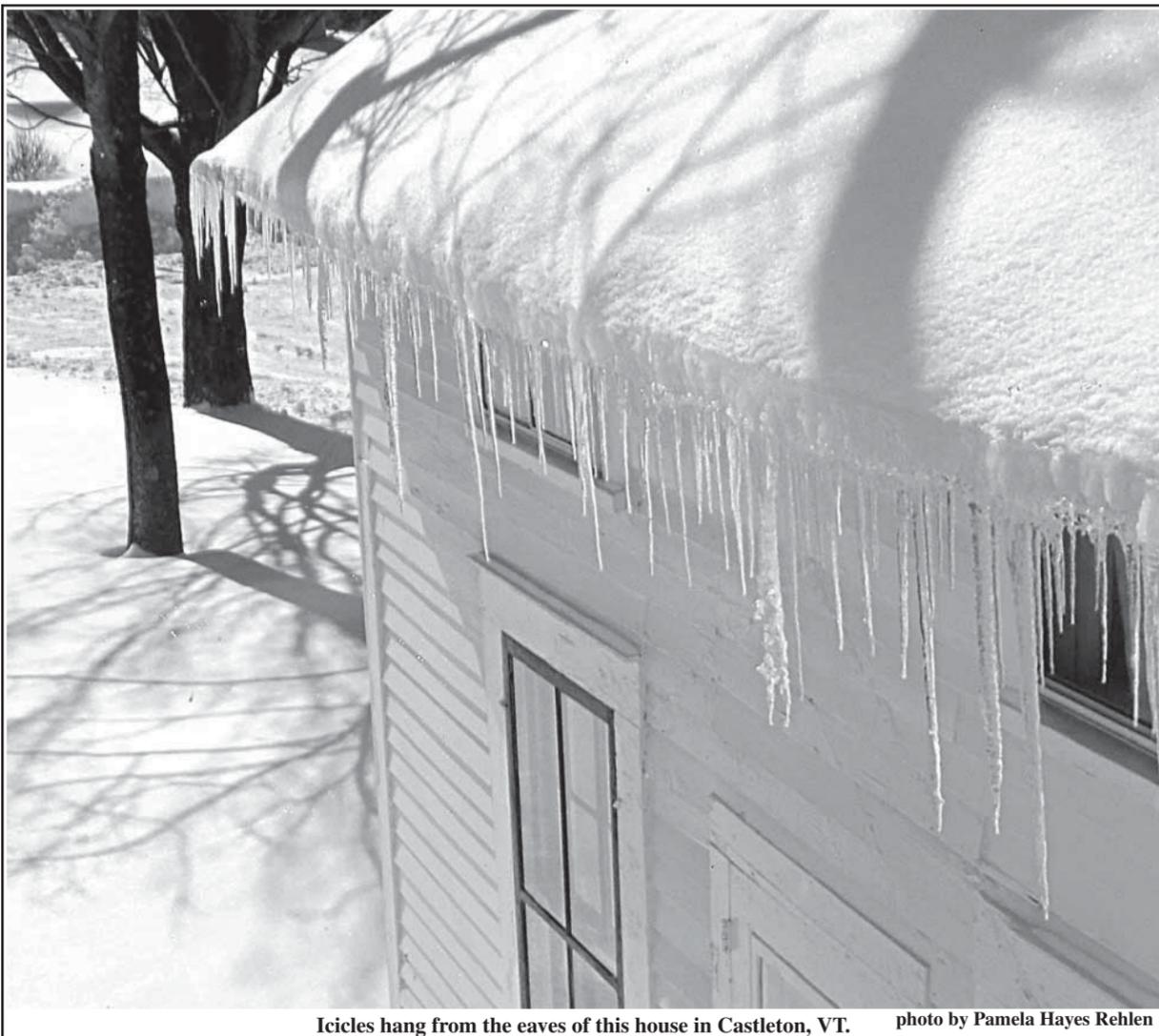
This year it seems that what the weather has specialized in is ice and penetrating cold. That's what people say to me, how cold it's been and how long it seems this cold has lasted. But in the years when we've had heavy snowfall after snowfall, by March, a lot of snow can have accumulated. My husband, as a store owner and landlord, dreads both snow accumulation and snow fall. He tells me that, for him, four or five inches of new snow equals eight hours of plowing and shoveling.

I've always tended to concentrate on the romantic aspects of snow. I used to tell my children—because this is how I remember it—that when I was a girl the snow would fall in December and stay deep on the ground until March. Then it would all go out in a few days with flooding and a torrentially-high Castleton River.

"I used to tell my children...when I was a girl the snow would fall in December and stay deep on the ground 'til March."

I'd walk down to the cemetery bridge to see the water roaring underneath where I stood. But it seems like it's been a long time since we've had that kind of a winter. This year, once again, the snow came in December, iced-up, but mostly stayed on the ground, although every bit of it could be gone, suddenly and dramatically, maybe one of these days in March.

After past years' big snows, I'd walk down the center of Main Street to the post office. When a lot of snow has fallen, the plowed center of Main Street is the only place where anyone can walk. Post-storm, many townspeople wind up



Icicles hang from the eaves of this house in Castleton, VT. photo by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

like Canterbury Pilgrims hailing each other as they march down the middle of the road.

What I like when it turns really cold is that old snow settles and remains clean and picturesque. People stay in and stay quiet, waiting out the frigid temperatures, and our village feels like it must have felt in an earlier time, less hurried, and frantic, more remote and isolated.

But next day the Castleton State College campus will be a lively, sunny place. The rail trail will be a wide avenue of pure white with deep, blue-shadowed, snow in the woods on either side.

Late winter with its bright air, full sun, and established snow pack is a bonanza for snowmobilers, and we have a high-spirited lot of them roaring and clanking through

town, stopping at our store, gassing up at the pumps. But late snow is when, in early morning darkness, my husband and my son have to grab shovels and climb into the plow truck. There have been times in the past when they found that there was no place to pile up new snowfall. They've also found that it's easy to make a plowing mistake, for example, push up against a building, and disastrously bury the fill pipes necessary for fuel deliveries.

Then there's the danger of an old-accumulated-snow avalanche that might come crashing down off a high roof, sometimes denting in the hood of a car. We own early houses

with laid-up slate foundations. Melting snow can flood the furnaces in their primitive basements.

I didn't used to realize many of these aspects of a lasting-into-March Castleton winter, but now I do.

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

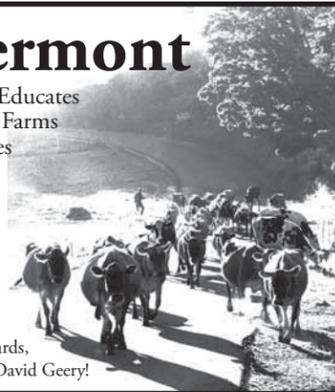
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1/4 cups maple syrup 3/4 cup heavy whipping cream
2 tsp. cider vinegar 6 tbsp. softened butter
1/3 cup sugar 1/2 tsp. vanilla
1 large egg 1 cup cake flour
1 tsp. baking powder

Put oven rack in upper third of oven and preheat oven to 350. Stir together maple syrup, heavy cream, cider vinegar and a pinch of salt in a small saucepan and bring to a boil, then remove from heat. Beat together butter and sugar in a bowl with an electric mixer until light and fluffy, about one minute. Add the egg and vanilla, then beat until just combined (batter will be thick). Sift flour and baking powder together into egg mixture and stir with a rubber spatula until just combined. Pour 1/3 cup syrup mixture into baking dish. Divide batter in bowl into six mounds with rubber spatula and spoon each mound onto syrup mixture in eight-inch square (two-inch deep) baking dish, spacing mounds evenly. Pour remaining syrup mixture over and around the mounds. Bake until topping is golden and firm to the touch, 25 to 30 minutes. Serve warm, with creme fraiche or sour cream if desired. *Serves six.*

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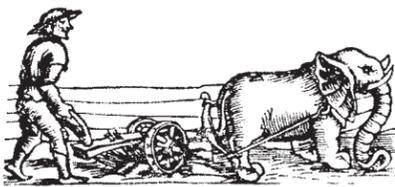
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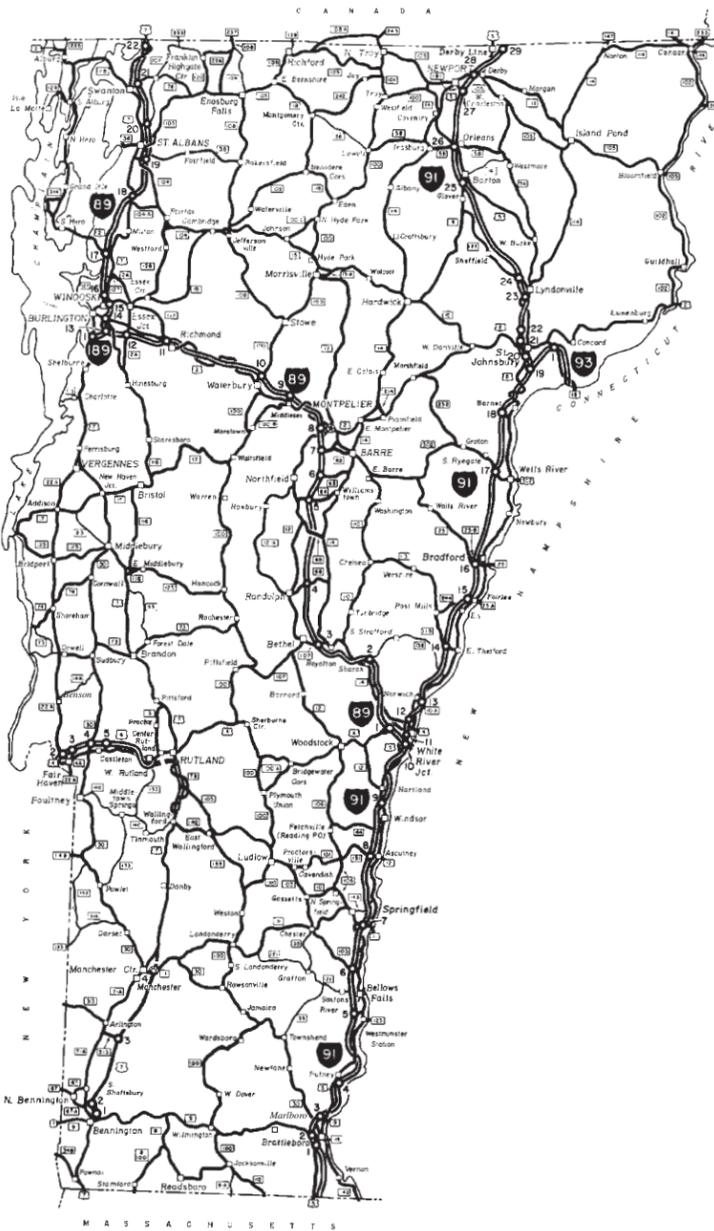
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ton, VT. (802) 434-3068. vt.audubon.org.

Baird Farm, 65 West Rd., Chittenden, VT. Robert Baird,
(802) 483-2963. www.bairdfarm.com.

Bragg Farm Sugarhouse and Gift Shop, 1005 VT Rt.
14 North, East Montpelier, VT. Doug and Barb Bragg, (802)
223-5757. www.braggfarm.com.

Bushee Family Maple Farm, 232 Quarry Hill Rd.,
Danby, VT. Kenneth Bushee, (802) 293-5037. [www.vermont
maplesweets.com](http://www.vermont
maplesweets.com).

Couture Maple Shop / Bed and Breakfast, 560 VT Rt.
100, Westfield, VT. Jacques and Pauline Couture, (802) 744-
2733. www.maplesyrupvermont.com.

Dakin Farms, 5797 Rt. 7, Ferrisburgh VT. Sam Cutting
IV, (802) 425-3971. www.dakinfarm.com.

Dutton Berry Farm, 3083 Depot St., Manchester Ctr,
VT. Paul and Wendy Dutton, (802) 365-4622.

Evans Maple Farm, 61 Spaulding Hill Rd., East Dum-
merston, VT. Faith Evans, (802) 257-0262. [www.evans
maplefarm.com](http://www.evans
maplefarm.com).

Goodrich's Maple Farm, 2427 US Rt. 2, Cabot, VT.
Glenn and Ruth Goodrich, (802) 426-3418. [www.goodrich-
maplefarm.com](http://www.goodrich-
maplefarm.com).

Green Mountain Sugar House, 820 Rt. 100 N, Ludlow,
VT. Doug and Ann Rose, (802) 228-7151. www.gmsh.com.

Green's Sugarhouse, 1846 Finel Hollow Rd., Poultney,
VT. Richard and Pam Green, (802) 287-5745. [www.greens-
sugarhouse.com](http://www.greens-
sugarhouse.com).

KandS Ruane Maple Sugar Farm, 128 Mountain View
Rd., Tinmouth, VT, Kevin and Sherri Ruane. (802) 446-3105.

Krueger-Norton Sugarhouse, 780 Button Hill Rd.,
Shrewsbury, VT. Art Krueger and Trish Norton, (802) 492-
3653. www.kruegernortonmaple.com.

Limlaw Family Maple Farm, LLC, 246 VT Rt. 25,
West Topsham, VT. Bruce Limlaw, (802) 439-6880. [www.
limlawmaplefarm.com](http://www.
limlawmaplefarm.com).

Merck Forest and Farmland Center, Sugarhouse Ad-
dress: 3270 Rt. 315, Rupert, VT. Laurie Martin, (802) 394-
7836. www.merckforest.org.

Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks, 1168 County Rd.,
Montpelier, VT. Burr Morse, (802) 223-2740. [www.morse
farm.com](http://www.morse
farm.com).

Shelburne Sugarworks, 746 Shelburne-Hinesburg Rd.,
Shelburne, VT. Steven Palmer, (802) 233-4408. [www.shel
burnesugarworks.com](http://www.shel
burnesugarworks.com)

Silloway Maple, 1089 Silloway Rd., Randolph Ctr, VT.
David Silloway, (802) 728-3625. www.sillowaymaple.com.

Smith Maple Crest Farm LLC, 2450 Lincoln Hill Rd.,
Shrewsbury, VT. Jeff and Mary Smith, (802) 492-2151. [www.
smithmaplecrestfarm.com](http://www.
smithmaplecrestfarm.com).

Sugar and Spice Restaurant and Gift Shop, 43 Rt. 4,
East Mendon, VT. (802) 773-7832. vtsugarandspice.com.

Sugarbush Cheese and Maple Farm, 591 Sugarbush
Farm Rd., Woodstock, VT. Lawrence and Elizabeth Luce,
(802) 457-1757. www.sugarbushfarm.com.

Wood's Cider Mill and Sugar House, 1482 Weathersfield
Center Rd., Springfield, VT. Willis and Tina Wood, (802)
263-5547. www.woodsidermill.com.

For a full listing of sugarhouses around Vermont visit
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vermontmaple.org](http://www.
vermontmaple.org).

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Vermont Country Calendar

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

DAILY EVENTS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

BRATTLEBORO. 59th Annual Winter Carnival. Something for everyone. Free admission. Check website for schedule. On Main Street. (802) 254-4565. www.brattleborowintercarnival.org. www.commonnews.org.

ESSEX JUNCTION. 16th Vermont State RV and Camping Mega Show. Over 100,000 square feet of RV's Inside and Out. Admission: adults \$7, children under 16 free with adult. Parking is free. 10 am - 5 pm. Champlain Valley Expo, 105 Pearl St. (772) 631-7920. www.eastcoastshows.com.

PERU. Kare Andersen's 30th Annual Tele Fest. Come rip with some of the best tele skiers in the East! Great tele events, annual Race, clinics and fun for the entire family. Learn what tele-skiing is all about! Bromley Mountain Ski Resort, 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. www.bromley.com.

RUPERT. Winter Sleigh Rides. In a Sweetheart Sleigh built for two; fee \$150 for a 45 minute tour around the wintry landscape of the farm and forest. Group sleigh rides in a 12-person sleigh for \$185 for 45 minutes through the woods and through the fields. Call to reserve. Merck Forest and Farmland, 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org. *Saturdays and Sundays through March.*

STOWE. 70th Annual Stowe Derby. One of the oldest and most unique ski races in North America. Race from the top of Mt. Mansfield, Vermont's highest peak to the historic village of Stowe on one pair of skis! The ultimate test of a skiers ability. (802) 253-7704 x 22. stowederby@teammssc.org. www.skireg.com/3735. stowe.com.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides, tours of the dairy farm and farmhouse, and a variety of activities. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

RUTLAND. Program: Birding in Costa Rica. A group of Rutland Audubon members visited Costa Rica in March 2014. They will share their adventure with slides of birds, plants and other wildlife. Free. 7 pm. Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court Street. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

MONTPELIER. Farmers Night 2015 Free Concert Series. Seven Times Salt performs music from the American colonies, from the first settlers at Plimoth to their descendants on the eve of the Revolution. 7:30 pm. State House Chamber, Vermont State House. (802) 479-8500. vermonthistory.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays through April 29.*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

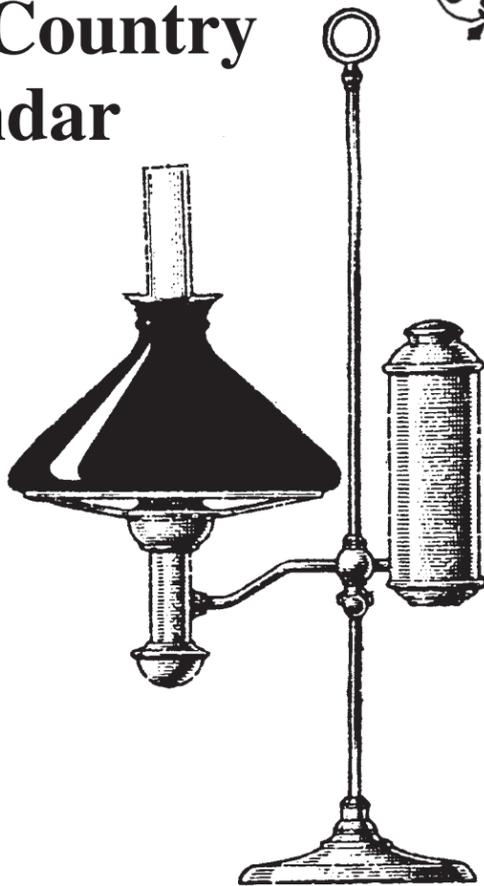
BURLINGTON. Comedy—Craig Ferguson's Hot & Grumpy Tour: Walking the Earth. The host of CBS's The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson. Tickets: \$52.25, \$41.75, \$31.25. 8 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. flynncenter.org.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

BURLINGTON. 20th Annual Magic Hat Mardi Gras Weekend. Friday night music at Higher Ground. Saturday noon in downtown Burlington pre-parade musical performances, costume contest, free photo booth, and other activities lining Church Street. Parade down Main St. with beads, moonpies, and Lake Champlain Chocolates! Live music on the Church Street Stage after the parade. (802) 658-2739. www.magichat.net. *Through February 28.*

ESSEX JUNCTION. The Vermont Flower Show—“Spring Reflections.” Landscaped central display and over 90 vendors. Educational seminars and workshops, a family room with activities and entertainment, cooking demonstrations, a bookstore, VT Certified Horticulturists, and landscaped train display by the Vermont Railway Society. Admission. 12-8 pm. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. (802) 878-5545. www.greenworksvermont.org. *Through March 1.*

NO. CLARENDON. “Show Me Gala” Talent Show. Performers of all ages will sing, dance, and play for your pleasure. This non-competitive talent show is a fundraiser for Friends of Music at Mill River Union High School. Tickets \$5 per person and \$15 per family, at the door. The snow date is March 5th at 7 pm. Hosted by the Mill River Friends of Music. 7 pm in the Auditorium at Mill River Union High School, 2321 Middle Rd. birwin@rssu.org.



RANDOLPH. Concert. Two local indie bands, TallGrass GetDown and Coquette will be performing. For tickets call the box office at (802) 728-6464 weekdays 3-6 pm. Concert at 7:30 pm. Chandler's Music Hall, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-9878. www.chandler-arts.org.

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

BONDVILLE. Snowshoe Backpack to Stratton Pond. With an overnight at Stratton Pond Shelter. Tentative route in via Stratton Pond Trail, out over Stratton Mountain. Difficult level, must have prior winter camping and snowshoeing experience. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Free. Non-members and newcomers welcome. Contact leader for details: Jim Robertson at (860) 633-7279 home or (860) 519-8310. rober2je@westinghouse.com. jrobert685@aol.com.

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

CABOT. Benefit Concert with Abby and Rosie Newton and Lyn Hardy. Tickets \$12, family \$25. 7:30 pm. Cabot School Performing Arts Center on Cabot School Campus, 25 Common Rd. (802) 563-2999.

CHITTENDEN. Cross-Country Intermediate Ski Tour—Chittenden Brook Recreation Area. The 6.5 mile route climbs steadily along beautiful Chittenden Brook then descends to a rolling logging road, and follows the unplowed access road back to the start. Sponsored by the Catamount Trail Association. Free and open to CTA members and non-members. For meeting time and place contact Craig Hadden at cwhadden76@gmail.com or call (802) 234-5218. catamounttrail.org.

ESSEX JUNCTION. The Vermont Flower Show—“Spring Reflections.” Landscaped central display and over 90 vendors. Admission. 10 am - 8 pm. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. (802) 878-5545. www.greenworksvermont.org. *Also March 1.*

ESSEX JUNCTION. 14th Annual Essex Winter Carnival and Soup Cookoff. Music, story telling, snow sculptures, snowshoe and cross-country ski demonstrations, great food, refreshments, and so much more. Plan your soup recipes for the Chili Cook-Off! Enjoy this wonderful day with your family in celebration of winter. 10 am - 3 pm. Albert D. Lawton Intermediate School, 104 Maple St. (802) 878-1375.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra performs Copland's Buckaroo Holiday, Gershwin's An American in Paris, and Dvorak's Symphony No. 9. Tickets: \$10-\$15. 8 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2422. www.hop.dartmouth.edu.

LYNDONVILLE. Winterbike. Celebrate “Fat Biking” with Kingdom Trails. Group rides, vendors, bonfire, games, beverages. Ongoing quilt and hooked rug display. Special winter photography exhibit by the NEK Camera Club. Cobleigh Public Library, 14 Depot St. (802) 626-5475. cobleighlibrary.org. www.kingdomtrails.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Concert with Chris Smither. Blues and folk, an American original. Part of the After Dark Music Series. Tickets \$30. Door open 6:30 pm, concert starts 7 pm. First come-first seated. Town Hall Theater, corner of Merchants Row and S. Pleasant St. (802) 388-0216. afterdarkmusicseries.com.



14th Annual Vermont Maple Open House Weekend

The 14th Annual Vermont Maple Open House Weekend will be held at sugarhouses throughout Vermont, March 28-29, 2015.

The Open House Weekend is a celebration of the maple syrup season in Vermont and an opportunity to visit sugarhouses throughout the state to learn about Vermont's first agricultural crop of the year.

Activities during Open House Weekend are different at each sugarhouse but include the opportunity to watch maple syrup being made (weather permitting) and to often sample syrup and other maple products. Some sugarhouses offer tours

of their sugarbushes and some have special activities for children. There may even be horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides.

No two sugarhouses are the same so people are encouraged to visit more than one.

There are approximately 2000 maple producers in Vermont which is the largest U.S. producer of maple syrup.

Information about participating maple syrup producers including which days they will be open and directions can be found on www.vermontmaple.org

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Vermont Country Calendar

NORWICH. English Country Dance. Music by Trip to Norwich: Carol Compton on keyboard, accordion, and recorders; Thal Aylward on violin and viola. Calling by Chris Levey. All dances taught, no partner needed. All are welcome. Please bring a clean change of shoes for the dance floor. Refreshments provided. Admission: \$8 adults, \$4 ages 25 and under. 3-6 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4121. engineering.dartmouth.edu/~d26745m/localECD. Also March 29 & April 19.

PLAINFIELD. Concert: Heartbeat. Dynamic blend of Eastern and Arabic music, Western rock, hip hop, jazz and reggae. Throughout the concert, the musicians share personal stories of growing up amidst the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. 8 pm. Haybarn Theatre, 123 Pitkin Rd. (802) 322-1685. meg.hammond@goddard.edu. www.goddard.edu/concerts.

POULTNEY. Snowshoe Outing. Join us for a moderate snowshoe trek through woods and fields. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club, Killington Section. Free. Non-members and newcomers welcome. Contact leader for meeting time and place: Diane Bargiel at (413) 687-1109. www.greenmountainclub.org.

RUPERT. Winter Sleigh Rides. In a Sweetheart Sleigh built for two; fee \$150 for a 45 minute tour around the wintry landscape of the farm and forest. Group sleigh rides in a 12-person sleigh for \$185 for 45 minutes through the woods and through the fields. Call to reserve. Merck Forest and Farmland, 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org. Saturdays and Sundays through March.

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

SPRINGFIELD. Workshop: Making Imaginary Landscapes Real. Instructor: Christine Mix. Learn the basics and visual tricks of perspective and depth, and apply them to your own landscape painting or drawing. Fee: \$40. Materials list available. 10 am - 3 pm. Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. www.galleryvault.org.

ST. ALBANS. 7th Annual Winter Carnival. Most events in Taylor Park, downtown. 12-5 pm, open sledding at Hard'ack. 1-4 pm, kids activities & games in Taylor Park—snowpainting, racing, largest icicle contest, sledding on Snow hill, tunnels. 1 pm, free horse-drawn wagon rides. 1 pm, chainsaw carving demonstration. 2 pm, waiter & waitress 50/50 shuffle. Dusk, 6:30-7 pm, fireworks! Free with some fees. 12-8 pm. (802) 370-2380. www.stalbansrec.com. Also March 1.

ST. JOHNSBURY. The 15th Annual Northeast Kingdom's Wabanaki Run—Primitive Biathlon Winter Shoot. Takes place on snowshoes instead of cross-country skis and muzzleloading firearms instead of modern rifles. A target shoot for traditional muzzleloaders, hunters, sportsmen, reenactors, shooters, and traders. Period dress is encouraged. 9 am - 3 pm. Rain or shine on the grounds of The Caledonia Forest and Stream Club (4 1/2 miles north of St. Johnsbury on US Rt. 5, then across the bridge on Pierce Rd. Follow the signs and go .7 mile then turn left onto Field and Stream Rd. and go a short distance to the field). For info or entry forms call Arthur Wood, (802) 748-2528. www.caledoniaforestandstream.com.

SWANTON. Maquam Bog Walk. Join volunteer Greg Simard for a walk into a unique woodland/wetland bog habitat, a traditional whitetail deer wintering area. Snow shoes may be necessary. The walk is dependent on weather and ground conditions. Call the refuge to register and receive updates on the status of the walk. 8-11 am. Meet at the parking lot on Tabor Rd. signed as "Refuge Trails Parking" located on mile south of Rte. 78 on Tabor Rd. Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, 29 Tabor Rd. (802) 868-4781. www.fws.gov/northeast/missisquoi.

WATERBURY. Ben & Jerry's Winter Festival. Free outdoor festival includes 2014 flavor samples, give-aways, games, DJ spinning fab music, free factory tours, snow sculptures. Local food sample & sale from Green Mountain Coffee, Vermont Butter & Cheese, Cider House BBQ & Pub. Sugar-on-Snow (dill pickles and all), Umiak snow shoe tours (fee), VINS—Bird on Glove program 1:00-2:30. Photo ops with mascots: Skip from The Mountaineers, Champ from the Lake Monsters and Ben & Jerry's very own Mooky the Cow. Ben & Jerry's, 1281 Waterbury-Stowe Rd. (802) 882-1240. benjerry.com.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekends. Tour the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. See *A Place in the Land*, the Academy Award nominee film in the theater. Warm up with a cup of spiced cider. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd., just north of the Woodstock village green. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Moonlight Ski, Snowshoe or Hiking Outing on Mt. Tom. Bring snack to share, beverage and candles for the cabin. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Free. For meeting time and place contact Juergen Ewert at (802) 457-4345. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WOODSTOCK. 5th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. See *To Breathe As One* on the big screen in the museum's theater, with high definition digital projection and Dolby™ surround-sound. Open to the public and accessible to people with disabilities. Tickets \$11 for ages 16 and up, \$6 for ages 3-15. Saturdays at 3 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. To purchase tickets in advance call (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. billingsfarm.org. On Selected Saturdays through April 4.

SUNDAY, MARCH 1

BURLINGTON. Dance Performance: "Light to Two Shadows." Bryce Dance Company: "To You, Around You, About You and Breathing Under Water." Toby MacNutt: "One, Two." Tickets: \$20. 2 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966.

ENOSBURG FALLS. Artist Reception. Featuring pastel artist Genie Rybicki-Judkins of Jeffersonville, painter & wood turner Jim Foote, and painter Pat Murphy of Sheldon. 1-2:30 pm. Artist In Residence Gallery, 321 Main St. (802) 933-6403. www.artistinresidencecoop.com.

ESSEX JUNCTION. The Vermont Flower Show—"Spring Reflections." Landscaped central display and over 90 vendors. Admission. 10 am - 4 pm. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. (802) 878-5545. www.greenworksvermont.org.

FAIRFIELD. Vermont Maple Breakfast. Menu: scrambled eggs, bacon, spiral cut ham, home fries, buttermilk pancakes, mini-muffins, ragamuffins, fruit salad, crepe bar, coffee, milk and orange juice. Catered by The Skinny Pancake. Adults: \$13.95, children (4-10) \$7.95, plus tax. 9 am - 1 pm. Branon's West View Maples, 825 West St. (802) 527-2430. branonvtorganicmaple.com. Also March 8, 15, 22 & 29.

GRANVILLE NY. The Annual St. David's Day Dinner. A 27th Annual Gathering of the Clans Event in Honor of St. David, Patron Saint of Wales. Sponsored by Poultney Area St. David's Society. \$15.50 per person. All are welcome. Prepaid registration to Poultney Area St. David's Society requested no later than February 22nd. 12:30 pm at A.J.'s Restaurant, Quaker St. For reservations call Jan Edwards at (802)-287-5744. E-mail pasds88@yahoo.com. www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pasds.

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Vermont Country Calendar

HARDWICK. The Waste Less Bonanza! Learn how to waste less by fixing, maintaining, reusing, and repurposing things in four main categories: tools and household items, food, clothing, and trash (paper, cans, bottles, plastic bags). Watch demonstrations and bring your own exhibits and ideas to share. Activities for all ages. 2-4 pm at the Green Mountain Technical Center Forestry Building. (entrance is on the left traveling up main street beyond Hazen Union High School). (802) 755-6336. swapsisters@gmail.com.

RUPERT. Winter Sleigh Rides. In a Sweetheart Sleigh built for two; fee \$150 for a 45 minute tour around the wintry landscape of the farm and forest. Group sleigh rides in a 12-person sleigh for \$185 for 45 minutes through the woods and through the fields. Call to reserve. Merck Forest and Farmland, 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org. Saturdays and Sundays through March.

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.

ST. ALBANS. 7th Annual Winter Carnival. All events take place at Hard'ack Recreation Area. 12-2 pm, free open sledding at Hard'ack. 1 pm, chainsaw carving demonstration. 12 pm, free family BBQ sponsored by the Elks. 1 pm, winner of snow sculpture contest announced. 1 pm, longest beard contest. 2 pm, Ace Duct Tape Derby (Registration begins at 1 pm) \$10 per sled registration fee; create a vessel out of duct tape and cardboard, bring it to Hard'ack and race it! See complete rules and details on website. (802) 370-2380. www.stalbansrec.com.

STOWE. Presentation. The Old Country Fiddler: Charles Ross Taggart. Fiddler Adam Boyce portrays Mr. Taggart near the end of his career, circa 1936, sharing recollections of his life interspersed with live fiddling and humorous sketches. Free. 3 pm. Jewish Community of Greater Stowe, 1189 Cape Cod Rd. (802) 253-7408. www.vermonthumanities.org.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Sunday Sugarhouse Breakfast Buffet. All-you-can-eat buffet includes pancakes, waffles, scrambled eggs, eggs fritatta, biscuits, toast, home fries, maple French toast bake, sausage, bacon, ham, sausage gravy, assorted fruits, donuts & beverages. Our own maple syrup and maple cream. Cost: \$13.99 (plus tax). Horse & wagon rides. 8 am - 2 pm. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. www.limlawmaplefarm.com. Also March 8, 15, 22, 29.

WOODSTOCK. Cross-Country Intermediate Telemark Ski Tour—Marsh Billings National Park. Marsh-Billings is home to the "lost" alpine slopes of Mt. Tom ski area plus glades linked by ungraded trails and carriage roads. Skiers should have skis that can for both touring and turning, possess skills to ski in tree-filled terrain and absolutely relish skiing downhill. Sponsored by the Catamount Trail Association. Free and open to CTA members and non-members. For meeting time and place contact Lynn Fisher at fisher.lynn@gmail.com or call (802) 672-5280. catamounttrail.org.

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

HUNTINGTON. Maple Sugaring Day—Vacation Day Camp. Tap trees in the Audubon Center's 500-tap sugar bush, and then collect the sap. See first-hand how an evaporator works and gather around a campfire to discover how people first turned maple sap into sugar. Wrap up the day with a syrup taste test! Ages: 6-12 years. Fee: \$60/day or \$165 for three days. Pre-registration required. 8:30 am - 3:30 pm. Education Barn, Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vermont@audubon.org. vt.audubon.org

MANCHESTER CENTER. Book & Author Event. Children's author N. Griffin presents *Smashie McPerter and the Mystery of Room 11*. A once-happy class is set on edge in this humorous, highly relatable mystery perfect for middle-grade readers. Free. 4 pm. Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St. (802) 362-2200. northshire.com.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

BRATTLEBORO. First Wednesdays Humanities Lecture Series — "Photography as Fine Art: Alfred Stieglitz and Camera Work." Middlebury College professor Kirsten Hoving examines Stieglitz's work and his advocacy for photography as a fine art, with special attention to his quarterly journal, *Camera Work*. Free. 7 pm. Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. (802) 254-5290. www.vermonthumanities.org.

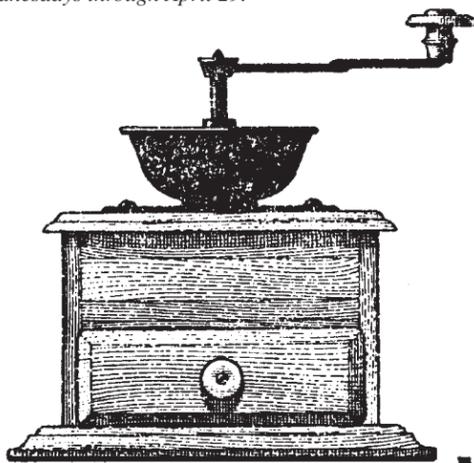
MANCHESTER. First Wednesdays Humanities Lecture Series—"The Memoir Boom: Who, What, Why." Dartmouth professor and experimental memoirist Irene Kacandes discusses current approaches to life writing and considers why we continue to love reading about others' lives. Free. 7 pm. Hosted by the Manchester Community Library. First Congregational Church, 3624 Main St. (802) 362-2607. www.vermonthumanities.org.

MIDDLEBURY. First Wednesdays Humanities Lecture Series: "You Are Not Special . . . and Other Encouragements." High school English teacher and father of four, David McCullough Jr. considers how we raise our kids today, and why passionate engagement—rather than success for its own sake—is critical to a fulfilling, happy life. Free. 7 pm. Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. (802) 388-4095. www.vermonthumanities.org.

NORWICH. First Wednesdays Humanities Lecture Series: "What If Poor Women Ran the World?" Labor historian Annelise Orleck tells the story of nine African-American union maids in Las Vegas during the 1970s. Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and Norwich Historical Society. Free. 7 pm. Norwich Congregational Church, 15 Church St. (802) 649-1184. www.vermonthumanities.org.

RUTLAND. First Wednesdays Humanities Lecture Series: "India Rising." UVM history professor Abby McGowan considers the challenges facing the new government of India, after the sweeping victory in the 2014 elections of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Free. 7 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. www.vermonthumanities.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 753-7269. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays through April 29.



New Season Maple Syrup at The Vermont Farmers Market

by Nancy Scarcello

Around the end of February as the days warm the work of the sugar makers begins. They tap thousands of trees over hundreds of acres for a season that lasts on average about 4-6 weeks. Improvements and innovations may have changed over the years but the process remains the same—gather sap, boil it down, and enjoy the sweet nectar of the maples!

The Vermont Farmers Market in Rutland, VT has its fair share of vendors who are maple producers and a trip there in March will yield new season maple syrup and other maple goodies.

One of those vendors is Hathaway Farm, a sugar maker in Rutland, VT for 73 years. They have one of the first oil-fired evaporators in Rutland County. The most common innovation in sugarings has been the use of plastic tubing stretched throughout the sugar bush. And yet, each of the producers I spoke with still gathers with buckets as well. B.J. Hathaway says they use buckets in the cow pasture where the animals might get caught in the plastic tubing but admits the buckets are also a necessary link back to his grandfather's time and the family history of their land. B.J., who's been in the business all his life, revels in the promise of spring finally arriving with sugaring time.

For Kevin Ruane of Tinmouth, VT, who started tapping trees in high school, his favorite part is being outside in the woods and the boiling.

Patty Plew, a sixth generation sugar maker from Mt. Holly, VT, claims that her



grown sons "come out of the woodwork" when sugar making begins. For her the best part is the whole family working together and the excitement of the first draw-off of the season.

While many of us are complaining about the cold the sugar makers are still connected to the rhythms of the land and find warmth in the continuum that nourishes body, mind and spirit.

Stock up on some syrup at the Vermont Farmers Market and chat with the sugar makers about their craft and the legacies that sustain them. And don't forget to thank the trees!

The Vermont Farmers Market is open every Saturday from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. through May 2nd and Wednesdays from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. through April 29 at the Vermont Farmers Food Center on West St. in Rutland, VT. After that the market moves outdoors to Depot Park in downtown Rutland. They accept debit, credit and EBT cards for your purchases.

The Vermont Farmers Market is located at 251 West St., in downtown Rutland, VT. (802) 753-7269. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. On Facebook. Visit vtfarmersmarket.org.

Free Calendar Listings

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Smoothies, Catering

Vermont Country Calendar

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

DORSET. Hike Mother Myrick Mountain. Hike via a series of unmarked logging roads and snowmobile trails to the summit of Mother Myrick. Return the same way. Total round trip distance 7.6 miles, elevation gain 2020 ft. Bring snacks and lunch and fluids, snowshoes. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club Manchester Section. Meet at 11 am at the end of Nichols Rd in Dorset (ask trip leader for directions). RSVP to Katie Adams at (802) 867-5369. kktadams@comcast.net.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

FAIRLEE. Annual Winter Doe Camp. A women's weekend retreat for outdoor skill development, adventure, education, camaraderie and just plain fun. Vermont Outdoor Guide Association (VOGA). 800-425-8747. info@voga.org. www.voga.org. Through March 8.

MANCHESTER CENTER. Book & Author Event. Howard Bryant presents *Legends: The Best Players, Games and Teams in Baseball*. Experience baseball's most exciting moments, World Series heroics, greatest players, and more! Free. 6 pm. Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St. (802) 362-2200. www.northshire.com.

RUTLAND. Vermont Actors' Repertory Theatre performs *The Cocktail Hour*. A.R. Gurney's comedy about a playwright whose parents are unhappy that he's written a play about them. 7:30 pm. The Brick Box at Paramount Theatre. (802) 775-0903. actorsrepvt.org. paramountvt.org.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

BARNARD. 3rd Annual Masquerade Jazz and Funk Winter Music Carnival Spices Season with New Orleans' Style Revelries. BarnArts Center for the Arts presents the Funk Band "The ChopShop." \$20 adults, \$10 students, free ages six and under. 6-11 pm. Barnard, Town Hall. barnarts.org.

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: Tim Ray, solo piano. Long-time pianist for Lyle Lovett. Appearing on over 70 recordings, Tim has performed in concert with Aretha Franklin, Bonnie Raitt, and Soul Asylum. Tickets: \$17/\$13. 7:30 pm at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. (802) 463-3100. www.immanuelretreat.org.

BETHEL. 10th Annual Home Show and Business Expo. Local businesses display and talk about their products. Refreshments available. Handicap accessible. Hosted by The Bethel Business Association. Free admission, everyone welcome. 9 am to 3 pm at the Whitcomb High School Gymnasium, 273 Pleasant St. For information contact Nick Nikolaidis at (802) 234-5064. nick@nikolaidis.com.

BRANDON. Artist Sale. Sell your art supplies and artwork. 10 am - 4 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Drive, Park Village, 1.5 miles north of downtown. (802) 247-4295. www.cmacvt.org.

POULTNEY. Frosty Derby. Annual ice fishing contest on Lake St. Catherine. Sponsored by the Poultney Fish & Game Club. Prizes awarded for largest fish in the categories of Pike, Trout, Perch, Bass, adult and child. Contact Ed Harmon at (802) 287-9111 for more information and ice conditions. At Lake St. Catherine, 3034 VT Rt. 30 South. www.vtstateparks.com/htm/catherine.htm

RUPERT. Apple Tree Pruning Workshop. Rico Balzano, of Little Lake Orchard in Wells, VT, will teach participants how to care for, prune, and maintain apple trees. Bring your own tools and gloves, and come prepared to be outside. Registration required. Cost: \$20. 9 am - noon. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org.

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

SHELBURNE. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Watch the maple sap being boiled. Maple goodies comfortable seating live music. 12-4 pm. Palmer's Sugarhouse, 332 Shelburne Hinesburg Rd. (802) 985-5054. www.palmersugarhouse.com. Weekends from March through April.

WAITSFIELD. 40th Annual North American Telemark Festival. The world's largest and oldest gathering of telemark skiers. Mad River Glen Cooperative, 57 Schuss Pass Rd. (802) 496-3551. ski@madriverglen.com. madriverglen.com. Also March 8.

WILDER. Concert. Opera North presents beloved American classics from composers Aaron Copland, George Gershwin, and Cole Porter, as well as selections from the upcoming 2015 Summer Season. 7 pm. Tickets: \$15/\$30. The Wilder Center. (603) 448-4141. www.operanorth.org. Also March 8 at 3 pm.

WOODSTOCK. 5th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. See *Waste Land* on the big screen in the museum's theater, with high definition digital projection and Dolby™ surround-sound. Open to the public and accessible to people with disabilities. Tickets \$11 for ages 16 and up, \$6 for ages 3-15. Saturdays at 3 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. To purchase tickets in advance call (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. On Selected Saturdays through April 4.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

CHESTER. Book & Author Event. Mimi Baird and Eve Claxton present *He Wanted the Moon: The Madness and Medical Genius of Dr. Perry Baird, and His Daughter's Quest to Know Him*. Free. 4 pm. Misty Valley Books, on the Green. (802) 875-3400. www.mvbooks.com.

WAITSFIELD. 40th Annual North American Telemark Festival. The world's largest and oldest gathering of telemark skiers. Mad River Glen Cooperative, 57 Schuss Pass Rd. (802) 496-3551. ski@madriverglen.com. madriverglen.com.

WEST PAWLET. Benefit Pancake Breakfast. A fundraiser for the fire department. Menu includes pancakes—regular, chocolate chip, blueberry and cranberry as well as waffles, West Pawlet's world-famous home fries, scrambled eggs, sausage and bacon. Beverages include coffee, tea, milk and orange juice. \$8 for 12 years and up, \$5 for 5-12 years and free to children under 5. 7:30 am - 11 am at the West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department firehouse at 2806 Rt. 153, Main St. (802) 345-4312.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Sunday Sugarhouse Breakfast Buffet. All-you-can-eat buffet includes pancakes, waffles, scrambled eggs, eggs fritatta, biscuits, toast, home fries, maple French toast bake, sausage, bacon, ham, sausage gravy, assorted fruits, donuts & beverages. Our own maple syrup and maple cream. Cost: \$13.99 (plus tax). Reservations available but not required. Free horse & wagon rides. 8 am - 2 pm. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. www.limlawmaplefarm.com. Also March 15, 22, 29.

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Festival. A fun-filled and informative week, celebrating Irish-American culture and community. Music, lectures, movies, drama and dance. For a complete schedule of events and more information visit www.burlingtonirishheritage.org. March 10-21.

RUTLAND. 2015 Rutland Business Show. Over 90 area businesses exhibiting everything from home services and products, automobiles, health care, retailers and much more. Great door prizes, raffles and lots of fun! Admission: \$3. Free parking and shuttle service. 4:30-7:30 pm. Holiday Inn, 476 Holiday Dr. (802) 773-2747. info@rutlandvermont.com. www.rutlandvermont.com.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

MIDDLEBURY. Chili Festival. Chili contests, face painting, beer tent, live music, street performers and more. Downtown 1-4 pm. (802) 377-3557.



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Vermont Country Calendar

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays through April 29.*

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum & Cabot Creamery Cooperative Co-sponsor the film: *Farmland*. An intimate look at the lives of farmers and ranchers in their '20s, all of whom are now responsible for running their own farming business. Panel discussion featuring local farmers will follow the screening. Admission free; reservations recommended. 7 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. reservations@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. www.cabotcheese.coop.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

BELLOWS FALLS. Fiddle and Song Retreat. Workshops on fiddling, singing, and song writing. Participate in community outreach, perform in the annual St. Patrick's "Fiddle Frenzy" concert. Led by Lissa Schneckenburger and Laura Cortese. For intermediate and advanced levels and all ages. Fee: \$90, fee for tuition and accommodations \$125-\$225. Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. (802) 463-3100. www.immanuelretreat.org.

MANCHESTER CENTER. Sixth Annual Rock & Bowl. Benefiting the Community Food Cupboard, this year's event includes bowl making and musical performances by local favorites So Far and Alias Grace as well as Long Trail School musicians. Rock and Bowl is a lead-up event to Empty Bowls, which will be held Saturday, March 28 at Long Trail School. 7-9 pm. Spiral Press Café. (802) 867-5717 ext. 141. www.northshire.com.

WELLS. Annual Teacup Auction. Sponsored by the Wells Methodist Church Mission Events. Viewing and bidding from 5:30 to 6:45 pm. Drawing from 6:45 on. Over 400 items by bid drawing 6:45-9 pm. Tickets 10 for \$1.00. Baked goods for sale. Houseplants. Skip supper and come on down for a modest meal—hot dogs, chili dogs, donuts, beverages, sundaes and more. Also a silent auction with jams, maple syrup. Modern Woodmen of America Hall, Rt. 30 south of town next to school. (802) 325-3203.

WILLISTON. Concert: Brick Church Music Series—Heliand Consort. With Ben Kulp opening. Featured visual artist: Dan Donnelly. \$14/\$12. 7 pm, doors at 6 pm. Old Brick Church, 100 Library Ln. (802) 764-1141. www.town.williston.vt.us.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

ADAMANT. Winter Music Series Concert: Maple Jam. Tickets: \$10 in advance at the Adamant Co-op, \$15 at door, optional potluck. 5:30 pm, music 7 pm. Adamant Community Club, 1161 Martin Rd.

BELLOWS FALLS. St. Patrick's Fiddle Frenzy. Concert with Lissa Schneckenburger, Laura Cortese, and Bethany Waickman plus a multitude of fiddling friends! Tickets \$20, students/senior \$15. 7:30 pm. Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. (802) 463-3100. www.immanuelretreat.org. www.stonechurcharts.org.

BRANDON. Creative Music & Live Looping Workshop and Concert with Acoustic Double-Neck Guitarist Ian Ethan Case. Workshop 11 am - 2 pm (fee \$35) at Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Dr. in Brandon. Concert at Brandon Music at 7:30 pm (tickets \$15). (802) 247-4295. www.emaevt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Concert: Bill Charlap Trio. One of the world's premiere jazz pianists performing with bassist Peter Washington and drummer Kenny Washington. \$20-\$40. 8 pm. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. (802) 254-9088 x 1. vtjazz.org.

CHESTER. Organic Beekeeping Workshop with Ross Conrad. "Overwintering Bees and Spring Management" and "Beeswax: Production, Collection, Processing, and Uses". Light morning refreshments will be served, featuring special treats from Grafton Village Cheese! Bring a brown bag lunch. Fee: \$35. Sponsored by The Nature Museum of Grafton. 9 am – 1 pm at the Newsbank, 352 Main St. (802) 843-2111. Visit www.nature-museum.org.

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

MANCHESTER CENTER. Off the Shelf with Erik Larson presents *Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania*. Admission: Ticket with book \$33; two seats and one copy of *Dead Wake* \$40. 7 pm; doors open at 6 pm. Maple Street School. (800) 437-3700. lbarnum@northshire.com. www.northshire.com.

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



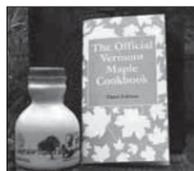
ST. ALBANS. Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Association's Vermont Rails Show. Multiple operating HO, N, G, and O-scale layouts, in addition to over 100 tables of exhibits and vendors of model railroading supplies and railroad videos and books! Hands-on train activities for children also. Food stand. Admission: \$5 adults, \$1 children 6-12, free under 6. 10 am - 4 pm at the Collins-Perley Sports Complex. Ron Piro, (802) 878-1135, ronpiro@aol.com. nvrailroad.org.

WOODFORD. Hike in the Aiken Wilderness. From the southern end of Woodford State Park, using map and compass to snowshoe through the George D. Aiken Wilderness. Visit beaver meadows, look for a variety of tracks, lunch at one of the beaver ponds, reach the snowmobile trail on the eastern edge of the Wilderness and return to Rt. 9. Bring extra clothes, snacks and lunch, fluids, snowshoes. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club Manchester Section. Meet at 8 am at Shaw's in Manchester Center, or at 9 am at the snowmobile parking lot. RSVP to Dave Ratti at (802) 366-0698. dbrspruce@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

BONDVILLE. 20th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Fun floats and free green balloons for the kids. Main Street, Rt. 30, 2-5 pm. Wear green and join us. (802) 297-2488.

Vermont Maple Cookbook



To order a copy of the "Official Vermont Maple Cookbook," *Third Edition*, please send a check for \$3, payable to Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association, to:
Mary Croft, VMSMA Secretary/Treasurer
491 East Barnard Rd, South Royalton, VT 05068
Phone (802) 763-7435 • fax (802) 763-7438
E-mail: mcmaple@wildblue.net

For two copies of the Cookbook, the Third Edition or the Second Edition or one of each (the two editions have different recipes) please send \$5. To purchase larger quantities of either cookbook, please contact Mary Croft.

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Vermont Country Calendar

MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS. 26th Annual Maple Festival. Maple desserts, sugar on snow, maple cotton candy. Bill Clark will be giving a talk on the evolution of sugaring techniques. Fred Bradley will demonstrate sugaring in a cast iron kettle over an open fire. Silent auction of maple sap buckets decorated by local students. Raffle. Acoustic music and kids' activities. Food for sale, activities free. Sponsored by the Middletown Springs Historical Society. 1-4 pm. On the green. (802) 235-1811. middletownspringshistoricalsociety.org.

RUTLAND. Vermont Symphony Orchestra Concert: Paris in Spring. Tickets \$9-\$32. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountvt.org.

SO. BURLINGTON. Concert: Freedy Johnston. Tickets: \$15 day of show. 7:30 pm, doors open at 7 pm. Showcase Lounge, 1214 Williston Rd. (877) 987-6487. info@highergroundmusic.com. www.highergroundmusic.com

STOWE. Catamount Trail Classic Funraising Tour. Backcountry cross-country ski from Bolton to Trapp Family Lodge. 8 am, meet at Trapp Family Lodge for a bus to Bolton. Registration deadline March 13. Call to register, (802) 864-5794. www.catamounttrail.org.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Sunday Sugarhouse Breakfast Buffet. All-you-can-eat buffet includes pancakes, waffles, scrambled eggs, eggs fritatta, biscuits, toast, home fries, maple French toast bake, sausage, bacon, ham, sausage gravy, assorted fruits, donuts & beverages. Our own maple syrup and maple cream. Cost: \$13.99 (plus tax). Horse & wagon rides. 8 am - 2 pm. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. www.limlawmaplefarm.com. Also March 22, 29.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

MONTPELIER. Farmers Night 2015 Free Concert Series: "Serenade to Spring"—Solaris Vocal Ensemble. This northern Vermont-based chamber choir of mixed voices, led by artistic director Dawn Willis, will perform choral selections by Johannes Brahms, Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, Gustav Holst, and William Dawson, including love songs, folk songs and spirituals. Free. 7:30 pm in the House Chamber, Vermont State House. (802) 828-2291. vermonthistory.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays through April 29.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

GRAFTON. Stargazing with Bob Dudley & SoVerA. Join The Nature Museum at Grafton, the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group, and Grafton Ponds for a stargazing experience for adults and families! Bob Dudley of the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group will lead an astronomy program at Grafton Ponds. In case of cloudy weather, a rain date will be March 21. Fee: \$5, family maximum \$20. In the evening at Grafton Ponds, 783 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2111. www.nature-museum.org.

MONTPELIER. Green Mountain Film Festival. Downtown Montpelier turns into a cinephile's dream, bringing foreign and independent films to Vermont. Special guests, discussions and a 48-hour film slam. Admission. (802) 262-3423. www.gmffestival.org. Through March 29.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

BENNINGTON. Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. 1-3 pm. (802) 447-5758. www.betterbennington.com.

CABOT. Cabot Maple Fest. Pancake breakfast 9-11 am. Silent auction 9 am - 2 pm. Lunch from 12-3 pm with Cabot cheese sandwiches and homemade soup, sap dogs and maple baked beans, real maple cotton candy, and sugar on snow. Free admission and free parking. Cabot School, Main St. (802) 563-3338. www.cabotvermont.org.

CAVENDISH. Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Menu, served buffet style except for dessert: baked ham with raisin sauce, baked beans sweetened with maple syrup, mashed potatoes, squash, cole slaw, pickles, homemade white and brown breads, homemade donuts, decaf coffee, tea, punch, and sugar-on-snow for dessert. Take-outs available. Tickets: adults \$10, children under 12 \$5, under 6 are free. 5:30-7 pm. Cavendish Baptist Church, 2258 Main St. (802) 226-7724.

CHESTER. LEGO Contest. Pre-K through Grade 8 and families will display their original creations (no kits allowed). Entry forms at www.chestertelegraph.org, www.ourchester.org, and Special Events at www.stlukeseiscopalvt.org. The \$10 Early Bird pre-registration deadline is March 16. Refreshments will be for sale. 9 am - 1 pm. NewsBank Conference Center, 352 Main St. (802) 875-1340. lbwillisct@comcast.net. www.stlukeseiscopalvt.org

DERBY. Wheeler Family Maple Museum Grand Opening. Free Sugar-on-snow and wood-fired maple pizza. Bonfire 4 pm. Gift shop and maple creemees! 10 am to 8 pm. Steve & Amy Wheeler, Wheeler Family Maple Museum, hosted by Jed's Maple Products, 259 Derby Pond Rd. (802) 766-2700. Visit www.jedsmaple.com. Also March 22.

FERRISBURGH. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Pancake breakfast with buttermilk pancakes, bacon, and sausage. 7:30-11:30 am, adults \$7.95 (plus tax), kids \$4.95 (plus tax). Sausage hoagie cooked in sap or a bowl of our very own maple chili for lunch. Taste free samples of maple syrup, ham, bacon. Live music with Bob Degree and the Bluegrass Storm, 12-4 pm. Observe boiling the traditional way. Dakin Farm, Rt. 7. (800) 993-2546. www.dakinfarm.com. Also March 22, 28 & 29.

GUILFORD. Annual Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Baked ham, baked beans, deviled eggs, potato salad, coleslaw, freshly baked rolls, sugar-on-snow, homemade donuts, pickles, and coffee, tea or milk. A half gallon of maple syrup will be raffled off during each seating. Seatings at 4:30, 5:45, and 7 pm. Adults \$11, children 11 and under \$5, preschoolers \$3. Guilford Community Church, 38 Church Dr. Directions: take 1-91 to VT Exit 1 (Brattleboro), go south on US Rt. 5 just past Guilford Country Store, left on Bee Barn Rd., then left again. (802) 254-9562. guilfordchurchsupper@gmail.com. www.guilfordchurch.org.

HARTFORD. Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Menu: baked ham, mashed potato, green beans, cole slaw, homemade rolls, raised donuts, sugar-on-snow for dessert. Served family style. Adults \$10, children under 12 \$4, pre-school free. Reservations recommended. Handicapped accessible. Servings at 5, 6 & 7 pm. Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Rt. 14. (802) 295-2510. Also March 28.

HARTLAND. Contra Dance. Carol Compton playing. Sponsored by Hartland Community Arts. Admission. 7:30 pm. At Damon Hall, 3 Corners intersection, where Rt. 12 and Rt. 5 divide. For info contact Adam R. Boyce, (802) 484-7719. adamrboyce@juno.com.

PLATTSBURGH, NY. 23rd Annual Champlain Valley RV & Boat Show. Admission: Adults \$5, Children under 16 free with adult. Free parking. Saturday 9 am - 7 pm, Sunday, 9 am - 6 pm. Crete Memorial Civic Center. (877) 228-8240. Also March 22.

RANDOLPH. Concert: Lavrova/Primakov Duo in a concert for two pianos. Tickets: \$32 advance, \$35 Day of show; Students \$10. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71-73 Main St. (802) 864-5741. www.chandler-arts.org. www.musicforyouth.net/vassily-primakovnatalia-lavrova.html.

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

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Way Back Then

The Life and Death of a Barn

by Charles Sutton

With all this winter's snow and ice one senses a few more unused or abandoned farm barns just won't make it through to spring.

Barns that always add so much to the landscape remind me of the one on our family homestead and its companion carriage house with its original big solid doors—the kind you rarely see anymore. The barn and shed with their saltbox type roofs were built sometime around 1800, the farmhouse in 1790.

My father purchased the mini-farm in the 1920s as a home in the country for weekends and holidays. The barn was home for his horse for a number of years. The previous owners had kept a couple of cows there and (much for our later enjoyment) had planted an apple orchard, cherry and pears trees, raspberry bushes, and even a quince tree.

As young boys the barn became a refuge for my brother Fred and I. We set up a small basketball court, ping pong table and dart board. Hours of shooting baskets, often alone, paid off later as I was good enough to make the Jayvee basketball team in high school.

We and our friends would dare each other to jump from the hay loft down onto the ground floor, maybe a 10-12 foot jump. None of us ever got hurt, the most unpleasant part was breathing the cloud of dust from the cracks in the antique floor whenever we landed.

When we were teenagers our parents had part of the barn floor sanded down for a dance floor. We had a few parties there which were successful back then even without alcohol. Music was from a crank-it-up floor model phonograph that played 78 rpm records. Remember them?

Not to be outdone by us kids, our parents also had barn parties there for their friends, usually after a Saturday football game. The old wood stove from the farmhouse had been installed in one area of the barn to take the chill off and for adult parties it served to warm a large pot of mulled wine.

Mother also served delicious home-made clam chowder. 'Home-made' really meant a long and tedious effort by

Fred and I to put lots of clams through an old-fashioned meat grinder. This was before the days of blenders and food processors.

The barn was put to good use during World War II when Fred and I went into the chicken business. We got Mother to help build an elaborate brooding house with warming light bulb and flappy cloth sides for baby chicks. We would get 100 white leghorn chicks at a time. Once the chicks got bigger they started hopping out of the brooder and running all over the barn, making a mess. It was then that Fred and I transferred them down to the carriage house. We later sold the flock as pullet hens, keeping a dozen or so for our own eggs. These lucky chickens had the run of the property during the day and their own quarters in the carriage house at night. The carriage house had also been used as a kennel when our parents raised golden retrievers.

Not unexpectedly the chicken coup attracted rats who would come to feed after we shut the hens in

for the night. We used to watch through an opening in the ceiling upstairs—they appeared to live in harmony with the chickens, sharing food.

The barn wasn't used again until years later when I was back in the area working on a newspaper. I hosted a couple of parties there for members of the working press. Someone brought a boom box for music; I provided beer and soda. People brought potluck and there was quite a spread of Italian, Chinese, Polish, Hungarian, and even Vietnamese dishes.

After Mother died at age 97 the property was sold and the barn and carriage house were torn down and the remnants removed except for a pile of posts and beams. Fortunately the new owners saved the 1790 farmhouse for restoration as by now it did need repairs. Most of the surrounding farmland had been divided into two-acre plots where stately old homes were taken down and replaced with costly modern McMansions with 3-car attached garages.

A year or so after my childhood home was sold, I drove by and was saddened to see the barn and carriage house gone. Those buildings had served us well. The keepers now are our memories.

"...after my childhood home was sold, I drove by and was saddened to see the barn and carriage house gone."

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Vermont Country Calendar

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

DERBY. Wheeler Family Maple Museum Grand Opening. Free Sugar-on-snow and wood-fired maple pizza. Bonfire 4 pm. Gift shop and maple creamies! 10 am to 8 pm. Steve & Amy Wheeler, Wheeler Family Maple Museum, hosted by Jed's Maple Products, 259 Derby Pond Rd. (802) 766-2700. Visit www.jedsmple.com.

FERRISBURGH. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Pancake breakfast with buttermilk pancakes, bacon, and sausage, 7:30-11:30 am, adults \$7.95 (plus tax), kids \$4.95 (plus tax). Sausage hoagie cooked in sap or a bowl of our very own maple chili for lunch. Taste free samples of maple syrup, ham, bacon. Live music with Bob Degree and the Bluegrass Storm, 12-4 pm. Observe boiling the traditional way. Dakin Farm, Rt. 7. (800) 993-2546. www.dakinfarm.com. Also March 28 & 29.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Sunday Sugarhouse Breakfast Buffet. All-you-can-eat buffet. Cost: \$13.99 (plus tax). Horse & wagon rides. 8 am - 2 pm. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. limlawmaplefarm.com. Also March 29.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

MONTPELIER. Farmers Night 2015 Free Concert Series: "Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind." Vermont Symphonic Winds performs a concert for winds and voices to send winter on its way. Free. 7:30 pm in the House Chamber, Vermont State House. (802) 828-2291. vermonthistory.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 4-7 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. For info contact Doug Patac (802) 753-7269, info@vtfarmersmarket.org www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays through April 29.

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

ARLINGTON. Community Dinner. Free. Includes entree, salad, breads, dessert, coffee and tea. Children are welcome. Handicap accessible, plenty of parking. 5:30-7 pm. St. James Episcopal Church, Rt. 7A. (802) 375-9952. stjamesarlingtonvt.org. Also April 24.

MONTPELIER. Maple Open House Weekend. Sugar-on-Snow Fri, Sat & Sun, 12-4 pm; pancake breakfast Saturday, 8:30-11:00 am; hot dogs boiled in sap Saturday & Sunday, 12-3 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. Also March 28 & 29.

NO. CLARENDON. Grocery Bingo. To benefit the Clarendon Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary. Refreshments available. 6 pm. Clarendon Elementary School, 84 N. Grange Hall Rd. (802) 773-1791.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

EAST MONTPELIER. Maple Open House Weekend at Bragg Farm. Sugar-on-snow and fiddle music by David Carpenter and Friends from 12-5 pm. Come watch us boil! Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. Bragg Farm, 1005 VT Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Also March 29.

EAST CHARLESTON. Sky Blue Boys Perform at the Kingdom Coffeehouse. 7 pm. Northwoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-4705. www.northwoodscenter.org.

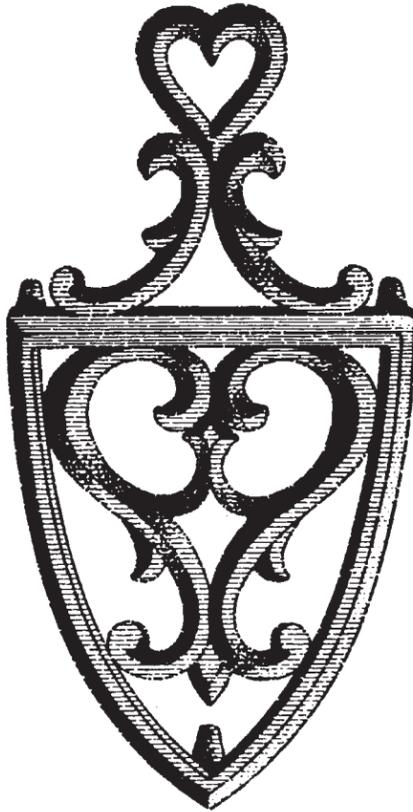
FERRISBURGH. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Pancake breakfast with buttermilk pancakes, bacon, and sausage, 7:30-11:30 am, adults \$7.95 (plus tax), kids \$4.95 (plus tax). Sausage hoagie cooked in sap or a bowl of our very own maple chili for lunch. Taste free samples of maple syrup, ham, bacon. Live music with Bob Degree and the Bluegrass Storm, 12-4 pm. Observe boiling the traditional way. Dakin Farm, Rt. 7. (800) 993-2546. www.dakinfarm.com. Also March 29.

HARTFORD. Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Menu: baked ham, mashed potato, green beans, cole slaw, homemade rolls, raised donuts, sugar-on-snow for dessert. Served family style. Adults \$10, children under 12 \$4, pre-school free. Reservations recommended. Handicapped accessible. Servings at 5, 6 & 7 pm. Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Rt. 14. (802) 295-2510.

HUNTINGTON. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Sugar-on-snow, sugaring demonstrations, and a delicious taste of each grade of maple syrup! Food and syrup for sale. Free admission. 11 am - 4 pm. Green Mountain Audubon Club, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vt.audubon.org. Also March 29.

LUNENBURG. 10th Annual Maple Festival. Celebrate our maple sugaring heritage! Displays, tree tapping demos, contests, sugarhouses tour, pancake breakfast, soup & bread lunch, antique sugaring equipment, sugar-on-snow & maple cotton candy. 8 am - 7 pm. Lunenburg Primary School. For contest rules and information please call Chris at (802) 892-6654. www.topofthecommon.org.

MANCHESTER. Dutton's Maple Open House. Live fiddle music from 12-2 pm. Specialty foods, vendors, maple creamies and fudge. Sugar house tours. At Dutton's Farm Stand, Rt. 11/30. (802) 362-3083. duttonberryfarm.com and on facebook—Dutton Berry Farm.



MONTPELIER. Maple Open House Weekend. Sugar-on-Snow Saturday & Sunday, 12-4 pm; Pancake Breakfast Saturday, 8:30-11:00 am; hot dogs boiled in sap Saturday & Sunday, 12-3 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. Also March 29.

POULTNEY. Maple Fest Celebration. Local sugar makers open their operations up for tours. Horse drawn wagon rides, a basket raffle and many more events during the day. Sugar houses will also be open for tours on Sunday. (802) 287-2010. www.poultneyvt.com.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Silloway Maple Open House. Tours of the solar-powered sugarhouse, with traditionally wood-fired arch. Sugar-on-snow, old-fashioned raised doughnuts with hot maple syrup, and new maple syrup and maple cream for sale. From 10 am on. Silloway Maple, 1303 Boudro Rd. (802) 272-6249. www.sillowaymaple.com. Also March 29.

RANDOLPH. Eighth Annual Mini Mud. Celebrate young talent from across the region. Tickets: \$17, students \$8. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71-73 Main St. (802) 864-5741. www.chandler-arts.org.

RUPERT. Annual Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. Take a wagon ride up to the Frank Hatch Sap House for Merck Forest & Farmland-raised pork breakfast sausages, locally-grown eggs, pancakes drizzled with Merck's Vermont-certified organic maple syrup, and coffee and juice. Adults \$10, children 4-12 \$5, and under 4 free. Tree-tapping demonstrations, sugaring, kids' activities, and maybe newborn lambs. 30 miles of trails to explore. 10 am - 2 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org. Also March 29.

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

SHELBURNE. Maple Open House at Shelburne Farms. 4-H breakfast, \$8/adult, \$4/child, 9 am - 12 pm. Exploring the sugarbush is free. 9 am - 2 pm. 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.

STATEWIDE. Maple Open House Weekend. Vermont's sugar houses open their doors to visitors. Many have special events, music, tours of the sugarbush, and free samples. Some have pancake breakfasts. The Vermont Maple Sugar Maker's Association provides a list of sugarhouses open to the public. For a copy to plan your day and for sugarhouse events, go to www.vermontmaple.org. Also March 29.

WELLS. Annual Old Tyme Maple Sugarhouse Dinner. Presented by the Wells United Methodist Church. Menu: maple glazed ham with maple pineapple sauce and mashed potatoes, 25-item salad bar with five maple dressings, maple baked beans, maple brown bread, hard boiled eggs cooked in maple sap. Large crock of dill pickles to help yourself from. Plenty of maple condiments. Beverages include maple coffee, maple tea, lemonade and water. For dessert, a choice of maple sundaes and maple cookies. Adults are \$12 each, youth 10 and under \$6, age 4 and under free. Take-outs are available. 4:30-7 pm. Modern Woodmen of America Hall, West Main St., Rt. 30, (21 miles northwest of Manchester and 15 miles south of Castleton). (802) 325-3203.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Open House Weekend. Special treats and sugarhouse tours. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. www.limlawmaplefarm.com. Also March 29.

THIS IS WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE ONE GALLON OF PURE VERMONT MAPLE SYRUP

It takes four maple trees, at least forty years old, growing in the mountain "sugarbush" to yield enough sap in six weeks to produce one gallon of maple syrup.



It takes a "gathering crew" to climb the mountains daily during March and April to collect the dripping sap and haul it down to the "sugarhouse."



It takes forty gallons of sap, boiled down in the "evaporator" to concentrate the sweet sap-water into one gallon of maple syrup.



It takes a four-foot log, burned in the raging fire in the "arch" under the evaporator for each gallon of syrup produced, and the whole sugarmaker's family to continually fire the arch, operate the evaporator and sterilize, filter, grade, and pack each gallon of maple syrup.

So, if you had to climb the mountain, tap the trees, haul the sap, cut the wood, stoke the fires, and pack the syrup to the nations only strictly enforced maple law, what would you charge for a gallon of Maple Syrup?



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Vermont Country Calendar

WHITINGHAM. 17th Annual Whitingham Maple Festival. Pancake Breakfast from 7-10 am by Lions Club at the Jacksonville Municipal Center. \$8 adults, \$6 for 65+ years and children 5-12, children under five free. Sugar House Tours from 8 am - 5 pm, Artisans Tours, Craft Fair at Twin Valley High School. Lunch 11:30 am - 1:30 pm at the Twin Valley High School. Horse-drawn sleigh rides from 10 am - 2 pm, by donation, on Rt. 100 across from Twin Valley Middle School. Sugar-on-Snow Baked Ham Dinner from 5-7 pm at the Municipal Center in Jacksonville, \$12 adults, \$6 children 5-12, children under five free. Maps available at info booth at the Whitingham Municipal Center, Rt. 100. (802) 368-2658. info@whitinghammaplefest.com. www.whitingham-maplefest.us. Also March 29.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

FERRISBURGH. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Pancake breakfast with buttermilk pancakes, bacon, and sausage, 7:30-11:30 am, adults \$7.95 (plus tax), kids \$4.95 (plus tax). Sausage hoagie cooked in sap or a bowl of maple chili for lunch. Free samples of maple syrup, ham, bacon. Live music with the Sky Blue Boys, 12-4 pm. Observe boiling the traditional way. Dakin Farm, Rt. 7. (800) 993-2546. dakinfarm.com.

HUNTINGTON. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Sugar-on-snow, sugaring demonstrations, and a taste of each grade of maple syrup! Food and syrup for sale. Free admission. 11 am - 4 pm. At the Sugarhouse, Green Mountain Audubon Club, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vt.audubon.org.

MONTPELIER. Maple Open House Weekend. Sugar-on-Snow 12-4 pm, hot dogs boiled in sap 12-3 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com.

NORWICH. English Country Dance. Music by Trip to Norwich: Carol Compton on keyboard, accordion, and recorders; Thal Aylward on violin and viola. Calling by Chris Levey. Refreshments provided. Admission: \$8 adults, \$4 ages 25 and under. 3-6 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4121. engineering.dartmouth.edu/~d26745m/localECD. Also April 19.

POULTNEY. Maple Fest Celebration. Local sugar houses will be open for tours. (802) 287-2010. poultneyvt.com.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Silloway Maple Open House. Tours of the solar-powered sugarhouse, with traditionally wood-fired arch. Sugar-on-snow, old-fashioned raised doughnuts with hot maple syrup, and new maple syrup and maple cream for sale. From 1 pm on. Silloway Maple, 1303 Boudro Rd. (802) 272-6249. sillowaymaple.com.

RUPERT. Annual Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. Take a wagon ride up to the Frank Hatch Sap House for Merck Forest & Farmland-raised pork breakfast sausages, locally-grown eggs, pancakes drizzled with Merck's Vermont-certified organic maple syrup, and coffee and juice. Adults \$10, children 4-12 \$5, and under 4 free. Tree-tapping demonstrations, sugaring, kids' activities, and maybe newborn lambs. 30 miles of trails to explore. 10 am - 2 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org.

STATEWIDE. Maple Open House Weekend. Vermont's sugar houses open their doors to visitors. Many have special events, music, tours of the sugarbush, and free samples. Some have pancake breakfasts. The Vermont Maple Sugar Maker's Association provides a list of sugarhouses open to the public. For a copy go to vermontmaple.org.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Sunday Sugarhouse Breakfast Buffet. All-you-can-eat buffet includes pancakes, waffles, scrambled eggs, eggs fritatta, biscuits, toast, home fries, maple French toast bake, sausage, bacon, ham, sausage gravy, assorted fruits, donuts & beverages. Our own maple syrup and maple cream. Cost: \$13.99 (plus tax). Horse & wagon rides. Special treats for Maple Open House Weekend. 8 am - 2 pm. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. www.limlawmaplefarm.com.

WHITINGHAM. 17th Annual Whitingham Maple Festival. Pancake Breakfast from 7-10 am by Lions Club at the Jacksonville Municipal Center, \$8 adults, \$6 for 65+ years, children under five free. Self-guided artisans tours all day. Sugar House Tours from 8 am - 5 pm, Craft Fair at Twin Valley High School. Lunch 11:30 am - 1:30 pm at Twin Valley High School. Horse-drawn sleigh rides from 10 am - 2 pm, by donation, on Rt. 100 across from Twin Valley Middle School. Maps available at info booth at Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100. (802) 368-2658. info@whitinghammaplefest.com. whitingham-maplefest.us.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

CHESTER. Monthly Public Astronomy Meetings for the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group. Second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm—free to the public at Whiting Library. Southern Vermont Astronomy Group, PO Box 424, Chester, VT 05143. www.sovera.org.

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

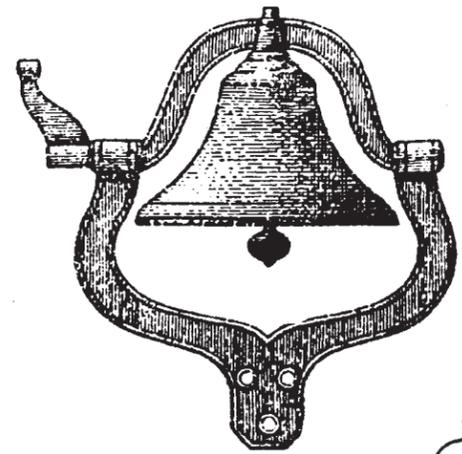
WEST RUTLAND. Vermont Herbal General Store. Owned and operated by a registered pharmacist. Tai' Chi Gung classes, Tuesdays at 5 pm at the store and Saturdays at 8 am at Best Western, Rt. 4, Rutland. Free intro classes. Usul & Karuna Reiki Healings & Classes. Handmade Herbal Medicines, Oils, Essences, Crystals, Gemstones & Books. Teas, Lotions, and Capsules. All are welcome. Open Tuesday & Wednesday 1-6, Thursday-Saturday 12-6, Sunday 1-4, closed Friday. Vermont Herbal General Store, 578 Main St. (802) 438-2766. info@vermonthherbal.com. On Facebook and Twitter. www.vermonthherbal.com.

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

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

COMMUNITY MEALS

ARLINGTON. Free Community Dinner. plenty of parking. 5:30-7 pm. St. James Episcopal Church, Rt. 7A. (802) 375-9952. stjamesarlingtonvt.org. March 27 and April 24.



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Vermont Trout Unlimited Hosts Fly Fishing Summer Camp for Teens

Vermont Trout Unlimited announces their "Fly Fishing Camp for Vermont Teens," ages 13 to 16.

Teens interested in learning the art of fly-fishing or improving their basic skill level alongside some of Vermont's most accomplished fly anglers, are invited to apply.

The 2015 camp is scheduled for Sunday June 21st through Thursday June 25th at Quimby Country Lodge & Cottages, in Averill, VT.

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter supports Trout Unlimited's educational efforts. "Trout

Unlimited's Fly Fishing Camp for Teens is an incredible program dedicated to educating our next generation of fly fishermen and women to help ensure that our precious cold water fisheries here in Vermont will be taken care of well into the future," said Porter.

Participants in the five-day/four-night comprehensive program will learn and practice casting, basic fly tying, knot craft, insect identification and imitation (entomology), fish identification and behavior (ichthyology) and safe wading techniques, angling ethics and coldwater

conservation. Campers will hone their skills on local lakes, ponds and streams, including the Connecticut River.

Quimby Country, (www.quimbycountry.com) is Vermont's oldest sporting lodge and has been in continuous operation since 1894. Located in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom just south of the Canadian border on Forest Lake and Great Averill Pond, Quimby's is only a 15-minute drive from the Connecticut River.

Prospective campers are encouraged to apply no later than April 15, 2014 to secure

a spot for this year's program. The cost for the 5-day camp is \$450. Scholarships may be available.

Trout Unlimited is a non-profit organization that has dedicated over 50 years to the conservation, protection and restoration of North America's cold-water fisheries and watersheds.

For information about the Trout Unlimited Fly Fishing Camp, an application form and videos, go to www.vermonttroutcamp.com. Contact Kurt Budliger, camp director, at (802) 223-4022 or vermonttroutcamp@gmail.com.

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BURLINGTON

Masterworks series

March 14, 8:00 pm
Flynn Center
Burlington

May 2, 8:00 pm
Flynn Center
Burlington

JAIME LAREDO, Music Director

RUTLAND

the Sunday Matinee series

March 15, 3:00 pm
Paramount Theatre
Rutland

In Concert
March 16, 7:00 pm
Latchis Theater
Brattleboro

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Gateway to Vermont's Rural Heritage

Baby Animal Day

Saturday, April 4, 2015
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Calves, Lambs, Chicks, and Ducklings

Children's Craft & Heirloom Seed Activities
Farm Life Exhibits
Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides

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802-457-2355 • www.billingsfarm.org

Vermont Country Calendar

CHESTER. Monthly Community All-you-can-eat Buffet Breakfast. \$7 donation at the door. 8-10 am. Gassetts Grange, junction of Rt. 10 & 103N. (802) 875-2637. *Monthly on first Saturdays.*

CRAFTSBURY COMMON. Free Community Dinner. 6 pm. United Church of Craftsbury, 7 Church Lane. (802) 586-8028. *Continues on third Wednesdays.*

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

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

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

POULTNEY. The Slate Valley Community Monthly Breakfast. 8-10 am at the Poultney United Methodist Church on Main St. Adults \$1 and children under 14 free. Handicapped accessible. (802) 287-9087. *Last Saturdays of the month.*

RUTLAND. Free Lunch. Free soup, sandwiches and beverage. Donations accepted including help. 11 am – 1 pm. Turning Point Center of Rutland, 141 State St. (802) 773-6010. www.rutlandturningpoint.org. *Every Friday.*

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

SO. ROYALTON. Community Supper. Free and open to all. Handicap accessible. 6 pm. United Church of South Royalton, 67 S. Windsor St. For info call Raelene Lemery at (802) 763-7690. ucsr@myfairpoint.net. *Every Friday.*

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

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Listen Hearty Three-Course Community Dinner. Free. Doors open at 4 pm. Dinner at 5 pm. Listen Community Dinner Hall, River Point Plaza, 42 Maple St. (603) 448-4553. listencommunityservices.org. *Monday through Friday.*

WINDSOR. Community Meal. Bring a friend for a meal sponsored by Windsor churches and community groups. Free. 5-6 pm. American Legion Hall on Court St. (802) 674-2157. *Each Wednesday.*

WINDSOR. All-You-Can-Eat Brunch Buffet. Adults \$7.50, 8 and under \$3. 11 am to 1 pm. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 27 State St. (802) 674-6461. *First Sundays.*

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

WINTER FARMERS MARKETS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NORWICH. Norwich Farmers' Winter Market. Saturdays 10 am – 1 pm. February 14 & 28; March 14 & 28; April 11 & 25. At Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. Steve Hoffman, (802) 384-7447. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. norwichfarmersmarket.org. *Through April 25.*

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

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

WINDSOR. The Windsor Farmers Market. First and third Sundays. 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. At the Windsor Welcome Center, 3 Railroad Ave. windsor.vt.farmers.market@gmail.com. *Through May.*

MUSEUMS, EXHIBITS & GALLERIES

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

BARRE. Vermont History Center and Leahy Library. Adults: \$5; families: \$12; students, children, seniors: \$3; members and children under 6: free. Monday through Friday, 9 am – 4 pm. Vermont Historical Society, 60 Washington St. (802) 479-8500. vermonthistory.org.

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

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

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum. Admission \$10, children under 18 free. Free admission to the Gift Shop. Open 10 am - 5 pm every day except Wednesdays. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

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



Lambs at rest in the Activity Barn at Billings Farm.

Billings Farm Baby Animal Day on Saturday, April 4th

Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT will feature Annual Baby Animal Day on Saturday, April 4th, from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. This is the day before Easter Sunday and is a perfect activity for families with young children and visiting relatives. Celebrate Easter and Spring with a visit to Billings Farm! The event will feature family-centered programs with the farm's new calves, lambs, chicks, and ducklings. There will be horse-drawn wagon rides around the farm fields, visits to the heirloom garden and children's springtime craft activities.

Get up close with the farm's baby animals and learn about their care and diet. Crafts for the kids include pom-pom chicks and lamb handprints.

Start planning your garden as you learn about heirloom seeds and select a few varieties of seeds from the Bill-

ings Farm garden to plant at home.

Admission includes all programs plus the working dairy farm and horse-drawn wagon rides.

The Billings Farm & Museum is a charitable non-profit institution. Since opening to the public in 1983, the Farm & Museum has served as a gateway to Vermont's rural heritage.

Billings Farm & Museum is open daily, May 1 through October 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekends Nov. – Feb., and Christmas & Presidents' weeks, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission: adults \$14; 62 & over \$13; children 5-15 \$8; 3-4 \$4; 2 & under free.

Billings Farm & Museum is located one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on Vermont Rt. 12. For information call (802) 457-2355 or visit www.billingsfarm.org.

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English Country Dance

Music by Trip to Norwich

Carol Compton and Thal Aylward

Chris Levey, caller

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

Sunday, March 29 from 1-4 p.m.

Tracy Hall, Norwich, VT

Admission \$8, under 25 \$4

Info: (802) 785-4121 (Chris)

Sponsored by Muskeg Music



Vermont Country Calendar

(Museums, Exhibits and Galleries, continued)

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

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

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

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

GRAFTON. The Nature Museum at Grafton. Hands-on natural history exhibits, mounted specimens and wildlife garden, nature programs for adults and children, plus tours for schools and community groups. Admission to the Museum is free, donations welcome. Open Thursdays from 10 am - 4 pm or by appointment. 186 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2111. info@nature-museum.org. www.nature-museum.org.

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

MANCHESTER. Southern Vermont Art Center. Open Tues-Sat 10 am - 5 pm. Yester House Galleries, Southern Vermont Arts Center, West Rd. (802) 362-1405. svac.org.

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

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

MIDDLEBURY. Vermont Folklife Center. Free admission. Open Tues-Sat 10 am - 5 pm. Vermont Folklife Center, 88 Main St., (802) 388-4964. info@vermontfolklifecenter.org. www.vermontfolklifecenter.org.

MONTPELIER. Vermont History Museum & Bookstore. Adults: \$5; families: \$12; students, children, seniors: \$3; members and children under 6: free. Open 9 am - 4 pm, Tuesday through Saturday. Pavilion Building, 109 State St. (802) 828-2291. vhs-info@state.vt.us. vermonthistory.org.

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

RUTLAND. Chaffee Art Center. Gallery open Thursday and Friday 12-6 pm and Saturdays 12-5 pm. 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. info@chaffeeartcenter.org. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

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

SAXTONS RIVER. River Artisans Cooperative. Year round, weekdays from 12-5 pm and weekends from 10 am - 3 pm. 26B Main St. (802) 869-2099. www.riverartisans.com.

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

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

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

SPRINGFIELD. Gallery at the VAULT. A Vermont State Craft Center featuring fine art and hand-crafted gifts from over 125 local and regional artists and craftsmen. Exhibits, classes, workshops. 6th Tuesday - Saturday 11 am - 5 pm. 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault.org.

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

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

WOODSTOCK. ArtisTree Community Art Center. Exhibits, classes, music, special events. Tuesday 11 am - 8 pm, Wednesday-Saturday 11 am - 4 pm. Mount Tom Building, 1206 Rt. 12. (802) 457-3500. info@artistreevt.org. www.artistreevt.org.

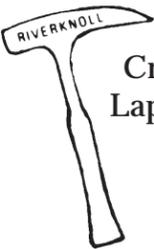
COMMUNITY DANCES AND MUSIC

BENNINGTON. Contradance. Caller Peter Stix, music by Spare Parts with Eric Buddington. All dances taught, beginners are welcome. Come with or without a partner. Admission \$10. 7:30-10:30 pm. One World Conservation Center, 413 Rt. 7 south. (802) 447-2173. info@benningtondance.org. www.benningtondance.org. *First Fridays*.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Music Center. Individual lessons, as well as classes for kids, teens, and adults; instrumentalists, singers, and non-musicians; absolute beginners and accomplished musicians. Daytime adult program, programs for kids, conducting class. Brattleboro Music Center, 38 Walnut St. (802) 257-4523. www.bmct.org.

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Wheeler Family Maple Museum Grand Opening in Derby, VT

Come visit Jed's Maple Products in Derby, VT for the Grand Opening of their Wheeler Family Maple Museum on March 21 & 22 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Free Sugar-on-Snow and wood-fired maple pizza will be available both days. There will be a bonfire on Saturday from 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. so dress for outdoor weather. Bring your family and explore how our family has made maple syrup over the generations. Our museum is located in the sugarhouse that Steve Wheeler grew up sugaring in. Weather permitting, we will be boiling the old-fashioned way in the museum.

Tours of our new eco-friendly modern sugarhouse where we currently boil using high pressure steam and used vegetable oil will also be available. And there is a gift shop and maple creamies! There are lots and lots of tempting maple products you can choose from including maple cotton candy and ice cream toppings.

Shop hours are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Directions: take VT Rt. 5 to Derby Center. At the intersection of VT Rts. 5/105/111 go left (yes, you are headed right towards Canada)! Travel 0.4 miles to Nelson Hill Rd. on the right. Proceed 0.5 miles to a Y in road. Take a right onto Derby Pond Rd. Jed's Maple and the Wheeler Family Maple Museum are 0.3 miles on the left.

For more information contact Steve & Amy Wheeler, Wheeler Family Maple Museum, hosted by Jed's Maple Products, 259 Derby Pond Rd., Derby, VT. Call (802) 766-2700. Visit www.jedsmaple.com.

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Vermont Country Calendar

BRATTLEBORO. Social Singing from The Sacred Harp. Early American hymns in the shape note tradition. Free and open to the public, no experience necessary, loaner books provided. 3-5:30 pm. Centre Congregational Church, 193 Main St. Information: laurat@crocker.com. *Third Sundays.*

BURLINGTON. Shapenote Singing. Bring water and a copy of the Sacred Harp book, if you have it. 6:30-8:30 pm. Check in advance for specific location at UVM: sometimes Ira Allen Chapel, sometimes 427-A Waterman Building. uvm.shape.note@gmail.com. youngtraditionvermont.org. *Every Tuesday.*

CHESTER. Monthly Square Dance and Rounds. Refreshments on sale in the kitchen. \$5 donation at the door. 7-11 pm. Also monthly Open Mike Country Jamboree hosted by Green Mountain Express on third Sundays monthly, admission \$5. Gassetts Grange, junction of Rt. 10 & 103N. (802) 875-2637. *Monthly on first Saturdays.*

FAIRLEE. Scottish Country Dance. All dances taught. Beginners welcome. Bring soft-soled shoes. Admission \$3, first time free. 7-9 pm. Town Hall, 75 Town Common Rd., off Rt. 5. (802) 439-3459. *Every Wednesday through June.*

MONTPELIER. Contra Dance. All dances taught, no partner necessary, beginners welcome! Please bring soft-soled shoes. 8-11 pm. Capital City Grange, 6612 Rt. 12. youngtraditionvermont.org. *1st, 3rd and 5th Saturdays with rotating callers and musicians.*

NORWICH. English Country Dance. Music by Trip to Norwich: Carol Compton on keyboard, accordion, and recorders; Thal Aylward on violin and viola. Calling by Chris Levey. All dances taught, no partner needed. All are welcome. Please bring a clean change of shoes for the dance floor. Refreshments provided. Admission: \$8 adults, \$4 ages 25 and under. 3-6 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4121. engineering.dartmouth.edu/~d26745m/localECD. *March 29, April 19.*

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

NORWICH. Contradance. Music by Cuckoo's Nest, caller Ruth Sylvester. Please bring a pair of clean, soft-soled shoes for dancing. All dances taught. Beginners and singles welcome. Admission \$5, under 16 free. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. 8 pm. At Tracey Hall, 300 Main St. For information call (802) 785-4607. *Fourth Saturdays.*

NORWICH. Social Singing from The Sacred Harp. Early American hymns in the shape note tradition. Free and open to the public, no experience necessary, loaner books provided. Not a performance or church function, just fellowship in song. 1:30-4:30 pm. Parish Hall of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, 262 Main St. For information contact Daniel Hertzler at danhertzler@gmail.com. *Fourth Sundays.*

PLAINFIELD. Monthly Sacred Harp Sing. A free event, with beginners and loaner books available. The second Sunday of every month at 3 to 5 pm at the Community Center above the Plainfield Co-op. For more information, call (802) 595-9951. nscottieharrison@gmail.com.

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

WEST NEWBURY. Eastern Square Dance. Traditional singing squares, waltzes, polkas, foxtrots, two-steps, Virginia Reel, Portland Fancy, Paul Jones, others. All dances taught. With Adam Boyce, fiddler/caller, Donna Weston on piano. Admission by donation, all ages welcome. 7:30 pm at the Community Hall at 219 Tyler Farm Rd. (802) 429-2316 or adamboyce@juno.com. *Fourth Saturdays.*

HORSEBACK RIDING, SLEIGH & WAGON RIDES

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

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

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

RUPERT. Winter Sleigh Rides. In a Sweetheart Sleigh built for two; fee \$150 for a 45 minute tour around the wintry landscape of the farm and forest. Group sleigh rides in a 12-person sleigh for \$185 for 45 minutes through the woods and through the fields. Call to reserve. Merck Forest and Farmland, 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org. *Saturdays and Sundays through March.*

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

RECREATION & NATURE CENTERS

BENSON. Obstacle Race Training Center and Indoor Gym. Natural terrain with 50 man-made obstacles over five miles. Events and races. Monthly memberships. Iceberg footwear for sale. Open year round regardless of the weather. Shale Hill Adventure Farm, 517 Lake Rd. (802) 537-3561. shalehilladventure@aol.com. www.shalehilladventure.com.

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

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

HUNTINGTON. Monthly Bird Monitoring Walk. Help monitor bird populations in the different habitats at the Green Mountain Audubon Center. Our monthly walks gather long-term data on the presence of bird species, their abundance, and changes in populations. Donation appreciated. 8-10 am. Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. Vermont@audubon.org. www.vt.audubon.org.

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

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

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

SHELBURNE. Shelburne Farms. Welcome Center, Farm and Farm Store. Open year round 10 am - 5 pm. Enjoy eight miles of walking trails in woodlands and meadows. Walkers, check in with the Welcome Center. Admission. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.

WOODSTOCK. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park. Trails, carriage roads, gardens and a mansion at Vermont's only national park. Admission: \$4 or \$8, under 15 free. Walk the grounds for free. Guided tours, reservations available. 10 am - 5 pm daily. 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368. www.nps.gov/mabi/index.htm.

10th Annual Home Show and Business Expo in Bethel, VT

The 10th Annual Home Show and Business Expo will take place Saturday, March 7 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Whitcomb High School Gymnasium in Bethel, VT.

Hosted by The Bethel Business Association this Expo has become a popular addition to the events calendar of Bethel, Vermont.

There will be many exhibitors with numerous interesting items on display and for sale. The Bethel Business Association is proud to sponsor this event which gives our local businesses a chance to show and tell about their products and services.

Delicious home-cooked food will be available by the Whitcomb High School

Boosters. Visitors will be greeted in the foyer by a lovely garden design, courtesy of Dandelion Acres Garden Center.

The Bethel Business Association will have a raffle featuring prizes donated by participating vendors and local businesses.

The facility is handicap accessible and admission is free. The event is open to the general public.

The Whitcomb High School Gymnasium is located at 273 Pleasant St. in Bethel, VT.

For more information contact event organizer Nick Nikolaidis at (802) 234-5064. E-mail nick@nikolaidis.com.



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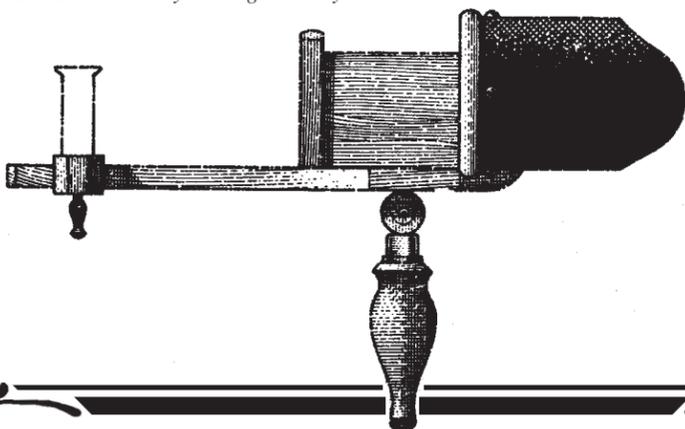
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A Walk in the Park: Plan to Visit Some Great Gardens

by Judith Irven

Even before the arrival of spring, Vermonters are eagerly anticipating summer! And, for me, no summer is complete without visiting a few beautiful public gardens. Whether or not you have a garden of your own, may I suggest the perfect summer pastime of an afternoon in an exquisite garden that somebody else has created!

Some of my most cherished memories are many happy hours with my mother at the magnificent garden at Sissinghurst (about 20 miles from our home in southeast England). Here we would wander through the different garden spaces, embrace the sights and smells of growing things and, all the while, chat together about who knows what!

At that point in my life I had no interest whatsoever in actual gardening; nothing could persuade me to dig the earth and then wait interminably for the flowers and vegetables to mature. But, despite my teenage apathy towards physical gardening, those 'garden days' with my mother were cherished times to savor forever.

Today, as a practical Vermont gardener, when I go to public gardens I usually carry a small camera to record the name of the occasional plant I might want to grow in my own garden. But mainly I go for the thrill of experiencing the beauty and serenity that only a lovely garden can offer.

So, for gardeners and the non-gardeners alike, I would like to share with you three wonderful garden destinations along the Maine coast which could make delightful additions to your summer travels.

Mount Desert Island, Maine

Many people make a point of visiting the stunning Arcadia National Park on Mount Desert Island. But few visitors are aware that, just beyond the park's boundaries in the little village of Northeast Harbor, a pair of exquisite gardens with a rich shared history, await your discovery.

Almost sixty years ago Charles Savage, a self-taught but extremely skillful landscape designer, created both Asticou Azalea Garden and Thuya Garden.

And, although a life-long native of Northeast Harbor, Charles always mingled comfortably with the well-to-do 'summer folk' who maintained properties in Northeast Harbor. Among his summer friends were two respected landscape architects, Joseph Curtis and Beatrix Farrand, as well as the philanthropist, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Not only was JDR instrumental in developing the carriage road system in Arcadia National Park, but he also financed the two gardens that are the subject of this story.

The impetus for creating both gardens was Beatrix Farrand's sudden decision to completely destroy her renowned collection of mature shrubs and perennials when she moved to a smaller home. Absolutely horrified, Charles persuaded his friend, JDR, to purchase and then move the entire plant collection to a new garden he would create in the swampy land at the head of the Northeast Harbor inlet.

Charles oversaw the extensive site preparation—draining the land, creating rocky waterways and finally the Great Pond. Then he managed the relocation of hundreds of full size plants—azaleas, evergreens and more—from the Farrand property.

The result was Asticou Azalea Garden, a serene 'stroll garden' based on Japanese design ideals, while also reflecting the topography and plants of the Maine coast.

We entered through the formal Japanese gateway to discover magnificent carpets of pincushion moss on either side of the gravel pathway. We watched, almost in disbelief, as an attendant gently brushed the moss to remove any stray pine needles that might have dropped the previous night.

Then we took the wide flowing sandy path, edged with azaleas, following a small brook strewn with weathered Maine boulders. We discovered the perfectly-raked sand garden with



Asticou Azalea Garden in Northeast Harbor, Maine, near Arcadia National Park. photo by Dick Conrad

carefully positioned rocks, in its entirety signifying coastal islands in a shimmering sea. Finally we arrived at the Great Pond, complete with a grand collection of elegantly pruned evergreens and yet more azaleas.

We visited Asticou in September, just as the autumnal hues were coming in. However, if you want to see the azaleas in bloom, plan your visit for late May or June.

Beatrix Farrand's plant collection also became the basis of Charles Savage's second great creation, Thuya Garden. By contrast, Thuya is set high on an enclosed hilltop, where it surrounds Thuya Lodge, the longtime home of Savage's landscape architect friend, Joseph Curtis.

Visitors usually approach Thuya Garden on foot, ascending a rocky staircase known as the Asticou Terraces to a pair of grand carved gates that announce you have arrived at your destination. (For people unable to make the climb, there is handicap parking available at Thuya Lodge)

Although Thuya and Asticou are the creation of a single designer using the same collection of Farrand plants, the two gardens feel a world apart. Asticou offers a journey of discovery through serene flowing spaces. By contrast, Thuya has the feel of an English garden. When sitting in the Lower Pavilion, at a single glance you can see the full expanse of the largest perennial bed. There are also waves of colorful flowers that remind us of early twentieth century gardens created by English notables Gertrude Jekyll and William Robinson.

Today both gardens are beautifully maintained by the Land and Garden Preserve, which also has many lovely photographs on their website: <http://gardenpreserve.org/index.html>.

Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens

It is an easy three-hour drive from Mount Desert Island to Boothbay Harbor and the beautiful Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens.

The Botanical Gardens encompass some 20 acres of cultivated areas within an expansive 250 acre site, so you should set aside a full day for exploration. Indeed shuttle buses are available to take visitors to and from the farther reaches of the site.

The Botanical Gardens are actually made up of a number of individual garden spaces, like a collection of 'Gardens within a Garden', each with its own personality, look and feel. The entire site is beautifully laid out, so that you can effortlessly move about both within the individual garden spaces and, equally important, between them.

We especially enjoyed the Sensory Garden, designed to appeal to all our senses. In addition to the visual treat of lots of colorful flowers, there is water to hear, stones to touch, leaves to smell and herbs to taste.

Another highlight is the Children's Garden, a lively, imaginative space to be enjoyed by kids of all ages (including ourselves). We were especially taken by the playful labyrinth cut into the lawn, and whimsical child-sized barns, one with a shaggy grass roof, where small classes were conducted throughout the season. Nearby two chatty chickens and their handsome rooster scratched away in the dirt.

We also loved the long serpentine walkway, surrounded by native plants of the Maine forests, leading down to a gentle Meditation Garden by the sea.

Like many of our home gardens, the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens are relatively young, which means that the shrubs and newly planted trees still have plenty growing to do. But these gardens are anything but sparse. Far from it—every last growing space brims with beautiful perennials and colorful annuals. But, growing in the wings, I spotted plenty of small shrubs that, in a decade or so, will start to predominate. Gardens are never static creations!!

For more pictures visit <http://northcountryreflections.com>.

Judith Irven is a landscape designer and Vermont Certified Horticulturist. You can hear her speak at this year's Vermont Flower Show in Essex Junction: "The Artful Garden—Decorating Our Outdoor Spaces", 12 noon on Friday, February 27; and "The Armchair Gardener—Regional Gardens to Visit and Enjoy", at 12 noon on Saturday, February 28. Visit greenworksvermont.org.

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.



The little children's barns in the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, Boothbay Harbor, Maine. photo by Dick Conrad

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Randolph, VT

Russian Piano Duo Perform at Chandler

Sunday, March 21

Moscow-born pianist Vassily Primakov made his first appearance in Central Vermont at Chandler Music Hall in Randolph in the fall a year ago with a stunning all-Chopin recital. In the audience was his friend and piano partner, Natalia Lavrova. The pair is returning to Randolph, this time with both of them on the stage for a combined concert of piano four hands and solo works. This unusual performance will take place at Chandler on Saturday evening, March 21 at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Primakov will perform the monumental, technically challenging *Fantasia in C major, Op. 15*, popularly known as the *Wanderer Fantasy*, and Ms. Lavrova will offer the long-neglected *Corelli Variations, Opus. 42* of Rachmaninoff, his last composition written for solo piano. Together the pair will perform Czerny's *Grande Sonata in f minor* and Rachmaninoff's *6 Pieces, Op. 11*. There will be reception held in the Chandler Gallery following the concert.

The duo will give a preview of this concert as the guests of VPR Classical host, Walter Parker, in the Colchester studio on Friday, morning, March 20, at 11 a.m.



The Lavrova/Primakov Duo was established in August 2010. They have performed extensively throughout the USA and garnered accolades from audiences and critics. *Fanfare Magazine* writes, "Lavrova and Primakov take turns playing the Piano I and Piano II parts, but technically and tonally they are so well-matched, you wouldn't know who was on first and who was on second."

The duo muses, "We feel that our strength is in being two, very individual performers, long standing friends and collaborators and this keeps us constantly grounded in promoting projects we feel a responsibility toward. We enter every situation, concert and project with a level of pride, respect and devotion and we sincerely hope that this will translate to our listeners."

Primakov's first piano studies were with his mother, Marina Primakova. He entered Moscow's Central Special Music School at the age of eleven as a pupil of Vera Gornostaeva, and at 17 came to New York to pursue studies at the Juilliard School with the noted pianist, Jerome Lowenthal.

Natalia Lavrova was born in Moscow in 1981. She earned her Bachelor of Music and Masters of Music degrees at Juilliard, under the tutelage of Jerome Lowenthal.

In November 2011 Ms. Lavrova and Mr. Primakov established their own record label, LP Classics, an initiative committed to unearthing lost historical gems, presenting never-before-released recordings, and enriching the discographies of emerging stars of the new generation. Included in their catalogue are three of their own discs, a collection of Arensky Suites, of Rachmaninoff works, and of sonatas written for and dedicated to them by their South African composer friend, Braam van Eden.

Each of the artists is recognized internationally. Vassily Primakov has been hailed as a pianist of world class importance, has won a number of performance prizes, and his recording of Chopin's *Mazurkas* was named best of the

Again

One day, not here, you will find a hand
Stretched out to you as you walk down some heavenly
street;
You will see a stranger scarred from head to feet;
But when he speaks to you you will not understand,
Nor yet who wounded him nor why his wounds are sweet.
And saying nothing, letting go his hand,
You will leave him in the heavenly street—
So we shall meet!

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photo by Alex Fedorov

Pianists Natalia Lavrova and Vassily Primakov will perform at Chandler Music Hall on March 21.

year by National Public Radio. Natalia Lavrova is a highly regarded performer of multi-faceted artistry with recitals throughout Europe and the US. She is also the founder and director of the Music School of New York City. Both of the partners are Yamaha Artists.

Tickets to the performance in the Main Hall may be purchased online at www.chandler-arts.org or by calling the box office at (802) 728-6464 weekdays 3-6 p.m.

This concert is presented by Chandler Center for the Arts and is sponsored by Vermont Public Radio, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Vermont Arts Council, and Friends of the Classics at Chandler.

Chandler Music Hall is located at 71-73 Main St. in Randolph, VT. It is handicapped accessible and equipped for the hearing impaired. For more information call (802) 728-9878. Visit www.chandler-arts.org.

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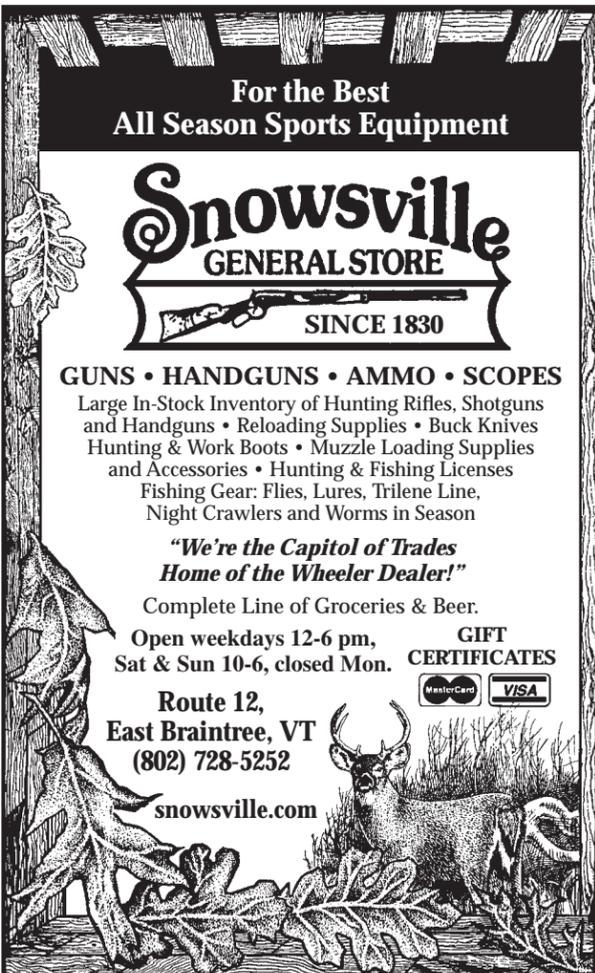
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Mysteries for Sure

by Burr Morse

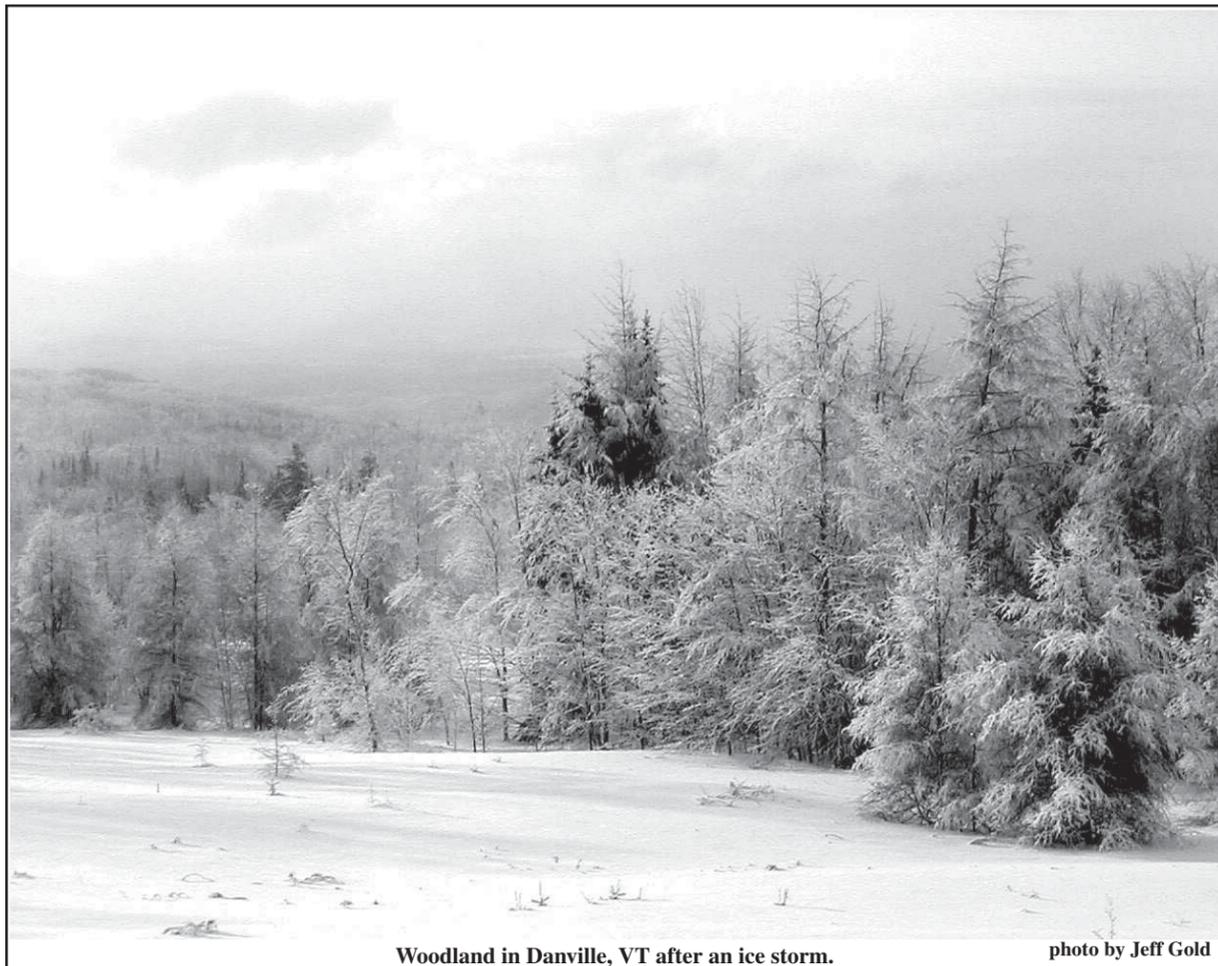
Life on these frigid days provides mysteries galore. Our trees stand like frozen ghosts making distressed cracking and popping sounds. The same ponds that are blue and inviting in July, sit stark, home to ice augers, pickup trucks, and men fishing on frozen water. Heck, even the earth itself is locked in a thick, impenetrable armor! Yet life magically goes on. Like yesterday when our employee Glee looked out the south window to witness trillions of tiny silver crystals dancing in the sun. Even this old curmudgeon had to admit, "it's beautiful...it's mysterious".

And then there's the hoar frost. "The 'what' frost, you say?" That's hoar frost. "Hoar" is an old English word which means "showing signs of old age". My dad used to say in thick Vermontese, "looks like th' old hoah visited in th' night." Translation: our trees had mysteriously "matured" overnight with flowing white beards and hair. Hoar frost is a good thing. It's beautiful and mysterious!

And speaking of my dad and Vermont mysteries, he's been visiting a lot lately right along with those dancing crystals and our recent hoar frost. So far four folks have come to me with reports that they feel Harry Morse's presence around the farm. Dad was the main man at Morse Farm for many years but departed for the great beyond back in 1999. We knew we'd never forget him but were not aware that he'd "force the issue" like he's been doing lately. Tammy our cleaning lady recently called me up. "Your dad was here the other night...knew it when the cellar door opened and then closed going 'bump, bump, bump' the way it does." She went on to describe this powerful "presence" in the store late that night as she and her son cleaned.

I relayed her message to the others at work the next day and, much to my surprise, two more folks seemed to confirm it. My nephew Jake said he was canning syrup the other day when he heard, clear as a bell, "Hi there" from the top of the stairs. Jake said he responded "c'mon down" and expected to see his visitor descend to the canning room. "When nobody appeared," he said, "I went up to look around and there was no one anywhere." He said it was his Grandpa Harry's voice. Harry Morse never was very "long winded." A simple "hi, there" was sufficient to let Jake know his grandpa was around checkin' on him!

Our bookkeeper Rob stayed after the store closed one recent night fighting a testy trial balance or some such thing. He reported feeling a powerful presence. "Just me and Quick-



Woodland in Danville, VT after an ice storm.

photo by Jeff Gold

Books," Rob said, "but there was someone else there, too." I told Rob it was no doubt my dad—he always did want to keep a close tab on our money matters!

I must admit that winter's never been my time of year. The first frigid January day'll bring powerful thoughts of buttercups and new mown hay. And ponds are meant to be blue and swimmable. Heck there's only one guy who could truly walk on water and he weren't wearin' Carhartts and Yaktrax! But I'm a Vermonter and the "tough winter pill," alas, must be swallowed! That said, I'm glad for mysterious crystals dancing in the sun, ridgelines made old by hoar frost, and, yes, an occasional visit by Dad just to warm us on those frigid winter days.

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

To order Cabot cheddar cheese and maple products by mail, call (800) 242-2740 or visit morsefarm.com.

Burr Morse's Microwave Sugar-on-Snow Recipe

Here's another way to use maple syrup. It'll taste great and it'll also be a great way to break up the doldrums of a long wintah.

Make the snow with your food processor and ice cubes (let the snow melt enough to be sticky, pack it down flat in a bowl, and then stick it in a freezer to firm back up).

Put 1/3 cup of maple syrup (use one of the three lightest-colored grades) in a microwave. Add a small bit (1/8 teaspoon) of butter. Microwave on high for two minutes. At the end of two minutes, take a small amount out on a teaspoon, cool it slightly on the snow, and pour it on the snow. If it does not "set up", microwave for a few more seconds. Keep doing this (up to a total of three minutes) until the boiled syrup "sets up" on the snow. When done right, it can be balled up like taffy with fork.

Eat it with plain donuts and dill pickles. This amount provides a "taste" for three people who'll like it so much you'll immediately have to make another batch! This unique Vermont tradition was handed down through seven generations to me (well, all except the food processor and microwave)!



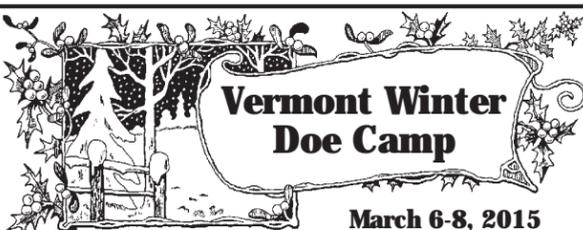
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The Sky Blue Boys, Dan and Willy, Entertain During March

In the tradition of the legendary Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys, Dan and Willy—The Sky Blue Boys—are set to launch another season of crackerjack performances around the Northeast. Here's how things are shaping up for March.

March 29: Dakin Farm, Rt. 7, Ferrisburgh, VT. Annual Sugar-on-Snow Party, noon to 3 p.m. featuring a pancake breakfast starting around 10 a.m. with music getting underway as the tables clear. Bring your appetite and enjoy the sweet scene. www.dakinfarm.com.

March 28: Northwoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr., East Charleston, VT. Kingdom Coffeehouse at 7 p.m. It's gonna be cabin fever time by late March. Better shovel out and warm up with some good live music. Get directions from www.northwoodscenter.org or call (802) 723-4705.

All 19 (that's right – nineteen!) albums are available on CD (one is a DVD) mostly as reissues at bargain prices. To order go to www.banjo-dan.com.

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photo by Greg Maino

Amy Kelsey, Matt Larson, and Emily Licht passing through a powder portal on section 22 of the Catamount Trail between Bolton Valley and Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, VT.

Stowe, VT

Catamount Trail Classic Fun-Raising Tour, on Sunday, March 15th

Come explore one of the most challenging and beautiful backcountry ski trails in North America on The Catamount Trail Classic, Sunday, March 15. Explore Section 22 of the Catamount Trail, as it runs between Bolton Valley Resort and the Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, VT and help support the Catamount Trail Association's Ski Cubs Youth Ski Program.

The Catamount Trail Classic is designed for experienced skiers who have a true sense of adventure and are prepared for the unexpected. Each individual is required to bring a small backpack with food, water, and extra clothes since there will be no official aid stations on the course. Climbing skins are highly recommended. You will be challenged by the terrain and rewarded with great descents and spectacular views.

The day will start at the Trapp Family Lodge where a bus will pick you up at 8 a.m. and transport you to the Bolton Valley Resort where the tour will begin. We will leave from the Bolton Valley Nordic Center and follow Section 22 of the Catamount Trail (blue diamonds) up and over Bolton Mountain to Nebraska Valley Road, eventually returning to the Trapp Family Lodge.

Upon arrival at the Trapp Family Lodge we will gather at Trapps to enjoy food, "refreshments" and socialize. All tour proceeds will go to benefit the Catamount Trail Association Ski Cubs Youth Ski Program which exposes youth to the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and provides a fun, winter alternative to typical indoor entertainment.

Tour participants should expect to take between five and seven hours. Conditions on the course can vary significantly and will play a large role in determining how long it takes to finish this section of the Catamount Trail.

This beautiful but physically challenging course is 17km in length and starts at the Bolton Valley Nordic Center, with a 1300-ft. climb over Bolton Mountain and a 2300-ft. vertical descent to the Trapp Family Touring Center in Stowe, VT. 70% of the trail is ungroomed, while the other 30% will be on groomed nordic center trails.

Schedule

- 7:30 a.m. – Registration and packet pickup inside the Yurt at the Trapp Family Lodge
- 8:00 a.m. – Shuttle pickup at Trapp Family Lodge
- 9:00 a.m. – Arrive at Bolton Valley Resort and start skiing!
- 3:00 p.m. – Food & refreshments at the Trapp Family Lodge...invite your friends!

The registration price for the Catamount Trail Classic includes trail access at both Bolton Valley and the Trapp Family Lodge, shuttle service from Trapps to Bolton, and music and food at the end of the day.

The base price for participating in the Catamount Trail Classic is \$50. When you go to register you will notice that there are additional giving options. Please think about all of the Vermont youth that have experienced a healthy, winter, outdoor activity because of the CTA SkiCubs program and consider giving an amount above and beyond the base price. Besides the base price of \$50 there are additional options at of \$75, \$100, \$150, \$200 and \$500.

Registration is now open. Sign up for the Catamount Trail Classic on Skireg.com. There are a limited number of seats on the bus, so sign up early to ensure you don't miss out!

Please direct any questions to gmaino@catamounttrail.org. Registration will close on Friday, March 13th at 12 p.m. There will be no event day registration.

Trapp Family Lodge is located at 700 Trapp Hill Rd., Stowe, VT. For more information call (802) 864-5794 or e-mail Greg Maino at gmaino@catamounttrail.org. Visit www.catamounttrail.org.

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North Country Book News

Children's Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

The Magic of Maple and the Late Winter Forest!

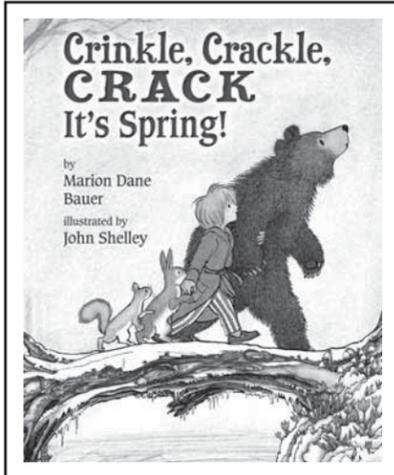
March brings warming winds from the south ushering in the first signs of spring. It was worth the wait. Remember without winter there would be no spring.

Maple sugaring season has its own sights—golden syrup, steam from the sugar house and fire under the evaporators, but there are other seasonal colors, too, as seen in *Sugar White Snow and Evergreens: A Winter Wonderland of Color* by Felicia Sanzari Chernesky and illustrated by Susan Swan (Albert Whitman & Company, \$16.99, www.albertwhitman.com).

Join a family on a sleigh ride to Mr. Sweet's Famous Sugar Maple farm where they enjoy maple syrup being made and have a breakfast of pancakes and syrup, hash and eggs. Their colorful winter journey includes seeing blue sleigh tracks on the glittering white snow; a red cardinal landing on the orange carrot snowman's nose; silver pails collecting sap; the black boiling pan inside the sugar shack; the amber maple syrup; a ride down hills with purple shadows; and evergreen trees a-plenty. This rainbow of colors is beautifully displayed and makes you long for sugaring season.

You can visit the author online at feliciachernesky.com and the illustrator at susanswan.com.

With its long-lasting cold and snow this winter one may wonder if spring will ever come. In *Crinkle, Crackle, CRACK—It's Spring* by Marion Dane Bauer and illustrated by John Shelley (Holiday House, \$16.95, www.holidayhouse.com), a friendly bear takes a little girl on a snowy trip through the woods looking for Spring. They are joined by a rabbit,



squirrel, beaver, and tiny bird. As the title suggests there are a lot of strange noises before the final CRACK bursting Spring wide open. The Spring drawing alone makes the snowy journey a worthwhile trip for you and these travelers.

The author has received a Newbury honor. You can visit her at www.mariondanebauer.com. John Shelley's illustrations are internationally known, especially in Japan where he lived for 21 years. Check out his website at www.jshelley.com.

When we venture into the woods we may know something about trees and animals, but in *What Forest Knows* by George Ella Lyon and illustrated by August Hall (Simon & Schuster, \$17.99, kids.simonandschuster.com), one is treated to a magnificent panorama of how the seasons really unfold in the forest.

A little boy and his dog share what the forest knows and teaches. The stunning drawings are enhanced by little verses also telling the story. As we see, the forest knows snow, icy branches, frozen waterfall, squirrels asleep in branches, insects burrowed in

bark, moles resting among roots. And with spring, the forest knows buds, soft life pushing through hardwood, a haze of yellow-green, purple, and pink above a cascading creek. There are animals, too: warblers, woodpeckers, bluebirds, doves, wolves, deer. And we learn the "forest knows everything belongs, including you, too."

The author, George Ella Lyon, grew up just down the road from Blanton Forest, the largest old-growth forest in Kentucky. Find out more online at georgeellalyon.com. Illustrator August Hall has worked as a sketch artist for Dreamworks and Pixar among others, but his love is for picture books and he has shifted his focus to editorial illustration. Lucky us!

Book Review

Mammal Tracks and Scat

Life-size Pocket Guide—Tracking Through All Seasons by Lynn Levine (Heartwood Press)

There has been so much snow this winter this would be a good time to figure out what animals have been making all those tracks around your home other than the neighbor's dog or cat. Or if you venture into the woods the tracks and animal scat will introduce you to the even greater variety of wildlife.

Thanks to this 45-page waterproof pocket-size guide, animal identification is now at your finger tips. The author, Lynn Levine, who lives in East Dummerston, VT, the first female consulting forester in New England, has been sharing her expertise on wildlife identification with workshops and guided trips into the forests for more than 25 years.

This guide keys you into track patterns used by different animals: walking and trotting, bounding, hopping or waddling. Animal foot-

prints are all drawn to scale just as you would see them in the snow, mud, sand or dirt.

Larger prints identify deer, moose and bear. Medium-sized footprints include fox, coyote, otter, beaver, opossum, woodchuck, porcupine, skunk, beaver, rabbit and other species. Smaller prints help identify mouse, chipmunk, red and grey squirrel.

The guide has scat drawings from 27 species. Lynn gives extra clues to help I.D. the scat. For instance, snowshoe hare scat usually contains pieces of wood.

Lynn Levine also is the author of *Snow Secrets*, a fictional children's tracking adventure.

You can find more about Lynn's books and her programs at www.heartwoodpress.com where the tracking guide can be ordered for \$14.95.

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Children's Book Review

Wee Gillis

by Munro Leaf

Illustrated by Robert Lawson

(New York Review Children's Collection, \$15.95, nyrb.com)

It's not unusual for young people to have suffer through battles of alliance when family members have conflicting ideas about what they should do.

Pity poor Wee Gillis, who lives in Scotland where he spends half the year with his mother's people in the Lowlands, and the other half of the year with his father's kin in the Highlands.

Being a conscientious boy he does well at his chores for these families. In the Lowlands we see the kilted Wee Gillis building up some strong lung power calling in the Scotch Highland cattle he herds in all kind of weather.

In the Highlands his task is to help stalk stags from outcrop to outcrop, holding his breath so as not to make a sound.

But the years go by and Wee Gillis finally comes of age where he has to decide whether he is a Lowlander or a Highlander. On the fateful day Wee Gillis follows his Uncle Andrew from the Lowlands and his Uncle Angus from the Highlands to a half-way meeting point between the two countrysides. The uncles plead, beg, and finally stamp their feet and shout, urging him to pick sides now! "You could hear them shouting all the way down the valley and all the way up the hills."

This verbal tempest temporarily comes to the end when a large man, a bagpiper, comes by. He is sad and crying because the fine new bagpipes he is carrying are too big and he hasn't enough breath to blow them up. The uncles try the pipes and fail. Now Wee Gillis asks if he can try the pipes. And we see that all that lung power he has built up works.

"The bag filled up and let out a screech through every one of its pipes and the large man and Uncle Andrew and Uncle Angus fell off their rocks with surprise."

It's also a happy surprise for us to learn that "the large man taught him how to make music and now Wee Gillis is welcome down in the Lowlands and up in the Highlands, but most of the time he just stays in his house half way up the side of a medium-sized hill and plays THE BIGGEST BAGPIPES IN ALL SCOTLAND." Would that all our family squabbles were sorted out this well.

You will enjoy the illustrator's line drawings that are just as amusing as the story itself.

The author Leaf Munro (1905-1976) wrote and illustrated more than 40 books, his best known being *The Story of Ferdinand* (1936) about a gentle bull in Spain that preferred smelling flowers to bullfighting, also illustrated by his friend Robert Lawson.

Leaf once commented: "Early on in my writing career I realized that if one found some truths worth telling they should be told to the young in terms understandable to them." He certainly has done that here.

Illustrator Robert Lawson (1892-1957) was a prolific writer and illustrator of literature for children and the first person to receive both the Newbery and Caldecott medals. Among his classic stories are *Rabbit Hill* and *Ben and Me*.

We thank the New York Review of Books for bringing us this and other newly reprinted classics. www.nyrb.com.



The Eloquent Page

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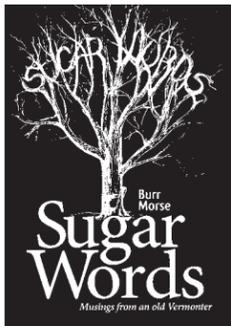
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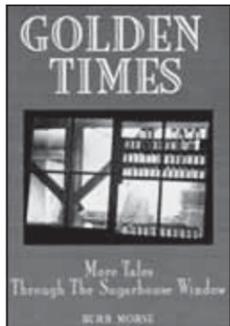
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The Sugarmaker's Companion

An Integrated Approach to Producing Syrup from Maple, Birch, and Walnut Trees

by Michael Farrell

(Chelsea Green Publishing)

One can only guess when the maple sugaring season will start and finish. The end will come all too soon when the sap-giving maples start budding out and the Spring peepers are heard at night.

Sugarmakers who wish they could keep going awhile longer when the maple run is over might consider shifting to tapping and producing birch sap and syrup. Birch? Or even nut trees?

The Sugarmaker's Companion, a 325-page fascinating book has plenty of down-to-the-basics advice and technical information for today's maple sugarmakers, but readers will be intrigued by its encouraging look at growing and tapping birch as well as nut trees. They also can produce a tasty syrup or beverage that could be just as economically feasible as time-tested maple syrup and maple products.

Author Michael Farrell is director of Cornell University's Uihlein Forest, a maple syrup research and extension field station at Lake Placid, NY, where he taps 5,000 maples, 600 birch trees and a few dozen black walnut and butternut trees every year.

And he writes:

"Having once harvested and thoroughly enjoyed butternuts (although the trees are scarce now, and their nuts hard to crack), I regret I never planted any nut trees, let alone think they would make syrup."

Farrell is especially keen on tapping birch trees whose sap can be made into healthy beverages that are gaining in popularity today, and he notes:

"The warm weather that causes the maple season to end early is the same weather that warms the soil up and gets the birch sap flowing."

Farrell says if you have a lot of birches mixed in with the maples one can use the same releases, vacuum pumps, and tanks as long as they are thoroughly cleaned and all the valves to your maple taps are closed. "We once made the mistake of not washing, and the sap quickly became contaminated with the residual bacteria left over from the maple season."

Because birch sap contains mostly fructose and glucose, it caramelizes at a lower temperature than maple sap (mostly sucrose), so in making birch syrup, the boil time can create a syrup with a very strong flavor and much darker in color.

Farrell recommends using reverse osmosis to remove at least 80 percent of the water from the birch sap before it is boiled; resulting in a shorter boiling time which will create a syrup with a much more delicate flavor and

lighter color. The author notes that the prices for birch syrup are three to five times those of maple syrup because so few are producing it. He reminds us that when there is high demand and limited supply, prices go up.

Farrell relates a story about how Korean immigrants who live in New York City came to his sugarhouse just to purchase maple sap, but were surprised and impressed that he knew about the Korean maple called 'goroses' which means "the tree that is good for the bones." He said they came twice to buy sap at \$5 a gallon.

We learn that in addition to S. Korea, other countries that consume a lot of tree sap are Japan, China, Finland and Russia, where birch sap is used to treat hypertension,

urinary problems, gout, gastritis, kidney problems and scurvy.

Farrell sees a growing

market for birch sap and syrup and its by-products in the United States through health drinks, birch beers and ales, and carbonated beverages.

The three most common birches in North America that can be tapped are paper birch, yellow birch and black birch also known as sweet birch. These are discussed in some detail as well as other tree species he recommends for tapping.

Among his list of unusual tapping prospects for the adventuresome are sycamore, butternuts, black and English walnuts and heartnuts.

Write-ups about these trees and their possibilities also extend to the pros and cons of a variety of maple trees. He discusses sugar maple, black maple, red maple, silver maple, Norway maple, boxelder, bigleaf maple, canyon maple and Rocky Mountain maple.

What may surprise us is that other areas of America and countries around the world have capable trees for sap gathering and possibly being made into syrup.

If there's a theme to *The Sugarmaker's Companion* it's savvy advice and ideas for making maple sugaring financially rewarding. Chapters are devoted to sugarhouse design and construction; cost effective ways for gathering sap; the best equipment including using vacuum pumps to get the most sap out of one's trees.

Those of us who continue to be amazed by so much plastic tubing in the woods replacing collection buckets will learn that actually a great deal of thought and care is given to laying out those colorful lines.

A herringbone design is popular, but advice is given on dealing with terrain problems and how to keep gravity on a sap-flowing

Book Review

by Charles Sutton

Book Review

Discover Thetford's History

Vermont author and historian Susanna H. French has compiled a wonderful history of Thetford, VT entitled *Thetford*, published by Arcadia Publishing, part of their Images of America Series.

This is a fascinating introduction to Thetford, VT, still comprised today of seven villages—Thetford Hill and Thetford Center, East and North Thetford, Post Mills, Ely and Union Village, each with its own unique history revived here in 200 remarkable photographs.

The author, who lives in Thetford and is a trustee of the Thetford Historical Society, documents how a for-

estland is transformed into a self-sustaining community of farms and mills connected to the greater America through busy railroads and stage-coaches.

Historically the area enjoyed an economic boost (and still does) from tourism and especially from the camp craze that started in the early 1900s. We see early camp girls fashionably dressed and railroad depots packed with camp girls and boys.

Dozens of photos make us aware that the area's economy at one time was mill-oriented, manufacturing lumber, furniture, rake handles, bobbins, linseed oil, cloth, shingles, starch, sash

and blinds, even musical instruments and shoes. All that remains today of these mills and factories are memories and pictures in this book.

We can see the population was resilient in the face of fires, flood, storms and other disasters.

This is also a history about the Thetford people and we hear about many of them. Consider Bathsbeba Lane, a midwife who delivered 1,666 babies and never lost a mother!

Thetford by Susanna H. French is available from your bookseller for \$21.99 or can be ordered from the publisher at arcadiapublishing.com.



The Sugarmaker's Companion

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PRODUCING SYRUP FROM MAPLE, BIRCH, AND WALNUT TREES



MICHAEL FARRELL

With information on sugarbush management, the economics of sugaring, and marketing strategies to ensure a profitable enterprise



level. We are shown how to install main and lateral lines, manifolds, support wires, and collection tanks. We even see a sap ladder to lift sap lines over a roadway.

The author discusses being certified organic or not; buying additional sap or syrup in bulk and its pricing structure; leasing taps; and profitability through value-added products such as maple cream, candy, granulated maple sugar, maple soda, maple cotton candy, and sugar-on-snow. He even shows a chart showing the higher prices generated using smaller containers.

Although this book deals with much technical information, there are many anecdotes and stories about the people in sugaring.

How many of us knew there's a "syrup inspector in chief" in Vermont, Henry Marckes, whose job is to pinpoint the source of substandard or off-flavored syrup. His testing sometimes has sent him to the hos-

pital, but not in the case of some syrup that tasted fishy. He discovered the sugarmaker was steaming clams in the back pan of the evaporator! Lesson to be learned: only syrup should be cooked in the evaporator.

Among the flavors he discovered you don't want your syrup to have: chlorine, detergent, metallic, plastic, defoamer, chemical, fermented, burnt niter, earthy, and buddy—the end of the season syrup that takes on a fruity, almost chocolate flavor that has often been described as Tootsie Roll. If you follow the advice in this book, your syrup—maple or birch—will taste just fine.

The Sugarmaker's Companion—An integrated Approach to Producing Syrup from Maple, Birch, and Walnut Trees by Michael Farrell is available from your bookseller for \$39.95 or from the publisher, Chelsea Green Publishing at www.chelseagreen.com.



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The Lunenburg 10th Annual Maple Festival

— March 28, 2015 —

The Lunenburg Annual Maple Festival celebrates an important heritage – an understanding and appreciation for all that goes into the process of “sugaring” and the historical importance of sugaring in the town of Lunenburg Vermont. This year marks the 10th Festival. The Top of the Common Committee invites you to join in this dual celebration!

On Saturday, March 28 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Lunenburg Primary School, located above the Town Common off Rt. 2 on 49 Bobbin Mill Rd., will serve as the hub for the Festival. There visitors can enjoy homemade meals, sign up for a free door prize, pick up a scavenger hunt, and a map and directions to the six local sugarhouses that are open for visitors. Photographs, interactive displays, and local antique sugaring equipment chronicle all that goes into the sugaring process and the local families as they have carried on the tradition over generations.

In honor of Lunenburg’s 10 years of celebrating its maple sugaring heritage, visitors will have the occasion to meet and visit with Katherine Ham of Sheffield, VT, Vermont’s Maple Ambassador, enjoy the Lunenburg and Gilman K-12 student entries in a poster contest, and view some anniversary theme displays. As in past years, they will have the opportunity to cast their vote for the People’s Choice awards in the photo and quilt square contests, and purchase maple and Lunenburg theme products, including copies of A Wicked Good Run.

Festival Schedule

At specific times during the day, these activities are available at the school and nearby locations:

- **From 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.—Pancake Breakfast** at the school. The menu including sausage, eggs, home fries, beverages and real maple syrup, will be offered by The Top of the Common Committee. \$7 adults, \$3.50 ages 12-4, under age 4 free. Take-outs are available.

- **10 a.m. to 3 p.m.—Sugar-on-Snow and Maple Cotton Candy** will be available at the VMSMA portable sugarhouse in the school parking lot.

- **10:30 a.m.—Judging of the Maple-Flavored Pie Contest** will begin at the Pie Contest table. Whole pies and pieces will be available for purchase throughout the day, after the winners have been announced. \$2/piece, \$8-\$12 for whole pies.

- **From 10 a.m. to mid-afternoon—Self-guided tours through the participating local sugarhouses.** Visitors, with maps in hand, can take self-guided tours through the participating local sugarhouses to visit with sugarmakers, purchase maple syrup and, weather permitting, watch syrup being made. The sugarhouses provide a representation of the diverse methods of sap collection, fuel, and product sales.

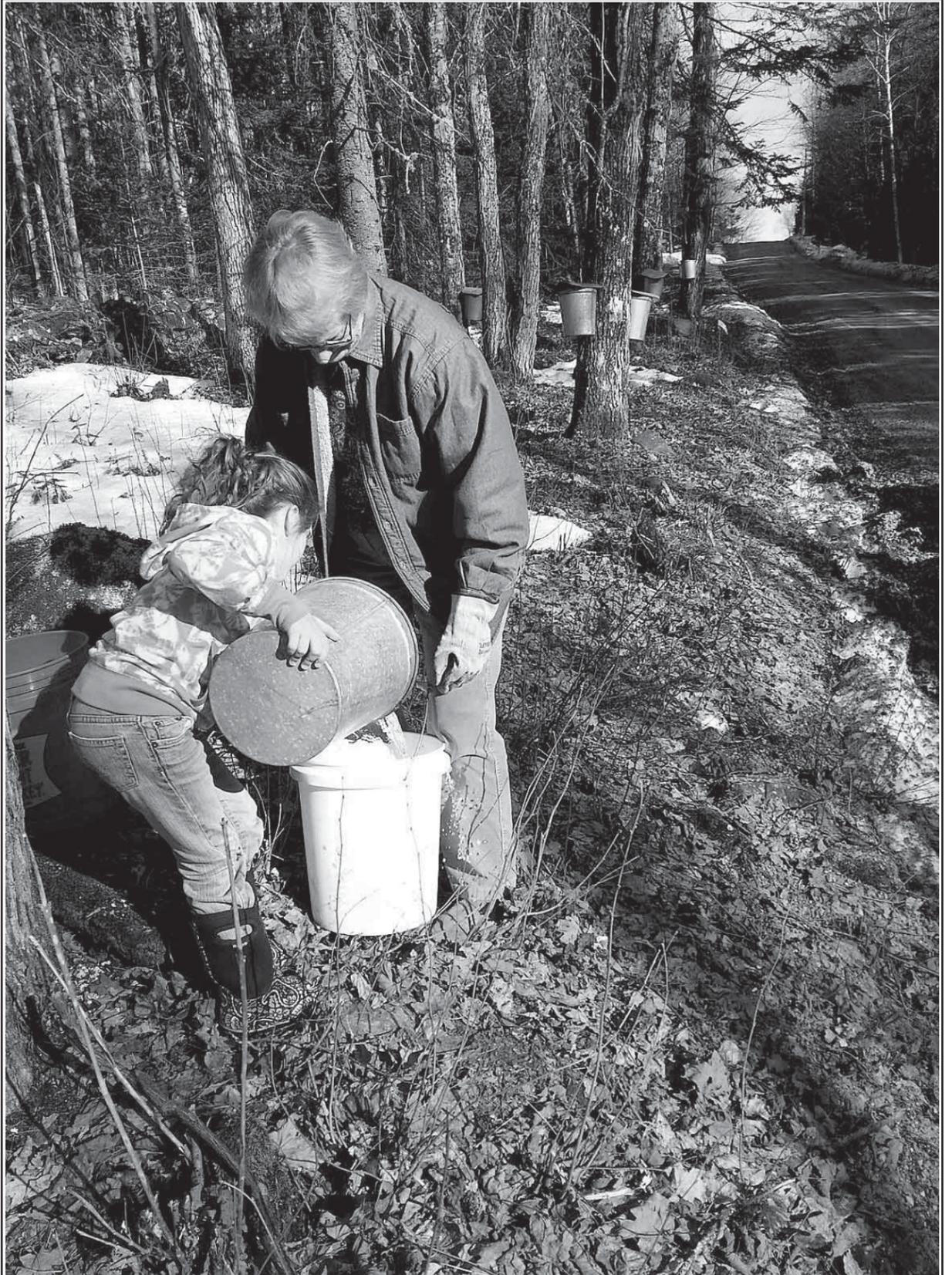
- **Noon to 3 p.m.—Luncheon** at the school with a choice of homemade soups, homemade breads, and a dessert for \$5.

- **At 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.—Learn how to tap a tree** and what makes the sap run at a tapping demonstration on the Town Common.

- **At 3:45 p.m.—Winners will be announced** for the photo and quilt square contests, quilt raffle, free door prizes and counting jar contest.

Enter the photo, quilt square, and pie baking contests! For festival information visit www.topofthecommon.org/17.html or call Chris at (802) 892-6654.

The Lunenburg Primary School is located off Rt. 2 on Bobbin Mill Rd. above the Town Common in Lunenburg, VT. Lunenburg is located in Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom on the way from St. Johnsbury, VT to New Hampshire.



Chet and Sharon Stockwell of Lunenburg, VT are training their grandchildren in their family heritage of sugaring, the sixth generation! They began their backyard operation 17 years ago in the driveway surrounded by a makeshift tarp “house”; now they’re in a sugarhouse constructed over a period of four years. Using buckets to collect the sap, they have 115 taps in their, neighbors’, and relatives’ trees—some of the same trees that Sharon’s great-grandfather tapped. A real neighborhood-family operation!

Vermont Winter Farmers Markets

Start your shopping with a trip to a Farmer’s Market and you’ll be pleased at how much of your table can be from Vermont, locally-grown and better tasting, even in the winter. You’ll find winter squash, potatoes, onions, and all sorts of greenhouse greens, fresh herbs, and salad makings. There will be apples all winter and freshly-pressed cider; pies, baked goods including gluten-free; Vermont cheeses and wines. And now that it’s March, new season maple products.

At some markets you can enjoy music and entertainment and most have snacks while you shop or take-home foods.

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

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

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

Burlington Winter Farmers’ Market at Memorial Auditorium, at the corner of Main St. and S. Union. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. every other Saturday, March 14 & 28, and April 11. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Chris Wagner, (802) 310-5172. info@burlingtonfarmersmarket.org. burlingtonfarmersmarket.org.

Burlington—UVM Medical Center Farmers Market in the Davis Concourse at the hospital. Every Thursday through May 15, 2:30-5 p.m. Tanya McDonald. tanya.mcdonald@vtmednet.org.

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

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

Lebanon, NH—Lebanon Farmers Market at Lebanon Senior Center, 10 Campbell St. Saturdays 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. March 21, April 18. Lindsay Smith, (603) 448-5121. info@lebanonfarmersmarket.org. lebanonfarmersmarket.org.

Middlebury Winter Farmer’s Market at Mary Hogan Elementary School, 201 Mary Hogan Dr. Saturdays March 7 through April 25, 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Jeremy Gildrien & Sha-

ron Kerwin, (802) 989-7223. middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Windsor—The Windsor Farmers Market. First and third Sundays. 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. through May. At the Windsor Welcome Center, 3 Railroad Ave. windsor.vt.farmers.market@gmail.com.

Woodstock Winter Farmers Market. At the Masonic Hall at 30 Pleasant St. Saturday, March 21 and April 18 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Anne Dean, (802) 457-3889. anneidean@gmail.com.



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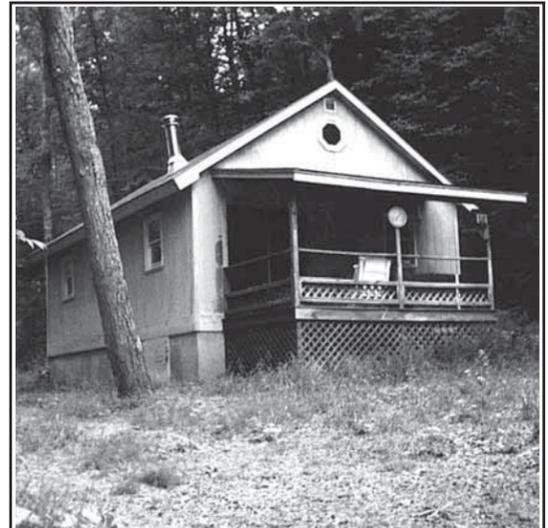
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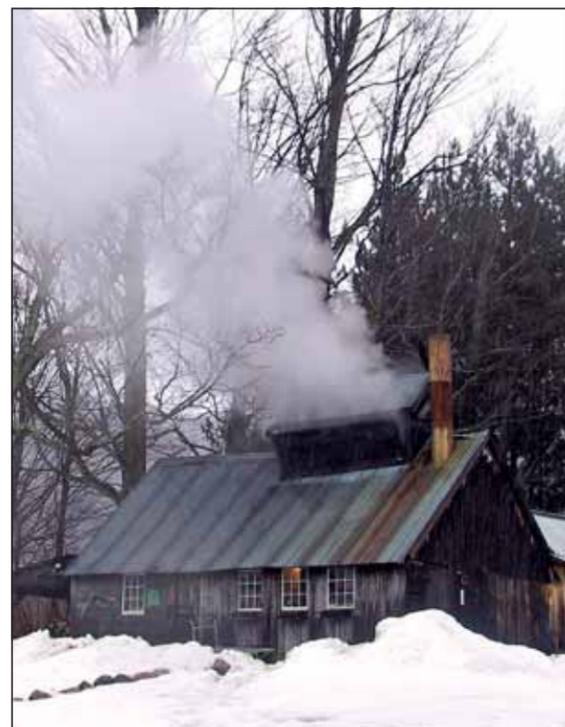
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