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Wild turkeys take flight along a driveway in Randolph, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

❧ Winter Notebook ❧

A little before or after New Year's Day, I take an inventory of what is happening around the yard and in my life.

I check the oak leaf hydrangea by the back porch. It often keeps half its leaves, even when the days stay below freezing. I stand and look at the wood pile for a while, trying to estimate how much wood is left.

I look in the front garden to see if the snowdrops have come up; usually they have, at least a little, their white tips an easy gauge of earliest spring—that is, unless they are covered with snow.

I check the pussy willows. Sometimes I count how many are opening. That's another way to measure the progress of the year. Then, I take a look at the honeysuckle bushes, note whether any of their berries are left. I finger the seed heads of the New England asters to see if all the seeds are gone. I kick the fat Osage fruits to see how they are doing: they are chartreuse green when they tumble down in October and November, turn yellower and yellower through the fall, start to get mushy in the middle of winter, fall apart in spring.

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

Inventory of my life at the beginning of the year is a little complicated, but inventory in the yard and garden makes up for that, helps me to know where I am, even if I don't always understand who I am.

—Bill Felker

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Vermont Country Sampler

January–February 2012, Vol. XXVIII

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Advertising rates available upon request. Deadline the 15th of the preceding month.

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Landgrove, VT

A Vermont Almanack for Deep Winter

by Bill Felker

*I sing the cycle of my country's year,
I sing the tillage, and the reaping sing.*

—Vita Sackville-West

The Phases of the Camel-Back Cricket Moon, The Singing Cardinal Moon, And the Red-Winged Blackbird Moon

While the camel-back crickets rule their crawl spaces and basements, the world outside, even when covered with snow, is moving through Deep Winter toward March. Early in January, the tufted titmouse sings its mating song, one of the first signs of the year's progress. Squirrel activity increases in the high trees, another sign of the lengthening days. Finally, at the approach of February, male cardinals begin their mating calls about a half an hour before dawn. Not long afterwards, mourning doves and bluejays start calling, too. Then, when sap stirs in the maple trees, the red-winged blackbirds arrive in the wetlands.

January 1: The Camel Back Cricket Moon enters its second quarter. **January 9:** The moon is full at 2:30 a.m. **January 16:** The moon enters its final quarter at 4:08 a.m. **January 23:** The Singing Cardinal Moon is new at 2:39 a.m. **January 30:** The moon enters its second quarter at 11:10 p.m. **February 7:** The moon is full at 4:54 p.m. **February 14:** The moon enters its final quarter at 12:04 p.m. **February 21:** The Red-Winged Blackbird Moon is new at 5:35 p.m. **February 29:** The moon enters its second quarter at 8:22 p.m.

The Sun's Progress

The Sun enters its sign of Aquarius on January 20th, foreshadowing the last subseason of winter (aptly called "Late Winter"). By the end of the month, the day's length is approaching a spring-like ten hours, even in the North!

Along the 40th Parallel on February 4th, the day is approximately one hour longer than it was at winter solstice. On the 18th of February, the sun reaches halfway to equinox, entering Pisces at the same time. This landmark in the solar year is called Cross-Quarter Day, and it not only divides the time between solstice and equinox, it ushers in the changeable season of early spring.

The Stars

The late evening sky of January is the noon sky of June: Orion is looming across the south, promising sweet clover and great mullein in bloom; Leo in the east tells about the yellow blossoms of the coneflowers; Taurus across the west fills the high canopy with dreams of honeysuckle flowers.

In February, deep winter's Orion moves off to the west after midnight, and Corvus appears on the eastern horizon. Before dawn, all the constellations that ride the Milky Way into summer lie in the east. Following the Milky Way to the south is Cygnus, the Northern Cross. Below Cygnus is Aquila, with its bright star Altair. Below Altair: July's Sagittarius.

The Planets

Venus lies in Aquarius as 2012 opens, deep in the far west after sundown. Jupiter begins the year in Aries, high in the western sky at sundown and remaining visible until after midnight. Saturn starts and ends 2012 in Virgo, coming up after 12 a.m. and traveling into the western sky by dawn. Mars moves within Virgo, too.

In February, Mars moves into Leo, rising before midnight and traveling across the sky throughout the early morning hours, coming overhead by 6:00 a.m. Jupiter continues to hold its position in Aries, deep in the west after dark. Saturn in Virgo comes up near midnight and lies in the southeast at dawn. Moving retrograde into Pisces as Late Winter begins, Venus continues as the brilliant evening star far in the west, lower than Jupiter (which is not quite as bright as Venus), and setting before Jupiter.

Meteorology

The season of Deep Winter begins January 1. This season has six significant cold waves, and it lasts from the 1st through around the 25th of January. Full moon on January 9 and new moon on January 23 are likely to intensify the weather systems due around that date. Late Winter contains five to six cold fronts and lasts from January 26 through February 18, at which time cold waves typically become weaker and warm fronts stronger. A relatively long season of eight to ten major fronts, Early Spring lasts from mid-February through the end of March. Full moon on February 7 and new moon on



photo by gregnesbit.com

Mollie Wright drives a sled pulled by Belgian draft horses at Taylor Farm in Londonderry, VT.

February 14 are likely to increase the intensity of the weather systems that typically arrive near those dates.

Bill Felker's Poor Will's Almanack for 2012 is now available. Send \$20 (includes s/h) to Poor Will, P.O. Box 431,

Yellow Springs, OH 45387. Bill's weekly radio essays are broadcast on National Public Radio's WYSO Ohio (available by podcast at www.wyso.org). His websites, www.poorwillsalmanack.com or www.poorwillsalmanack.net provide excerpts from his daybook and weekly Almanack updates.

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Modern Art Gallery Opens in Chester, VT

Bryce LeVan Cushing

Bryce LeVan Cushing (Sculptor, Performance Artist, Chef, Garden Designer & Curator) has been busy for the past two decades working in the arts across a multitude of disciplines coast to coast in the United States and in Europe. He is thrilled to announce his latest undertaking, opening a modern art gallery in the new capital of contemporary art for Southern Vermont: Chester, VT.

The gallery will feature cutting edge work from artists around the U.S. and abroad and is called BLCARTGRP Gallery. It is located at 297 Main Street in the MoonDog Cafe Building.

The first show to open is titled: Contempo-Take-O and features the dynamic polaroid transfer prints of Rik (Wave) Kapler (Provincetown, MA) and the mixed media sculptures of curator Bryce LeVan Cushing. This show opens with a gala event on January 22nd from 3-9 p.m. and runs through March 15th.

BLCARTGRP is proud to host Provincetown, MA-based fine artist Rik (Wave) Kapler for our inaugural event showcasing a retrospective of his polaroid transfer prints of Provincetown Carnival imagery. It is rare to see this type of ground-breaking work in a rural setting.

The gallery will offer an art experience not available anywhere else in Vermont,

with legendary NYC performers bringing their far left edgy grit to the pastoral New England countryside. The first in a series of performers coming to the gallery offering performance art during our openings are: Needles Jones and Moonfire Tower. Needles has been a regular at the NY Times critically-acclaimed performing art marathon as of late and he has been on the scene since the late 70's when he graced the stage of the Pyramid Club.

MoonFire Tower is best known for his work with "The Goddess," Joey Arias. MFT helped give rise to the gender-bending performance art style which flourished in the early 90's in Philly and other urban centers. At the opening of Contempo-Take-O, MoonFire Tower will debut his new live guitar act of original songs as he opens for the fantastic local trio: The Break Maids. Please join us for a night full of art, song and celebration.

Visitors to the BLCARTGRP Gallery, in the rear of the MoonDog Cafe Building at 297 Main Street in Chester, VT will experience a true modern art experience.

The gallery will be open to the public Wednesday thru Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and by appointment. For more information please call (802) 843-1162 or visit www.brycelevancushing.com.



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Windham Orchestra Performs a Romantic Voyage

Warm up your bleak winter nights as the Windham Orchestra takes us on a Romantic Voyage. The Orchestra, under the direction of Hugh Keelan, will perform Elgar's Sea Pictures and Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2.

Performances take place on Friday, January 27, 7:30 p.m., at Bellows Falls Opera House in Bellows Falls, VT, and Sunday afternoon, January 29, 3 p.m., at Latchis Theater in Brattleboro, VT, Treasured local mezzo-

soprano Mary Westbrook-Geha will sing Sir Edward Elgar's Sea Pictures, Op. 37. This orchestral song-cycle consists of five songs written in English by various poets. Sea Pictures takes us on a journey describing the human relationship with the sea, from tenderness and loss through calm safe-haven to tempestuous drama.

"Elgar's Sea Pictures is a complex expanse of contrasts, in poetry, emotion, dynamics, and in vocal and orchestral color," says

Westbrook-Geha. "Vocally, the piece is quite demanding, I am so pleased to have been invited to perform it with Maestro Keelan and the Windham Orchestra, who are finding all the subtleties in Elgar's beautiful orchestration, evoking the sounds of England and the sea."

Russian composer Sergei Rachmaninoff created symphony No. 2, opus 27, during the Romantic Era of music composition.

In this piece we are shown how to live in winter in Rus-

sia or Vermont: the scene appears to be set in darkness, cold and settled snow, a heavy, brooding state of mind prevails, and the main work of the symphony is to generate joy, passion and a glow of warmth against this backdrop.

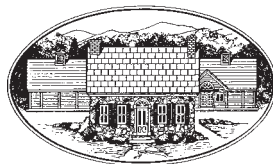
As with so much of what Rachmaninoff created, there are glorious rising lines of music that create an overwhelming uplift, only to subside and rise even higher and more powerfully. Brilliance and warmth prevail.

Tickets are \$15, \$10 students and seniors. They are available at the Brattleboro Music Center and Maple Leaf Music in Brattleboro, Village Square Booksellers in Bellows Falls, or by calling the BMC at (802) 257-4523, or by visiting www.bmvt.org.

For more info about the Windham Orchestra, visit www.windhamorchestra.org.



The Windham Orchestra

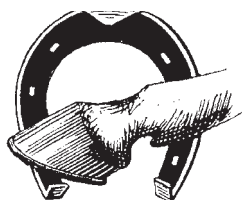


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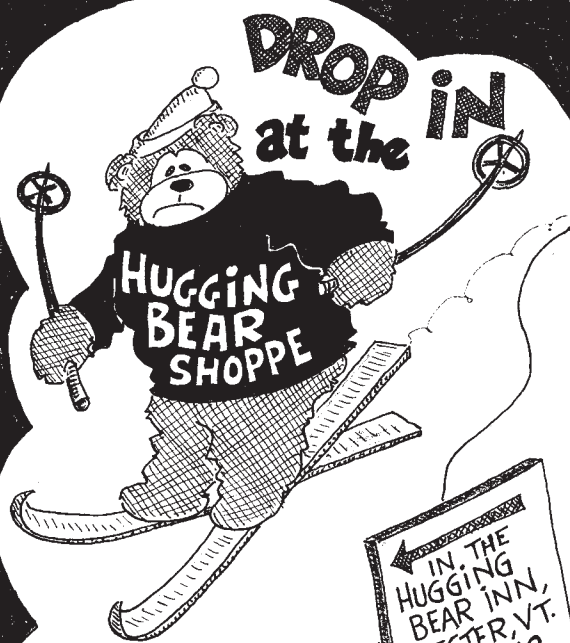
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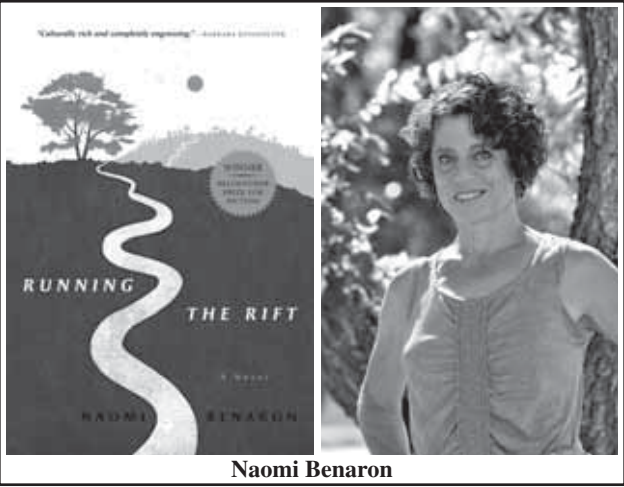
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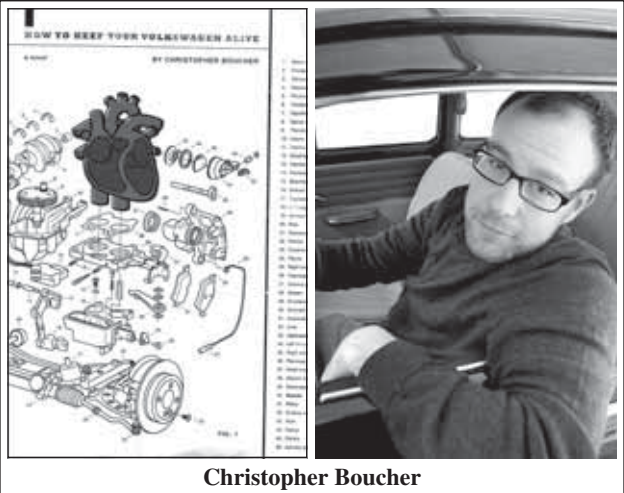
Misty Valley Books Presents New Voices 2012

Misty Valley Books’ annual New Voices literary event takes place on Saturday, January 28, at 2 pm, at the Vermont Institute of Contemporary Arts at the corner of Main and Depot Streets in Chester, VT. Five promising debut authors will talk about their work.



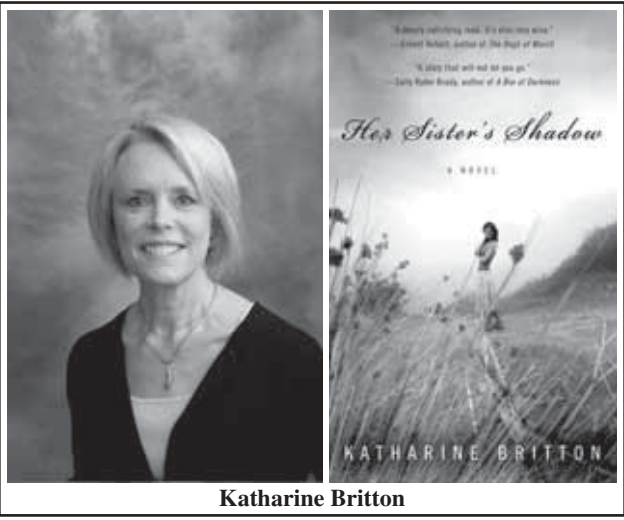
Naomi Benaron

New Voices, now in its 18th year, is a program which has attracted national attention, and a number of Misty Valley New Voices—including Dennis Lehane, Colum McCann, Arthur Golden, Gregory Maguire, Jennifer Egan, Alex Berenson and Heidi Durrow—have gone on to considerable fame.



Christopher Boucher

Over the years, New Voices has attracted thousands of loyal readers to hear more than 100 new authors read and discuss their work. This year’s group includes Naomi Benaron with her award-winning *Running the Rift* set in Rwanda; Christopher Boucher, whose novel *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive* features a VW Beetle as a central character; Katharine Britton, with *Her Sister’s Shadow*, a beautifully-told family story; Paul Grossman, author of *The Sleepwalkers*, about a Jewish detective in Nazi Germany; and Betty Shotton with *Liftoff Leadership*, which advocates meaningful and principled leadership.



Katharine Britton



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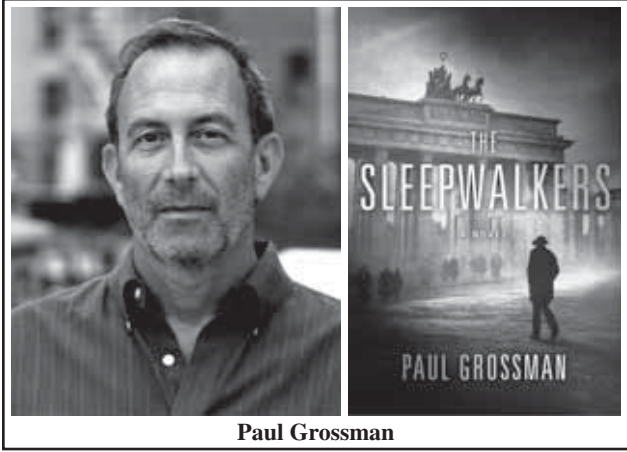
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Benaron’s book *Running the Rift*, winner of the Bellwether Prize (like two former New Voices, Hillary Jordan and Heidi Durrow), follows Jean Patrick Nkuba, a gifted Rwandan boy, from the day he knows that running will be his life to the moment he must run to save his life, a ten-year span in which his country is undone by the Hutu-Tutsi tensions. Ms. Benaron, herself an Ironman Triathlete, teaches writing in Tucson and will be introduced by Lisa Kissel of Grafton, VT.

Boucher’s VW book, *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive*, is wildly imaginative. This strange and dazzling novel concerns a young man whose girlfriend gives birth to a 1971 Volkswagen Beetle. She finds this more troubling than he does and quickly flees the scene, leaving him to raise a fragile young VW while coping with the aftermath of his father’s death. Boucher teaches writing and literature at Boston College, is managing editor of Post Road Magazine and plays in a bluegrass band in his spare time. He will be introduced at New Voices by Jeremy Dworkin of South Londonderry, VT.



Paul Grossman

Her Sister’s Shadow, Katharine Britton’s sharply-observed story of family, is, says Sally Ryder Brady, “The quintessential summer holiday book. It invites you to linger in the garden, breathe the salt air, listen to the hiss of the tide.” Britton teaches writing at Colby-Sawyer College, and is an instructor at The Writer’s Center (www.thewriterscenterwrj.com). She lives in Norwich, VT. Tory Spater Somerville of Chester, VT will introduce her.

Paul Grossman’s character, Willi Kraus, is a Jewish detective in the Berlin police force in the final weeks of the Weimar Republic, as Hitler angles to assume control of Germany. The Washington Post calls *The Sleepwalkers* “a thrilling mystery.” Grossman lives in Manhattan and teaches writing at the City University of New York. Ron Theissen, of Andover, VT will introduce him.

Astronaut Dr. Kathryn Thornton said of Betty Shotton’s *Liftoff Leadership*: “The analogy of flying and leadership is unique and thought-provoking—great reading for leaders and any manager who aspires to become a leader.” A principal in Berkana Consulting, a pilot, entrepreneur and accomplished speaker, Shotton will be introduced by Misty Valley Books’ Lynne Reed.

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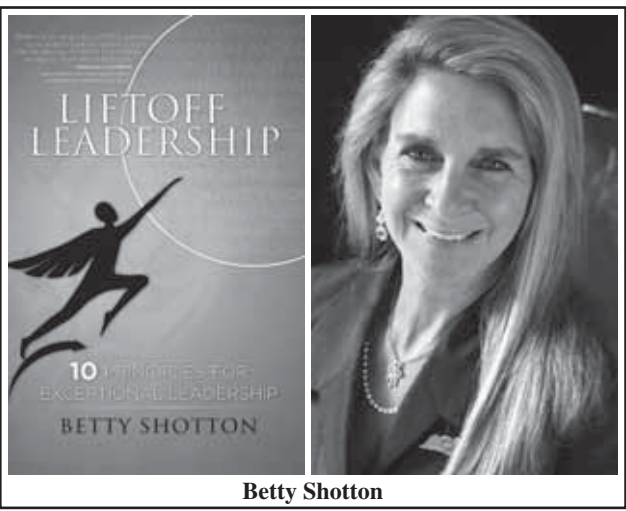


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Betty Shotton

In addition to the readings at Vermont Institute of Contemporary Arts, which are offered free of charge, the public is invited to cross-country ski or snowshoe with the authors at Grafton Ponds on Saturday morning (trail fee), meet the authors at a reception at the Institute after the readings (free) and then have drinks and/or dinner with the authors at the Fullerton Inn, on the Green in Chester next door to Misty Valley Books (\$28 per person).

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

For more information stop by Misty Valley Books, 58 The Common, Chester, VT or call the bookstore at (802) 875-3400. Visit www.mvbooks.com or Facebook.

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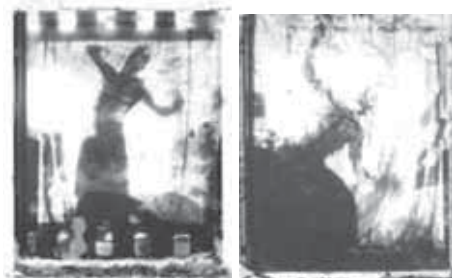
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History & Heritage at The Bennington Museum

The Bennington Museum is set to bring you another year filled with wonderful exhibits, events, and programs as we continue to celebrate the history and heritage of the southern Vermont region.

Our 2012 calendar includes the ‘quirky’ yet historically accurate “Revealed: 100 Years of Underwear in Bennington” as well as the first comprehensive documentation of Rockwell Kent’s life and work in Vermont in “Rockwell Kent’s ‘Egypt’: Shadow and Light in Vermont.”

As in the past, the museum is closed for the month of January, but re-opens on February 4th with a Community Day celebration when admission will be reduced. This is a wonderful time to come and enjoy the special exhibitions, permanent collection, and all that the museum has to offer. Join us as we celebrate the opening of the Annual Student Art Show, “Memento Mori: The Art and Commerce of Gravestones in Bennington County.” This show brings artwork of the region’s elementary, middle and high school students. The exhibit runs through February 28.

An exhibition of gravestones

The museum’s opening exhibit—“Memento Mori: The Art and Commerce of Gravestones in Bennington County” is on view from February 2 through May 22. In this exhibition learn about the artists, aesthetics, and economics involved in the creation of these poignant memorials. The exhibition takes place in two phases: the first phase, opening on February 2nd, features photographs of gravestones taken by Daniel Farber (1906–1998), while the second phase, opening on March 10th, features original gravestones, including the markers (head and foot) created to memorialize Bennington’s first minister, Rev. Jedidiah Dewey (1714–1778). The gravestones were received as a gift to the Bennington Museum in the fall of 2010. Also shown are selections from an archive of manuscripts documenting the Rule family of stonemasons from Arlington during the 1820s.

Club Muse celebrates Irish Pub Night

If the club atmosphere is what you are looking for to break up the winter blues, Club Muse celebrates the ‘green’ on March 9. Join your friends at the Irish Pub Night featuring great Irish food and drink, and of course music to kick up your heels. If you prefer, just sit back at the intimate tables with your friends, or someone special. A cash bar offers signature drinks along with beer, wine and soft drinks. There is only a \$5 cover at the door, and the club offers on-site parking. It’s all happening at Club Muse located on the second floor of the Bennington Museum!

History of women’s underwear

From March 17th through May 15th, “Revealed: A Century of Women’s Underwear” takes a look at how women created the illusion of such impossibly tiny waists, how they maintained hoop skirts of such proportions, and more. It peeks under the skirt and looks at the number and variety of layers required by Bennington’s fashionable females 100 years ago. Historic examples from the Museum’s collection include homemade petticoats and chemise, professionally constructed corsets and hoop skirts, as well commercially manufactured knit union suits and undershirts from Bennington’s own underwear mills.

Here comes the bride!

March 25th sees the Annual Bridal Fair in full swing. come to the museum from 2–5 p.m. and meet with wedding professionals who can help plan that special day. Speak with bakers, photographers, jewelers, site and tent rental companies, musicians, venues, and more. Sample wedding cakes, try on wedding bands, and enjoy the wonderful fashion show featuring apparel for the bridal party, guests and of course the bride. All this is held in the elegantly warm atmosphere of the Paresky Wing of the Bennington Museum, itself available for weddings, rehearsal dinners, bridal showers, and more. Just \$5 for a wonderful afternoon.

Appraise your family heirlooms

The Bennington Museum holds its Seventh Annual Appraisal Fair on March 31st from 1–4 p.m. Bring your family heirlooms or the odd, quirky piece you always wanted to know about, and let an expert panel of art and antique ap-



The Bennington Museum is a great place to visit in every season. photo courtesy of Bennington Museum

praisers explain and evaluate your items. Appraisals are \$5 per item, with a limit of five items.

Children’s programs and more

Finally, don’t forget the programs designed for school children. During the Spring School Break, the Bennington Museum hosts Vacation Week Workshops. From April 16–20, daily workshops are held from 1–3 p.m. for children ages 6–9. The topics vary, but are all guaranteed to be interesting, creative, and fun. Fees apply. For the pre-school group, there is Museum ABCs on February 16, March 15, April 12, and May 17 each incorporating stories, activities, and visits to galleries and grounds based on the month’s theme. Designed for children ages 3–5 and their caregivers, this program is at 1:30 p.m. and is free.

There will be other programs and exhibits throughout the year. The Museum brings “Rockwell Kent’s ‘Egypt’: Shadow and Light in Vermont” on view from June 9–October 30. Ad-

ditional children’s and adult workshops, Historical Society presentations, a Jane Stickle Quilt display, Annual Brew and Food Pairing in May, Farm to Table dinner in August, Annual Homebrew Competition and Festival in September, and so much more are offered.

The Bennington Museum celebrates Vermont’s Heritage with the Bennington Pottery Gallery, the Military Gallery, Grandma Moses Schoolhouse and Interactive Family Center, as well as the Grandma Moses Gallery with the largest public collection of Grandma Moses paintings in the world, Early American Furniture and Art, the Martin-Wasp Antique Car, and changing new and exciting exhibits. The museum is located at 75 Main St. (Rt. 9) one mile west of the intersection of Rts. 7 and 9 in Bennington, VT. It is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., but closed on Wednesday and the month of January. For more information, visit our website at www.benningtonmuseum.org or call (802) 447-1571.



Vermont Woods in Winter

by Norman C. Tice

—circa 1914—



This morning we will buckle on our snowshoes and take a tramp over the snow-covered meadows and explore the silent woods. The purple shadows are dark beneath the snow-laden spruces that stand at the edge of the timber land. The sun shines down upon us in chilly rays and the surface of the snow gleams in dull white patches beside the rail fences. As we enter the younger growth of trees we see a few chickadees hopping from branch to branch, meanwhile chattering incessantly.

The sun becomes deeper as we penetrate farther into the woodland. The shadows are darker and cooler. The soft crust of the snow is marked in irregular trails by the feet of various small animals. Here the rabbit gambolled in the moonlight and we can see where he chased his companion among the spruces and around the trunks of the beeches. There is a series of tracks where the squirrel ran from one tree to another and hurriedly climbed the mossy trunk for safety.

The silence grows deeper as we walk along. The snow is piled high on fallen logs and decayed stumps of trees, giving them a grotesque appearance. By this unfrozen

spring a fox stopped to drink, then trotted away in search of his prey. The crunch of our snow shoes upon the crusty snow warns a timid squirrel of our approach. He runs up to the topmost bough of a leaning birch and scolds us energetically. A sap-sucker races headlong down the trunk of a maple with reckless velocity, then darts away to another tree where he goes through the same performance. Feeding among the cones on a birch tree is a blue-jay. He eats his fill then flies away. The sun sinks behind the hill early in the day. A twilight glow of purple veiling envelopes the woodland,

as we reach the end of the woods that border on the swamp. Tall brown grasses, bedraggled by the winter winds wave to and fro. Long streaks of clear blue ice mingled with the soft brown of sunken logs and mossy knolls stretch before us.

A breeze steals through the swamp and whistles shrilly among the dry rushes. A mountain ash, heavily laden with a treasure of red berries, leans toward the frozen bay. A flock of swamp robins alight on its branches and greedily despoil it of its beauty. Then chirping gayly they fly away.

We now turn our steps homeward as the shadows are rapidly covering the landscape. The last glow of the winter sunset has fled and an ethereal purple glamour fills the sky and tints the slopes of the wooded hills.





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Page 6 Vermont Country Sampler, January–February 2012



Steve Halford from Wallingford, VT

photo by Carl Severance

8th Annual Southern Vermont Primitive Biathlon

This year's Southern Vermont Primitive Biathlon will be held on February 11th, and 12th, 2012 at the Old Skinner Hollow Farm on Route 7A in Manchester, VT. Preparations are under way, and conditions are looking good so far!

A Primitive Biathlon is much like an Olympic Biathlon in that it involves trekking through the woods, and target shooting. But in a Primitive Biathlon the competitors travel on wooden snowshoes, and shoot with antique-styled muzzle loading firearms instead of skis and modern target rifles.

As a tribute, many participants will arrive and compete dressed in period attire representing Colonial Frontiersmen, Native Americans, and Early Militia.

Competitors travel through the woods on a marked course, and stop to test their shooting skills at designated shooting stations along the way. They not only have to be able to shoot well, but also have to be able to manually load their firearms swiftly and accurately. Scores are calculated using travel time through the course and the number of hits made

while shooting. There are specific classes available for Men, Women, Children under 16, Elders over age 60, and an untimed class for people who do not wish to run or use snowshoes. Participation in this event is open to the public, and one does not have to be a runner or competitor to enjoy this event.

The Southern Vermont Primitive Biathlon was started in 2005 by a small group of people to meet a unique demand for this type of event in southwestern Vermont. This two-day event has grown every year since. Other events like this have sprung up around New England and Western New York in the last 15 years and have attracted enthusiasts from all around the country.

There is a food concession at the event, and a few vendors (or Sutlers as they were once called) on hand distributing their wares. A long list of sponsors have donated in-kind services for the event, and merchandise for a large doorprize including two muzzle loading rifles as the grand prize giveaways. Grand prizes and doorprizes are available to participants, and spectators alike.

The Southern Vermont Primitive Biathlon is hosted by the Manchester Rod and Gun Club, Brew Moscarello of Vew-Do Balance Boards, and the Severance Family at the Old Skinner Hollow Farm in Manchester, Vermont.

All proceeds benefit the Manchester Rod and Gun Club's Youth Conservation Camp Scholarship Fund. The Green Mountain Youth Conservation Camps are a summer camp network owned by the State of Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. Week-long camp stays are available to youth's 12-16 years of age, with an emphasis on teaching Vermont's Wildlife Ecology. Every summer The Manchester Rod and Gun Club sponsors 25-40 youths from the area to attend these camps and the Primitive Biathlon supports this cause. This event is open to spectators at no charge. It is a fun way

to spend a day outdoors with some fine and interesting people and take a brief look into our past. Families are welcome.

The 8th Annual Southern Vermont Primitive Biathlon will be held on February 11th, and 12th, 2012 at the Old Skinner Hollow Farm on Route 7A in Manchester, VT. If you would like to volunteer, we can use your help. Call (802) 688-4662.

To find out more about this or other primitive biathlons, Green Mountain Youth Conservation Camps, or the Manchester Rod and Gun Club please visit our website at www.svtph.org.

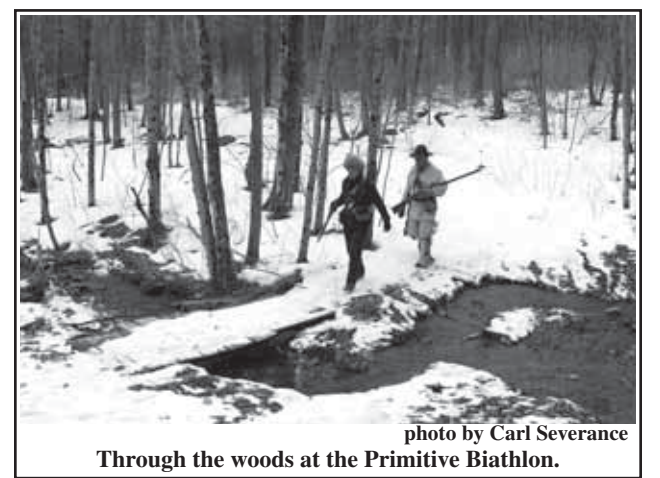


photo by Carl Severance

Through the woods at the Primitive Biathlon.



photos by Carl Severance

Kenny Gaudette from Shelburne, VT

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TRIED-AND-TRUE CORN CHOWDER

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1/3 cup diced salt pork | 2 1/4 cups fresh corn, or 1 can |
| 1 onion, sliced | corn, chopped |
| 3 cups boiling water | 1 1/2 teaspoons salt |
| 3 cups diced potatoes | 1/8 teaspoon pepper |
| 2 cups hot milk | 6 crackers, split |

Try out the pork and cook the onion in the fat. Remove the pork and add the boiling water to the fat and onion. Turn into a chowder kettle, add the potatoes, and cook fifteen minutes. Add the corn, hot milk, and seasonings. Remove from the fire just before the chowder comes to a boil. Add the split crackers and serve at once. *Serves six.*

JULIENNE SOUP

Jean Baptiste Julien, a native of France, opened the first public eating house in Boston in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Julien, known as “Prince of Soup,” originated the vegetable soup which bears his name.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 3 small onions | 3 young carrots |
| 2 tablespoons butter | 1 stalk celery |
| 3 quarts clarified beef stock | 3 turnips |
| Salt, pepper, mace | 1 pint green beans |

Cut the onions fine. Put the butter in a soup kettle, stir until melted, and fry the onions until brown. Add the clarified beef stock, salt, pepper, and a dash of mace. Boil one hour. Add the remaining vegetables cut into thin strips about an inch and a half long. Boil two hours. *Serves eight to ten.*

BLACK BEAN SOUP

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|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 cups black beans | 1/4 teaspoon mustard |
| 6 cups water | 4 tablespoons fat |
| 2 medium onions, sliced | 1 tablespoon lemon juice |
| 1 clove garlic | 1/4 cup sherry |
| 1 1/2 teaspoons salt | 1 lemon, sliced |
| 1/4 teaspoon pepper | 1 hard-cooked egg, minced |

Soak the beans overnight. Drain. Add the water, onions, garlic, salt and pepper, and cook until soft. Strain through a coarse sieve. If too thick, dilute with warm milk. Add the mustard, fat, lemon juice, and sherry. Serve with a slice of lemon covered with minced hard-cooked egg floating in each bowl. *Serves six to eight.*

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Hereford mom and her half-grown calf out in the bracing winter air in Brookfield, VT.
photo by Nancy Cassidy

BEAN PORRIDGE

In the old days bean porridge was made very thick. It was molded and frozen and stored in the buttery. Then it was sliced, as needed. It was often used by people going on long journeys. To make the modernized version of bean porridge, begin the day before it is to be served. Use a four-pound shank bone with plenty of meat and fat on it. Cover with four quarts water, bring to a boil, and cook slowly until the meat falls from the bones. Strain and allow the liquor to cool until the next day. Pick over and soak a pint of white beans overnight. In the morning put them on in fresh water and cook slowly over low heat until the skins crack. Remove the fat from the meat broth, and add the broth to the beans. There should be about four quarts of liquid in all. Moisten one-half cup corn meal with cold water. When the beans and broth have cooked about an hour, stir in the corn meal. Let cook until thick. Then put the kettle over low heat and allow to simmer until ready to use. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and add the cooked cut-up meat if desired.

SALT PORK CHOWDER

It is often hard to tell where a chowder leaves off and a stew begins. The recipe given here is known in the mountains as a stew; in the coastal part of New England it is referred to as a chowder. But under whichever name it appears, it is a substantial tasty dish and inexpensive to make. Do not depend on salt pork chowder as an unexpected-company dish. It needs planning and slow cooking to bring it to the peak of perfection. Nor should you prepare the ingredients with a stingy hand; every experienced mountain cook will tell you that the dish is much better warmed over than on the day it first comes from the kettle.

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|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 3 large carrots | 8 potatoes, cut in cubes |
| 3 medium-sized onions | 8 cups boiling water |
| 1/8 pound salt pork | Salt and pepper |

Slice the carrots and onions, and put them in a chowder kettle. Cover with water and cook about half an hour. Slice the pork and fry it in a skillet until brown. Add the fat to the vegetables; there should be about five tablespoons. Add the potatoes, boiling water, and seasonings. Cook until the potatoes are soft. The pork slices may be diced and added, if desired. *Serves eight.* About twenty minutes before serving, add dumplings made as follows:

Dumplings

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 teaspoon baking powder | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 2 cups flour | Sweet milk |
| 1 teaspoon table fat | |

Sift the baking powder with the flour. Work in the table fat. Add the salt and mix with milk until the mixture will drop from a spoon. Drop the dumplings on top of the boiling chowder. Cover the kettle closely, and do not open for twenty minutes.

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Why Our Wildlife Need Native Plants

by Annie S. White,
Graduate Research Assistant, University of Vermont

Researchers are learning more about the relationships between native plants and wildlife. At the same time, home gardeners are learning more about the benefits of native plants in their landscapes and how to use them effectively. Even professional landscapers are increasingly using native plants both for their beauty and benefits to nature. Many forms of wildlife depend on native plants for the food and shelter that non-native plants just don't provide.

A native plant is one that has developed over hundreds or thousands of years in a particular region, such as native to New England. Only plants that were established in this country prior to European settlement are generally considered native to the United States.

Our recent history of land use in the United States has been destructive to natural habitats. Scientists estimate that humans have now altered over 95 percent of the natural landscape in the lower 48 states. In our efforts to beautify the remaining "natural" landscapes, we have introduced thousands of non-native plant species from around the world. Some of these have escaped into natural areas to compete with native plants—the so called "invasives."

The benefit of native plantings

Entomologist Doug Tallamy introduced the gardening public to the benefits of native plants with his best-selling book, *Bringing Nature Home*, in 2007. Tallamy's research at the University of Delaware found that native landscaping increases the number of birds and caterpillars (meaning more butterflies and moths) in suburbia. In other words, by restoring native plants to our landscapes, we also are restoring the birds, butterflies and pollinators that rely on these plants to live and reproduce.

Simply choosing a native over a non-native plant will provide numerous benefits to wildlife. For example, Kousa Dogwood (*Cornus kousa*) is a small non-native flowering tree from China that is commonly used as an ornamental landscape tree in the U.S. No native insects feed on the Kousa Dogwood, therefore it supports no native caterpillars, moths or butterflies. However, Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*), a small flowering tree native to the warmer parts of the eastern U.S., has a similar habit and form to the Kousa Dogwood, but supports a remarkable 117 species of moth and butterflies.

So many wonderful options

There are many options for incorporating native plants into a home landscape. In New England, consider using native coniferous trees, such as White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) and Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), to provide winter shelter for the Golden Crowned Kinglet and other birds that overwinter here. A small grove of only a few trees of our native balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) provides summer nesting and winter protection to many small and large birds. Deciduous nut and acorn producing trees, such as White Oak (*Quercus alba*), provide year-round food and shelter for a diversity of insects, birds, and small mammals.

Downy Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) and Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) are examples of summer-fruited native shrubs that are food sources for birds and other wildlife. American Highbush Cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*) and Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) are native shrubs with winter-bearing fruit, which are important food sources for birds during the winter months.

Hummingbirds are drawn to tubular flowers for nectar, such as Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*). Native flowering perennials, like the New England Aster (*Aster novae-angliae*)

Free Winter Community Church Suppers in Dorset, VT

This winter the Dorset Church in Dorset, VT will be holding free Winter Community Suppers on Thursday, February 16th and Wednesday, March 14th from 5:30–7:30 p.m. We will be serving (and eating!) a delicious supper.

These meals are for everyone—Moms & Dads that need a break, people who want a night out in the middle of winter, families rushing from work to sports, people stretching their budget—the suppers are meant to build community for everyone. We hope you'll join us for warm fellowship and a hot meal. All are welcome for these free great meals. Please bring your family and friends. Take outs available.

Dorset Church (United Church of Christ) is located at 143 Church St., off Rt. 30 in Dorset, VT. For more info call (802) 867-2260.

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A snowy road winds through the woods in Brookfield, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

and Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium maculatum*), are preferred nectar and pollen sources for native pollinators. These two perennials are important late in the season when little else may be in flower.

Other flowering perennials, such as Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) provide food sources for leaf-eating caterpillars and the subsequent butterflies. In addition, the silky seeds of this perennial in particular provide insulation in winter nests for small birds.

Restoring native plants back into our landscapes provides habitat for native wildlife, as well as other benefits for them,

Bennington Winter Program Series: "The Valley We Live In"

Learn about our history, our heritage, and our future at this series of six winter programs sponsored by One World Conservation Center (OWCC) and The Bank of Bennington. Admission is free and the public is welcome. The programs take place at the center on Rt. 7 South in Bennington, VT.

January 19, 2012—"The Valley is Formed," presenter Dr. Tim Schroeder, Professor of Earth Science at Bennington College. The forces of nature that have shaped our land and its features. 6-9 p.m.

February 2, 2012—"Unto the Sky and This Land," presenters Mary Gerisch and friends. Mary is a retired attorney, a Native American, and active in many social causes. They will present Native American beliefs, life and culture prior to European settlement. 7–9 p.m.

February 16, 2012—"Place of Refuge," presenter Jamie Franklin, Curator, The Bennington Museum. The arrival of the first European settlers to the Valley, their lives, culture, tribulations, and early history. 7-9 p.m.

March 1, 2012—"The Bounty of the Valley," presenter Joe Hall, Past President, The Bennington Historical Society. The rise and early history of commercial agriculture in the Valley, how it grew, sustained the population, and changed in the early years of Bennington. 7–9 p.m.

March 15, 2012—"Mills in the Valley," presenter Victor Rolando, amateur Industrial Archeologist. The emergence of industry in the Bennington

Valley, the types, locations, and remnants of early sites to see. 7–8:30 p.m.

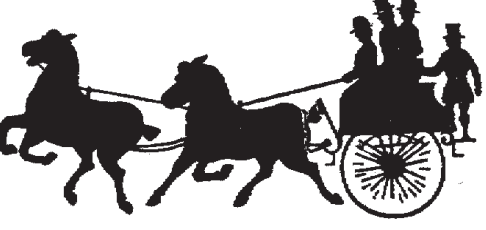
March 29, 2012—"A Look Toward the Future," presenter Jim Sullivan, Director, Bennington County Regional Commission. The possible futures of the Bennington Valley's economic, social, and infrastructure demographics and discussion on what we can do today to shape the best possible outcomes. 7–9 p.m.

All these programs take place at One World Conservation Center, 413 US Rte. 7 South, Bennington, Vermont 05201. (802) 447-7419 or visit our website at: www.netrop.org. Program admissions are free, with donations to OWCC appreciated.

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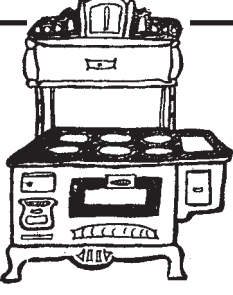
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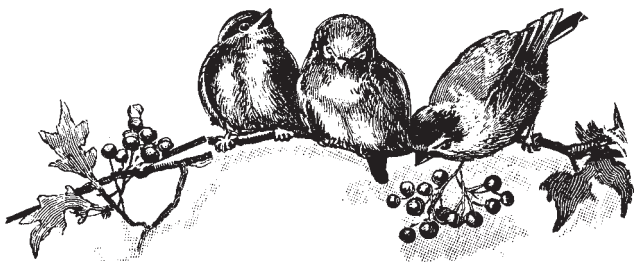




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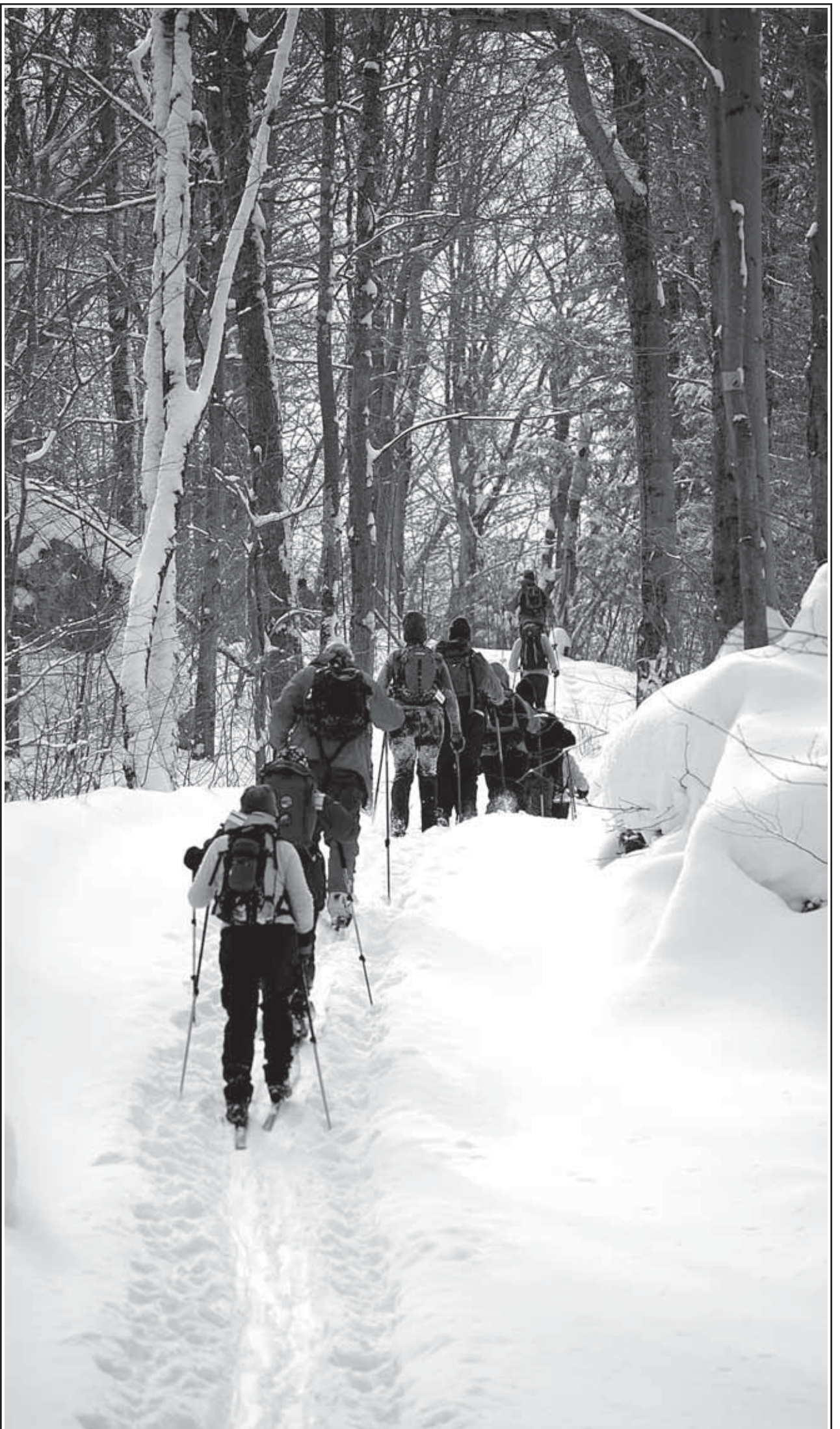
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Jim Fredericks/Catamount Trail photo

Cross-country skiers out on the Catamount Trail.



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Guided Vermont Ski Tours on the Catamount Trail

Catamount Trail Association 2012 Winter Events

At 300 miles in length and spanning the state of Vermont from bottom to top, the Catamount Trail is one of Vermont's treasured gems. It is a cross-country ski trail that has been in the making since 1984 and was fully linked together in 2008. Thousands of skiers and snowshoers take to the trail every winter season — most for the day, many on Catamount Trail Association (CTA) tours, and some to ski end-to-end — all enjoying the backcountry, touring center, farmland and village surroundings along the way.

For the safety and enjoyment of all tour participants, please review the skier responsibilities at www.catamounttrail.org/trail/tours before signing up. Be sure you: have the skills and physical conditioning necessary to complete the trip; bring sufficient food and water for a full day and an extra layer of clothing; stay with the group; when leaving the trail, tell someone or leave a pack; check out with the leader before leaving at the end of the day.

To sign up for a day tour contact the tour leader listed at least a few days in advance. The leader will provide details.

Check the CTA website, www.catamounttrail.org, often for new additions to the calendar and rescheduled tours. Last minute tours often arise when snow conditions are good!

Join the Catamount Trail Association. There are many benefits with membership. Fees are \$35 Individual, \$50 Family. Other categories are available. Our day tours are free and open to non-members.

Event Schedule

Saturday, January 28. Bolton Valley to Rt. 2. Section 21. Easy Intermediate. This tour of 7-8 miles will run north to south, providing a very nice downhill run with a total decent of about 2000 feet. The route starts with a long downhill, first on the groomed trails of Bolton Valley and then on back-country trails. It then moves onto a lightly used snowmobile trail for the second half of the route which includes some fairly steep downhill stretches. Trail fee. CTA members get a 2-for-1 discount with coupon. Contact: Kristina Roomet, kroomet@pfclaw.com or (802) 598-5909.

Saturday, January 28. Chester's Woods, Tunbridge, VT. Intermediate. Enjoy a scenic tour in the heart of Vermont through hardwood forests and open meadows on groomed and ungroomed trails. We will ski for about two hours and then have the option to ski over to the famous tele-bowl for some turns. This tour is dog-friendly for well behaved canine companions. Contact: Betsy Gaiser, betsymg@valley.net or (802) 763-2288.

Thursday, February 2. Exploring the Bolton Back-country. Part I. Strong Intermediate. Bolton has some of the most wonderful backcountry skiing in Vermont. We will spend the day exploring some of this terrain on trails that are ungroomed and may be untracked. This tour is for fit intermediate skiers. Trail fee. CTA members get a 2-for-1 discount with coupon. Contact: Priscilla Kimberly, pkimberl@uvm.edu or (802) 879-6153.

Saturday, February 4. Beaver Meadow Loop, Morristown, VT. Intermediate. This tour of five-six miles is a loop from the Beaver Meadow parking lot gradually up to a meadow where a rustic Long Trail shelter will be a nice snack break. We will ski out via the Burling Camp trail. Tail gate potluck at the end of the tour, conditions permitting. Contact: Kim Dunkley and Scott Meyer, (802) 635-2418.

Saturday, February 4. Out With the Old, In With the New, Ripton, VT. Intermediate. From Rikert Ski Touring Center we'll ski up the old Catamount Trail. A couple of miles on the VAST trail will bring us to the new CT with its beautiful stands of yellow birch, mixed older-growth hardwood and evergreens. We will descend the new back-country section for 2½ miles, then rejoin the Rikert trails and return to our start. This 4 to 5 hour tour has a couple of advanced short steeper descents. Trail fee. CTA members get a 50% discount with coupon. Contact: Andy McIntosh, andymac@together.net or evenings 802-388-8376; weekdays (802) 236-2488.

Sunday, February 5. Harriman Dam to Route 100, Readsboro, VT. Easy. This tour is a good introduction to backcountry skiing on the Catamount for novice skiers. It is a delightful, easy three miles on a slightly downhill back-country railroad grade along the Deerfield River. A short, steep section in the first half-mile is easily walked by novices. Our pace will accommodate the slowest skier in the group. Contact: Sam Bartlett, (413) 624-0192.

Sunday, February 5. Historic Ramble in Cottonbrook, Stowe, VT. Intermediate. This ski is long, about 10 miles, but gradual, doing a loop up into Cottonbrook Valley, mostly on snowmobile trail, before cutting over behind the Waterbury Reservoir and into Little River State Park. The route will go by many old house sites with some modest ups and downs. Contact: Debbie and Steve Page, debbiewolfpage@gmail.com or (802) 878-6529.



Jim Fredericks/Catamount Trail photo
Catamount Trail Association sponsors a winter excursion with a bunch of happy skiers.

Saturday February 11. Camels Hump Rd. to Duxbury Road, Huntington, VT. Section 20. Intermediate. The 7.8-mile route starts on rolling terrain with some moderate slopes and sudden dips. It then joins the groomed trails of the Camel's Hump Nordic Center where you can catch a view of the Adirondacks. The route returns to ungroomed terrain, passes through glades, reaches the height of land, and finishes with a long downhill run on the Honey Hollow Trail with several short, steep descents and narrow chutes. Contact: Peter Cottrell, pcottrel@myfairpoint.net or (802) 879-0755 or Andy Strauss, ar Strauss@yahoo.com or (802) 660-9373.

Sunday, February 12. Blueberry Hill to Rikert Ski Center, Goshen, VT. Easy/Intermediate. This tour is a fairly easy ski of six-and-a-half miles on rolling terrain and is a good opportunity for cross country skiers with some experience to try a back country outing. The route begins on the groomed trails of Blueberry Hill Touring Center but is mostly on back country trails and finishes at the Chatfield parking lot near the Rikert Ski Center. The tour can be extended at Blueberry Hill or on other ungroomed trails. Trail fee. CTA members get a 50% discount with coupon. Contact: Phil Kivlin, redsled@shoreham.net or (802) 897-8031.

Sunday, February 12. Ninevah Four Corners to Buttermilk Falls, Healdville, VT. Section 10. Intermediate. This completely new route of seven miles starts with a steady two-mile ascent on an old logging road around Tiny Mountain after which we will take a short side trip to beautiful Tiny Pond. From there the trail follows rolling terrain crossing an open power line before reaching a two-mile descent with some switchbacks and one short, steep run to Buttermilk Falls. Contact: Donna Dearborn or Dagny St. John, winnie@vermontel.net or (802) 875-6617.

Saturday, February 18. Secret Trails of Ripton, VT. Intermediate. Explore some of the hidden beaver meadows and most beautiful patches of forest in Ripton! With clear skies we'll also get views of Mt. Abe, Breadloaf Mtn., Worth Mtn., and the peaks of Romance Mtn. This four/five-hour tour of 13-15 km. explores the secret hand-tracked trails just north of Rikert Ski Touring Center's groomed network. Wide back-country skis are not recommended. Contact: Andy McIntosh, andymac@together.net or call evenings, (802) 388-8376; weekdays, (802) 236-2488.

Saturday, February 18. Woodward Mountain Trail, Bolton, VT. Advanced Intermediate. The Woodward Mountain Trail is a 5.6-mile adventure that starts at the top of the Bolton Valley Ski Area and ends about 3,000 vertical feet lower at the Waterbury Reservoir. You start by riding the lift to the top of the ski area, then head in the opposite direction from all the other skiers—into the woods! Bring your skins and metal edges, and hope for powder. Trail fee. CTA members get a 2-for-1 discount with coupon. Contact: Andy Strauss, ar Strauss@yahoo.com or (802) 660-9373.

Sunday, February 19. Kelly Stand Rd. to Kendall Farm Rd., Stratton, VT. Section 5. Intermediate. This nine-mile tour features a fairly new two-mile portion that takes this section of the CT entirely off snowmobile corridor. The route now visits two beautiful ponds and stops at one GMC shelter. A six-mile version will accommodate skiers who want a shorter trip. Contact: Andrew Harper, ap_harper@hotmail.com or (802) 824-3139.

For more information and for membership, contact the Catamount Trail Association, 1 Mill St., Suite 350, Burlington, VT 05401. (802) 864-5794. info@catamounttrail.org. www.catamounttrail.org.

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Vermont Map



Signs of a Prosperous Farmer

The Farm and Household Cyclopaedia, 1885

When lights are seen burning in his house before the break of day, in winter especially, it shows that the day will never break on the breaking in of the winter of adversity.

When you see him drive his work instead of his work driving him, it shows that he will never be driven from good resolutions, and that he will certainly work his way to prosperity.

When he has a house separate from the main building purposely for ashes, and an iron or tin vessel to transport them, it shows that he never built his dwelling for a funeral pyre for his family, and perhaps himself.

When his hog-pen is boarded outside and in, it shows that he is "going the whole hog or none," in keeping plenty inside his house and poverty out.

When his sled is safely housed in summer, and his farming implements covered both winter and summer, it plainly shows that he will have a good house over his head in the summer of early life and the winter of old age.

When his cattle are properly shielded and fed in winter it evinces that he is acting according to Scripture, which says that "a merciful man is merciful to his beast."

When he is seen subscribing for a newspaper and paying for it in advance, it shows that he is speaking like a book respecting the latest movements in agriculture, and that he will never get his walking papers to the land of poverty.



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Vermont Country Calendar

ONGOING EVENTS

BARRE. Exhibits, classes, events and workshops. Free. Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-4. Studio Place Arts, 201 N. Main St. (802) 479-7069. info@studioplacearts.com. www.studioplacearts.com.

BELLOWS FALLS. Third Friday Art Walk. Stores and galleries in town and in the surrounding area host special exhibits and events. 5-8 pm. Flyer available at Village Square Booksellers, 32 The Square. (802) 463-9404. villagesquarebooks.com. *Monthly on the third Friday.*

BELMONT. Mount Holly Community Historical Museum. Open year-round on second weekend of the month. Tarbellville Rd. (turn right immediately after the Belmont Store, museum is on your right). (802) 259-2460. www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org.

BENNINGTON. Art Exhibits, Permanent Collections, Theater Productions, Workshops. Admission: adults \$9, seniors/students \$8, families \$20, under 12 are free. Bennington Center for the Arts, 44 Gypsy Lane. (802) 442-7158. www.benningtoncenterforthearts.org.

BENNINGTON. Bennington-Walloomsac Winter Farmers Markets at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 200 Pleasant Street. Every third Saturday: January 21, February 18, March 17 & April 21 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Katherine Keys, (802) 688-7210. info@walloomsac.org. www.walloomsac.org.

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum—Exhibits and Public Programs, Founding Documents, Fine Art, Grandma Moses, and more. See Bennington Pottery, the 1924 Wasp Touring Car, Fine Art, Vermont Furniture, and the Bennington Flag – one of America's oldest flags. Lectures, workshops, concerts, films. Admission \$10, children under 18 free. Open 10 am - 5 pm every day except Wednesdays, closed for January. 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BERLIN. Afro-Caribbean Dance. With live percussion every Thursday from 10:30 am – 12 pm. All levels welcome. Also Capital City Grange Potluck—share delicious food with your friends and future friends, starting about 6:30 each first Saturday, all are welcome, no charge. Capital City Grange, 6612 VT Rt. 12, Northfield Rd. (802) 985-3665. capitalcitygrange.org.

BRANDON. Brandon Museum at the Stephen A. Douglas Birthplace. Also houses the Brandon Visitor Center with public restrooms, which is open daily 8 am – 6 pm, 365 days a year. The museum is at 4 Grove St., next to the Baptist Church at the corner of Routes 7 and 73 West. (802) 247-6401. info@brandon.org. brandon.org.

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

BRATTLEBORO. Fair Winds Farm Sleigh or Wagon Rides. Half-hour reserved horse-drawn rides through fields and woods, and along a babbling brook. Adults \$10, kids 3-12 \$6, minimum \$50, after 5 pm \$80. Rustic heated greenhouse available for your event, additional charge. Visit our farm store. Fair Winds Farm is a "Diversified, Horse Powered, Vermont Family Farm" on Upper Dummerston Rd. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

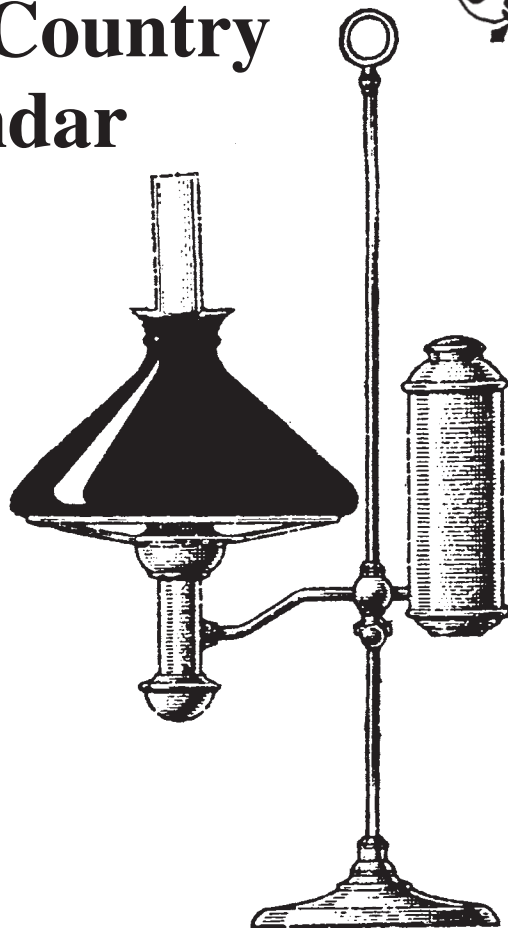
BRATTLEBORO. Gallery Walk. Monthly celebration of the arts in downtown and nearby locations. 40-50 or more exhibit openings, many with meet-the-artist receptions and live music, plus occasional readings, dance, circus arts, theater, and more. Free. First Fridays from 5:30-8:30 pm. (802) 257-2616. www.gallerywalk.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Post Oil Solutions meets frequently and sponsors events with a mission to advance cooperative, sustainable communities. For info contact Tim Stevenson at info@postoilsolutions.org or www.postoilsolutions.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Indoor market featuring local farms products including produce, apples, eggs, grass-fed meats, cider, syrup, preserves, locally grown house plants, baked goods, local wines, pottery, jewelry, handmade soaps, hats, scarves and more. Delicious lunches featuring locally grown foods, and live music in the lunch cafe. A project of Post Oil Solutions. Open every Saturday November-March from 10 am – 2 pm. At the River Garden, 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. www.postoilsolutions.org.

BURLINGTON. Exhibit: *Seasons of Change*, January 21st through mid March. Workshops, programs, café, gift shop, story hour. Admission: \$9.50 adults, \$7 ages 3 - 17, \$8 seniors and students, under 3 free. Monday-Sunday, 10 am – 5 pm. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, One College St. (877) 324-6385. info@echovermont.org. www.echovermont.org.

BURLINGTON. UVM Theatre Presents "The Beaux' Stratagem." Original play by George Farquhar with adaptation by Thornton Wilder and Ken Ludwig. Three centuries in the making, the play is a raucous romp through the minefields of love, money and marriage. Admission. Thurs-Sat 7:30 pm, 1st Sat & 2nd Sun 2pm. Royall Tyler Theatre, 116 University Place. (802) 656-2094. theatre@uvm.edu. uvm.edu. uvmtheatre.org. *Feb 16-26.*



BURLINGTON. Burlington Winter Farmers' Market at Memorial Auditorium, corner of Main St. and S. Union. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm, every other week: Jan 21, Feb 4 & 18, March 3, 17, & 31, and April 14 & 28. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Chris Wagner, (802) 310-5172.

BURLINGTON. First Friday Art Walk. Galleries, studios, and interesting venues all around town. Free. 5-8 pm. Map available. (802) 264-4839. www.artmapburlington.com.

BURLINGTON. Burlington's First Friday Art Walk. Over 30 galleries and art venues throughout Burlington staying open late to welcome walkers and share our incredible art scene. Visit the website to see a list of participating venues. Sponsored by Burlington City Arts, the Free. Fri., 5 pm - 8 pm. Throughout Burlington. (802) 264-4839. info@artmapburlington.com. www.artmapburlington.com.

CENTER RUTLAND. The Rutland Railroad Museum. Housed in the Rutland Depot, built in 1917. See railroad artifacts and historical exhibits including HO & N scale model railroad layouts and a children's layout. The museum is also available to educational groups and schools for tours by appointment. Open Saturdays from 11 am – 1 pm. Rutland Railway Association, 79 Depot Lane. rra@rutlandrailway.org. www.rutlandrailway.org.

CHESTER. Contempo-Take-O Art Exhibit. Features the dynamic polaroid transfer prints of Rik (Wave) Kapler and the mixed media sculptures of curator, Bryce LeVan Cushing. Wednesday thru Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm and by appointment. At BLCARTGRP Gallery, in the rear of the MoonDog Cafe Building, 297 Main St. For more information contact Bryce LeVan Cushing, (802) 843-1162 or visit www.brycelevancushing.com. *Through March 15.*

CHESTER. Monthly Public Astronomy Meetings for the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group. Second Tuesday of the month – free to the public at Whiting Library. 7 pm. Star parties and other events. For membership and information contact the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group, PO Box 424, Chester, VT 05143. www.sovera.org.

CHESTER. Peace of Paradise—Holistic Wellness Emporium. Wellness services and products. Reiki, acupuncture, massage, meditation, yoga and drumming. Classes, workshops and seminars. Events, groups and gatherings. Locally-made creations, yoga mats, drums, jewelry and art. Open Thurs-Sun 10 am – 5 pm. On the Village Green. (802) 875-8008. peaceofparadisevt.com.

CHESTER. High Tea at Inn Victoria. Afternoon savories, sweets, fruit, and a variety of teas. \$19.99 per person. Open by reservation on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 3-4:30 pm. Inn Victoria, 321 Main St. (802) 875-4288. innkeeper@innvictoria.com. www.innvictoria.com.

CHESTER. Activities at Gassetts Grange Hall. Craft workshops, Thursdays 2-4 pm, everyone welcome, free refreshments and coffee, info: Bonnie, (802) 875-3500. Bingo Thursdays 6-9 pm. Dance and monthly community breakfast buffets first Saturdays. Monthly Country Jamboree. Gassetts Grange Hall, junction of Rts. 10 and 103N. For information call Dave (802) 875-2637.

CHESTER. Gallery 103. Dedicated to promoting fine American Craft and Design, with an exclusive showroom of Junker Studio Ironwork. Monthly "Featured Artists." Owned and operated by Elise & Payne Junker. Gallery is open daily 1-5 pm (often later) closed Tuesdays. On Rt. 103, just south of town. (802) 875-7400. Gallery103.com.

CRAFTSBURY. Winter Market at Sterling College, Simpson Hall on Craftsby Common. Saturdays 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Nov-March. Carole Drury, (802) 533-2359.

DANBY. Mountain View Ranch & Sun Bowl Ranch. Horse-drawn wagon rides, all-season trail rides, lessons, boarding, special events. 502 Easy St. off Brook Rd. Call to reserve. (802) 293-5837. riding@mountainviewranch.biz. www.mountainviewranch.biz.

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The kettle simmering on the stove,
A welcome sound:
I shall have tea.
And suddenly,
In my all-rightness
The room becomes too small
To hold my love,
And I must call
To you beyond this:
Oh, bless you, bless you all.



—JAMES HAYFORD
Orleans, VT 1953



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Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing events continued)

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DANBY FOUR CORNERS. Chipman Stables, 33 Danby-Pawlet Rd. Trail rides, kid's camps, lessons, boarding & horses for sale. New indoor arena. Open daily, reservations appreciated. (802) 293-5242. www.chipmanstables.com.

DORSET. Dorset Winter Farmers' Market at J.K. Adams Kitchen Store and Factory on Rt. 30. Sundays from 10 am – 2 pm through February 19. Nicole Henry (802) 867-7080. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com. www.dorsetfarmersmarket.com.

EAST CHARLESTON. NorthWoods Stewardship Center. Programs, workshops and special events in all seasons. Public is welcome. 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551. www.northwoodscenter.org.

GRAFTON. Grafton Ponds Outdoor Center. A year-round recreation center offering Nordic skiing with snowmaking, snowshoeing, Biathlon, special events & snow tubing in winter. Dog Days: Grafton Ponds' trails are dog-friendly every Monday and Thursday (owners responsible for keeping the trails "clean.") Rental equipment available. Grafton Ponds Outdoor Center, 783 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2400. Visit graftonponds.com.

GRAFTON. Grafton Valley Arts Guild invites you to visit the Cricketers Gallery in historic Grafton Village at 45 Townshend Road. Open Thursday-Sunday from 10 am – 4 pm. (802) 843-4824. www.graftonvalleyartsguild.com.

GRAFTON. The Nature Museum at Grafton. Exhibits, gift shop, family activities, and special events. Admission: adults \$5, seniors/student \$4, children 3-12 \$3, family \$15. Saturdays 10-4 and Sundays 1-4. 186 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2111. www.nature-museum.org.

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

GROTON. Groton Growers' Winter Farmers Market at Groton Community Building Gym. Every third Saturday, 10 am – 2 pm through May. Mary Berlejung, (802) 584-3595. grotongrowers@gmail.com.

HARTLAND. Upper Valley Seed Savers meet on the second Thursday of the month at 5 pm. 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 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.

LEBANON, NH. Listen Community Dinner. Nutritious free meals served from 5–5:30 pm every Tuesday and Thursday. At Sacred Heart Church on Hough St. (603) 448-4553.

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

LEICESTER. Addison County Farm Animal Homeopathy Study Group. Learn how other farmers are applying homeopathy to their herds or flocks. Discussion includes an in-depth look of at least one remedy, some theory and a case analysis. Meets the first Thursday of each month and is open to all levels. 1-3 pm at Taconic End Farm. For more information call Annie Claghorn, (802) 247-3979. foxclag@gmavt.net.

LUDLOW. Ludlow Farmers' Market at Ludlow Teen Center at Goodman's American Pie, 106 Main St. Every Saturday 10 am – 1 pm. Jerry Milligan, (802) 734-3829. lfmkt@tds.net. www.ludlowfarmersmarket.org. *Through March 3.*

LUDLOW. Fletcher Farms School for the Arts and Crafts. Vermont's oldest residential arts and crafts school. Register now for our winter arts and crafts classes. Woodworking, Oil and Watercolor Painting, Kirigami and much more. Registration fee. Monday-Saturday, 9 am – 4 pm. Fletcher Farm School for the Arts & Crafts, 611 Rt. 103 South. (802) 228-8770. info@fletcherfarm.org. www.fletcherfarm.org. *January 14–April 1.*

LYNDONVILLE. Lyndonville Winter Farmers' Market at Tom Breslin Community Center on Main St. (Rt. 5). Second Saturdays from 10 am – 1 pm, through April. Brian Titus, (802) 533-7455. info@woodedgefarm.com. www.lyndonfarmersmarket.com.

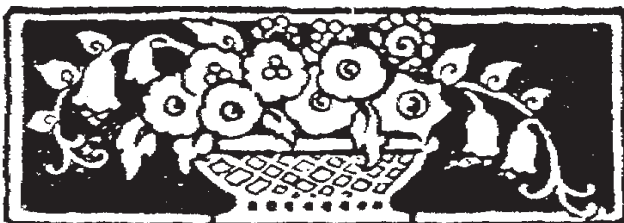
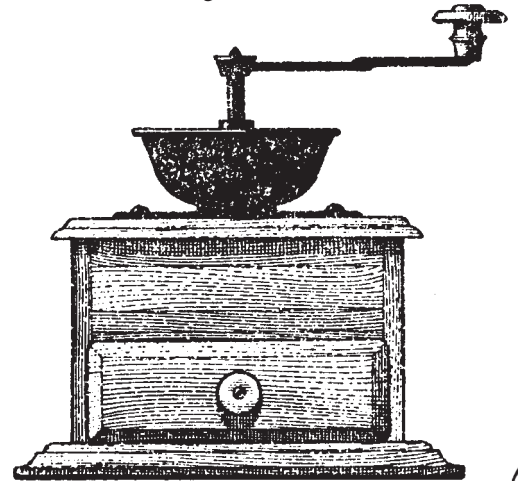
LYNDONVILLE. 2012 Snowflake Festival. Two weeks of family wintertime fun from February 18 through March 4. Sleigh rides, ski races, torchlight parade, spaghetti suppers, pancake breakfasts, skating, snowmobile races, quilt show, chowder fest, and more! A variety of events happen at various locations in Burke and Lyndonville. Call for more information and schedule. (802) 626-9696.

MANCHESTER. Southern Vermont Arts Center Exhibitions. Gallery, special events, concerts, gift shop, and café. SVAC, Yester House Gallery, West Rd. (802) 362-1405. www.svac.org.

MANCHESTER. 20th Annual Winter Members' Exhibition. Paintings, sculpture, photographs, and mixed media pieces of the highest quality. Eagerly anticipated by collectors and browsers alike. Free. Yester House Galleries at Southern Vermont Arts Center. Open Tues-Sat 10 am – 5 pm. (802) 362-1405. www.svac.org. *Through February 11.*

MANCHESTER. Winter Wonderland Tours in "The Shires of Vermont." Ride in the warmth & comfort of an eight-passenger tour vehicle, escorted by a local tour guide. Includes great vistas on pristine, country backroads, oldest U.S. marble quarry (now abandoned but still beautiful), historic Vermont hamlet, unique Vermont general store, optional short & easy hike around a wooded path & mountain pond. Sundays only: a visit to a local farmers market/crafts expo. Fee: \$30 pp. Starts at Adams Park, 357 Center Hill Rd. For details or reservations call (802) 362-4997. bckrddisc@aol.com. www.backroaddiscovery.com.

MANCHESTER. Visit Historic Hildene, the summer home of Robert Todd Lincoln. Special activities, lectures, bird walks, museum store, Nordic center, holiday programs. Tickets: \$13 adults, \$5 youth under 14, children under 6 free. Grounds pass: \$5 adults, \$3 youth, children under 6 free. Open daily 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Historic Hildene is off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. info@hildene.org. www.hildene.org.



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Dance and Dine the Night Away: VSO Waltz Night is Coming

Vermont's premiere black tie tradition, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra's Waltz Night, will be held this year on Saturday, February 4 in the Grand Maple Ballroom on the top floor of the Dudley Davis Center at the University of Vermont in Burlington. Once again, the VSO invites Vermonters to strap on their dancing shoes and float to the live music of the Orchestra. All proceeds from the event, expected to draw 250 revelers, will benefit VSO educational and musical programs throughout the state.

The 34th Waltz Night brings the special opportunity to dine and dance to the music of the VSO under the direction of principal guest conductor Anthony

Princiotti, and to enjoy the music of the Pine Street Jazz. The annual gala includes cocktails (cash bar) and silent auction beginning at 6 p.m., with an elegant dinner and complimentary wine, and dancing beginning at 7 p.m. and lasting until 12:30 a.m.

The theme for the annual Waltz Night auction is "Celebrating the Spirit of Vermont," honoring the inspirational level of generosity, resilience and community demonstrated by Vermonters this year. Waltz Night attendees and Vermont community are invited to bid on more than 100 fabulous items in the live and silent auctions. Visit the VSO website for a preview of auction items and starting bids. Back by popular demand this year is the Waltz Contest, a lighthearted opportunity for a few talented couples to take to the dance floor and display their waltzing skills.

Besides a beautiful evening of dining and dancing, Waltz Night tickets include complimentary ballroom dance lessons, discounted tuxedo rentals at Men's Wearhouse & Tux in Williston, and for those wishing to make a romantic weekend of the affair, special room rates at the Courtyard Marriott Burlington Harbor and the Sheraton, with limo transportation to the Davis Center. The two free dance lessons led by Maggi Hayes will take place on January 22 and January 29. Waltz Night is sponsored by Jet Blue, the

Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Macy's, Lake Champlain Chocolates, Pop Color and many other generous businesses and individuals.

Waltz Night is open to everyone! Tickets for the black-tie Waltz Night gala are \$175 per person, \$225 for Silver Patrons, or \$325 for Gold Patrons. Tables for 10 are available for \$1,750. Patron tables are also available. A portion of the ticket cost is tax deductible. For tickets call Mike Peluse at (800) VSO-9293, ext. 25, or visit www.vso.org.



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Vermont Country Calendar

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

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Arts Walk. Join us on the second Friday of every month. More than 40 venues will be displaying art. Stores remain open, becoming galleries displaying the work of dozens of area artists. 5-7 pm. Free. Downtown Middlebury. (802) 388-7951 x 2. info@middleburyartswalk.com. www.middleburyartswalk.com.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Farmer's Market at American Flatbread Restaurant in the Marbleworks. Second and fourth Saturdays from 9:30 am – 1 pm, January through May. Pam Taylor, (802) 388-0178. www.middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont. The oldest chartered community history museum in the United States, welcoming visitors since 1882. Exhibits, research center, and museum shop. Saturdays 10 am - 5 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, 1 Park St. (803) 388-2117. www.henrysheldonmuseum.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Vermont Folklife Center. Exhibits, gallery, archives & research center, programs, and Heritage Shop. Free admission. Open Mon-Sat, 10 am – 5 pm, Sun 11 am – 4 pm. At 88 Main St., downtown. (802) 388-4964. www.vermontfolklifecenter.org.

MONTPELIER. Art Exhibit. Grace Brigham's agricultural murals are on display. Her holsteins are now grazing in the hallway at the Vermont History Museum. Museum admission: adults \$5; families \$12; students, children and seniors \$3; members and children under 6 are free. Open to the public Tues-Sat 10 am – 4 pm at 109 State St. (802) 828-2291. www.vermonthistory.org.

MONTPELIER. Lost Nation Theater's Winterfest. Four shows over four weeks to brighten your winter from February 2-26. A showcase of Vermont's most exciting and entertaining performing artists. City Hall Arts Center. For tickets and schedule call (802) 229-0492. kathleen@lostontheater.org. www.lostontheater.org.

MONTPELIER. Montpelier Capital City Winter Farmers' Market at Vermont College of Fine Arts gym, 10 am – 2 pm on first and third Saturdays through April. Carolyn Grodinsky, (802) 223-2958. manager@www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com.

MORRISVILLE. Lamoille Valley Farmers' Artisan Market at River Arts Center on Pleasant St., in Morrisville. Second Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm, Feb through April. Amy Walker, fammanager@gmail.com.

MORRISVILLE. Exhibit: "Topographies." Recent paintings by Frank Woods. Opening reception on January 19 from 5 – 7 pm. Free. Mon-Fri, 10 am - 2 pm. The Gallery at River Arts Center, 74 Pleasant St. (802) 888-1261. January 19 - March 2.

NORWICH. Norwich Farmers Market. Local/organic produce, meats, cheeses, eggs, handicrafts, baked goods, prepared foods, and live music. Saturdays 10 am – 1 pm. Winter Markets on Second Saturday of each month, from Jan. 14 through April 14. Tracy Hall, Rt. 5, one mile south of Norwich village. (802) 384-7447. norwichfarmersmarket.org.

NORWICH. Montshire Museum of Science. Exhibits, trails, programs, and museum store open 10 am – 5 pm daily. Admission \$12 adults, \$10 children 2-17, under 2 free. One Montshire Rd. (802) 649-2200. www.montshire.org.

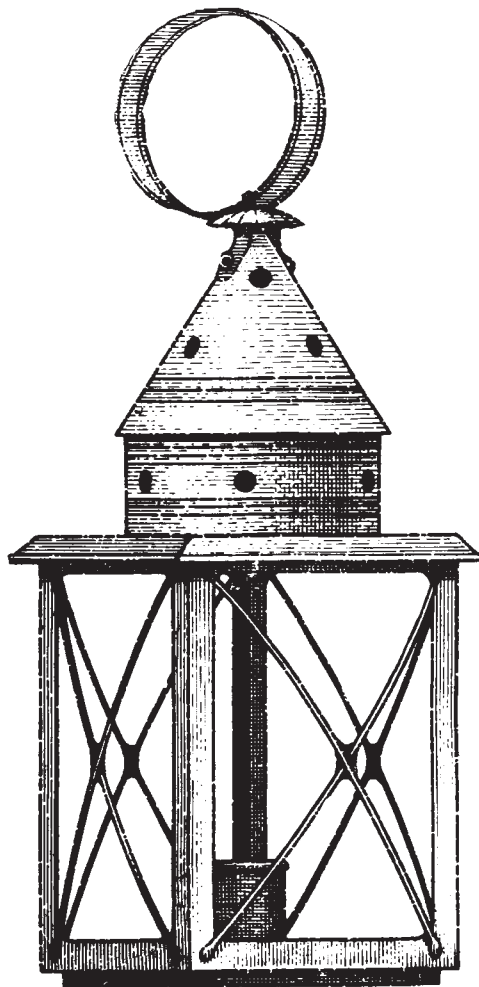
PLAINFIELD. Monthly Sacred Harp Sing. A free event, with beginners and loaner books available. The second Sunday of every month at 3 to 5 p.m. at the Community Center above the Co-op in Plainfield. For more information, contact Lynnette Combs at (802) 426-3850. lynnettecombs@gmail.com.

POULTNEY. Community Breakfast. Hosted by the Slate Valley Ministry the last Saturday of each month. \$1/person, under 14 free. All welcome. Breakfast served 8-10:30 am, Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 84 Church St. (802) 287-2252.

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

PUTNEY. Green Mountain Orchards Farm Store open all year with local apples and cider. 130 West Hill Rd. (exit 4, I-91), look for signs in Putney Village. (802) 387-5851. www.greenmtorchards.com.

QUECHEE. Vermont Institute of Natural Science Nature Center. Exhibits, programs, nature trail, nature store. Admission: adults \$10.50, seniors \$9.50, youth (3-18) \$8.50, children 3 and under free. 10 am – 5:30 pm, 7 days a week. VINS Nature Center, 6565 Woodstock Rd., Rt. 4, (802) 359-5000. www.vinsweb.org.



RANDOLPH CENTER. Turkey Hill Farm. Farmer's Kitchen cooking classes. Farm skills workshops. "Moo-tique" farm store, raw milk micro-dairy, pasture-raised meats, local farm products, and books. Spacious farm-stay apartment for short-term stays. Chapter meetings for the Weston A. Price Foundation. Stuart and Margaret Osha, 55 Turkey Hill Rd. For schedules and information call (802) 728-7064. localfood@turkeyhillfarmvt.com. www.turkeyhillfarmvt.com.

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. Open year round, dawn to dusk. 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. Fifth Annual Winter Farmers Market. The downtown Rutland Winter Farmers Market is indoors on Saturdays through April 28! Over 40 vendors, selling fresh salad greens, locally-grown apples, grass-fed meats, artisan cheeses, freshly baked organic breads, honey, jellies & jams, pickles, maple syrup & maple products, hot foods, wines, wools, glasswork and jewelry—a great place to shop, eat and visit. Live entertainment. Come have lunch and meet your friends. 10 am - 2 pm. Located in the Old Strand Theater (enter through the Rutland Natural Food Co-Op at 77 Wales St.). For info call Greg Cox (802) 683-4606. coxveg@hotmail.com. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through April 28.

RUTLAND. Trinity Episcopal Church invites everyone to join us for a hot meal every second Saturday of the month. By donation, if able. 11:30 am – 1 pm. 85 West St., Nourse Hall. (802) 775-4368.

RUTLAND. Chaffee Art Center—Rutland Area Art Association. Exhibits, classes, workshops, open studio evenings. Gallery open Tues-Sat 10 am to 5 pm. 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

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

SALISBURY. Green Mountain Ice Fishing Tournament. All Vermont waters and all legal species of fish. January 20 through March 15. Registration fee \$20. Register at Kampersville Store, (802) 353-4501.

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

SHARON. Sharon Sprouts Farmers' Market at Sharon Elementary School. Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Feb. 11, Mar. 10, Mar. 31, May 12. Donna Foster, (802) 763-8280.

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. Admission. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.

SOUTH HERO. South Hero Winter Farmers' Market at South Hero Congregational Church. 10 am-2 pm on Feb. 4, March 4, April 7. (802) 372-3291. champlainislandsfarmersmarket.blogspot.com.



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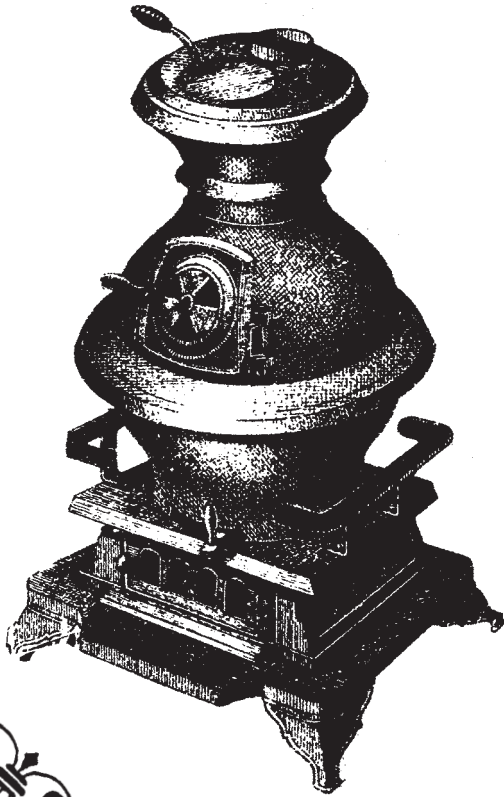
Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing events continued)

SOUTH WALLINGFORD. Line Dancing every Tuesday. Beginners and experienced. \$5 per person, snack bar available. 6:30 pm at the Maple Valley Grange Hall, Rt. 7. (802) 446-2872. www.wallingfordvt.com.

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

ST. ALBANS. St. Albans Northwest Farmers' Market at St. Albans City Hall. Saturdays 10 am – 1 pm on January 21 and February 11. Marnie Barry, (802) 373-5821.



ST. JOHNSBURY. Winter & Holiday Farmers Markets at St. Johnsbury Welcome Center, Railroad St. Every first Saturday from 10 am – 1 pm, through March. Elizabeth Everts, (802) 592-3088. elizabeththeverts@yahoo.com. sites.google.com/site/caledoniafarmersmarket.

ST. JOHNSBURY. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain and Dog Chapel. Free. Open Mon-Sat 10 am – 4 pm and Sun 11 am – 4 pm. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. off Spaulding Rd. (802) 748-2700. info@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com.

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance every fourth Friday. Admission \$8, \$6 for teens, \$3 for children 5-12, under 5 free. Refreshments available. 8 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 235-2718. Tinmouthvt.org.

WALLINGFORD. Lunch at the First Congregational Church of Wallingford. Come alone or bring a friend or neighbor. Free. Thursdays 11:30 am - 1 pm. (802) 446-2817. www.wallingfordvt.com.

WESTFORD. Westford Holiday Market at Brick Meeting House, 1 Common Rd. February 3 from 3:30 to 6:30 pm. (802) 370-4077. info@westfordfarmersmarketvt.org. www.westfordfarmersmarketvt.org.

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. 8 pm at the Community Hall at 219 Tyler Farm Rd. (802) 429-2316 or adamrboyce@juno.com. *Fourth Saturdays*.

WEST RUTLAND. Reiki Healings. Herbal remedies and teas, crystals and stones. Vermont Herbal General Store, 518 Main St. (802) 438-2766. www.vermontherbal.com.

WEST RUTLAND. Home Buyer Education Classes. Call for schedule. NeighborWorks office at 110 Marble St. (802) 438-2303 x 216. www.nwvvt.org.

WESTMINSTER. Homemade Soup and Bread. Every Wednesday noon to 2 pm at the First Congregational Church on Route 5. The simple meal is free, with donations accepted. (802) 722-4148.

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

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Upper Valley Co-op's First Friday Celebration. Live music by local artists, samples of local foods, 5% off all purchases for every shopper. 4-6 pm at the Upper Valley Food Co-op. The First Friday of every month is celebrated by businesses in White River Junction. (802) 295-5804. Kye@uppervalleyfood.coop. www.uppervalleyfood.coop.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Northern Stage Presents *M. Butterfly*. Mystery and international intrigue surround a 20-year romance in '60s China. Admission. Tues-Sat 7:30 pm, Sun 5 pm. Briggs Opera House, 12 North Main St. (802) 296-7000 x 15. boxoffice@northernstage.org. www.northernstage.org. *February 15 - March 4*.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Northern Stage Presents *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. A deliciously wicked story of love, based on the scandalous 1782 French novel, spins a sinister tale of jealousy, seduction and lust. Most days at 7:30 pm with many 2 pm matinees. Briggs Opera House, 12 N. Main St. Tickets start at \$30. Call (802) 296-7000 x 15. boxoffice@northernstage.org. www.northernstage.org. *January 18 - February 5*.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Listen Community Dinner. Free nutritious meals served 5-6 pm every Monday and Wednesday. Take-home available. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 749 Hartford Ave. (603) 398-2780.

WILMINGTON. Sleigh Rides. Belgian draft horses will pull the sleighs through the 100-acre hillside farm across an open meadow to a log cabin in the woods to warm up by a wood fire. Participants will sip a steaming cup of hot chocolate and can sing to the tunes of an ol' player piano. Afternoon and evening rides offered weather permitting. Also, private Morgan horse-drawn sleigh rides for two. Reservations required. Adams Farm, 15 Higley Hill. (802) 464-3762. www.adamsfamilyfarm.com. *Through March 10*.

WINDSOR. Cider Hill Gardens & Gallery. Gary Milek's award-winning paintings and prints, inspired by the surrounding gardens and scenery. Winter hours are by appointment. At 1747 Hunt Rd., off State St. (800) 232-4337. ciderhillgardens.com. www.garymilek.com. flowers@ciderhillgardens.com.

WOODSTOCK. Third Friday Contra Dance and Dinner. Music by Old Sam Peabody, calling by Delia Clark. Vegetarian dinner 5:30-7:30 pm; family dance at 6 pm; potluck dessert at 7:30 pm; contra dance 8-10:30 pm. \$8 suggested donation includes dinner, under 18 free. Temporary dance venue: Masonic Lodge on Rt. 4, 1/4 mile east of the Green. (802) 785-4039. hoffmanathome@gmail.com. *Third Fridays September through May*.

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Vermont Country Calendar

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week at Billings

Farm. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through the frosty fields of the farm. Horse-drawn sleigh rides, sledding with jack jumpers. Dairy farm and farmhouse, programs and hands-on activities. Sample Presidential cookie favorites and spiced cider! 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Adm. 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum. GPS: 5302 River Road. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *February 18 - 26.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Premiere Jersey dairy farm, restored 1890 farmhouse, family programs, sleigh rides, festivities, programs, and museum. Admission (includes all activities) \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, free for children 2 and under. Winter hours: open weekends and vacation weeks through February, 10 am to 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

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

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Rides at Sugarbush Farm. Bundle up and enjoy a 45-minute sleigh ride through the maple woods. Learn from the sugar maker how these trees are tapped in March and how sap is boiled. Belgian draft horse sled rides from 11 am – 3 pm by reservation. Farm is located outside Woodstock & snow tires are suggested. Warm up with cheese slices and hot drinks afterwards in the farm house. Farm store open 9 am – 5 pm. Sugarbush Farm, 591 Sugarbush Farm Rd (gravel). (802) 457-1757. www.sugarbushfarm.com. *Through February 29.*

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

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15

BETHEL. Historical Presentation: Benning Wentworth and the New Hampshire Charters in Vermont. By VHS Executive Director Mark Hudson. 2 pm at the Bethel Historical Society at the Bethel Town Hall. (802) 234-5064. nick@nikolaidis.com.

BURLINGTON. Ethan Allen Homestead Winter Enrichment Program: “Hometown Hauntings.” The Paranormal Investigaton Team from the local group Hometown Hauntings shares its methods of investigation and some of its findings from investigations of local areas, including the Historic Allen House! Free. 2 pm at the Ethan Allen Homestead, Ethan Allen Homestead Rd. off Rt. 127. (802) 865-4556. info@ethanallenhomestead.org. ethanallenhomestead.org.

MONTPELIER. 2nd Annual Winter Folk Music Festival. Singing workshop with Brendan Taafe at 1 pm at Summit School, 46 Barre St. Concert at 4 pm with Mayfly and the Speckers at the Savoy Theater, Main St. Tickets \$25/ workshop, \$15/concert, \$10/kids. Presented by Summit School of Tradition Music and Culture. (802) 917-1186. music@summit-school.org. www.summit-school.org.

SHELBURNE. Celtic Winter Gathering. Workshops, performances and dances. Scottish Highland Dance Competitions—free and open to the public to observe. Scottish Tea Room. Cape Breton step dance workshop, Celtic drumming, 7 pm performance. Tickets: \$6 children, \$12 adults. FlynnTix: (802) 863-5966. 9:30 am – 9 pm. All Souls Interfaith Gathering, 291 Bostwick Farm Rd. E-mail: celtic.heather@gmail.com. www.flynnnix.org. www.celticheather.com.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Weekend. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Visit the Jersey dairy farm and restored 1890 farmhouse. Activities and programs for all ages. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also January 16.*

MONDAY, JANUARY 16

MONTPELIER. Martin Luther King, Jr. Program. Author Elise Guyette will talk about her book, *Discovering Black Vermont: African American Farmers in Hinesburg 1790-1890*. This 2011 Hathaway award-winning book follows the lives of three generations of free blacks. Free. 7 pm at the Vermont History Museum. (802) 479-8505. vermonthistory.org.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Weekend. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Visit the Jersey dairy farm and restored 1890 farmhouse. Activities and programs for all ages. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open winter weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18

BELLOWS FALLS. Free Community Supper and Gardening Conversation. The menu will feature both vegetarian and meat curry, rice, drinks and dessert. Hosted by The Greater Falls Great Food Community Conversation. 6 pm at the Compass School, Rt. 5. For more information, contact Tim Stevenson, (802) 869-2141. info@posttoilsolutions.org. www.posttoilsolutions.org.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19

WEST RUTLAND. West Rutland Marsh Monitoring Walk. Now in our 11th year, this is a monthly bird monitoring exercise sponsored by the Rutland County Audubon Society. To date over 1,400 participants have tallied 144 species from Least Bittern to Rusty Blackbird. Meet at the West Rutland Price Chopper parking lot at 8 am. Leader: Roy Pilcher, (802) 775-3461. www.rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20

RUTLAND. Cabin Fever Book Sale. Buy-one-get-one on all books under \$1. 9:30 am – 4:30 pm. pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org. *Also January 21.*

SHELBURNE. Film Screening: Mother Nature’s Child. Mother Nature’s Child asks the questions: Why do children need unstructured time outside? What is the place of risk-taking in healthy child development? Admission. 7-9 pm. Lake Champlain Waldorf School, 359 Turtle Lane. (802) 985-2827 x 12. www.lakechamplainwaldorfschool.org.

WOODSTOCK. Third Friday Contra Dance and Dinner. Music by Old Sam Peabody, calling by Delia Clark. Vegetarian dinner 5:30-7:30 pm; family dance at 6 pm; potluck dessert at 7: 30 pm; contra dance 8-10:30 pm. \$8 suggested donation includes dinner, under 18 free. Temporary dance venue: Masonic Lodge on Rt. 4, 1/4 mile east of the Green. (802) 785-4039. hoffmanathome@gmail.com. *Third Fridays September through May.*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

BETHEL. Flood Stories Exhibit: Quilts—Comforts & Connections. See stories and photo exhibits about the many dramatic events from Tropical Storm Irene in the Bethel area. Quilt display and silent auction of quilts and art items. Sponsored by the Bethel Historical Society. Proceeds go to the clean-up of Peavine Park and athletic fields. Admission \$5. 10 am – 4 pm at the Bethel Town Hall. For information call Mary Floyd at (802) 234-9515. *Also January 22.*

CHITTENDEN. Annual Paintball Biathlon Weekend. Featuring an adult competition, a children’s and a high school race. The competition combines cross-country skiing and shooting at targets. Everyone welcome. Advance registration required. Fee. Mountain Top Inn & Resort Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Center, 195 Mountain Top Rd. (802) 483-6089. www.mountaintopinn.com. *Also January 22.*

LYNDONVILLE. Northeast Kingdom Snowmobile Drag Racing. Head to head racing on a 660’ track. The track is accessible by snowmobile. Registration 8:30 am. Races start at 9:45 am. \$20 entry + \$10 insurance fee, general admission \$5. Located on Route 114 North. (802) 535-6802. www.lyndonsnocruisers.com.

PERU. Bromley’s 75th Anniversary Weekend. Festivities, activities, and celebration! Big party Saturday night. Sunday there will be prizes. Admission. Bromley Mountain, 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. www.bromley.com. *Also January 22.*

PUTNEY. Turtle Dove Singing Workshop with Nils Freidland and Brendan Taaffe. Join us for an afternoon of singing with two old friends. Nils will be presenting a wide range of music—Medieval chants, complex rounds, a jazzy arrangement of “Home in Pasadena”, Mozart, and South African choruses. Brendan will share original compositions, traditional American harmony, and Zimbabwean songs. Fee: \$35. 12-4:30 pm at the Friends Meeting House. www.turtledoveharmony.org.

RUTLAND. Cabin Fever Book Sale. Buy-one-get-one on all books under \$1. 9:30 am – 2 pm. pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org.

SOUTH BURLINGTON. Vermont Gun & Knife Show. Antiques & collectibles, free appraisals, buying, selling trading. Admission. Open to the public. Free parking. Sat 9 am – 5 pm, Sun 9 am – 3 pm. Holiday Inn, 1068 Williston Road. (802) 875-4540 or (802) 380-8351. www.greenmtgunshowtrail.com. *Also January 22.*

STARKSBORO. 11th Annual Spaghetti Supper and Silent Auction. To benefit the Starksboro Cooperative Preschool. Donation. 5:30-7:30 at the Elementary School, Rt. 116. (802) 453-4427. www.scpreschool.org.

STOWE. 38th Annual Stowe Winter Carnival. 10+ major activities for both young and old, from zany sports events, ice carving competitions, movies, kids carnival kaos and the infamous snowgolf and snowvolleyball tournaments. Tour the town, while watching professional ice carvers create elegant and masterful ice carvings throughout the village on Demonstration Day, January 21. At Stowe Mountain Resort. www.stowewintercarnival.com. *Through January 29*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep in the farm barns. Tour the restored & furnished 1890 Farm House. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also January 22, 28 & 29, February 4, 5, 11 & 12.*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22

BETHEL. Flood Stories Exhibit: Quilts—Comforts & Connections. See stories and photo exhibits about the many dramatic events from Tropical Storm Irene in the Bethel area. Quilt display and silent auction of quilts and art items. Sponsored by the Bethel Historical Society. Proceeds go to the clean-up of Peavine Park and athletic fields. Admission \$5. 10 am – 4 pm at the Bethel Town Hall. For information call Mary Floyd at (802) 234-9515.



BRATTLEBORO. BEAN Micro-Grant Dinner. Presented by Brattleboro Museum and Elliot Street Cafe. Vote on BEAN Micro-grants for local artists. With entertainment by Red Heart The Ticker. Admission. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 2570124 x 0. office@brattleboromuseum.org. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

CHESTER. Contempo-Take-O Art Exhibit Gala Opening. Features the dynamic polaroid transfer prints of Rik (Wave) Kapler and the mixed media sculptures of curator, Bryce LeVan Cushing. Performance art by Needles Jones, Moonfire Tower, and the Break Maids. 3-9 pm. At BLCARTGRP Gallery, in the rear of the MoonDog Cafe Building, 297 Main St. For more information contact Bryce LeVan Cushing. (802) 843-1162 or visit www.brycelevancushing.com. *Exhibit runs through March 15.*

NORWICH. Sacred Harp Sing. 1:30-4:30 pm with a 3 pm snack. Parish Hall of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church at 262 Main St. For information contact Daniel Hertzler at danhertzler@gmail.com.

RICHMOND. The Richmond Historical Society Annual Meeting and Winter Program. Following a brief business meeting, Adam Boyce will give a Living History Presentation entitled, “The Old Country Fiddler: Charles Ross Taggart, Vermont’s Traveling Entertainer.” All are welcome at this free event co-sponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council. Refreshments will be served. 4 pm in the Richmond Free Library Community Room. (802) 434-6453. atrhs@oldroundchurch.com.

RUTLAND. Tales to Tails—Children Reading to Dogs. 4-4:45 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org.

SOUTH BURLINGTON. Vermont Gun & Knife Show. Antiques & collectibles, free appraisals, buying, selling trading. Admission. Open to the public. Free parking. 9 am – 3 pm. Holiday Inn, 1068 Williston Rd. (802) 875-4540, (802) 380-8351. www.greenmtgunshowtrail.com.

STOWE. 38th Annual Stowe Winter Carnival. 10+ major activities for young and old Sports events, ice carving competitions, movies, kids carnival kaos and snowgolf and snowvolleyball tournaments. 11th Annual NICA sanctioned Ice Carving Competition on January 22. At Stowe Mountain Resort. www.stowewintercarnival.com. *Through January 29.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit with the Jersey herd, draft horses, and sheep in the farm barns. Tour the restored & furnished 1890 Farm House. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also January 28 & 29, February 4, 5, 11 & 12.*

MONDAY, JANUARY 23

NEWPORT. Eighth Annual Northeast Kingdom Ice Fishing Derby. Weigh-ins at Wright’s Sport Shop. (802) 334-6115. *Through February 26.*

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

BURLINGTON. Program: Science and Stories—Tracks in the Snow. For children ages 2-6. Winter animals can be very secretive but they leave clues in the snow that let you know they have been there. Come and discover what can be learned from the tracks animals leave behind. Free with admission. 11-11:30 am at ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center, One College St. (877) 324-6386. info@echovermont.org. echovermont.org.

RUPERT. Workshop: Asian Inspired Cooking. Join Chef Ray Chen of The Inn at West View Farm as he creates an Asian-inspired menu. This cuisine will be furnished and feasted on at a charming country home in Rupert. 5:45-9 pm. Address provided upon registration. For tickets call (802) 362-1199. Renee.greenmtacademy@gmail.com. www.greenmtacademy.org.

RUTLAND. Discussion: Vermont Rivers Following Irene. Rutland County Audubon Society sponsors Ethan Swift, Watershed Coordinator for the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, who will talk about flood myths and recovery guidelines for our rivers and streams following this year’s catastrophic storm. Free. 7 pm at the Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 775-3461. rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

Vermont Country Calendar

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

MONTPELIER. Vermont Symphony Orchestra Annual Farmers' Night Concert. World-renowned conductor Andrew Massey, who lives in Montgomery, VT, leads the VSO in a program of music by Gluck, Fauré, Bach, and Wagner. Free and open to the public, first-come, first-seated. 7:30 pm in the State House Legislative Chambers. (802) 864-5741. www.vso.org.

WATERBURY. Waterbury Historical Society Winter Meeting. Followed by a program, "America's Oldest Ski Patrol" presented by Brian Lindner. The meeting is open to all. Refreshments will be available. 7 pm at the Wesley Methodist Church, in the Fire Place Room. (802) 244-8089.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26

MIDDLEBURY. Musical: Hairspray. The college's music theatre students entertain the entire community in a collaboration between the music department and Town Hall Theater. 8 pm each evening. Town Hall Theater, 68 Pleasant St. For tickets call (802) 4433168. cfa@middlebury.edu. www.middlebury.edu/cfa. *Through January 29.*

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

BELLOWS FALLS. Windham Orchestra Concert. Rachmaninoff Symphony No. 2 in e minor and Mary Westbrook-Geha, mezzo-soprano, performs Elgar Sea Pictures. 7:30 pm. Bellows Falls Opera House. For tickets call (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org. www.bmcvt.org.

BENNINGTON. Claudia Schmidt in Concert. For almost four decades Claudia Schmidt has been exploring the nuances of acoustic music with her voice, 12 string guitar and mountain dulcimer with an exciting collection of original, traditional, and contemporary writing. 8 pm. Meetinghouse Cafe of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 108 School St. For tickets call (802) 440-9816. info@uubennington.org. www.uubennington.org.

HYDE PARK. Jane Austen Weekend. A leisurely literary-inspired weekend includes a discussion of Persuasion & how the movies stand up to the book. Afternoon tea in a beautiful old mansion, a talk, brunch & the Jane Austen quiz. Optional sleigh ride. Governor's House in Hyde Park, 100 Main St. (802) 888-6888. www.OneHundredMain.com.

JAY. Farmer's Appreciation Day at Jay Peak. Over 300 farmers from across Vermont gather at Jay Peak for a fun-filled ski and snowboard day. Three free tickets are issued per farm. Vermont foods are on tap along with a ski race and apres ski party. Jay Peak Resort. (802) 988-2611. www.jaypeakresort.com.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury College Orchestra. Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. Andrew Massey, conductor. Free. 8 pm. Middlebury College, Mahaney Center for the Arts, Concert Hall, 72 Porter Field Rd. (802) 4433168. cfa@middlebury.edu. www.middlebury.edu/cfa.

SWANTON. Free Community Open Door Dinner. 5:30-6:30 pm. Memorial United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 23 Grand Ave. (802) 868-7185 x 10. holytrinityepi@myfairpoint.net.

TINMOUTH. Winter Evening Contra Dance. With Sarah Blair on fiddle and Brendan Taafe on guitar. All dances taught and you do not need a partner. Beginners are always welcome. Admission is \$9, \$7 for teens and free for children 12 and under. Refreshments will be available. 8-11 pm. Tinnmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, five miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 235-2718 or visit www.Tinnmouthvt.org. *Also February 24.*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

BRATTLEBORO. Windham Orchestra Concert: A Romantic Voyage. The Orchestra, under the direction of Hugh Keelan, will perform Rachmaninoff Symphony No. 2 in e minor and Mary Westbrook-Geha, mezzo-soprano, will sing Elgar Sea Pictures, Op. 37. 3 pm. Latchis Theater, Main St. For tickets call (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org. www.bmcvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Northern Roots Traditional Music Festival. Local and regional musicians representing the best of various northern musical traditions. All day and evening. New England Youth Theater, 100 Flat St. For tickets and schedule call (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org.

CRAFTSBURY COMMON. TD Bank Craftsbury Cross-Country Ski Marathon. The largest nordic ski event in the East: a fifty kilometer point to point course, classic technique ski marathon and tour, traversing Vermont's spectacular Northeast Kingdom. Craftsbury Outdoor Center, 535 Lost Nation Rd. (802) 586-7767. www.craftsbury.com.

CHESTER. 18th Annual New Voices. A literary event sponsored by Misty Valley Books. Hear five newly published authors talk about their work. For 2012 this includes Naomi Benaron with her award-winning Running the Rift; Christopher Boucher, How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive; Katharine Britton, Her Sister's Shadow; Paul Grossman, The Sleepwalkers; and Betty Shotton, Lifford Leadership. Free, public invited. 2 pm at the Vermont Institute of Contemporary Arts at the corner of Main and Depot Streets. Also XC ski with the authors in the morning at Grafton Ponds (trail fee), meet the authors at a reception after the readings (free) and have drinks and/or dinner with the authors in the evening at the Fullerton Inn (\$28). For information call (802) 875-3400. Visit www.mvbooks.com.

JEFFERSONVILLE. 17th Annual Smugglers' Notch Primitive Biathlon. Using of muzzleloading rifles and snowshoes. Period dress encouraged. Start times between 8 am and 2 pm. Food, snacks, and traders. Families welcome. Sterling Ridge Inn and Log Cabins, Junction Hill Rd. (802) 644-8232, (802) 933-4880. <http://homepages.uber.net/~medukie/index.htm>. *Also January 29.*

MONTPELIER. Ken Perlman Workshop on Prince Edward Island Tunes. With it's vibrant living fiddling tradition, Prince Edward Island has produced many exquisite tunes. Kent Perlman will teach a selection of "PEI" tunes to players of all instruments—fiddle, banjo, guitar, accordion, mandolin, flute. He will offer the kind of background information on PEI music that makes the tunes come alive. Fee: \$25. Sponsored by Woodbury Strings and Summit School. 2-4 pm at Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture, 46 Barre St. To register call (802) 917-1186. www.summit-school.org.

MORRISVILLE. Tying Flies that Catch Fish. With Alan Erdossy. Learn the art of fly tying while creating a selection of flies. Beginning or experienced welcome. Fee. 11 am – 7 pm. River Arts, 74 Pleasant St. (802) 888-1261. www.riverartsvt.org.

NORTH BENNINGTON. Annual Bennington Winter Festival. Penguin plunge, ice carving contest, indoor carnival, children's story time, pet fashion show, games and fun for the entire family. Drink and food specials at local restaurants along with music. 8 am – 11 pm at locations throughout town. (802) 442-3311. www.bennington.com.

Rutland, VT

Mama T's Country Kitchen Offers Tasty Texas-Style Barbeque

by Charles Sutton

Tropical Storm Irene created great hardships and disrupted lives but there are times when something positive occurs from such adversity. Consider how the Mama T's Country Kitchen on Route 7 in Rutland came about as a result of the storm.

It all began when Theresa and Eric House fired up their three small BBQ pits and made hamburgers and hot dogs for the hastily assembled personnel at the Dept. of Transportation's storm incident command center (ICC) in Rutland. Eric is a design planner for the DOT and readily knew the situation there.

Feeding the storm workers

The much appreciated food prompted Gilbert Newbury, the district administrator in charge of the ICC to ask if they would cook meals for the 65 people at the center for the next three Fridays.

This led to an offer and a contract to feed workers rebuilding the roads up on the mountain as well as at the headquarters in Rutland.

So Theresa quit her job working for a dentist, rented a mobile kitchen, and took on the job of feeding a lot of road-weary hungry workmen. "I never worked in a restaurant, just cooked for my family," Theresa said. With the help of her daughter Cynberlee Prencipe, who also gave up her regular job, the two prepared breakfast for 65-75 people at the command center with a varying menu including bacon and sausage, scrambled eggs, waffles and pancakes, and oatmeal.

After breakfast, the cooks prepared lunches for an additional 100-125 road workers as well as the ICC personnel. That menu varied—soup, salad and sandwich, meatloaf, shepherd's pie, lasagna, baked chicken and goulash as well as BBQ'd hot dogs, hamburgers, pork chops, and ribs. The beverage was Gatorade. The lunches were served in take-out containers and delivered to the workers on the roads by DOT personnel. "At one point we were serving 230 meals a day," Theresa recalls.

The next step

Her food was so well received and appreciated that a number of the recipients asked her to open a restaurant if she didn't have one already. So Mama T's Country Kitchen came about with an opening in Rutland on S. Main St. (Rt. 7) this past December 1st. "I always dreamt of having a restaurant and this is a Godsend," she said.

The couple put in a large commercial smoker for the BBQ meats—brisket, chicken, turkey breast and ribs. The oven is large enough to handle 75 racks of ribs at one time. Cooking time: four hours. Theresa and her daughter start preparing foods at 7 a.m. for the 11 a.m. lunchtime opening.

Mama T's serves delicious home-cooked barbeque, southern food, Tex-Mex, and New England favorites. The prices are affordable and the portions generous. Meals, sandwiches, and meats by the pound are offered. Homemade sides include macaroni and cheese, hash browns, pasta and potato salads, cole slaw and rice pilaf. Vegetables are green beans, corn,



Theresa House at Mama T's Country Kitchen

and pinto beans. Daily specials include chicken and dump-lings, lasagna, chili, clam chowder and other homemade soups. For dessert there is homemade pecan pie, blueberry or cherry cream cheese pie, pineapple upside down cake, apple cobbler, cookies and brownies. This is still a family business with their son Evan and son-in-law Matthew helping out part-time.

The Houses came to Vermont in 2006 from Texas where Eric also worked for the State Highway Department. They chose to move to Vermont for it's four seasons. "We only have one season in Texas," Theresa quipped. Her meals reflect Texas-style cooking. "See how I season the string beans," Theresa said.

Her restaurant has an apt slogan: "When it come to cookin,' Mom's the Word!"

Mama T's Country Kitchen, 245 South Main St., Rutland, VT, is open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays. For information or to order call (802) 353-6262. mamatskitchen@yahoo.com. You can also see them on Facebook.



Theresa House rings up a customer at Mama T's Country Kitchen in Rutland, VT. photo by Charles Sutton



Farm Store Open!

Winter hours: 10 am – 4 pm daily

Come in and try our new hard and ice ciders, as well as apples, sweet cider, pies, and other great Vermont products

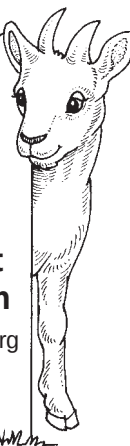
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Waterbury Center, VT 05677

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Vermont Country Calendar

RANDOLPH. Ian Ethan in Concert. Double-necked guitarist Ian Ethan presents an evening of acoustic music. His strikingly unconventional, self-invented approach to the instrument is both baffling and mesmerizing. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, Upper Gallery, 71-73 Main St. For tickets call (802) 728-6464. director@chandler-arts.org. www.ianethan.com.

SHELBURNE. Waldorf Winter Family Open House. Teachers and high school students will give tours and presentations about Waldorf education while young children can make a special craft and participate in other preschool and kindergarten activities. Free. 10 am – 12 pm. Lake Champlain Waldorf School, 359 Turtle Lane. (802) 985-2827 x 12. www.lakechamplainwaldorfschool.org.

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. Heritage WinterFest. Celebrate the wonder of Winter with a guided snowshoeing nature walk at Smugglers' Nordic Center, and sleigh rides, children's story hour, a lasagna dinner, family contra dance, bonfire and fireworks in Jeffersonville. The Primitive Biathlon takes place same day in the same location. Smugglers' Notch Resort Nordic Center and Sterling Ridge Inn. (802) 644-8851. smuggs@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com. Also January 29.

SOUTH HERO. Celebration and Family Contra Dance. With Mark Sustic (caller) and Fiddleheads. Presented by the South Hero Community Library Potluck at 5 pm, dance 6-8 pm. South Hero Community Library, 75 South St. (802) 372-6209 or www.youngtraditionvermont.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Open House at the Art Gallery at St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. Come see the Skylights Project. St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, 1171 Main St. (802) 748-8291. www.stjathenaeum.org.

SUDBURY. Winter Outing to High Pond. Snowshoe and explore winter wildlife habitat at this pretty Nature Conservancy preserve. Moderate, 4-5 miles. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. 10 am. Leave from Main Street Park, near the east end of the fire station off Center Street in Rutland City. Leaders: Barb & Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573. greenmountainclub.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep in the farm barns. Tour the restored & furnished 1890 Farm House. A Place in the Land, our Academy Award- nominee film is shown in the theater. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. Also January 29, February 4, 5, 11 & 12.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

BURLINGTON. Vermont Youth Orchestra Winter Concert. Jeffrey Domoto, conductor; Quinn Parker, trombone. Featuring works by Franck, Rossini, Grondahl. Tickets: Adults/Seniors \$15; Students \$10. 3 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. For tickets call (802) 863-5966. www.vyo.org.

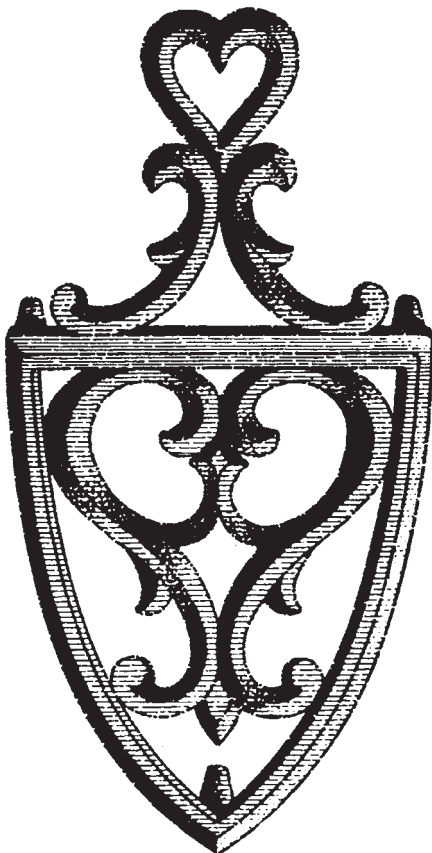
FAIR HAVEN. Living History Presentation: "The Old Country Fiddler: Charles Ross Taggart, Vermont's Traveling Entertainer" portrayed by Adam Boyce. Sponsored by the Fair Haven Historical Society and Jay Brown/Fabian Trucking. Public is invited at no charge and refreshments will be served. 2 pm at the Fair Haven Grade School Learning Center. (802) 265-3843.

JEFFERSONVILLE. 17th Annual Smugglers' Notch Primitive Biathlon. Using of muzzleloading rifles and snowshoes. Period dress encouraged. Start times between 8 am and 2 pm. Food, snacks, and traders. Families welcome. Sterling Ridge Inn and Log Cabins, Junction Hill Rd. (802) 644-8232, (802) 933-4880. http://homepages.erver.net/~medukie/index.htm.

MONTPELIER. Winter Festival: Ice on Fire. The bigger-than-life winter festival returns to the open fields of the Nature Center. Spend the afternoon participating in wonderful village activities including parades, storytelling, winter games, songs, readings, and outdoor theater. Admission \$3 adult, \$1 child, \$5 family. 2-5 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm Street. (802) 229-6206. www.northbranchnaturecenter.org.

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. Heritage WinterFest. Celebrate the wonder of Winter with a guided snowshoeing nature walk at Smugglers' Nordic Center, and sleigh rides, pancake breakfast, children's story hour, a lasagna dinner, live entertainment, family contra dance, bonfire and fireworks in Jeffersonville. The Primitive Biathlon takes place same day in the same location. Smugglers' Notch Resort Nordic Center and Sterling Ridge Inn. (802) 644-8851. smuggs@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep in the farm barns. Tour the restored & furnished 1890 Farm House. A Place in the Land, our Academy Award- nominee film is shown. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. Also February 4, 5, 11 & 12.



TUESDAY, JANUARY 31

BURLINGTON. Program: Science and Stories—Beavers. For children ages 2-6. What kind of animal is a beaver? What do they do in the winter time? How do they make their lodge? Free with admission. 11-11:30 am. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center, One College St. (877) 324-6386. info@echovermont.org. echovermont.org.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

MANCHESTER. The Voice of a Singer with Joanne Beck. Learn the ins and outs in this four-week course. Everyone can sing! February 8, 15, 22, 29. 5-6:30 pm. Fee. First Congregational Church, 3624 Main St. Call to register. (802) 362-1199. Renee.greenmtacademy@gmail.com. www.greenmtacademy.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Vermont Humanities Council Presents First Wednesdays Lecture: "The Intimate Privilege of Being with the Dying" with author Marjorie Ryerson. 7 pm. Ilsley Public Library. (802) 388-4095. info@vermonthumanities.org. www.vermonthumanities.org.

SHREWSBURY. Cheese-Making Class. Learn how to make cheddar, gouda and machego cheeses from raw cows' milk in a class presented by Rural Vermont and taught by Lea Calderon-Guthe. 1-4 pm at Red Wing Farm. Pre-registration required. \$20-\$40 sliding scale. To register call (802) 223-7222 or email shelby@ruralvermont.org.

SWANTON. Community Breakfast. Come in from the cold and bring a friend. \$2.50 per person. 7-9 am. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 38 Grand Ave. (802) 868-7195. holytrinityepi@myfairpoint.net. www.holytrinityswanton.org. Also February 15, March 7 & 21.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2

MIDDLEBURY. Concert: Motown Revue. Presented by the Middlebury College Department of Music. Tickets \$6. 8 pm. Town Hall Theater. (802) 443-6433. www.townhalltheater.org.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3

BURLINGTON. Burlington's First Friday Art Walk. Come inside and warm up at over 30 galleries and art venues throughout Burlington staying open late. Sponsored by Burlington City Arts, the Free. 5 pm - 8 pm. (802) 264-4839. info@artmapburlington.com. www.artmapburlington.com.

DANVILLE. Old Time Contra Dance. With Chip Hedler (caller) and music by Hull's Union String Band with David Carpenter. 8-11 pm. Danville Town Hall. (802) 563-3225 or samlyman@fairpoint.net.

MONTPELIER. Full Moon Snowshoe Hike. Under a full moon, with the trees free of leaves, and surrounded by sparkling snow, let's snowshoe by lunar light! Explore and enjoy Montpelier's hillsides at night with Nature Center staff. Snowshoes and hot chocolate provided. Fee: \$5. 7-8:30 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm Street. (802) 229-6206. chip@northbranchnaturecenter.org. www.northbranchnaturecenter.org.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4

BARNET. Collectors Fair 2012. Everyone one is invited whether they collect or not. Here is your chance to meet, swap, and share great information about what you collect or want to collect. We welcome displays of anything, but please no firearms, weapons, or jackknives (we're a school building). Refreshments available, and door prizes at the end of the afternoon. This is a no cost event, free to exhibitors and free to the public. 9 am – 2 pm. At the Barnet School. For questions or to reserve a space, e-mail davewarden37@hotmail.com.



VERMONT REGIONAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE:

Mt. Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce: 877-VT-SOUTH
Londonderry Chamber of Commerce: 802-824-8178
Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce: 800-756-8880
Brandon Area Chamber of Commerce: 802-247-6401
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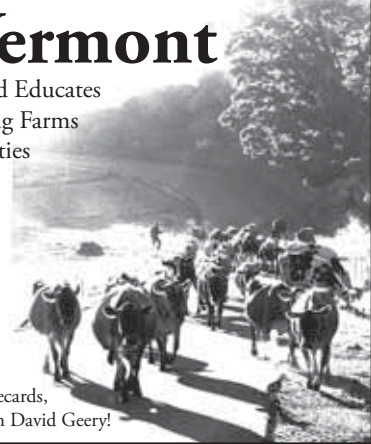
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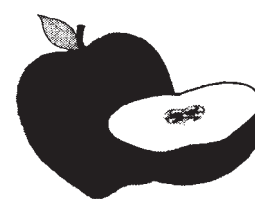
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Vermont Country Calendar

(February 4, continued)

BENSON. Lake Champlain Down Home Ice Fishing Derby. Also Kid's Derby. Sponsored by Benson Fish and Game Club. Access area at Benson Landing for all waters south of Lake Champlain Bridge. (802) 537-2468. Also February 5.

BERLIN. Art & Crafts Fair. Free admission, free coffee, free Wi-Fi, door prizes. 9 am – 5 pm. Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce, off exit 7 from I-89. (802) 431-3540. Resourcewizard@yahoo.com.

BRATTLEBORO. Concert: Ninth Annual Collegiate A Cappella Benefit Concert. 7:30 pm. Call for tickets. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

BURLINGTON. 34th Annual Vermont Symphony Orchestra's Waltz Night. The annual gala benefit includes cocktails (cash bar) and silent auction beginning at 6 pm, with an elegant dinner and complimentary wine, and dancing from 7 pm until 12:30 am. Tickets are \$175 per person. Grand Maple Ballroom on the top floor of the Dudley Davis Center at the University of Vermont. (800) VSO-9293, ext. 25, or visit www.vso.org.

MORRISVILLE. The Vibrancy of Pastel from the Ground Up. Learn how to create archival, primed and sanded pastel boards, saving you time and money. Most of the time will be spent creating art—from imagination/memory and from your own favorite photos (please bring). Entry Fee. 10 am – 12 pm. River Arts, 74 Pleasant St. (802) 888-1261. info@riverarts.org. www.riverartsvt.org.

NORWICH. Upper Valley Chocolate Festival. This chocolate lovers' event consists of local chocolatiers and chocolate artisans including restaurants, bakeries, patisseries, and catering companies. Vendors will vie for a People's Choice Award for the Best Chocolate Dessert in the Upper Valley-2011. Admission. 10 am – 3 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (603) 448-4893.

RANDOLPH. Concert: Bow Thayer and the Holy Plow. 7:30 pm. Chandler Upper Gallery, 71-73 Main St. For tickets call (802) 728-6464. director@chandler-arts.org. www.chandler-arts.org.

SALISBURY. Lake Dunmore Ice Fishing Derby. Eligible fish: catfish, bass, northern pike, salmon, trout and walleye. All entry fees go for prizes. Registration fee is \$20. Register at the Kampersville Store, (802) 353-4501. Also February 5.

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. Casino Night—Viva Notch Vegas. A fun night for all! Game tables, door prizes, silent auction, music, munchies. Benefits the Smugglers' Notch Ski and Snowboard Club's youth racing programs. Admission. 7-11 pm. Meeting House, 4323 Rt. 108 South. (802) 644-8851. smuggs@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/skiride/winter-events.php.

SO. BURLINGTON. Concert with The Sky Blue Boys (Banjo Dan and Willie Lindner). Tickets \$20. 7:30-10 pm. Studio Three, San Remo Dr. (866) 639-6577. www.studiothreevt.com.

WATERBURY CENTER. Green Mountain Club's Annual Snowshoe Festival. Enjoy an invigorating day with free snowshoe rentals, guided tours to local peaks and trails, kids' activities, educational workshops, nature walks, and hot chocolate. Followed by a winter party with live music food, and raffle prizes. Admission. Activities 8:30 am – 3 pm, and party from 3-5 pm. Green Mountain Club Visitor Center, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Rd. (802) 244-7037. gmc@greenmountainclub.org. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WEST PAWLET. Ninth Annual Woodchuck Festival and Fireman's Games. Events include children's games, face painting, home style foods by Ladies' Auxiliary, and many vendors. The all volunteer event raises funds for West Pawlet Fire Department and Ladies Auxiliary. From 9 am – 3 pm at Mettawee Community School, Rt. 153. For more information contact Eli Norman at (802)645-9224.

WEST RUPERT. Trail/Road Hike from Rupert to West Rupert. Begin by doing a short section of rail trail and paved road in Rupert, to a back road (dirt) between Rupert and West Rupert. Have option of finishing on rail trail from West Rupert back to cars, or may get a ride for drivers at Viv's Mom's house to pick up cars in Rupert. Easy 4-5 miles. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. 9:30 am. Leave from Main Street Park, near the east end of the fire station off Center Street in Rutland City. Leaders: Larry Walter & Viv Bebee, (802) 775-3855. greenmountainclub.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep in the farm barns. Tour the restored & furnished 1890 Farm House. A Place in the Land, our Academy Award-nominee film is shown in the theater. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open winter weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. Also February 5, 11 & 12.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

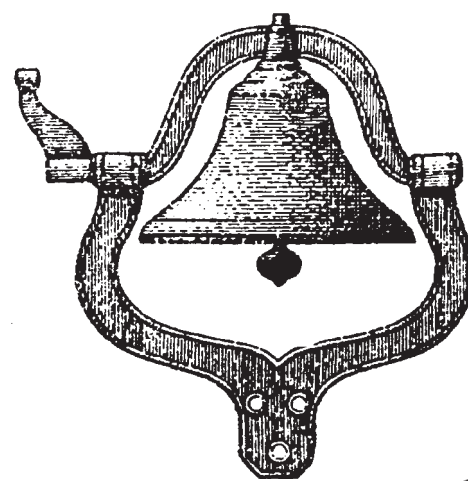
BENSON. Lake Champlain Down Home Ice Fishing Derby. Sponsored by Benson Fish and Game Club. Access area at Benson Landing for all waters south of Lake Champlain Bridge. (802) 537-2468.

BRATTLEBORO. Concert: A Cappella, OJ, and Muffins with the Dartmouth Aires. 8:30 am. We'll serve breakfast. Seating is limited. Call for tickets. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124.

CASTLETON. Science Pub—Topic: "Climate Change and Vermont." Dr. Alan Betts, Atmospheric Research (alanbetts.com). Join friends and neighbors for an informal afternoon of learning and drinks and consider staying for dinner. Hosted by The Friends of Castleton Library at area restaurants with Castleton State College. 4-5:30 pm. Lakehouse Pub & Grille, Rt 30, 3 miles north of Rt 4. (802) 468-5574. www.castletonfreelibrary.org/friends.

SALISBURY. Lake Dunmore Ice Fishing Derby. Eligible fish: catfish, bass, northern pike, salmon, trout and walleye. All entry fees go for prizes. Registration fee \$20. Register at Kampersville Store, (802) 353-4501.

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH. 11th Annual Northern Vermont Snowshoe Race. A family snowshoe festival. Smugglers' and TSL Snowshoes present this exciting day of treks, walks and races on snowshoes. Smugglers' Nordic Ski and Snowshoe Adventure Center, 4323 Rt. 108 South. (802) 644-1173. smuggs@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com.



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Visit Billings Farm & Museum

Winter Weekends

Billings Farm & Museum will be open Saturdays and Sundays in January & February, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., featuring the operating dairy farm, restored 1890 Farm House, plus programs and activities. Billings Farm is an operating Jersey dairy farm that continues a 141-year tradition of agricultural excellence and offers farm programs and historical exhibits that explore Vermont's rural heritage and values. A *Place in the Land*, the recently remastered Academy Award-nominee film which chronicles the development of the Billings estate, will be shown in the theater. Warm up with a cup of spiced cider in the visitor center.

Sleigh Ride Week

Billings Farm & Museum's Sleigh Ride Week is scheduled for February 18–

26 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and will feature sleigh rides, sledding with jack jumper sleds, tours of the dairy farm and farmhouse, and interactive programs.

Climb aboard the Billings Farm sleigh for a ride through the frosty farm fields and take a turn on a jack jumper sled.

On the weekends, in commemoration of Presidents' Day, sample favorite cookies of the Presidents, including James Monroe's Cry Babies, Rutherford Hayes's Hermits, Martin Van Buren's Dutch Koekjes, and Grace Coolidge's Ice Box cookies.

In the barns, discover Vermont dairying—past and present—and learn about the development of the Billings Farm, one of the best Jersey farms in America. The horse barn, calf nursery, milk room, cow barn, and sheep barn are stops along the self-guided



photo courtesy Billings Farm & Museum
Percheron horses pull a sleigh through Billings fields.

tour. Up-close programs with the livestock will be offered.

The restored and furnished 1890 Farm House will be open for touring, featuring the farm office, family living quarters, creamery, and ice house.

Sleigh Ride Week admission includes sleigh rides and sledding, the farm, farm house, and activities, plus A *Place in the Land*, an Academy Award nominee film.

The Billings Farm & Museum is owned and operated by The Woodstock Foundation, Inc., a charitable non-

profit institution founded by Mary French and Laurance Spelman Rockefeller.

Billings Farm & Museum is open daily April 28 through October 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., then weekends November through February 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Christmas and Presidents' Week.

Admission: adults: \$12; 62 & over: \$11; children: 5-15: \$6; 3-4: \$3; 2 & under: free. Billings is located one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on Rt. 12.

For information call (802) 457-2355. Visit www.billingsfarm.org.

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Vermont Country Calendar

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep in the farm barns. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also February 11 & 12.*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

EAST CHARLESTON. Kingdom Coffeeshouse. The Sky Blue Boys (Banjo Dan & Willy Lindner) have been playing authentic traditional music for years. NorthWoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551. www.northwoodscenter.org.

MONTPELIER. Farmer's Night. Celebrate the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Morrill Land-Grant Act. Spend the evening with Senator Morrill in an historical reenactment presented by the Vermont Historical Society and the Justin Morrill Homestead. 7:30 pm. Vermont State House. (802) 479-8505. tess.taylor@state.vt.us. www.vermonthistory.org.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

HARTLAND. Upper Valley Seed Savers meet on the second Thursday of the month at 5 pm. 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.

MANCHESTER. 20th Annual Chili Challenge and Silent Auction. Individuals and restaurants to showcase their own chili or macaroni and cheese dishes. Cook-off and silent auction benefits Manchester Parks and Recreation Scholarship fund. Admission fee of \$8 for adults and \$4 for children allows a chance to taste and vote on each dish. 5-8 pm at The Equinox Hotel. (802) 362-1349.

SO. BURLINGTON. Lecture: Permaculture Today (EMG-E) with Keith Morris. Fee: \$20. 6-8 pm. UVM Horticulture Research Center, 65 Green Mountain Dr., So Burlington. (802) 864-3073. friendsofthehortfarm.org.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10

BURLINGTON. 30th Annual Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Winter Conference. Workshops, keynotes, a gathering for Vermont's farmers and those interested in gardening. Friday seminars and opening reception in the evening. At the University of Vermont. Fee, call to register: (802) 434-4122. www.nofavt.org. *Through February 12.*

NORTH HERO. Great Ice in Grand Isle—5th Annual Celebration. 5 pm Christmas Tree Bonfire on the ice, piped in by bagpipes. Cookout on the ice with cash bar on the pier at North Hero House. Chili cook-off contest. Official launch of Great Ice Out Device. Schedule is weather dependent. Free parking in North Hero Village. For updates call (802) 372-8400 or Hero's Welcome General Store at (802) 372-4161. www.champlainislands.com. www.heroswelcome.com. *Also February 11, 12, 18, 19.*

PROCTORSVILLE. Concert with Yankee Chank. 6:30-9 pm. Crow's Corner Bakery. For more information contact Mark Sustic at mrksustic@together.net.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

BOMOSEEN. Lily Pond. Snowshoe past beaver meadows, old quarries and other habitat to a remote pond. Moderate, 3.5 miles. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. 10 am. Leave from Main Street Park, near the east end of the fire station off Center Street in Rutland City. Leader: Sue Thomas, (802) 773-2185. greenmountainclub.org.

BURLINGTON. 30th Annual Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Winter Conference. Workshops, keynote speakers, a gathering for Vermont's farmers and those interested in gardening. Over 70 workshops. Children's conference., festivities. At the University of Vermont. Fee, call to register: (802) 434-4122. www.nofavt.org. *Also February 12.*

CHESTER. Green Mountain Festival Series: Fusionworks Dance Company. Known for their gutsy, striking, and provocative interpretation of work from contemporary choreographers. Adult \$20, senior \$15, student, \$5. 6:30 pm. Green Mountain Union High School, Rt. 103. (802) 875-4473. green_mountain_festival_series@yahoo.com. www.greenmountainfestivalseries.com. www.fusionworksdance.org.

HUBBARDTON. Lake Hortonia Ice Fishing Derby. From 6 am – 3 pm. Check-in location at mouth of channel outlet. Register at Lake Hortonia Country Store, 303 Rt. 144. (802) 345-8009. *Also February 12.*

MANCHESTER. Workshop: Creative Cupcakes for Kids. With Sarah Porter. We'll start by mixing and baking an easy vegan recipe and then frost and embellish the cupcakes with Valentine's Day in mind. Perfect for grade school ages. Fee. 1-4 pm. Call to register and for location. (802) 362-1199. Renee. greenmntnacademy@gmail.com. www.greenmntnacademy.org.

MONTPELIER. Introduction to Animal Tracking. For folks big enough to walk on snowshoes, we will have a short intro to patterns created by wildlife in our area. Then we'll go out and see what evidence of animals we can find. Showshoes are available at no extra cost. Fee: \$10 adults, \$5 children 8 and up. 10 am – 12 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm Street. (802) 229-6206. chip@northbranchnaturecenter.org. northbranchnaturecenter.org.

NORTH HERO. Lake Champlain Ice Fishing Derby. \$25 to register. Free parking in North Hero Village. Schedule is weather dependent. For info call (802) 372-5600. www.champlainislands.com. *Also February 12.*

NORTH HERO. Great Ice in Grand Isle—5th Annual Celebration. Events all day. Free skating and snowshoeing. Dog sled demo, rides for a fee. Kids' pick-up hockey, byo equipment, skate rental \$5. Adult pick-up hockey, skate rental \$5. Sweetheart Boogie at North Hero Community Hall at 7 pm. For updates call the Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce at (802) 372-8400 or Hero's Welcome General Store at (802) 372-4161. www.champlainislands.com. www.heroswelcome.com.

RUTLAND. Concert with Yankee Chank. Presented by the Saturday Night Coffee House Concert Series. Admission. 7:30-10 pm. UU Church of Rutland at 117 West St. (802) 779-3637.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep in the farm barns. Tour the restored & furnished 1890 Farm House. A Place in the Land, our Academy Award- nominee film is shown in the theater. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also February 12.*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

GRAFTON. Concert: Hot Mustard. A bluegrass quartet featuring April Hobart, a guitarist and lifelong bluegrass singer teamed up with singer/fiddler/banjo picker Bill Jubett. Admission. 3 pm. Phelps Barn at the Grafton Inn, 92 Main St. (802) 843-1801. info@grafftoninnvermont.com. www.oldtavern.com.

FAIR HAVEN. American Legion Post #49 Holds a Breakfast Buffet. With scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, ham, pancakes, french toast, hash, home fries, sausage, drinks. \$7 adult, \$3.50 children. 8-11 am. 72 S. Main St. (802) 265-7983.

HUBBARDTON. Lake Hortonia Ice Fishing Derby. From 6 am – 3 pm. Check-in location at mouth of channel outlet. Register at Lake Hortonia Country Store, 303 Rt. 144. (802) 345-8009.

MANCHESTER. Abraham Lincoln's Birthday Celebration. 1:30-4 pm for children ages 8-11. Admission is \$3 per child. At Hildene, off Rt. 7A, south of the village. Pre-registration required. Call (802) 367-7960. hildene.org.

NORTH HERO. Great Ice in Grand Isle—5th Annual Celebration. Events all day. Free Nordic Skating with Jamie Hess, www.nordic skating.com, (free demo and use of skates). Wild skating, conditions permitting, 2-4 pm. Ice Golf Tournament, 9 am – 1 pm. For updates call the Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce at (802) 372-8400 or Hero's Welcome General Store at (802) 372-4161. www.champlainislands.com. www.heroswelcome.com. *Also February 18, 19.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Winter Weekend. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep in the farm barns. Tour the restored & furnished 1890 Farm House. Warm up with a cup of hot-spiced cider in the Visitor Center. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. Open weekends and February vacation week, 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13

MANCHESTER CENTER. Discussion: Today's Headlines. Moderated by Steven Sinding. This is an opportunity to voice your opinion on national and international issues. Admission. A six-part series taking place Mondays, February 13, 20, March 5, 12, 19, 26. 2-3:30 pm. Spiral Press Cafe Conference Room, 4869 Main St. (802) 362-1199. Renee.greenmntnacademy@gmail.com. www.greenmntnacademy.org/courses.php.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

WILMINGTON. Valentine's Day Private Sleigh Ride. Snuggle up with your sweetheart under an authentic bearskin lap robe in our vintage single horse sleigh pulled by a Morgan horse. Journey through the woods, across the ridge of our mountain back down to the farm. Fee, reservations required. Adams Farm, 15 Higley Hill. (802) 464-3762. www.adamsfamilyfarm.com.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15

SWANTON. Community Breakfast. Come in from the cold and bring a friend. \$2.50 per person. 7-9 am. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 38 Grand Ave. (802) 868-7195. holytrinityepi@myfairpoint.net. holytrinityswanton.org. *Also March 7 & 21.*



NOFA-VT

Vermont Organic Farming Winter Conference

The Annual Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Winter Conference has long been a key educational and inspirational gathering for Vermont's farmers. This years 30th annual event is taking place February 10-12, 2012 at the University of Vermont in Burlington, VT.

Join over 1500 of your friends and neighbors to learn more about gardening, farming, homesteading, and eating locally—with over 70 workshops in the works, there's sure to be something for everyone!

After a particularly challenging year, Vermont's growers are looking forward to the opportunity to exchange ideas, learn new techniques, and create connections. The Conference brings together farmers, educators, researchers, and more to build knowledge and tackle hard questions—like how to create a vibrant and resilient food system in the face of climate change and a struggling economy.

Keynote speakers

Vern Grubinger and Wendy Johnson

On Saturday, keynote speaker and local extension expert Vern Grubinger will share his vision of the future of Vermont's food system. "The resilience of Vermont's food system is challenged by many factors, including climate change and weather extremes, reliance on fossil fuel, loss of good farmland, and consolidation of food processing, distribution and retailing," says Grubinger. "Strategies for addressing these challenges are emerging as part of an ongoing transformation in how people think about food."

Sunday's keynote speaker will be Wendy Johnson, a Buddhist meditation teacher and organic gardening mentor who lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. Wendy is one of the founders of the organic Farm and Garden Program at Green Gulch Farm Zen Center in Marin County, and is the author of Gardening at the Dragon's Gate (Bantam, 2008). She is a prize-winning garden columnist for Tricycle: The Buddhist Review.

Something for everyone

Over 30 of the weekend's workshops are intended for commercial farmers and will cover topics such as Produce Safety, Farm Finance, Flood Recovery, Alternative Energy, Pasture Management and much more. In addition, day-long seminars on Friday will address Advanced Orchard Health for Sustainable Fruit Production, Nose-to-Tail Butchery, Organic Beekeeping, Renewable Energy Options, and Weed Management in a Wetter, Warmer Climate.

New this year will be a seed swap. The Children's Conference is the place for all children ages 6-12 on Saturday and Sunday. And there will be social events on Friday and Saturday nights for the grown-ups, including the Saturday evening dinner and dance.

About NOFA Vermont: NOFA Vermont is member-based organization working to grow local farms, healthy food, and strong communities in Vermont.

For more information about the Winter Conference, to browse workshops, and to register, visit www.nofavt.org or call (802) 434-4122.

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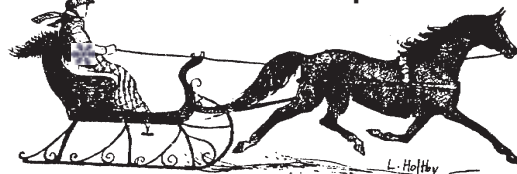
Billings Farm & Museum

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Sleigh Ride Week

February 18 - 26, 2012

10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.



Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides

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Vermont Country Calendar

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16

DORSET. Free Winter Community Supper. We will be serving (and eating!) a delicious meal. Everyone is welcome. 5:30-7 pm. Dorset Church (United Church of Christ), 143 Church St., off Rt. 30. (802) 867-2260. *Also on March 14.*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17

BENNINGTON. Concert: Dafé Brudájo. A mix of originals, contemporary folk and jazz. 8 pm. Meetinghouse Cafe of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 108 School St. For tickets call (802) 440-9816. info@uubennington.org. www.uubennington.org.

CHESTER. Annual Chester Winter Carnival. Winter events, fun for all ages! Friday night dinner-dance at the American Legion, 6 pm. Events through Sunday, various times and locations around town. (802) 875-2693. cheshdwre@vermontel.net. www.yourplaceinvermont.com. *Through February 19.*

ISLAND POND. Annual Island Pond Winter Carnival. Fun events for all ages all weekend including: ice skating, sleigh rides, snowmobile tours, kids fishing derby, snow sculpture competition, cardboard sled races. Bluff Mountain Snowshoe, Intro to Ice Fishing, and more. At locations throughout town. (802) 723-9889. www.islandpondchamber.org. *Through February 19.*

RUTLAND. Great Backyard Bird Count. Join birdwatchers across North America to count the birds at feeders and favorite outdoor areas. Go to www.birdsource.org/gbbc/howto.html for details on how to participate. Call (802) 775-3461 or visit www.rutlandcountyaudubon.org. *Through February 20.*

WOODSTOCK. Third Friday Contra Dance and Dinner. Music by Old Sam Peabody, calling by Delia Clark. Vegetarian dinner 5:30-7:30 pm; family dance at 6 pm; potluck dessert at 7: 30 pm; contra dance 8-10:30 pm. \$8 suggested donation includes dinner, under 18 free. Temporary dance venue: Masonic Lodge on Rt. 4, 1/4 mile east of the Green. (802) 785-4039. hoffmanathome@gmail.com. *Third Fridays September through May.*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

BRANDON. Annual Art in the Snow. Brandon's Art & Wine Festival. Open studios, classes, and demonstrations in a variety of visual arts media. Artist talks, colorful galleries, wine tasting. 11 am – 4 pm. At locations throughout town. info@brandon.org. www.brandon.org. *Also February 19.*

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Carnival Sleigh or Wagon Rides. 20 minute horse-drawn rides through fields and woods, and along a babbling brook. Adults \$6, 3-12 yrs \$4. 1-4 pm. Rain or shine. Fair Winds Farm, Upper Dummerston Rd. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org. *Also Feb 19, 20, 23, 25.*

CASTLETON. Lake Bomoseen Ice Fishing Derby. Sign-ins at Crystal Beach landing on Lake Bomoseen, Rt. 30 N. Eligible species: bass, northern pike, perch and trout. Sponsored by Castleton Lions Club. For more information call Stanley Patch at (802) 468-5001. *Also February 19.*

CHESTER. Annual Chester Winter Carnival. Winter events, fun for all ages! Snow sculptures, dog sled rides, broom hockey, sled races, ice skating and more. Breakfast at the American Legion 8-10 am, free rides by Braeburn Huskies, Biathlon sled/shooting match, bonfire at 6 pm, fire sculpture by Barre Pinsky at 6:30 pm. Free admission. Events through Sunday, various times and locations around town. (802) 875-2693. cheshdwre@vermontel.net. www.yourplaceinvermont.com. *Also February 19.*

ISLAND POND. Annual Island Pond Winter Carnival. Fun events for all ages all weekend including: ice skating, sleigh rides, snowmobile tours, kids fishing derby, snow sculpture competition, cardboard sled races. Bluff Mountain Snowshoe, Intro to Ice Fishing, and more. At locations throughout town. (802) 723-9889. www.islandpondchamber.org. *Also February 19.*

NORTH HERO. Great Ice in Grand Isle—5th Annual Celebration. Events all day. Kids' ice fishing derby 10 am – 1 pm. F-f-rozen Chosen Regatta, 1-3 pm. Schedule is weather dependent. For updates call the Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce at (802) 372-8400 or Hero's Welcome General Store at (802) 372-4161. www.champlainislands.com. www.heroswelcome.com. *Also February 19.*

POULTNEY. Winter Snowshoe Outing. Snowshoe on woodland trails, options for short or longer routes. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. 10 am. Leave from Main Street Park, near the east end of the fire station off Center Street in Rutland City. Or meet at 10:45 am at Lake St. Catherine Country Club. Leaders: Barb & Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573. greenmountainclub.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Vermont Gun & Knife Show. Antiques & collectibles, free appraisals, buying, selling trading. Admission. Open to the public. Free parking. Sat 9 am – 5 pm, Sun 9 am – 3 pm. American Legion #26, 1 Boardman St. (802) 875-4540, (802) 380-8351. www.greenmtgunshowtrail.com. *Also February 19.*

WEST RUTLAND. West Rutland Marsh Monitoring Walk. Now in our 11th year, this is a monthly bird monitoring exercise sponsored by the Rutland County Audubon Society. To date over 1,400 participants have tallied 144 species from Least Bittern to Rusty Blackbird. Meet at the West Rutland Price Chopper parking lot at 8 am. Leader: Roy Pilcher, (802) 775-3461. www.rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

WESTON. 12th Annual "Vermont & Beyond" fine art exhibit with music and refreshments. Free admission. 11 am - 5 pm at the Weston Rod & Gun Club, Rt. 100, 1.2 miles north of village. www.westonvt.com. *Also Feb 19.*

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 26.*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

BRANDON. Annual Art in the Snow. Brandon's Art & Wine Festival. Open studios, classes, and demonstrations in a variety of visual arts media. Artist talks, colorful galleries, wine tasting all day. 11 am – 4 pm. At locations throughout town. info@brandon.org. www.brandon.org.

CASTLETON. Lake Bomoseen Ice Fishing Derby. Sign-ins at Crystal Beach landing on Lake Bomoseen, Rt. 30 N. Eligible species: bass, northern pike, perch and trout. For more information call Stanley Patch at (802) 468-5001.

CHESTER. Annual Chester Winter Carnival. Winter events, fun for all ages! Chester Snowmobile Club Poker Run, 9 am. Broom hockey tournament, 10 am. Food available. Free admission. (802) 875-2693. www.yourplaceinvermont.com.

ISLAND POND. Annual Island Pond Winter Carnival. Fun events for all ages all weekend including: ice skating, sleigh rides, snowmobile tours, kids fishing derby, snow sculpture competition, cardboard sled races. At locations throughout town. (802) 723-9889. www.islandpondchamber.org.

LYNDONVILLE. 2012 Snowflake Festival. A variety of events happen at locations in Burke and Lyndonville. Call for schedule. (802) 626-9696. *Through March 4.*

MIDDLEBURY. Vermont Gun & Knife Show. Antiques & collectibles, free appraisals, buying, selling trading. Admission. Open to the public. Free parking. 9 am – 3 pm. American Legion #26, 1 Boardman St. (802) 875-4540, (802) 380-8351. www.greenmtgunshowtrail.com.

Free Calendar Listings

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

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“Quilts: Comforts & Connections—Flood Story Exhibits”

An exhibit will be taking place at the Bethel Town Hall in Bethel, VT on January 21st & 22nd, providing an opportunity to see more about the many dramatic events that happened in the Bethel area during and after Tropical Storm Irene's visit.

Mary Floyd, who is organizing the event, chose the theme, “Quilts: Comforts & Connections—Flood Story Exhibits,” because quilts were not only directly involved during the storm, but have played an important role since the flood. And, in

much the same way that a quilter can take a collection of many fabrics—some of them initially seeming not to fit—and work them into a beautiful quilt, many people in the community came forward to provide comfort and security to their neighbors in a variety of ways, when it was most needed.

Some stories will be in written form; in others the photo exhibits will speak for themselves. Computer slide shows will be included.

Quilts will also be on display, many of them illustrating the strong family connections between generations of Vermonters, even as far back as the 1927 Flood.

Present at the event will be The Delectable Mountain Quilters, a local group that meets weekly in the approximately 20 members' homes in the area. They have made and given away 61 quilts to storm victims in the past four months, most all of them made by quilting group.

Several stories of individual residents and neighborhoods will be also be told. Local students' flood-related art and written stories will be on display.

There will be a silent auction of donated quilt and art-related items. The event is sponsored by the Bethel Historical Society, which will provide related historical displays. Admission is \$5.00. Proceeds will go to the further clean-up of Peavine Park and the athletic fields.

For questions or to make a donation, call Mary Floyd at 234-9515.

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Vermont Country Calendar

NORTH HERO. Great Ice in Grand Isle—5th Annual Celebration. Events all day. Flapjack breakfast 8:30-10 am at North Hero House, \$7 per person. Over and Back Trek to Knight Island, 11 am – 4 pm, by donation. Family night skating party, 5 pm, food and beverages for sale. For updates call the Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce at (802) 372-8400 or Hero’s Welcome General Store at (802) 372-4161. www.champlainislands.com. www.heroswelcome.com.

WESTON. 12th Annual “Vermont & Beyond” fine art exhibit with music and refreshments. Free admission. 11 am - 5 pm at the Weston Rod & Gun Club, Rt. 100, 1.2 miles north of village. www.westonvt.com.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 26.*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 26.*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

MIDDLEBURY. Guitar Concert with Xuefei Yang. A program of Bach, Regondi, Brouwer, Chopin, and Albeniz’s Asturias. Reserved admission. 7:30 pm. Mahaney Center for the Arts, Concert Hall, Middlebury College, 72 Porter Field Rd. Call for tickets. (802) 443-3168. cfa@middlebury.edu. boxoffice.middlebury.edu.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm February Vacation Fun—A Day at the Farm. For children 8-12. Fee: \$40. 9:30 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 23.*

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 26.*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

STOWE. Mountain Fireworks & Torchlight Parade. Enjoy the beauty of Spruce Camp under the stars and experience the magic as Stowe Mountain Resort comes alive with a spectacle of light. 4-6 pm. Visit Stowe.com.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm February Vacation Fun—Farm Vet for a Day. For children ages 10 to 15. Fee: \$75. 9:30 am – 1:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also February 23.*

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Visit the Jersey dairy farm and restored 1890 farmhouse. Activities and programs for all ages. Sample Presidential cookie favorites and spiced cider! Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 26.*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

SMUGGLERS’ NOTCH. Disney Family Fun Magazine Winter Carnival. Music and live entertainment, face painting, games, a bonfire, giveaways and outdoor barbecue. Free admission. 2 pm-5 pm. Smugglers’ Notch Resort Village Green, 4323 Rt. 108 South. (802) 644-8851. smuggs@smuggs.com. www.smuggs.com.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm February Vacation Fun—Winter Warmth on the Farm. For children 6-8. Fee: \$30. 9:30 am – 1:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 26.*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

SWANTON. Free Open Door Community Dinner. Free. 5:30-6:30 pm. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 38 Grand Ave. (802) 868-7185 x 10. holytrinityepi@myfairpoint.net. www.holytrinityswanton.org.

TINMOUTH. Winter Evening Contra Dance. With Sarah Blair on fiddle and Brendan Taaffe on guitar. Admission is \$9, \$7 for teens and free for children 12 and under. Refreshments will be available. 8-11 pm. Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, five miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 235-2718 or visit www.Tinmouthvt.org. *Also March 24.*

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through February 26.*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

CASTLETON. Great Benson Ice Fishing Derby. All Vermont waters and all legal species of fish. Check-in at Crystal Beach landing, Rt. 30 N. For more information contact Bob Day at (802) 468-5004 or Dan Wood at (802) 468-2726. *Also February 26.*

LYNDONVILLE. 2012 Snowflake Festival. A variety of events happen at locations in Burke and Lyndonville. Call for more information and schedule. (802) 626-9696. *Through March 4.*

RANDOLPH. Concert with Leon Redbone. An evening of masterful acoustic guitar music. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71-73 Main St. For tickets call (802) 728-6464. director@chandler-arts.org. www.leonredbone.com.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Visit the Jersey dairy farm and restored 1890 farmhouse. Sample Presidential cookie favorites and spiced cider! Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also February 26.*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

CASTLETON. Great Benson Ice Fishing Derby. All Vermont waters and all legal species of fish. Check-in at Crystal Beach landing, Rt. 30 N. For more information contact Bob Day at (802) 468-5004 or Dan Wood at (802) 468-2726.

LYNDONVILLE. 2012 Snowflake Festival. A variety of events happen at locations in Burke and Lyndonville. Call for schedule. (802) 626-9696. *Through March 4.*

RANDOLPH. Classical Music Concert. The Pacifica Quartet returns with Beethoven Quartets in B-Flat Major, Op. 18, F minor, Op. 95, and B-Flat Major, Op. 130. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71-73 Main St. For tickets call (802) 728-6464. www.pacificaquartet.com.

SHREWSBURY. Showshoe Outing to Jockey Hill. Snowshoes required for this four-mile trip, which will include some bushwhacking and some climbing. Difficult, 4 miles. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. 10 am. Leave from Main Street Park, near the east end of the fire station off Center Street in Rutland City. Or meet at 10:45 am at Lake St. Catherine Country Club. Leader: Diane Bargiel, (413) 687-1109. greenmountainclub.org.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Week. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through frosty farm fields and jack jumper sledding. Visit the Jersey dairy farm and restored 1890 farmhouse. Sample Presidential cookie favorites and spiced cider! Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, ages 2 & under are free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27

JAY. Mardi Gras Week at Jay Peak. Music, New Orleans-style food, snowshoe obstacle course, ski races, mask making, and a parade! Jay Peak Resort, Rt. 242 (802) 988-2611. www.jaypeakresort.com. *Through March 2.*

MONTPELIER. Winter Wonders—Vacation Nature Camp. For children grades 2-4. Fee: \$38/day. 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm Street. (802) 229-6206. www.northbranchnaturecenter.org. *Through February 29.*



THE CARDINAL-BIRD

Where snow-drifts are deepest he frolics along,
A flicker of crimson, a chirrup of song,
My Cardinal-Bird of the frost-powdered wing,
Composing new lyrics to whistle in Spring.

A plump little prelate, the park is his church;
The pulpit he loves is a cliff -sheltered birch;
And there, in his rubicund livery dressed,
Arranging his feathers and ruffling his crest,

He preaches, with most unconventional glee,
A sermon addressed to the squirrels and me,
Commending the wisdom of those that display
The brightest of colors when heavens are gray.

—ARTHUR GUITERMAN

Winter Outings with the Green Mountain Club Killington Section

Our sometimes mild winter leaves us with lots of opportunity for spending time outdoors. The Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club invites you to join them. Newcomers and nonmembers are welcome on these outings. Unless otherwise noted, all trips leave from Main Street Park, near the east end of the fire station off Center Street in Rutland City.

Outing Schedule

January 28, 10 a.m. High Pond, Sudbury, VT. Snowshoe and explore winter wildlife habitat at this pretty Nature Conservancy preserve. Moderate, 4-5 miles. Leaders: Barb & Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573.

February 4, 9:30 a.m. Trail/Road Hike, Rupert to West Rupert, VT. Begin by doing a short section of rail trail and paved road in Rupert, to a back road (dirt) between Rupert and West Rupert. Have option of finishing on rail trail from West Rupert back to cars, or may get a ride for drivers at Viv’s Mom’s house to pick up cars in Rupert. Easy 4-5 miles. Leaders: Larry Walter & Viv Bebee, (802) 775-3855.

February 11, 10 a.m. Lily Pond, Bomoseen, VT. Snowshoe past beaver meadows, old quarries and other habitat to a remote pond. Moderate, 3.5 miles. Leader: Sue Thomas, (802) 773-2185.

February 18, 10 a.m. Rutland, VT. Or 10:45 a.m. at Lake St. Catherine Country Club, Poultney, VT. Snowshoe on woodland trails, options for short or longer routes. Leader: Diane Bargiel, (413) 687-1109.

February 26, 10 a.m. Jockey Hill, Shrewsbury, VT. Snowshoes required for this 4-mile trip, which will include some bushwhacking and some climbing. Difficult, 4 miles. Leaders: Barb & Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573.

March 4, 9 a.m. Black Mountain Ponds, Dresden, NY. Snowshoe to a chain of remote beaver ponds at the base of Black Mountain. Moderate, 6 miles. Leader: Allison Henry, (802) 775-1627.



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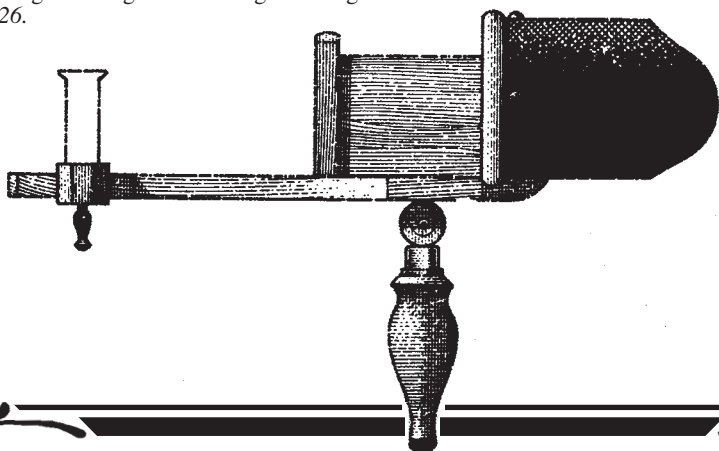
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Sleep, Sleep, Sleep

by Burr Morse

If you're one of those hardcore curmudgeons who says "Don't sleep your life away" I say "Get a life!" And if you don't think sleeping is part of life, well, you're wrong...last night in my sleep, I trekked through the woods with my long-deceased father and saw the Alps from 30,000 feet up in a jet plane. Yup, some of my best living has been at high-revved REMS. In fact in true baby-like bliss, there are no bills to pay, no aches or pains, no kids to worry about...I'm the Wizard of Zs...life is good!

Webster defines sleep as "a natural suspension of consciousness" and when my consciousness is truly "suspended", any interruption bodes deep trauma. Because of this, I have excluded certain things from my life that used to wake me up, like being a volunteer fireman. Years ago, I joined the East Montpelier Fire Department as a volunteer out of a sense of duty; after all, I was a perfect fit...self employed, loved trucks and equipment, and had a farmer's level of common sense. The only problem was that fires often happen at night. The first couple of times it happened, I grumbled to myself but "sucked it up" and forced myself out of bed into the cold night. About the third time, however, I remember screaming to Betsy..."These people and their cursed fires... why do they always have to have them at night!". About the time Betsy used the word "quit", I had it already covered. I turned in my badge the next day.

Then there were the days when we grew two acres of strawberries here at Morse Farm. Strawberries are excruciatingly labor intensive especially up here on this heavy, hilltop soil. Being a perennial crop, they demand constant weeding; weeds and witch grass take to heavy, hard-packed soil much

"Nights for me are when all is well and the world is at peace. There's no doubt that sleep is the best part of life."

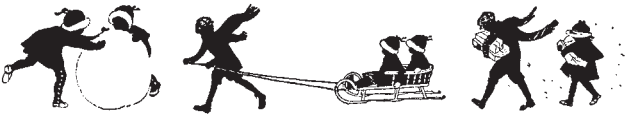
like lampposts take to cement. I was always willing, however, to combat weeds and witch grass. My "kicker" with strawberries was the same old nocturnal neurosis that trumped my firefighting. When strawberries are in blossom, they require irrigation on frosty nights and oh, did I use to rant and rave when that happened! We stopped raising strawberries years ago not because of weeds rooted like lampposts but because of the "tiger" in me when I get woke up at night!

These days as aging takes root, I've managed to exclude most everything that would stand in the way of a solid eight hours between the sheets except for one thing. With fuel oil up to four dollars a gallon, it's essential to burn wood for heat in our house. I like everything about the wood burning process except, you guessed it, night feeding. I don't care what wood stove salesmen tell you, wood stoves and furnaces are like babies...they all require night feeding. 'Long about 2:00 AM I'll rouse enough to function at the very minimum, make my way down our narrow cellar stairs and throw a few chunks of ash in that boiler's gaping maw.

Except for the furnace, I'm pretty well set for "clear sailing" at night but for a rare glitch like what happened recently; sleep had never been better...my pillow was adjusted to the point of perfection and the comforter was drawn to chin level, just way I like it when I heard the dog's puking sounds at the door...Hkkk.....Hkkk.....Hkkk.....Hkkk. In my defense, I basically knew what should be done, but something at the last minute made me rationalize..."but they're just little puking sounds". I rolled over to my other side, nudged the comforter up a bit, and returned to blissful sleep. That morning I woke up at 6:00 to the smell of cleaning products and grumbling..."rug's probably ruined," she hissed. I happen to believe that every long-term marriage allows for a couple of minor lies (never about alcohol or infidelity, mind you) and I used one of them that morning: "Dog puked, uhh, Hon?... gosh I'd have let her out if I'd known."

I think Betsy somehow knew because things were just a bit "chilly" for a few days! Yup, it's always in daylight hours when those minor little skirmishes come up, bills have to be paid, and worries rear their angry heads. I'm selfish about my nights, though. Nights for me are when all is well and the world is at peace. There's no doubt that sleep is the best part of life.

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An icy bush graces the side of a barn, Randolph, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

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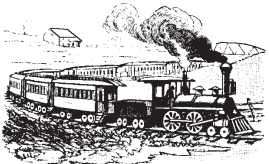
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Local Seed Saver Brings the World to Vermont

by Charles Sutton

When one’s garden ‘goes to seed’ it usually means the end of the season for most home gardeners. But not so for Sylvia Davatz of Hartland, VT, a veteran seed saver, who will be extra hard at work getting her own home-grown seeds ready for Solstice Seeds, a mail order catalog business she started four years ago. Her just-published 2012 catalog features 125 varieties of seed, all locally grown and tested for suitability to Vermont soils and climate conditions. They also were grown and selected for flavor, hardiness, longer growing season and the potential for storage to feed the family over the winter.

Sylvia said she started saving her own seeds 20 years ago when the large commercial seed companies stopped offering varieties she wanted. Eventually she started sharing her expertise and home-grown seeds with others.

“Seed saving is not difficult,” she said, urging would-be seed savers to start with just a few of their favorite vegetables. “Timing is crucial,” she adds, as seeds to be saved have to come from plants that are started early indoors and in isolated plots to avoid cross-pollination. We also learn that some plants have to be wintered over as their seeds need two seasons to mature. Sylvia brings such plants into a solid wall passive solar greenhouse that stays warm enough so the plants can be planted directly into the dirt garden floor! No high benches.

All Solstice Seeds are open-pollinated which means one can save any varieties listed in the catalog and the plants and fruit will come true to type, holding their genetic structure. This avoids next year’s zucchini or other vegetable having a pumpkin or other strange taste which unsuspecting gardeners may wonder “how’d that happen?”

Each of the 125 listings in the catalog gives a thumb-nail write-up about the vegetable, its origins, growing season, and if it is not available elsewhere commercially. As a bonus, if the seeds produce especially beautiful plants, their colors are also described in the listing. For instance her Swiss chard has “brilliant striped pink stems with emerald green leaves.” The True Red Cranberry pole bean is “dazzlingly beautiful glossy and garnet-colored. Its seeds are the exact size, shape and color of a cranberry!” The chicory Radicchio Castelfranco Libra has “creamy yellow-green leaves splashed with red steaks.”

Gardeners will be tempted by flavors, too: Brilliant celeriac has a “sweet, nutty flavor, outstanding both raw or cooked;” the Luthy salsify’s flavor is creamy smooth, often compared to that of oysters; and the Togo Trefle pink-purple tomato,



photo courtesy of The Garden Conservancy
Visitors enjoy Sylvia Davatz’s gardens in Hartland, VT at The Garden Conservancy’s Open Days last summer.

a rare heirloom from West Africa, has an “excellent rich/sweet tart taste.”

The tomato seed collection features 25 varieties, many of them heirlooms. Here’s a few that are unusually tempting: Kathleen’s Wild Sweet Cherry, a tiny, intensely tart/sweet 3/4-inch cherry tomato originating from a community garden in Brooklyn (very flavorful); the Risentomate (traveling tomato) whose fruits develop into large lobes or sections that can be gently pulled apart when ripe. Sylvia tells us it gets its name since it can be put in your pocket and eaten in sections over the course of a trip. Gezahute Tomate Buhrer-Keel—the “tooth tomato”—is very deeply pleated so slices are almost star shaped. It is “pinkish in color, with a very thin skin and sweet mild flavor.”

Many of Sylvia’s tomatoes have Swiss origins, an advantage of her having been born in Switzerland and living there until she was eight years old. She visits Switzerland every other year where she is a member of the seed-saving organization, Pro Specie Rara.

Other tomatoes have origins in Russia, Germany, Hungary, India, Sardinia, Greece, Italy, and South America. Closer to home a White Delight tomato is offered whose original seeds came from Ruth Joly of the Windsor Road Nursery in Claremont, NH.

Each season Sylvia experiments with new varieties of vegetables which she hopes will be suitable for Vermont growing conditions.

New this year are two storage onions, both rare varieties, one a hard-to-find Italian yellow onion, and the other a Red Globe, an 1873 heirloom from Southport, CT—“*One of the most beautiful of all the red onions I trialed*” – SD. Also new are a Sweetnose pimento pepper (well adapted to Vermont) and a hot Thai pepper.

She is particularly keen on barley, which she says is “easy to grow, easy to thresh, delicious and satisfying in its whole form.” One may think that grains have to be grown on a large scale in big fields. Not necessary, says Sylvia who encourages gardeners to try a few rows at a time. She is enthusiastic about rice as a possible crop for Vermont and has had some success with a black-seeded variety called Purple Jomon which produces multi-tillered plants and large seed heads in regular garden beds. No need for rice paddies and their ever-abundant water supply.

Solstice Seeds all come from organically-raised plants, free from pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers. Trying to grow vegetables against the odds can be an exciting though frustrating challenge. Consider eggplant which

doesn’t appreciate the cold. Sylvia recommends the 80-day Diamond eggplant that was developed in the Ukraine, and brought to the States on 1993 by Seed Savers Exchange founder Kent Whealy.

Got plenty of garden of space? Try her Musquee de Provence “cheese” squash that has 20-foot vines and fruits that can weigh as much as 17 pounds!

Sylvia envisions a time when more and more families grown their own food naturally and no longer have to rely on processed foods.

For a free e-mail copy of the 2012 Solstice Seeds catalog contact Sylvia Davatz at sdav@valley.net. Or you can reach her by mail at 106 Gilson Rd., Hartland, VT 05048. Or call (802) 436-3262.



photo courtesy of The Garden Conservancy
Sylvia Davatz

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Across mountain passes where trails were rough and slow
To seek a home together where wild strange forests lay,
With love and courage only to guide their unknown way.

The goods they brought were, the pioneer’s small store.
Necessity made needful and practical...no more,
But Faithful in her packing that counted all her needs
Took pains to make certain of her beloved flower-seeds.

She brought the little package from far-off Boston town
Into the northern mountains that frowningly looked down
And by the new log-cabin she sowed the seeds in spring,
About the time she sang herself, to hear the robins sing.

Beside the cabin blooming, bright in the wilderness,
Her English flowers brought her their gift of happiness
And made the forest clearing not one from which to roam,
But what her dreams had planned, her heart’s beloved home.

A century has vanished—and more if dates be true,
But still her garden blooms just as it used to do
When summer brings the mountains the golden sunny days
And cheery robins practice their merry roundelays.

Time took away the cabin, and Faithful could not see,
Returning to the valley, the scenes that used to be,
Save one—her flower-garden, beautiful and gay—
A symbol of the heart’s own love that passes not away!

—ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH
Northfield, VT, 1920

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Lavender, Laundry, And a Place at the Table

by Sally O’Kane McClintock

*“Lavender’s blue, dilly dilly, lavender’s green,
when I am king, dilly dilly, you shall be queen.”*

Singing my song, I picked a handful of lavender that was overflowing onto the sidewalk by the picket fence a block from my home. “Call up your men, dilly dilly, fetch them from work,” I continued.

I was so immersed in the lavender that I failed to notice a van pulling up in the driveway.

“Would you like me to get you some scissors?” I looked up to see a man calling from the van. “It would make it a lot easier,” he added.

“Oh no, thank you,” I said hastily, leaving in embarrassment. I couldn’t tell whether he was being helpful or sarcastic. His tone of voice suggested the latter.

He owned the lavender, but the lavish rows spreading into the sidewalk surely invited picking. I felt uncomfortable as I hurried home with my bouquet. The flowers were planted there for passersby to enjoy and admire, I reflected. But it was

“Singing my song, I picked a handful of lavender that was overflowing onto the sidewalk.”

not proper to pick them without permission, even though we share the sun and rain that helped the garden grow.

Owning and sharing can be confusing at times. I have always felt my clothesline is my own special territory, whether in a back yard, a rooftop, or above a brook. As I moved about the country, some special clotheslines were strung from back porch to tree in Indiana, on an apartment rooftop in California, and even above a roaring brook in Vermont where a careless step could land me in the water.

Wherever it’s been, I am in my own private space, harnessing the sun and the wind. And rarely has this space of mine been “invaded.” But once on a camping trip where I attached a clothesline from tree to tree near our campsite, I recall how annoyed I was to find a neighboring camper’s laundry hanging on my line. I may have owned the clothesline, but couldn’t I willingly share the wind and the sun?

Can you own a place at the table? Some people think so. My father told me that when he moved alone to San Francisco, he went to a church dinner “for some socializing,” as he put it. But when he brought his plate to a table, instead of being welcomed, he was told, “This seat’s taken.” At table after table, he received the same greeting until finally he found an unclaimed seat in a corner. A sort of musical chairs without the music! So much for hospitality. But it didn’t seem to bother him. He even found this amusing, at least in the telling.

Contrary to my father’s attitude when denied a seat at the table, I couldn’t find the humor when it happened to me. The afternoon had begun in a pleasant way. With extra time before my meeting, I stopped to rest at a nearby park, enjoying the colorful fall

leaves. I sat at a picnic table and took out my lunch. Some pigeons alighted casually nearby, keeping a polite distance

while I ate my sandwich. When I left, I scattered some crumbs for them.

I was still early for the meeting when I arrived. Usually I came when people were already assembled around the table. This time it seemed no one was there yet. The large table was empty, no notebooks or purses claiming places. I set my cane against the wall, chose a chair near the speaker, and put down my bag and notebooks, settling in to wait for the others.

“You’re sitting in my chair. I always sit here.” A member of our group was just entering the room. Surprised, I got up and slid my notebooks and bag across the table to another empty spot while she returned to the other room.

I settled into the second chair and another member of the group walked in. “Why are you sitting in my chair? I’ve sat here for three years.” Apparently I had taken her place too.



I got up and looked around for another seat. The woman next to me kindly offered her chair and took a folding chair for herself. “Thank you for being flexible,” the second woman said to her.

I looked at the group for sympathy or even some humor. But no one had seen how I had to move out of my seat two times in a row. Feeling sorry for myself, I tucked away the experience for the time being. But when I went to bed that night, I dwelled on the incident, puzzling over my sensitivity. I was sure they were unaware of my hurt feelings, so why did this bother me so much? Couldn’t I just laugh it off? Or tell them how I felt?

Instead, from then on I approached the meeting table more carefully, not unlike the cautious pigeons. One evening when I

was reading “Time and Myth” by John S. Dunne, I found solace in a philosophy that also excited me. He wrote that one could choose to look at life either as a journey of experience, or as a series of discoveries. He quoted Hegel, the philosopher, who said that for him personally, the journey was “a voyage of discovery.”

With this view, I decided to stop feeling sorry about my experience, and instead look for the discoveries in my life, like the importance of one’s place at the table. Or my possessiveness, revealed by the “borrowed” clothesline. And in picking someone else’s lavender, I realize how casual I can be about what belongs to someone else.

Whether negative or positive, the discoveries in my life are all a part of my voyage.

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North Country Book News

Book News

A Mighty Storm Stories of Resilience After Irene

by Yvonne Daley

Disaster struck, and Vermonters rose up in response. The torrential rains of Tropical Storm Irene inundated the state on Sunday, August 28, 2011, and left a swath of destruction.

That day, and in the days following—facing devastation far worse than anyone imagined—Vermonters stuck together, got to work, and did what they needed to to recover on their own. From the volunteers who brought boats and equipment to rescue trailer park residents from rising waters in Berlin, the citizens who organized relief convoys to isolated towns, to the straight-laced conservative and the back-to-the-land hippie who teamed up to organize relief for Jamaica, and the countless other actions of volunteers, neighbors and friends, Vermonters proved that disaster does not have to mean tragedy alone.

Award-winning journalist and educator Yvonne Daley, and the reporters and photographers of the Rutland Herald and Times Argus newspapers traveled across the state in the days and weeks following Irene, collecting these stories that are both heartbreaking and inspiring. Together with publishing

partner Northshire Bookstore, they have teamed up tell the stories of indomitable Vermonters who inspired a nation in the wake of devastation and to raise money for the ongoing recovery from Tropical Storm Irene.

“We are truly excited to bring these stories to readers in book form, and to lend a hand by raising money,” said project editor Rob Mitchell, the state editor of the Rutland Herald and Times Argus. “Our newspapers were affected by flooding earlier this year, but Irene affected us in a different way—our fellow Vermonters inspired us and lifted us up. So this book is a labor of love as well as our responsibility as the storytellers of our communities.”

“Northshire Bookstore is so pleased to be able to partner with the Rutland Herald and Times Argus to bring this book to life,” said Chris Morrow, the owner of Northshire Bookstore. “Not only is the book a fitting testament to the resilience of Vermonters, but all the proceeds will go to benefit those who are still recovering from the devastation. It feels good to honor the people of our great state with a book filled with visceral images and gripping text.”

All proceeds from sales of the book will be split evenly among the following three charities:

- The VT Irene Flood Relief Fund, providing grants to small businesses statewide affected by the flooding in partnership with the Central Vermont Community Action Council
- The Mobile Home Project Fund, a relief fund benefiting many of Vermont’s most vulnerable residents with picking up and rebuilding after floodwaters wreaked havoc in mobile home parks across the state.
- The Rutland Relief fund, which benefits Rutland-area residents who were hurt by flooding.

A Mighty Storm: Stories of Resilience After Irene by Yvonne Daley is available for \$34.95 from Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St., Manchester Center, VT. (802) 362-2200.



Children’s Book News

It’s Snowing!

by Gail Gibbons

(Published by Holiday House, New York, NY)

Ever wonder how snowflakes actually are formed and how big they can get?

Once again, Vermont writer-artist Gail Gibbons has produced a timely, informative, and colorful children’s book—this time about snow and how beautiful it can be.

Snow may be unwanted on our roads, but Gail explains how helpful it is as a protective blanket for plants and wildlife and how when it melts it provides much needed groundwater for spring plants.

We learn that snowflakes originate as drops of water, then as ice crystals in varying shapes—needles, columns, flat plates and other shapes and designs—which float into one another to form snowflakes. No two snow-

flakes look exactly alike but they always have either six sides or points. The largest snowflake ever recorded (in Montana) was 15 inches wide!

The first person believed to have photographed snowflakes was Wilson Bentley of Jericho, VT, who took more than 100 photos on the family farm. He became known as Snowflake Bentley.

Gail advises readers to see the many snowflake patterns by going outside when the snow is falling gently and have flakes drop onto a sheet of black paper where they can be studied through a magnifying glass.

It’s Snowing by Gail Gibbons is available at bookstores for \$17.95.

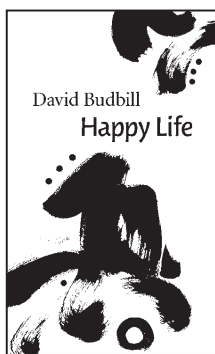
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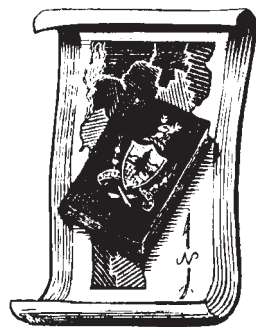
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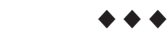
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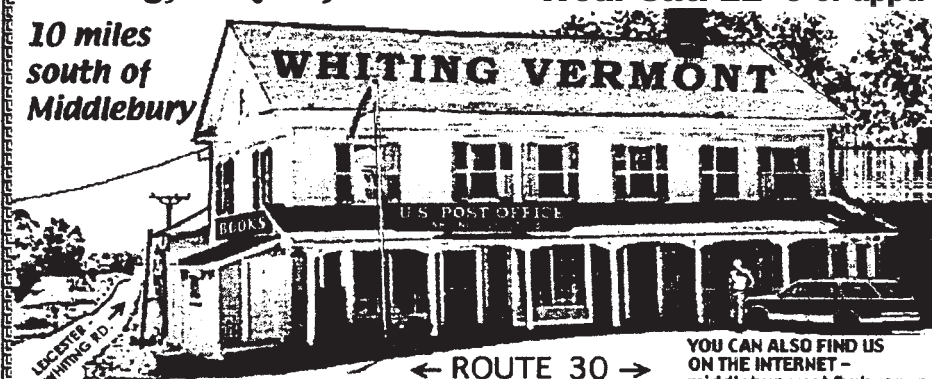
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A Quest Through New England for a Lost Family Journal

Nicholas

(A Four-Part Series)

**A Massachusetts Tale • A Maine Tale
A New Hampshire • A Vermont Tale**

by Peter Arenstam and illustrated by Karen Busch Holman

(Published by Mitten Press, Ann Arbor, MI)

In this four-book saga, we are swept along on the remarkable journey of a lively, little field mouse named Nicholas and his chipmunk traveling companion, Edward, in a seemingly impossible mission to locate a copy of Nicholas’ lost family journal. An uncle has a copy of it someplace up in northern New England, the original having been ruined in a flood at the mouse’s home in a farmhouse outside Stockbridge, MA.

Here’s where the journey begins that takes our adventurer through Massachusetts, then to Maine, New Hampshire and finally Vermont. Does he find a copy of the much-sought-after journal? Readers will just have to travel with Nicholas all the way to Vermont to find out.

It’s no mystery that Nicholas and Edward’s endearing personalities enable them to talk other animals into giving them rides to their next destination. These animals are species native to each particular region so we learn a lot about its wildlife and habitat. These animals have a keen sense of history and geography and readily share this with their grateful passengers. But not all of the encountered animals are friendly. They barely elude pesky seagulls in Boston Harbor after a harrowing trip on a fishing trawler from Gloucester. Later in Maine, a Cooper’s hawk dives at the two-some, looking for an easy meal. Our travelers escape into some tunnels built by voles under a broccoli garden.

Rats share the same type of environment as mice, so encounters with this fellow species were bound to happen. Wharf rats are very helpful in showing Nicholas how to sneak aboard the schooner for the trip to Maine. Once aboard Nicholas finds a place to hide in a cupboard behind some cans of Maine’s famous B&M baked beans.

Covering such a large state as Maine wasn’t easy but Nicholas gets rides on the back of a moose and airborne trips with an eagle, goose, puffin, and a swan. The Maine adventure includes trips to Moosehead Lake, Mount Kathadin, the Aroostook County potato fields, and the Bath Iron Works.

The trip into New Hampshire begins with a visit to the famous Fryeburg Fair near the Maine-New Hampshire border. Nicholas and Edward make friends with a show goat named Coconut who smuggles them aboard a travel trailer going to Keene, NH. Coconut tells about the mountains of New Hampshire, especially Monadnock, which, he said, means “the mountain that stands alone.”

In an another unusual ‘fly-over’ Nicholas and Edward ride atop a piece of birch bark carried by four finches to the next destination of Manchester, NH, where they are lured into an abandoned textile mill by a pack of none-too-friendly rats. The rats tell about the old days when the mills thrived with thousands of workers.

When the head rat, Rusty, learns Nicholas and Edward have flown with the birds, he demands a flight, too, if the twosome are to be freed. To their rescue comes an aged shaggy old grey and purple pigeon named Gus who agrees to give the rat a back ride around the mill. The flight is a success so our traveling ‘hostages’ are set free.

In the final New Hampshire episode a cousin, Francis, has been found who has the family journal, but won’t turn it over to Nicholas. He insists they all go together to Vermont to unravel the secrets of the journal.

The three companions set off on their journey but Francis, with the prized journal, gets swept down a stream. A new search begins to look for him that takes the weary travelers



Nicholas the field mouse undertakes a great adventure traveling through Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont on his search for the lost family journal. He is pictured here at the beginning of his journey, in Massachusetts.

to the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury, VT. From there they get rides on the backs of wild turkeys to the Northeast Kingdom.

The next leg of the journey takes them to Lake Champlain where they are carried through the air by an osprey in still another rescue mission. Then a ride by seagull to Burlington where, with another new-found friend—a skunk—they get to sample ice cream at Ben & Jerry’s! In this part of the saga Nicholas is reunited with a long-lost big brother, Clarence, who joins them in their search.

There is a surprise reunion in Woodstock

with one final rescue—the very most important one of all—one that teaches us to revere the past, but cherish the living.

Nicholas, A Massachusetts Tale • Nicholas, A Maine Tale • Nicholas, A New Hampshire Tale • and Nicholas, a Vermont Tale. This series of hardcover books by Peter Arenstam and illustrated by Karen Busch Holman (with many endearing and often nearly full-page pen and ink drawings) are available at bookstores for \$14.95 a volume, or can be purchased from the publisher at www.mittenpress.com.

Phoenix Books Welcomes Journalist Michael Hastings

Michael Hastings will visit Phoenix Books in Essex, VT on Saturday, February 18th at 2 p.m. to discuss his new book, *The Operators*. Frank Rich of the New York Times has described *The Operators* as “An impressive feat of journalism by a Washington outsider who seemed to know more about what was going on in Washington than most insiders did.”

During a spring 2010 trip across Europe to garner additional allied help for the war effort, General Stanley McChrystal was accompanied by Hastings. For days, Hastings looked on as McChrystal and his staff let off steam, partying and openly bashing the Obama administration for what they saw as a lack of leadership. When Hastings’s piece appeared in Rolling Stone a

few months later, it set off a political firestorm ending in McChrystal’s resignation.

In *The Operators*, Hastings picks up where his Rolling Stone coup left off. He gives a shocking behind-the-scenes portrait of our military commanders. As he weighs the merits and failings of old-school generals and the counterintelligence experts, Hastings draws back the curtain on a hellish complexity.

Michael Hastings is a contributing editor at Rolling Stone. His work has appeared in numerous other publications. Hastings lives in Vermont.

Phoenix Books is located at 21 Essex Way, #407 in Essex, VT. This event is free and open to the public. For more info visit phoenixbooks.biz or call (802) 872-7111.

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BARNARD, VT
Historic Home, Gorgeous View and Fields on 90-acre Farm. Four miles to Suicide Six, a small family ski resort in Woodstock. On a dirt road in a private valley with a pond, this classically beautiful, simply furnished treasure built in 1799 is the former home and studio of a prominent Vermont artist. With five bedrooms and three baths, it sleeps eight to ten. Sunny addition has a master bedroom, family room/kitchen/dining room overlooking terraces, brooks, and hills beyond. Downstairs are a paneled living room with hearth, two early (bed)rooms. Upstairs a dormitory and smaller bedroom sleep up to six. Satellite TV and Wi-Fi. A summer studio with cathedral ceiling, pool table and bathroom connects with the house. Silver Lake and Appalachian Trail are nearby. All seasons are different and beautiful. No smoking. Dogs accepted, no cats. Contact Mark, ewcmark@gmail.com. (Listing #585)

BOLTON, VT
Mountaintop Condo Features Five-person Hot Tub. Want for nothing in this beautiful immaculate condo located 1800' above the valley floor! This retreat is next to Bolton Valley Ski Resort, where 300' of snow falls each winter. It has ski-on/off access to Bolton Valley's trails via the Timberline Lift. This property has access to reduced-price lift tickets to Bolton Valley Resort, less expensive than Bolton Valley's Powder Pass. In summer, enjoy use of an outdoor heated pool. Fully-equipped granite kitchen with dining area; living room features large LCD TV, DVD/VCR, stereo system, queen pullout sofa, and a Vermont Firestove; two bedrooms, two full baths, and air conditioning. Each bedroom has cable TV; master bedroom has DVD/VCR. Wi-Fi. Maximum six people. Minutes to Burlington, Stowe, & Waterbury attractions; ask about coupons. No smoking. Linens provided and pets permitted with additional fees. Nightly and weekly. Contact Jill & Brian Drinkwater, blkbear@wcvt.com. (Listing #481)

FAYSTON, VT
Beautiful Open-Floor-Plan House. This four-bedroom, four-bathroom house conveniently located just down the hill from Mad River Glen, America's first skier-owned mountain, and less than five minutes from Sugarbush, is the perfect spot for a multi-family ski vacation or summer/fall getaway. Walk out the back door into the 2,700-acre Phen Basin State Forest. There are two equally-sized second-floor master bedrooms, each with a queen-sized bed and its own tiled bathroom. A guest bedroom with queen-sized bed is on the main floor, and a lower-level bunkroom sleeps nine. The



A deep-winter retreat in Fayston near Mad River Glen. (Listing #564) photo by David Silverstein

house sleeps 15 total. Amenities include sun-filled open floor plan, granite kitchen, plasma TV, Wii, pool table, and high-efficiency, wood-burning fireplace. No pets, smoking, or large, rowdy parties. We love this place and know you will too! Booking February school vacation week only. Contact David, (617) 620-9390. dasilverstein@yahoo.com. (Listing #564)

WAITSFIELD, VT
Circa 1850 Farmhouse in Waitsfield. Ten minutes to Mad River Glen (with no snowboarding), fifteen to Sugarbush, and thirty to Stowe. Old-style, fully-equipped farmhouse for 19 persons, but equally pleasant for two people. Six bedrooms, three baths, two living rooms, dishwasher, fireplace, piano, and sledding hill. No pets, no smoking. Two-night minimum all seasons. Summer season rentals are also available. Contact William Iler, (978) 922-6903. (Listing #556)

RIPTON, VT
Breadloaf Mountain—Luxury Executive Retreat. Beautifully renovated colonial home adjacent to Middlebury College's Breadloaf Mountain campus. Within two miles of the house are downhill skiing at Middlebury College's Snow Bowl, scenic walking trails on land formerly owned by Robert Frost, and more rigorous hiking on the Long Trail. Enjoy history and charm, and views of the mountains and ski slopes. Cross-country skiing from the backyard. This four-bedroom, three-and-a-half bath house comfortably sleeps 10 and can be divided, sleeping four downstairs on one side of house and six upstairs on other side. Downstairs: two 30' living rooms, two fireplaces, dining room seating 10, gourmet kitchen, plus additional galley kitchen. Queen bedroom, queen-sized sleeper sofa, plus one-and-a-half baths. Graceful, wraparound porch. Upstairs: master (queen) bedroom and bath with Jacuzzi and shower, plus two twin bedrooms and hall bath. Broadband Internet access, satellite TV, gas fireplace. Large outdoor gas barbecue. Within a short distance are countless other attractions including some of the most famous downhill slopes in the East; and in other seasons, golf, fishing, boating and swimming in the numerous lakes and streams. No smoking, no pets. Contact Neil Bicknell, (303) 955-7865 or (914) 725-8002. ncbicknell@bicknelladvisory.com. (Listing #236)

WESTMORE, VT
Eco-friendly Home—Willoughby Mountain Retreat. Enjoy great outdoor fun with sledding at the house, x-country skiing in the woods, and snowmobiling on nearby VAST trail. For skiing, drive 20 minutes to Burke Mountain, claiming the lowest number of skiers per acre in Vermont, and Jay Peak Resort (40 minutes). Winter access needs AWD or good tires. Fully-furnished green timber-frame home with sod roof and unique architectural features is hidden in the mountains, perfect whether you are looking for extreme privacy or a great family hangout. Sleeps 10 in three bedrooms (one queen, three full, two twin beds). Fully equipped including linens, towels. One full bath with cedar-lined shower/tub. TV, VCR & DVD; Wi-Fi; local phone calls. Full kitchen with gas stove/oven, dishwasher, and washer/dryer. Stay cozy with propane radiant-heat floors and fieldstone fireplace with dry wood. The spacious great room features a cathedral ceiling & leather couch with dual recliners. A piano, games, and a bookshelf filled with books for year-round seclusion, fun and comfort. Situated on 80 forested acres to savor the natural world, quiet and starlit at night. Minutes from Lake Willoughby and countless other lakes, your Northeast Kingdom vacation will surely be memorable as you make your home base an eco-friendly adventure. No smoking. Inquire about pets. Nightly, weekly & seasonal. Contact Annalei Babson, (802) 535-4468. annalei@nekinfo.com. (Listing #1329)

WINDHAM, VT
Austrian Ski Chalet Near Magic, Bromley, Stratton, and Okemo. Located on the backside of Magic Mountain, which is working on becoming the second cooperatively run ski area, this charming chalet has three bedrooms and sleeps 8-10, and can be shared by several families or couples. Get in touch with some old friends and use it as a reunion retreat. One bedroom has a queen pillow-top mattress. Another bedroom has twin beds. The third bedroom has a bunk bed with a twin captain's bed and trundle. There are two living rooms with fireplaces. Relax in an over-sized microsuade couch as you are entertained by DirecTV, DVD, VCR, Xbox, or boardgames and books. The other living room has leather sectional sofa with recliners & a twin daybed for an extra guest. There are two full baths with tubs, a mudroom with washer and dryer, and a fully stocked, large eat-in kitchen with dishwasher. The kitchen spills out into a dining room with seating for 10. Two large decks with a gas grill. Skiing: five minutes to Magic Mountain, 15 to Bromley, 25 to Stratton, 35 to Okemo, 45 to Mt. Snow, and 60 to Killington. You can ski a different resort each day! Also cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, golf, swimming, outlet shopping. No pets or smoking please. Three-night minimum to season rental. Contact Joan Rogers, (203) 740-1510 or Susan Reimer, (267) 247-5900. s.reimer@comcast.net. (Listing #1102)



For photos, rates, and more information about these vacation retreats, go to vermontproperty.com and search by the listing number (provided above) on the home page or on the advanced search page.

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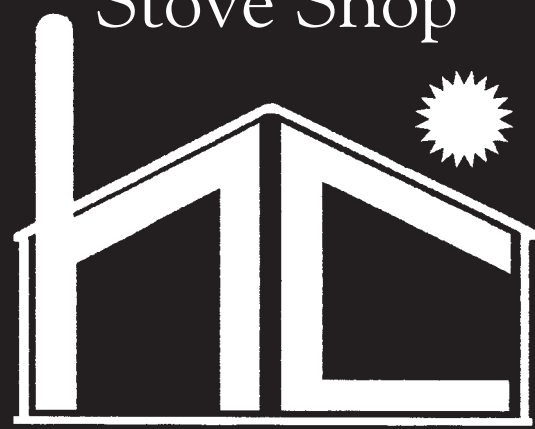
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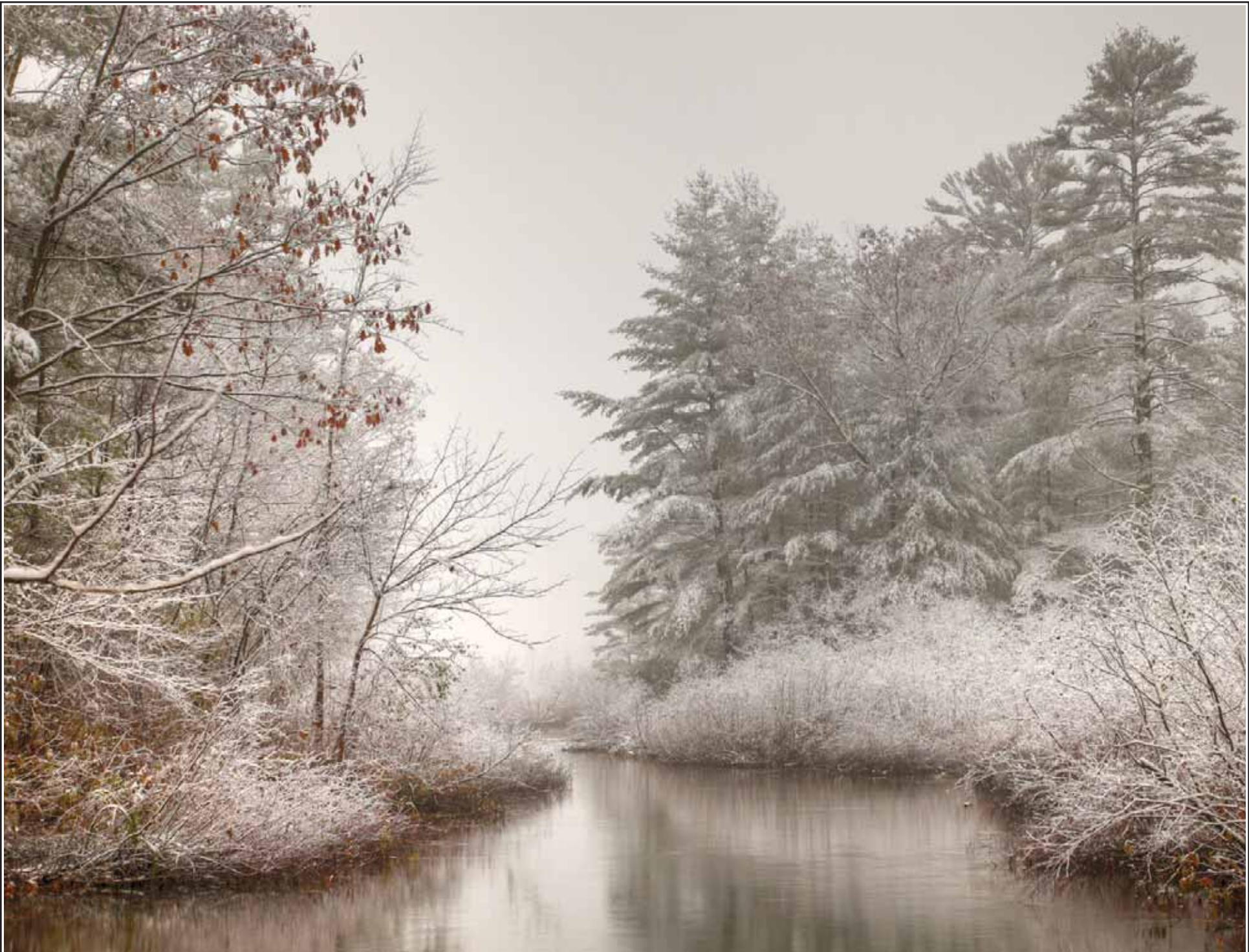
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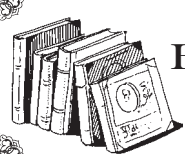


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